



LEGISLATIVE OPERATING COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDA

Business Committee Conference Room - 2nd Floor Norbert Hill Center December 4, 2024 9:00 a.m.

- I. Call to Order and Approval of the Agenda
- II. Minutes to be Approved
 - 1. November 20, 2024 LOC Meeting Minutes (pg. 2)
- III. **Current Business**
 - 1. Oneida Life Insurance Plan Law Amendments (pg. 4)
- IV. **New Submissions**
- V. **Additions**
- VI. **Administrative Updates**
- VII. **Executive Session**
- VIII. Recess/Adjourn



Oneida Nation Oneida Business Committee Legislative Operating Committee PO Box 365 • Oneida, WI 54155-0365



LEGISLATIVE OPERATING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Oneida Business Committee Conference Room-2nd Floor Norbert Hill Center November 20, 2024 9:00 a.m.

Present: Jameson Wilson, Kirby Metoxen, Marlon Skenandore

Excused: Jonas Hill, Jennifer Webster

Others Present: Clorissa N. Leeman, Grace Elliott, Carolyn Salutz, Maureen Perkins

Others Present on Microsoft Teams: Janice Decorah, Rae Skenandore, Eric Boulanger, Kaylynn Gresham, Tavia James-Charles, Ralinda Ninham-Lamberies, Fawn Billie, Kristal Hill, Fawn Cottrell, Grace Koehler, Peggy Helm-Quest, Shane Hill, Lisa Moore, Ronald Vanschyndel, Eric McLester, David P. Jordan

I. Call to Order and Approval of the Agenda

Jameson Wilson called the November 20, 2024, Legislative Operating Committee meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Motion by Marlon Skenandore to approve the agenda; seconded by Kirby Metoxen. Motion carried unanimously.

II. Minutes to be Approved

1. November 6, 2024 LOC Meeting Minutes

Motion by Kirby Metoxen to approve the October 16, 2024 LOC meeting minutes and forward to the Oneida Business Committee; seconded by Marlon Skenandore. Motion carried unanimously.

- **III.** Current Business
- IV. New Submissions
- V. Additions

VI. Administrative Updates

1. E-Poll Results: Approval of the LOC and LRO FY 2025 Annual Reports for GTC Motion by Marlon Skenandore to enter into the record the results of the October 25, 2024, e-poll entitled, Approval of the LOC and LRO FY2025 Annual Reports; seconded by Kirby Metoxen. Motion carried unanimously.

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VII. Executive Session

VIII. Adjourn

Motion by Kirby Metoxen to adjourn at 9:04 a.m.; seconded by Marlon Skenandore. Motion carried unanimously.





Oneida Nation Oneida Business Committee Legislative Operating Committee PO Box 365 • Oneida, WI 54155-0365



Legislative Operating Committee December 4, 2024

Oneida Life Insurance Plan Law Amendments

Submission Date: 6/5/24	Public Meeting: 11/15/24
LOC Sponsor: Jameson Wilson	Emergency Enacted: N/A

Summary: This item added to the Active Files List on June 5, 2024, at the request of the Chief Financial Officer, Ralinda Ninham-Lamberies. The CFO requested the LOC consider an emergency amendment to the Law to remove section 1004.5-3 which provides that "the Oneida Trust Enrollment Department shall be notified within one (1) year of the member of the Nation's death in order to distribute the Oneida Life Insurance Plan benefits to the beneficiary. Oneida Life Insurance Plan claims made beyond the first anniversary of the decedent's death shall not be processed for distribution." Finance provided that recently a member of the Nation missed the deadline by four (4) days, and there would not be an increase in liability is this provision is removed dur to limited staff availability. The LOC determined this request did not meet the standard for emergency legislation provided for in section 109.9-5 of the LPA, but decided to add this item to the Active Files List anyways due to the August 20, 2023 OBC motion which directed the LOC to bring this Law back for a one (1) year review of its adoption and implementation.

6/5/24 LOC:

Motion by Jonas Hill to add the Oneida Life Insurance Plan Law Amendments to the Active Files List with Jameson Wilson as the sponsor; seconded by Kirby Metoxen. Motion carried unanimously.

<u>8/26/24:</u>

Work Meeting. Present: Jameson Wilson, Jonas Hill, Kirby Metoxen, Marlon Skenandore, Clorissa Leeman, Carl Artman, Ralinda Ninham-Lamberies, John Danforth, Michelle John, Heidi Janowski, Fawn Billie, Kristal Hill, Maureen Perkins. The purpose of this work meeting was to discuss how the implementation of the Oneida Life Insurance Plan law went during its first year, and begin discussions on whether any amendments to the law are necessary at this time.

8/29/24:

Work Meeting. Present: Jameson Wilson, Marlon Skenandore, Kirby Metoxen, Jonas Hill, Clorissa Leeman, Fawn Cottrell, Kristal Hill, Maureen Perkins, Fawn Billie, Carolyn Salutz. The purpose of this work meeting was to determine what, if any, amendments to make to the Oneida Life Insurance Plan law based on the information received during the One Year Review work meeting held on August 26, 2024.

9/4/24 LOC:

Motion by Kirby Metoxen to accept the memorandum entitled, One (1) Year Review of the Oneida Life Insurance Plan Law; seconded by Marlon Skenandore. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Marlon Skenandore to approve the draft of proposed amendments to the Oneida Life Insurance Plan law and direct that a legislative analysis be developed; seconded by Jonas Hill. Motion carried unanimously.

9/18/24 LOC: Motion by Jonas Hill to approve the legislative analysis for the proposed amendments to the Oneida Life Insurance Plan law; seconded by Marlon Skenandore. Motion carried unanimously.

10/2/24: E-Poll Conducted. This e-poll was titled, Approval of Canceled October 2, 2024 LOC Meeting Materials. The requested action of this e-poll was to: approve the September 18, 2024, LOC meeting minutes and forward to the Oneida Business Committee; approve the public meeting packet for the proposed amendments to the Oneida Life Insurance Plan law, and forward the Oneida Life Insurance Plan law amendments to a public meeting to be held on November 15, 2024; approve the adoption packet for the Computer Resources Ordinance amendments and forward to the Oneida Business Committee for consideration; approve the public comment review memorandum, draft, and legislative analysis for the proposed amendments to the Investigative Leave Policy; and approve the fiscal impact statement request memorandum and forward the materials to the Finance Department directing that a fiscal impact statement be prepared and submitted to the LOC by October 16, 2024. The e-poll was approved by Jennifer Webster, Kirby Metoxen, Jonas Hill, Jameson Wilson, and Marlon Skenandore.

