



Washington State Agency Publication Guide

January 2015

Introduction

- » What is a state publication?

Deciding to Produce a Publication

- » Annual evaluation of every publication is required

Electronic Publications

- » Electronic publications are preferred

Style, Formatting and Production

- » Select vendors who use recycled paper and ink where possible
- » Standards for state letterhead and business cards
- » Guidelines for agency correspondence and publications
- » Disability access and ADA language
- » Sample ADA language

Distribution

- » Review and approval by OFM prior to legislative submittal
- » Distribution to the Legislature via the State Library
- » The State Library requires additional copies for statewide distribution
- » State Library collection program
- » Mailing publications at the lowest available rate

Fees and Advertising

- » Charging fees for state publications

INTRODUCTION

It is the state's goal to insure that all publications are produced and distributed in a way that both meets the needs of the state and controls publication costs. This guide is designed as a resource for agencies to help them comply with legal requirements and to provide information on the most cost-effective alternatives in producing state publications.

The Office of Financial Management was directed to report on implementation of chapter 40.07 RCW, on management and control of state publications and to "make recommendations concerning the use of alternative methods of distribution, including electronic publication, of agency reports and other publications and notices."

Although some agencies are exempt from publication guidelines issued by OFM under chapter 40.07 RCW they may be subject to other statutes, directives and administrative policies referenced in this guide.

What is a state publication?

RCW 40.06.010 defines state publications as the following:

"State publication" includes annual, biennial, and special reports, state periodicals and magazines, books, pamphlets, leaflets, and all other materials, other than news releases sent exclusively to the news media, correspondence and interoffice memoranda, issued by the state, the legislature, constitutional officers, or any other state department, committee, or other state agency supported wholly or in part by state funds.

Keep in mind that, according to this same RCW, the term "print" includes all forms of reproducing multiple copies, with the exception of typewritten correspondence and interoffice memoranda.

Therefore, these guidelines do cover electronic publications. **With advances in technology, however, these guidelines may not always be applicable. Agency staff are encouraged to use common sense, keeping in mind the intent of the legislation and the principles of publication guidelines.**

DECIDING TO PRODUCE A PUBLICATION

State law sets out the guiding principles for managing state publications in chapter 40.07 RCW, which states:

No agency head shall recommend a state publication for printing and distribution, other than those required by law, unless the benefits from the publication and distribution thereof to the citizens and taxpayers of this state clearly exceed the costs of preparation, printing, and distribution.

– RCW 40.07.030

While this is a subjective standard, legislative intent is clear. The Legislature has historically taken a dim view of unnecessary publications. The statute requires agency heads to determine whether the benefits from a publication exceed the costs of production and distribution **before** any publication is authorized.

OFM recognizes that agencies need to produce high-quality, well-designed publications to reach their audience, but recommends that they do so “in the most economic manner consistent with effectiveness and achievement of program objectives” [RCW 40.07.030(5)].

While decisions about individual publications are generally left to the discretion of individual agencies, RCW 40.07.030(2) gives OFM the authority to “selectively review state publications in order to determine if specific state publications are economically and effectively contributing to the accomplishment of state agency program objectives.” The Governor or the Governor’s designee in OFM also has the authority to “eliminate, consolidate, or simplify state agency publications” under RCW 40.07.040(1).

Annual evaluation of every publication is required

State agencies must conduct an annual evaluation of all publications in accordance with OFM guidelines to determine whether they will be produced, revised or distributed through other means (RCW 40.70.030). Internet publication, for example, may be a better choice for some formerly printed publications as it is often more cost-effective and accessible. Agencies should keep in mind, however that not all citizens have access to electronic publications and should determine the audience when deciding how best to distribute the document.

If the requirements of a federally mandated state publication conflict with any of the state guidelines for publication or distribution, agencies are required to send a copy of the publication to the OFM Director with a letter of transmittal citing the federal statute, rule or regulation requiring the publication (RCW 40.07.050). This requirement does not apply to publications that already meet the state publications guidelines defined by statute, Governor’s Administrative Policy, OFM Directive or this guide.

ELECTRONIC PUBLICATIONS

Electronic publications are preferred

In many cases, electronic communications — whether through the Internet or some other medium — provide a cost-effective alternative to printed publications.

Despite the ubiquity of the Internet, agencies should recognize that not all citizens have access to electronic communications and they are not a substitute for printed materials in all cases.

STYLE, FORMATTING AND PRODUCTION

The Governor’s Office has directed all executive branch agencies, boards and commissions to balance the effectiveness of printed materials with cost considerations when selecting formats, colors and logos.

Select vendors who use recycled paper and ink

The state is continually working toward a cleaner environment and encourages the use of recycled products and non-petroleum (vegetable) based ink. The state clearly intends that recycling standards be followed for state publications. It is recommended that agencies follow this intent by consulting with state-approved vendors about available printing stock and affixing a recycle symbol to their publication.

Standards for state letterhead and business cards

Common sense should dictate printing decisions, but some specific standards should be adhered to for stationery (letterhead and envelopes) and business cards printed by agency in-house printing facilities and state-approved private vendors.

- » Individual names should not be printed on any letterhead or memo paper.
- » Addresses should be printed with the PO Box and Zip +4 Zip code.
- » The union label and recycle symbol should appear on all business cards and letterhead printed by a state agency.
- » Letterhead and business cards should be printed with green ink on recycled stock.
- » Agencies may create letterhead electronically, provided that the design conforms to that established by OFM.
- » Business cards should be printed only for employees who require cards as an integral part of their responsibilities.

