



TO: Legislative Operating Committee (LOC)
FROM: Clorissa N. Santiago, Legislative Reference Office, Senior Staff Attorney *CNS*
DATE: October 20, 2021
RE: Oneida General Welfare Law: Public Comment Review

A public comment period for the permanent adoption of the Oneida General Welfare law (“the Law”) was held open until October 13, 2021. A public meeting for the permanent adoption of the Law was not held due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

On March 12, 2020, Chairman Tehassi Hill signed a “*Declaration of Public Health State of Emergency*” regarding COVID-19 which declared a Public Health State of Emergency for the Nation until April 12, 2020, and set into place the necessary authority for action to be taken and allowed the Nation to seek reimbursement of emergency management actions that may result in unexpected expenses. The Public Health State of Emergency has since been extended until November 25, 2021, by the Oneida Business Committee through the adoption of resolutions BC-03-28-20-A, BC-05-06-20-A, BC-06-10-20-A, BC-07-08-20-A, BC-08-06-20-A, BC-09-09-20-A, BC-10-08-20-A, BC-11-10-20-A, BC-12-09-20-D, BC-01-07-21-A, BC-02-10-21-A, BC-03-10-21-D, BC-05-12-21-A, BC-06-23-21-B, BC-07-28-21-N, and BC-09-22-21-A.

On March 27, 2020, the Nation’s COVID-19 Core Decision Making Team issued a “*Suspension of Public Meetings under the Legislative Procedures Act*” declaration which suspended the Legislative Procedures Act’s requirement to hold a public meeting during the public comment period, but allowed members of the community to still participate in the legislative process by submitting written comments, questions, data, or input on proposed legislation to the Legislative Operating Committee via e-mail during the public comment period.

On August 3, 2021, the Oneida Business Committee adopted resolution BC-08-03-21-A, *Setting Public Gathering Guidelines during Public Health State of Emergency—COVID-19*, which prohibits indoor and outdoor public gatherings when the COVID-19 infection rates within Brown or Outagamie Counties exceed “Low” as identified by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services.

In accordance with resolution BC-08-03-21-A, a public meeting was not held due to the infection rates within Brown and Outagamie Counties exceeding “Low” as identified by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services. Instead on September 15, 2021, the Legislative Operating Committee approved a public comment period to be held open until October 13, 2021, and the Nation’s COVID-19 Team’s “*Suspension of Public Meetings under the Legislative Procedures Act*” declaration took effect.

Members of the community were provided an opportunity to provide written submissions of comments or questions to the Legislative Operating Committee through e-mail until October 13,

2021. No written comments were received for the proposed permanent adoption of the Oneida General Welfare law.