<u>10/16/24 LOC</u>: Motion by Jonas Hill to enter into the record the results of the October 2, 2024, e-poll entitled, Approval of the Canceled October 2, 2024 LOC Meeting Materials; seconded by Jennifer Webster. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Meeting Held. Present: Jameson Wilson, Clorissa Leeman, Gina Powless, John Danforth, Michelle John, Barbara Metoxen, Bonnie Pigman, Carolyn Salutz, Diana Hernandez, Grace Elliott, Jason Martinez, Jesse Kujawa, Justin Nishimoto, Katherine Jordan, Lee Schuyler, Mae Cornelius, Matthew Denny, Patricia Garvey, Ronald Wurth, Todd Vandenheuvel. Five (5) individuals provided comments during the public meeting.

<u>11/22/24</u>: Public Comment Period Closed. Two (2) individuals provided written comments during the public comment period.

Next Steps:

 Accept the public comments and the public comment review memorandum and defer to a work meeting for further consideration.



Legislative Operating Committee Legislative Reference Office PO Box 365 • Oneida, WI 54155-0365



TO: Legislative Operating Committee (LOC)

Clorissa N. Leeman, Legislative Reference Office, Senior Staff Attorney FROM:

DATE: December 4, 2024

RE: Oneida Life Insurance Plan Law Amendments: Public Comment Review

On November 15, 2024, a public meeting was held regarding the proposed amendments to the Oneida Life Insurance Plan law. The public comment period was then held open until November 22, 2024. This memorandum is submitted as a review of the comments received during the public meeting and public comment period. The public meeting draft, public meeting transcript, and written comments received are attached to this memorandum for review.

Comments 1 through 4 – Timeframe for Notice of Death:

1004.5. Qualifications, Designation of Beneficiary, and Notice

1004.5-3. Notice of Death. The Oneida Trust Enrollment Department shall be notified within three (3) years of the member of the Nation's death in order to distribute the Oneida Life Insurance Plan benefits to the beneficiary. Oneida Life Insurance Plan claims made beyond three (3) years of the decedent's death shall not be processed for distribution.

Gina Powless Buenrostro (oral): Start over? My name is Gina Powless Buenrostro and I'm here to just make up a couple comments about the Oneida Life Insurance Plan, Chapter 1004. The specific amendment that's on line 106 and 108 - extending Oneida Trust Enrollment Department shall be notified within, and crossed out as one (1) year, and it's the proposed amendment, proposed amendment must be three (3) years of the member of the Nation's death, in order to distribute their Oneida Life Insurance Plan benefits to the beneficiary. Oneida Life insurance Plan claims made beyond the first anniversary is crossed out and inserted is three (3) years of the descendants death or decedents death shall not be processed for distribution. So, my opinion is this, I think one (1) year is generous. When someone dies they're buried probably within a week, but it shouldn't take year for the family to reach out and request funds to assist with the costs. Unless you're wealthy and don't need the money. So, I think for the period of time that is already allotted in a law, that's generous. I think when they're late, they're late. It obviously wasn't important for them to request funding if we're extending it for three (3) years.

The other thing I wanted to addresses when every department has to provide budgets, we have a time limit to get those those forecasts and dollar amounts that we're going to spend for each department. There is time limits so it's proposed to GTC. So when people get to reach out three (3) years later or, you know, within three (3) years, I think that's unreasonable for not only planning purposes for the Trust Enrollment Department to plan how much money they're going to need. I'm sure they have a general idea of how many deaths occur within the Nation on a yearly basis, probably get those numbers, but I don't think we need them. I just think for planning and for monetary reasons, for the budgeting process that I don't think we should be going back three (3) years. I think this is unreasonable.

I don't know who came up with this, but I would like to know who came up. Can I get the name of who came up with this proposal to extend it three (3) years? Was that you guys LOC is that's proposing it?

Yes, okay. So with that being said, I don't think this is in the best interest of the Nation. I don't think it's in the best interest of our budgeting processes and I don't think it's in the best interest of people that actually need the money and they request it within that year period of time. I'm not sure if there's been numerous incidents where people have reached out after a year, I'm pretty sure if there is any, it's probably very limited and restricted and I think we're looking at the betterment of the whole, the whole Nation and not one (1) person or (2) people that miss deadlines. If they miss, deadlines, move on if you already paid for the funeral expenses, move on or whatever. But I think it's unreasonable to come back and then ask for the lot to be changed to extend it for three (3) years. That's just unreasonable. And I think its unfair, and its not equitable for the Nation. That's all I have to say. Thank you.

Bonnie Pigman (oral): But I also don't agree that an extension should be provided and I also don't agree with running backwards or for a number of years to give people opportunities because when you open those doors up then everybody has an opportunity to say, well, you, you did it once, you should be able to do it again. And I just. I just don't. I don't agree with it. It's never really been allowed. I think there may have been a few instances where failure to comply with the rules and stuff didn't get followed, so that would been maybe the one or two instances that the Trust Enrollment committee allowed for that to occur. So just my thoughts. Thank you so much.

John Danforth (oral): John Danforth, Director of Trust and Enrollment. The only comments I wanted to make kind of to echo the sentiments of the last two presenters was when it comes to extending it for one (1) to three (3) years it doesn't have too much of an impact on how the department operates, but it does kind of open the door for people to not have a sense of urgency to file that claim. But for the most part, what we see in our department is the vast majority of people, 99%, are claiming within that year. We did have one (1) outlier, which I think is the root of some of these changes.

Michelle John (oral): Hello. I'm Michelle John. I'm the death benefits coordinator for the Oneida Nation. Regarding this, there was only one (1) instance in FY 2023 where a claim was not made in a correct timely manner. I have completed all the other claims. There was over four hundred (400) and some claims to beneficiaries and funeral homes and they were all completed in a timely manner. I don't think that adjusting the time is should be done. I used to work with the Epic insurance as well when I first started. A lot of insurance companies they also have the same time frame, one (1) year. So I don't think we need to adjust this based off of one (1) person that did not comply. That's all I have to say. Thank you.