While these requirements apply specifically to letterhead and business cards, OFM recommends that agencies apply similar standards of simplicity to all publications.

Guidelines for agency publications

Agencies are encouraged to develop internal policies and procedures to govern their publications. These policies and procedures should:

- » Ensure the quality of agency publications and promote consistency in graphic design in individual agencies.
- » Standardize and simplify the process of creating and maintaining agency publications. A regular review process should include strategies to revise, combine or eliminate outdated or unnecessary publications, and planning for all communication materials.
- » Allow publications to be posted electronically with a minimum effort, thus increasing access to public information.

Disability access and ADA language

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that all state services, including publications, be accessible to people with disabilities.

In communicating with employees, applicants, clients of services, or the general public, all state agencies, boards and commissions shall ensure that Teletypewriters (TTYs), sign language interpreters, assistive devices, and information in alternate formats shall be provided upon request.

The Central Access Office at Central Washington University's Disability Services department provides services that include document conversion, free software and alternative media consultation. Visit <http://www.cwu.edu/central-access/> for more information.

The Web Accessibility Initiative of the World Wide Web Consortium, <http://www.w3.org/WAI> has developed guidelines for improving access for people with disabilities to materials provided through the Internet.

Sample ADA language

ADA language must appear on all agency and institution documents available to the public. This language lets individuals requesting alternative formats and/or accommodations for meetings know how to notify agencies of their specific needs.

Sample ADA language is provided here as a reference.

If you would like copies of this document in an alternative format, please contact (provide name of agency, address, phone number and TTY/TDD number).

To obtain this publication in alternative format, please contact the (indicate agency) ADA Coordinator at (address, phone, fax).

This document is available in alternative formats to accommodate persons with disabilities. Copies of this document can be obtained in alternative formats by calling (contact phone number, TTY/TDD telephone number).

DISTRIBUTION

Review and approval by OFM prior to legislative submittal

Any report prepared by an executive agency for the Legislature must be reviewed and approved by OFM's Executive Policy and Budget divisions prior to transmittal to the Legislature. OFM reviews these reports for policy, fiscal and program content. At a minimum, a two-week period is necessary for OFM review. OFM staff will notify agencies upon completion of the review.

To expedite review and approval, agencies must contact their assigned OFM budget or policy analyst early in the planning process and keep the analyst informed about the status of the publication until complete. In general, it is preferable to send the analyst a draft of the final publication. No publication should be distributed before OFM review.

Distribution to the Legislature

Agencies are required to send reports electronically to the Legislature (and to copy the Secretary of the Senate and Chief Clerk of the House).

The State Library requires copies for statewide distribution

To help assure that the public has access to information and that historic records of state activities are maintained, OFM requires that agencies use the State Distribution Center at the State Library to make information available through libraries statewide.

The State Library uses depository libraries to insure that publications are available for the public. For large print runs — more than 100 copies — the State Library requests that agencies provide it with 50 paper copies of all publications written for a general audience, the Legislature or the public. These copies will be made available at depository libraries throughout the state.

If a publication is produced for limited distribution — less than 100 copies — the State Library requests 15 paper copies for the Full Depository libraries only. These guidelines apply to state publications defined by chapters 40.06 and 40.07 RCW.

For publications produced electronically only, send a URL or electronic file to the Digital State Publications staff at epubstate@sos.wa.gov. For more information, visit <http://www.sos.wa.gov/library/StateDepositoryProgram.aspx>. To determine the number of copies needed, call the State Distribution Center or 360-704-5265 or 360-704-5200.

The State Library may also request that agencies furnish the Distribution Center with a complete list of current state publications and a copy of its mailing and/or exchange lists RCW 40.06.060. Mailing and/or exchange lists provided to the State Library fall within the guidelines of RCW 42.17.260 and 42.52.050 relating to confidentiality. Call the State Library at 360-704-5200 for more information.

State Library collection program

Before recycling old state publications that have outlived their usefulness to state agencies, please contact the State Library. The State Library may be able to distribute such publications as RCWs, session laws, and agency publications to libraries in Washington. Contact the State Library at 360-704-5200.

Mailing publications at the lowest available rate

RCW 40.06.040 requires that state publications distributed to the public and the Legislature be mailed at the lowest available postal rate. Assistance with bulk mailing is available from DES. (See DES web site: <http://des.wa.gov/services/PrintingMail/mail/Pages/default.aspx>). Consultation on developing and formatting agency mailing lists is also available through DES.

FEES AND ADVERTISING

Charging fees for state publications

State law provides some agencies with specific statutory authority to collect fees for the publications they produce. For example, under RCW 77.12.170, the Department of Fish and Wildlife deposits fees for informational materials published by the department in the State Wildlife Account.

The state Public Records Act also allows agencies to impose “a reasonable charge” to recover the cost of providing copies of public records pursuant to public records requests (RCW 42.56.120). The law stipulates a maximum charge of 15 cents per page for copying. However, the Office of the Attorney General has advised OFM that the public disclosure law should not be interpreted as providing blanket authority to agencies to charge for publications not relating to a public disclosure request. Absent specific statutory authority, state agencies are advised to consult with their assistant attorney general before charging for a publication produced for general distribution.