Response

Overall, the commenters express a lack of support for expand the period of time in which it is required to notify the Oneida Trust Enrollment Department of a decedent's death in order to distribute Oneida Life Insurance Plan benefits to the beneficiary from one (1) year to three (3) years. [10 O.C. 1004.5-3].



This item added to the Active Files List on June 5, 2024, at the request of the Chief Financial Officer (CFO), Ralinda Ninham-Lamberies. The CFO requested the Legislative Operating Committee consider an emergency amendment to the Law to remove section 1004.5-3 which provides that "the Oneida Trust Enrollment Department shall be notified within one (1) year of the member of the Nation's death in order to distribute the Oneida Life Insurance Plan benefits to the beneficiary. Oneida Life Insurance Plan claims made beyond the first anniversary of the decedent's death shall not be processed for distribution." Finance provided that recently a member of the Nation missed the deadline by four (4) days, and there would not be an increase in liability is this provision is removed due to limited staff availability. The Legislative Operating Committee determined this request did not meet the standard for emergency legislation provided for in section 109.9-5 of the Legislative Procedures Act, but decided to add this item to the Active Files List anyways due to the August 20, 2023 Oneida Business Committee motion which directed the Legislative Operating Committee to bring this Law back for a one (1) year review of its adoption and implementation. The Legislative Operating Committee has since been working on the development of amendments to the Law.

Whether or not to expand the period of time in which it is required to notify the Oneida Trust Enrollment Department of a decedent's death in order to distribute Oneida Life Insurance Plan benefits to the beneficiary from one (1) year to three (3) years is a policy determination for the Legislative Operating Committee to make. The Legislative Operating Committee may make one of the following determinations:

- 1. The Legislative Operating Committee may determine that the proposed amendments to the Law should remain as currently drafted and require that the Oneida Trust Enrollment Department be notified within three (3) years of the member of the Nation's death in order to distribute the Oneida Life Insurance Plan benefits to the beneficiary.
- 2. The Legislative Operating Committee may determine that the proposed amendments to the Law should be eliminated, and the currently effective language in the Law should remain which requires that the Oneida Trust Enrollment Department be notified within one (1) year of the member of the Nation's death in order to distribute the Oneida Life Insurance Plan benefits to the beneficiary.

LOC Consideration

Comments 5 through 6 – Administration of the Oneida Life Insurance Plan:

1004.5. Qualifications, Designation of Beneficiary, and Notice

1004.5-3. *Notice of Death*. The Oneida Trust Enrollment Department shall be notified within three (3) years of the member of the Nation's death in order to distribute the Oneida Life Insurance Plan benefits to the beneficiary. Oneida Life Insurance Plan claims made beyond three (3) years of the decedent's death shall not be processed for distribution.

1004.5-4. Oversight. The Oneida Trust Enrollment Department shall be delegated the



oversight and management of the Oneida Life Insurance Plan.

1004.8. Administrative Rulemaking

1004.8-1. Delegation of Administrative Rulemaking Authority. The Oneida Trust Enrollment Department shall be delegated administrative rulemaking authority in accordance with the Administrative Rulemaking law to promulgate rules to govern the administration of the Oneida Life Insurance Plan.

Bonnie Pigman (oral): Thank you, my name is Bonnie Pigman. I have enrollment number 5361. And I was just reviewing, I have been reviewing, I believe this is a revision or emergency, whatever, from the original. I know I was working with the Trust Enrollment Department when, from the inception of this when it was a life insurance plan with Epic life insurance company. Two (2) things. I was listening to the previous presenters information about statistically, how often does it occur? It was kind of rare. And I believe at that time, that the, uhh Trust Enrollment Committee was the final authority on decisions regarding any kind of special circumstances for allowing someone to give provided an extension to claim. They were pretty tough about making sure that you know that all the things were followed for the individuals. We followed the policies and the rules. So as long as all of those were complied with by the Department, no extension was ever provided.

The other thing is I don't see who your authority is for decision making on the plan, the life insurance plan. At this time, I don't see it in there. I don't know if it's someplace else. It wasn't in included in the materials that were sent out or online, so I just have question because I still think that the Trust Enrollment Committee should be the authority for this. Seeing that they have the responsibility to work with the membership on these on this particular item. So I don't know that that ever was transferred to someone else, maybe the Judiciary, but I didn't see it in your documentation. Just a couple of questions or thoughts on where this is going.

Jermaine Delgado (written): OTEC recommends LOC consider language to establish a linear decision-making process to ensure the Oneida Business Committee does not become embroiled in future disputes regarding the distribution of benefits. OLIP is in its third year of tribal administration under this law. The Trust and Enrollment Division has encountered questions regarding timing, beneficiaries, and distribution of residuals. Most of these questions have been addressed through the administrative rulemaking process delegated to OTEC through OLIP. OTEC believes additional clarity may be gained through a defined decision appeals process. OTEC believes the Trust and Enrollment Director may promulgate a substantiated decision regarding OLIP matters. A director's decision may then be appealed to OTEC for affirmation or reconsideration. These two steps may be addressed through the administrative rulemaking process.

As OLIP ages, we may find potential beneficiaries seeking an additional "appeal" of an OTEC decision to the Business Committee or the Oneida Judiciary. We would hope the former would not be successful as this may appear as a political appeal of a lawful decision. The latter option of appealing to the Oneida Judiciary would be a wise use of this branch's oversight and interpretive role. OTEC believes allocating an appeal role to the Oneida Judiciary may be outside the scope of its administrative rulemaking authority. The inclusion of an appeal of an OTEC decision to the Oneida Judiciary should be expressly stated by the LOC and adopted by the Business Committee.



OTEC recommends LOC look to the Oneida Nation Law Enforcement law. 3 O.C. 301.9-9, for model language, if the LOC chooses an appeal process outside the scope of OTEC's administrative rulemaking authority. If LOC decides to not include this language then OTEC will remain the sole appeal step for OLIP decisions.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Respectfully, Oneida Trust and Enrollments Committee

Response

The commenters question who has oversight and decision making authority regarding the Oneida Life Insurance Plan, and question whether it is the intention of the Law to allow decisions regarding the Oneida Life Insurance Plan to be appealable to the Oneida Business Committee or Judiciary.

The Law delegates authority to the Oneida Trust Enrollment Department for the oversight and management of the Oneida Life Insurance Plan. [10 O.C. 1004.5-4]. The Law also delegates administrative rulemaking authority to the Oneida Trust Enrollment Department to promulgate rules to govern the administration of the Oneida Life Insurance Plan. [10 O.C. 1004.8-1]. The Law is fairly straightforward, and contains little requirements or room for interpretation. But if there were any issues that arise that are not addressed through the Law, the Oneida Trust Enrollment Department has the authority to address the issue through an administrative rule developed in accordance with the Administrative Rulemaking law. It is not the intention of the Law that decisions made by the Oneida Trust Enrollment Department be appealed to the Oneida Business Committee or the Judiciary.

There is no recommended revision to the proposed amendments to the Law based on this comment.

LOC Consideration

Comments 7 through 8 – Effective Date of Potential New Amendments:

1004.5. Qualifications, Designation of Beneficiary, and Notice

1004.5-3. Notice of Death. The Oneida Trust Enrollment Department shall be notified within three (3) years of the member of the Nation's death in order to distribute the Oneida Life Insurance Plan benefits to the beneficiary. Oneida Life Insurance Plan claims made beyond three (3) years of the decedent's death shall not be processed for distribution.

John Danforth (oral): The one thing I will echo from, from Bonnie as well, which is an establishment of a date of the effectiveness that this law is covering, similar to the avoiding unlawful membership act where that was established, I believe on February 14th of 2018, and that law to avoid someone's membership is only applicable to anyone who was enrolled after that date. Because there shouldn't be a witch hunt backwards in that sense. Basically leaving the past in the



past. So I would ask for with this law and establishment of an effective date, basically stating that any date or any death from today forward that is applicable to this law establishing that we are moving forward from today and these are the rules that we are following for, for this life insurance plan. So those are the only comments I wanted to make regarding these amendments to to the law.

Jermaine Delgado (written): Dear Legislative Operating Committee, I write on behalf of the Oneida Trust and Enrollments Committee (OTEC) regarding proposed amendments to the Oneida Life Insurance Plan law (OLIP). The Legislative Operating Committee (LOC) proposes to extend the time to file from one year to three years.

OTEC recommends LOC include a start or effective date for the amendments. A clearly stated effective date for the OLIP amendments will: 1) eliminate confusion as to when a decedent's benefits may be applied to the funeral expenses and residuals, 2) offer guidance as to when the beneficiaries may seek OLIP assistance, and 3) clarify for the Trust and Enrollment Division when and how the amendments should commence for a decedent's benefits. The effective date for the amendments under consideration could be part of the Business Committee resolution adopting the amendments. OTEC recommends the effective date being the date of the adopting Business Committee resolution's passage, thereby establishing a clear date on and after which the timing for the benefits commence.

Response

The commenters both recommend that if the proposed amendment to section 1004.5-3 of the Law which expands the period of time in which it is required to notify the Oneida Trust Enrollment Department of a decedent's death in order for the Oneida Life Insurance Plan benefits to be distributed to the beneficiary from one (1) year to three (3) years is adopted, then the adopting resolution should clearly provide a date in which that amendment becomes effective and applies. It is recommended that the adopting resolution provide that the expanded three (3) year notification timeframe would only apply to deaths occurring after the proposed amendments to the Law become effective, and would not apply to deaths occurring prior to the adoption of amendments to this Law.

The Legislative Operating Committee may determine whether or not to address the application of the proposed amendment to section 1004.5-4 of the Law in the adopting resolution.

LOC Consideration

Comments 9 through 10 – Employee Benefit Confusion:

1004.5. Qualifications, Designation of Beneficiary, and Notice



1004.5-1. *Eligibility*. All members of the Nation shall qualify for benefits from the Oneida Life Insurance Plan to be used for funeral expenses first, with any residual benefits distributed to a designated beneficiary.

Matthew J. Denny (oral): Yeah, Matt Denny, 8245 enrollment number. You know something's happened. I you know, I know there was an individual down the road from me that passed away and they had no idea who the beneficiaries were and come to find out if their beneficiaries were in some different state. It took longer than a year, you know, and that was. You know, that's without, that's just finding out who the beneficiaries were. I mean, things happen. I mean the one (1) year deadline, this is something that the employees, you know the deceased employee paid into. So I just don't know why we wouldn't just continue the payment understanding that. Like I get people have may have to do a little more work, but you know it's their, it's their benefit. I don't. I don't know why we would take it away. It's all I got.

Matthew J. Denny (written): #8245, Waiting to request their benefits does not have to do with how much money someone has. Unfortunate things happen that could result in not requesting benefits that the employee paid for. Its their money. I support the one (1) to three (3) years.

Response

The commenter appears to have confused the Oneida Life Insurance plan with a life insurance benefit that is provided to employees. The Oneida Life Insurance Plan benefits is not an employee benefit. The Oneida Life Insurance Plan is a benefit provided to all members of the Nation to be used for funeral expenses first, with any residual benefits distributed to a designated beneficiary. [10 O.C. 1004.5-1]. This is not a benefit that an individual paid into or contributed to in order to receive. Benefits from the Oneida Life Insurance Plan are contingent on funding by the Nation. [10 O.C. 1004.7-1]. It is unclear whether the commenter would support the expansion of the notification timeframe in regard to the Oneida Life Insurance Plan and not an employee life insurance benefit.

There is no revision to the proposed draft of amendments to the Law based on this comment.

LOC Consideration

Comment 11 – Notification and Identification of Beneficiaries:

1004.8. Administrative Rulemaking

1004.8-1. Delegation of Administrative Rulemaking Authority. The Oneida Trust Enrollment Department shall be delegated administrative rulemaking authority in accordance with the Administrative Rulemaking law to promulgate rules to govern the administration of the Oneida Life Insurance Plan.



Matthew J. Denny (written): Sometimes the beneficiaries don't know they are beneficiaries. Will the Trust and Enrollment Department reach out to the beneficiaries?

Response

The commenter questions if beneficiaries are notified by the Oneida Trust Enrollment Department when they are listed as a beneficiary for a member of a Nation. Currently, the Law does not address if beneficiaries are notified upon being listed as a beneficiary of a member of the Nation, nor does the Law address a process in which people can check who is listed as the beneficiary of an individual. The Law delegates authority to the Oneida Trust Enrollment Department for the oversight and management of the Oneida Life Insurance Plan. [10 O.C. 1004.5-4]. The Law also delegates administrative rulemaking authority to the Oneida Trust Enrollment Department to promulgate rules to govern the administration of the Oneida Life Insurance Plan. [10 O.C. 1004.8-1].

It is recommended that the Oneida Trust Enrollment Department consider the development of administrative rules which address such topics as the notification or identification of beneficiaries.

LOC Consideration





Oneida Nation Oneida Business Committee Legislative Operating Committee PO Box 365 • Oneida, WI 54155-0365 Oneida-nsn.qov



LEGISLATIVE OPERATING COMMITTEE PUBLIC MEETING

Oneida Life Insurance Plan Law Amendments

Norbert Hill Center Business Committee Conference Room and Microsoft Teams
November 15, 2024
12:15 p.m.

Present: Jameson Wilson, Clorissa Leeman, Gina Powless Buenrostro, John Danforth, Michelle John, Barbara Metoxen, Bonnie Pigman, Carolyn Salutz, Diana Hernandez, Grace Elliott, Jason Martinez, Jesse Kujawa, Justin Nishimoto, Katherine Jordan, Lee Schuyler, Mae Cornelius, Matthew Denny, Patricia Garvey, Ronald Wurth, Todd Vandenheuvel

Jameson Wilson: Good Afternoon, the time is 12:15 p.m. and today's date is Friday, November 15, 2024. I will now call to order the public meeting for the proposed amendments to the Oneida Life Insurance Plan law.

The Legislative Operating Committee is hosting this public meeting to gather feedback from the community regarding these legislative proposals. The public meeting is not a question and answer period. The LOC will review and consider all comments received during the public comment period. The LOC will respond to all comments received in a memorandum, which will be submitted in the meeting materials of a future LOC meeting.

All persons who wish to present oral testimony in person need to register on the sign in sheet. Individuals who wish to present oral testimony on Microsoft Teams, please raise your hand and you will be called on. If you leave an email address on the sign in sheet or in the chat on Microsoft Teams with your name, we can ensure you receive a copy of the public comment review memorandum.

Additionally, written comments may be submitted to the Nation's Secretary's Office or to the Legislative Reference Office in person, by U.S. mail, interoffice mail, e-mail or fax as provided on the public meeting notice. These comments must be received by close of business on Friday, November 22, 2024.

In attendance from the LOC is myself, Jameson Wilson, and I serve as the chairman of the Legislative Operating Committee.

The LOC may impose a time limit for all speakers pursuant to section 109.8-3(c) of the Legislative Procedures Act. As the presiding LOC member, I am imposing a time limit of five minutes per person. This time limit shall be applied equally to all persons.

We will now begin today's public meeting for the proposed amendments to the Oneida Life Insurance Plan law.

The purpose of the Oneida Life Insurance Plan law is to provide a death benefit through the Oneida Life Insurance Plan for all eligible enrolled Oneida Nation members, pursuant to the Oneida General Welfare law.

The Oneida Life Insurance Plan law amendments will expand the period of time in which it is required to notify the Oneida Trust Enrollment Department of a decedent's death in order to distribute Oneida Life Insurance Plan benefits to the beneficiary from one (1) year to three (3) years.

Those who wish to speak please raise your hand. Please state your name when making a comment.

And we're now open for discussion. Sp just state your name when making your comment.

Yeah, you have five (5) minutes.

[inaudible]

Jameson Wilson: Ope, can you turn on your mic? I'm sorry. Yeah, it's got.

Gina Powless Buenrostro: Start over? My name is Gina Powless Buenrostro and I'm here to just make up a couple comments about the Oneida Life Insurance Plan, Chapter 1004. The specific amendment that's on line 106 and 108 - extending Oneida Trust Enrollment Department shall be notified within, and crossed out as one (1) year, and it's the proposed amendment, proposed amendment must be three (3) years of the member of the Nation's death, in order to distribute their Oneida Life Insurance Plan benefits to the beneficiary. Oneida Life insurance Plan claims made beyond the first anniversary is crossed out and inserted is three (3) years of the descendants death or decedents death shall not be processed for distribution. So, my opinion is this, I think one (1) year is generous. When someone dies they're buried probably within a week, but it shouldn't take year for the family to reach out and request funds to assist with the costs. Unless you're wealthy and don't need the money. So, I think for the period of time that is already allotted in a law, that's generous. I think when they're late, they're late. It obviously wasn't important for them to request funding if we're extending it for three (3) years.



The other thing I wanted to addresses when every department has to provide budgets, we have a time limit to get those those forecasts and dollar amounts that we're going to spend for each department. There is time limits so it's proposed to GTC. So when people get to reach out three (3) years later or, you know, within three (3) years, I think that's unreasonable for not only planning purposes for the Trust Enrollment Department to plan how much money they're going to need. I'm sure they have a general idea of how many deaths occur within the Nation on a yearly basis, probably get those numbers, but I don't think we need them. I just think for planning and for monetary reasons, for the budgeting process that I don't think we should be going back three (3) years. I think this is unreasonable.

I don't know who came up with this, but I would like to know who came up. Can I get the name of who came up with this proposal to extend it three (3) years? Was that you guys LOC is that's proposing it?

Jameson Wilson: Oh, we don't respond in these in these public meeting, but I can get you the information.

Gina Powless Buenrostro: Yes, okay. So with that being said, I don't think this is in the best interest of the Nation. I don't think it's in the best interest of our budgeting processes and I don't think it's in the best interest of people that actually need the money and they request it within that year period of time. I'm not sure if there's been numerous incidents where people have reached out after a year, I'm pretty sure if there is any, it's probably very limited and restricted and I think we're looking at the betterment of the whole, the whole Nation and not one (1) person or (2) people that miss deadlines. If they miss, deadlines, move on if you already paid for the funeral expenses, move on or whatever. But I think it's unreasonable to come back and then ask for the lot to be changed to extend it for three (3) years. That's just unreasonable. And I think its unfair, and its not equitable for the Nation. That's all I have to say. Thank you.

Jameson Wilson: Thank you Gina. And as we mentioned earlier, we will have a response for any comments that come through for today and also through the November 22, 2024 deadline for the public comment period. So those will be included in the memorandum and that will be that, that will be included in the next LOC meeting packet or a subsequent meeting LOC meeting packet.

[inaudible]

Yep, you have that opportunity to have until November 22nd of 2024. Yep. Thanks Gina. Yep, appreciate it. Yep, you too.

Online we have Bonnie Pigman raising her hand. Go ahead, Bonnie. You can, you have five (5) minutes, so please state your name for the record and again you have five (5) minutes. Thank you.



Bonnie Pigman: Thank you, my name is Bonnie Pigman. I have enrollment number 5361. And I was just reviewing, I have been reviewing, I believe this is a revision or emergency, whatever, from the original. I know I was working with the Trust Enrollment Department when, from the inception of this when it was a life insurance plan with Epic life insurance company. Two (2) things. I was listening to the previous presenters information about statistically, how often does it occur? It was kind of rare. And I believe at that time, that the, uhh Trust Enrollment Committee was the final authority on decisions regarding any kind of special circumstances for allowing someone to give provided an extension to claim. They were pretty tough about making sure that you know that all the things were followed for the individuals. We followed the policies and the rules. So as long as all of those were complied with by the Department, no extension was ever provided.

The other thing is I don't see who your authority is for decision making on the plan, the life insurance plan. At this time, I don't see it in there. I don't know if it's someplace else. It wasn't in included in the materials that were sent out or online, so I just have question because I still think that the Trust Enrollment Committee should be the authority for this. Seeing that they have the responsibility to work with the membership on these on this particular item. So I don't know that that ever was transferred to someone else, maybe the Judiciary, but I didn't see it in your documentation. Just a couple of questions or thoughts on where this is going.

But I also don't agree that an extension should be provided and I also don't agree with running backwards or for a number of years to give people opportunities because when you open those doors up then everybody has an opportunity to say, well, you, you did it once, you should be able to do it again. And I just. I just don't. I don't agree with it. It's never really been allowed. I think there may have been a few instances where failure to comply with the rules and stuff didn't get followed, so that would been maybe the one or two instances that the Trust Enrollment committee allowed for that to occur. So just my thoughts. Thank you so much.

Jameson Wilson: Thank you for your comments Bonnie, appreciate it. Are there any other comments? Please state your name for the record you have five (5) minutes.

John Danforth: John Danforth, Director of Trust and Enrollment. The only comments I wanted to make kind of to echo the sentiments of the last two presenters was when it comes to extending it for one (1) to three (3) years it doesn't have too much of an impact on how the department operates, but it does kind of open the door for people to not have a sense of urgency to file that claim. But for the most part, what we see in our department is the vast majority of people, 99%, are claiming within that year. We did have one (1) outlier, which I think is the root of some of these changes.



The one thing I will echo from, from Bonnie as well, which is an establishment of a date of the effectiveness that this law is covering, similar to the avoiding unlawful membership act where that was established, I believe on February 14th of 2018, and that law to avoid someone's membership is only applicable to anyone who was enrolled after that date. Because there shouldn't be a witch hunt backwards in that sense. Basically leaving the past in the past. So I would ask for with this law and establishment of an effective date, basically stating that any date or any death from today forward that is applicable to this law establishing that we are moving forward from today and these are the rules that we are following for, for this life insurance plan. So those are the only comments I wanted to make regarding these amendments to to the law.

Jameson Wilson: Thank you John, appreciate it. Any other comments? Please state your name for the record you have five (5) minutes. Thank you.

Michelle John: Hello. I'm Michelle John. I'm the death benefits coordinator for the Oneida Nation. Regarding this, there was only one (1) instance in FY 2023 where a claim was not made in a correct timely manner. I have completed all the other claims. There was over four hundred (400) and some claims to beneficiaries and funeral homes and they were all completed in a timely manner. I don't think that adjusting the time is should be done. I used to work with the Epic insurance as well when I first started. A lot of insurance companies they also have the same time frame, one (1) year. So I don't think we need to adjust this based off of one (1) person that did not comply. That's all I have to say. Thank you.

Jameson Wilson: Thank you, Michelle. The floor's still open if anybody wants to share any comments regarding the Oneida Life Insurance Policy amendments.

Matt, I see your comments in the chat section, usually, usually we would disable that, so if you would like, could you share your comments verbally and state your name for the record if you'd like. And then if so, you'd have five (5) minutes to speak.

Matthew J. Denny: Yeah, Matt Denny, 8245 enrollment number. You know something's happened. I you know, I know there was an individual down the road from me that passed away and they had no idea who the beneficiaries were and come to find out if their beneficiaries were in some different state. It took longer than a year, you know, and that was. You know, that's without, that's just finding out who the beneficiaries were. I mean, things happen. I mean the one (1) year deadline, this is something that the employees, you know the deceased employee paid into. So I just don't know why we wouldn't just continue the payment understanding that. Like I get people have may have to do a little more work, but you know it's their, it's their benefit. I don't. I don't know why we would take it away. It's all I got.



Jameson Wilson: Thank you Matt. Does anyone else have any comments? Unless somebody comes strolling through the door here in person, it's it's all on you who's joining virtually.

With there being no more speakers, the public meeting for the proposed amendments to the Oneida Life Insurance Plan law is now closed at 12:33 p.m.. Written comments may be submitted until close of business on Friday, November 22, 2024.

Really appreciate everybody joining us in person and virtually. Some of the best attendance we've had for a public meeting sometime, so yawkko for joining.

-End of Meeting-



From: <u>Jermaine Delgado-otc</u>

To: LOC

Subject: Comments on OLIP amendments

Date: Friday, November 22, 2024 7:35:23 PM

Dear Legislative Operating Committee,

I write on behalf of the Oneida Trust and Enrollments Committee (OTEC) regarding proposed amendments to the Oneida Life Insurance Plan law (OLIP). The Legislative Operating Committee (LOC) proposes to extend the time to file from one year to three years.

OTEC recommends LOC include a start or effective date for the amendments. A clearly stated effective date for the OLIP amendments will: 1) eliminate confusion as to when a decedent's benefits may be applied to the funeral expenses and residuals, 2) offer guidance as to when the beneficiaries may seek OLIP assistance, and 3) clarify for the Trust and Enrollment Division when and how the amendments should commence for a decedent's benefits. The effective date for the amendments under consideration could be part of the Business Committee resolution adopting the amendments. OTEC recommends the effective date being the date of the adopting Business Committee resolution's passage, thereby establishing a clear date on and after which the timing for the benefits commence.

OTEC recommends LOC consider language to establish a linear decision-making process to ensure the Oneida Business Committee does not become embroiled in future disputes regarding the distribution of benefits. OLIP is in its third year of tribal administration under this law. The Trust and Enrollment Division has encountered questions regarding timing, beneficiaries, and distribution of residuals. Most of these questions have been addressed through the administrative rulemaking process delegated to OTEC through OLIP. OTEC believes additional clarity may be gained through a defined decision appeals process. OTEC believes the Trust and Enrollment Director may promulgate a substantiated decision regarding OLIP matters. A director's decision may then be appealed to OTEC for affirmation or reconsideration. These two steps may be addressed through the administrative rulemaking process.

As OLIP ages, we may find potential beneficiaries seeking an additional "appeal" of an OTEC decision to the Business Committee or the Oneida Judiciary. We would hope the former would not be successful as this may appear as a political appeal of a lawful decision. The latter option of appealing to the Oneida Judiciary would be a wise use of this branch's oversight and interpretive role. OTEC believes allocating an appeal role to the Oneida Judiciary may be outside the scope of its administrative rulemaking authority. The inclusion of an appeal of an OTEC decision to the Oneida Judiciary should be expressly stated by the LOC and adopted by the Business Committee. OTEC recommends LOC look to the Oneida Nation Law Enforcement law. 3 O.C. 301.9-9, for model language, if the LOC chooses an appeal process outside the scope of OTEC's administrative rulemaking authority. If LOC decides to not include this language then OTEC will remain the sole appeal step for OLIP decisions.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Respectfully,

Oneida Trust and Enrollments Committee

12:04 PM Meeting started



12:13 PM Secretary started recording to the cloud

Matthew J. Denny 12:26 PM



Matt Denny #8245, Waiting to request their benefits does not have to do with how much money someone has. Unfortunate things happen that could result in not requesting benefits that the employee paid for. It's their money. I support the one (1) to three (3) years.

Sometimes the beneficiaries don't know they are beneficiaries. Will the Trust and Enrollment Department reach out to the beneficiaries?

Title 10. General Welfare Exclusion - Chapter 1004 ONEIDA LIFE INSURANCE PLAN

1004.1. Purpose and Policy

1004.2. Adoption, Amendment, Repeal

1004.3. Definitions

1004.4. Establishment

1004.5. Qualifications, Designation of Beneficiary, and Notice

1004.6. Beneficiary Claim Process and Distribution

1004.7. Funding

1004.8. Administrative Rulemaking

1004.1. Purpose and Policy

1004.1-1. Purpose. The purpose of this law is to provide a death benefit through the Oneida Life Insurance Plan (OLIPP) for all eligible enrolled Oneida Nation members, pursuant to the Oneida General Welfare law.

(a) The General Tribal Council, through resolution GTC-01-17-09-B, approved the concept of the Oneida Life Insurance Plan Plus to replace the Oneida Burial Fund. The General Tribal Council directed implementation of a benefit that pays fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000) to the designated beneficiary or beneficiaries of the deceased Oneida Nation member. The payment of death benefits through OLIPP to designated beneficiaries of a deceased Oneida Nation member is an exercise of self-governance crucial to the Oneida Nation's sovereignty, and health and welfare of the community.

1004.1-2. Policy. It is the policy of the Nation to care for its members and their families even after their death. The Nation seeks to internalize the Oneida Life Insurance Plan process to ensure equitable and expedient distribution to designated beneficiaries.

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- 1004.2. Adoption, Amendment, Repeal
- 17 1004.2-1. This law was adopted by the Oneida Business Committee by resolution BC-08-23-23-
- 18 G- and amended by resolution BC- - - .
- 1004.2-2. This law may be amended or repealed by the Oneida Business Committee or the General 19
- 20 Tribal Council pursuant to the procedures set out in the Legislative Procedures Act.
- 21 1004.2-3. Should a provision of this law or the application thereof to any person or circumstances
- 22 be held as invalid, such invalidity shall not affect other provisions of this law which are considered 23 to have legal force without the invalid portions.
- 24 1004.2-4. In the event of a conflict between a provision of this law and a provision of another law, 25 the provisions of this law shall control.
- 26 1004.2-5. This law is adopted under authority of the Constitution of the Oneida Nation.

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1004.3. Definitions

- 1004.3-1. This section shall govern the definitions of words and phrases used within this law. All words not defined herein shall be used in their ordinary and everyday sense.
 - (a) "Approved program" means any program(s) to provide general welfare assistance that is intended to qualify as a General Welfare Exclusion, administered under specific guidelines, and is adopted by the Oneida Business Committee through resolution or law of the Nation in accordance with the Oneida General Welfare law.
 - (b) "Benefit" means the fifteen thousand dollars provided (\$15,000) to pay for funeral expenses of an enrolled member of the Nation, with any residual amounts paid thereafter to the designated beneficiary.
 - (c) "Decedent" means the deceased person.
- (d) "Designated Beneficiary" means any person(s) designated by the enrolled member of the Nation, through the approved beneficiary designation form, to receive all or a portion

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- of the decedent's Oneida Life Insurance Plan benefit.
 - (e) "Funeral Expenses" means the cost of the funeral of the decedent accrued and invoiced by the funeral home including, but not limited to, the following:
 - (1) funeral planning;
 - (2) securing the necessary permits and copies of death certificates;
 - (3) preparing the notices;
 - (4) sheltering the remains;
 - (5) coordinating the arrangements with the cemetery, crematory or other third parties;
 - (6) transporting the remains;
 - (7) embalming and other preparation;
 - (8) viewing, ceremony, or memorial services;
 - (9) use of a hearse or limousine;
 - (11) a casket, outer burial container or alternate container;
 - (11) monuments; and
 - (12) cremation or interment.
 - (f) "Nation" means the Oneida Nation.

1004.4. Establishment

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- 1004.4-1. *Establishment*. The Oneida Life Insurance Plan is hereby established as an approved program of the Nation in accordance with the Oneida General Welfare law. The purpose of the Oneida Life Insurance Plan is to provide fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000) of financial assistance to eligible members of the Nation to pay for funeral expenses, with any residual benefit amounts paid thereafter to the designated beneficiary.
- 1004.4-2. *General Welfare Exclusion*. The Oneida Life Insurance Plan meets the requirements of the General Test as defined in the Oneida General Welfare law; General Criteria as defined in I.R.S. Rev. Proc. 2014-35. Section 5.01(1); and the requirements of the Tribal General Welfare Exclusion Act of 2014, 26 U.S.C. §139E(b).
 - (a) The assistance provided through the Oneida Life Insurance Plan is:
 - (1) paid on behalf of the Nation;
 - (2) pursuant to an approved program of the Nation;
 - (3) does not discriminate in favor of members of the governing body of the Nation;
 - (4) available to any eligible member of the Nation who meets the guidelines of the approved program;
 - (5) provided for the promotion of general welfare;
 - (6) not lavish or extravagant;
 - (7) not compensation for services; and
 - (8) not a per capita payment.
 - (b) . I.R.S. Rev. Proc. 2014-35, section 5.02(2)(e)(iv) lists funeral, burial, and expenses related to a death as Safe Harbor program for which need is presumed.

1004.5. Qualifications, Designation of Beneficiary, and Notice

1004.5-1. *Eligibility*. All members of the Nation shall qualify for benefits from the Oneida Life Insurance Plan to be used for funeral expenses first, with any residual benefits distributed to a designated beneficiary.

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- (a) Newly enrolled members of the Nation shall be covered the date their enrollment application is approved by Oneida Trust Enrollment Committee and Oneida Business Committee.
- (b) Members of the Nation that have relinquished their membership shall not be covered from the date their relinquishment request is approved by the Oneida Trust Enrollment Committee and Oneida Business Committee.
- 1004.5-2. *Designation of Beneficiary*. A member of the Nation shall complete the Oneida Trust Enrollment Committee approved beneficiary designation form and submit it to the Oneida Trust Enrollment Committee, either online or in person at the Oneida Trust Enrollment Office, prior to their death in order to secure benefits from the Oneida Life Insurance Plan for their beneficiary.
 - (a) Any Oneida Life Insurance Plan beneficiary designation forms submitted prior to the effective date of this law shall remain valid.
 - (b) Oneida Life Insurance Plan residual benefits shall not be paid or claimed if the decedent did not designate a living beneficiary though the beneficiary designation form.
 - (c) A parent or legal guardian shall complete and submit a beneficiary designation form on behalf of their minor child or ward.
 - (d) Funeral expenses shall be paid directly to the funeral home upon submission of a valid invoice, up to the limit of the Oneida Life Insurance Plan benefits, even if a designated beneficiary has not been designated.
- 1004.5-3. *Notice of Death*. The Oneida Trust Enrollment Department shall be notified within one (1) yearthree (3) years of the member of the Nation's death in order to distribute the Oneida Life Insurance Plan benefits to the beneficiary. Oneida Life Insurance Plan claims made beyond the first anniversarythree (3) years of the decedent's death shall not be processed for distribution.
- 1004.5-4. *Oversight*. The Oneida Trust Enrollment Department shall be delegated the oversight and management of the Oneida Life Insurance Plan.

1004.6. Beneficiary Claim Process and Distribution

 1004.6-1. Evidence as to Passing or Status. In proceedings under this law, the following rules relating to determination of death and status are applicable:

- (a) A certified or authenticated copy of a death certificate purporting to be issued by an official or agency of the place where the death purportedly occurred is prima facie proof of the fact, place, date and time of death, and the identity of the decedent;
- (b) A certified or authenticated copy of any record or report of a governmental agency, domestic or foreign, of a decedent's death; and
- (c) A person who is absent for a continuous period of seven (7) years, during which they have not been heard from, and whose absence is not satisfactorily explained after diligent search or inquiry is presumed to be dead. Their death is presumed to have occurred at the end of the period unless there is sufficient evidence for determining that death occurred earlier.
- 1004.6-2. Effect of Homicide on Beneficiary Designation. A designated beneficiary who criminally and intentionally causes the death of the decedent shall not be entitled to any benefits passing under this law.
- 128 1004.6-3. *Distribution*. Oneida Life Insurance Plan benefits shall be distributed in the following order:

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2024 10 02 130 (a) Funeral expenses shall be paid to the funeral home pursuant to receipt of a valid 131 invoice therefrom; 132 (1) Any expenses beyond the funeral expenses shall be the responsibility of the 133 beneficiary, family of the decedent, or any other responsible parties. 134 (b) Residual benefits shall be paid to the designated beneficiary. 135 136 **1004.7.** Funding 137 1004.7-1. Funding Source. The Oneida Life Insurance Plan shall be contingent on funding by the 138 Nation. 139 140 1004.8. Administrative Rulemaking 141 1004.8-1. Delegation of Administrative Rulemaking Authority. The Oneida Trust Enrollment Department shall be delegated administrative rulemaking authority in accordance with the 142 Administrative Rulemaking law to promulgate rules to govern the administration of the Oneida 143 144 Life Insurance Plan. 145 146 End. 148 149 Emergency Adopted – BC-09-28-22-C 150 Emergency Extension – BC-03-22-23-C 151 Adopted – BC-08-23-23-G 152 Amended – BC- - - -

December 2024

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MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Dec 2 1:30pm UCC Law (Microsoft Teams Meeting) - Grace L. Elliott 2:30pm Oneida Personnel Policies and Procedures Amendments Work	3 11:00am Elder Protection Law (Microsoft Teams Meeting) - Grace L. Elliott	4 8:30am LOC Prep Meeting (Microsoft Teams Meeting) - Clorissa N. 9:00am Legislative Operating Committee Meeting (Microsoft 5:30pm LOC Community Meeting: Marijuana	5	1:30pm Data Sovereignty - Overseeing Research (Microsoft Teams Meeting) - Grace L. Elliott
9	3:00pm Business Corporations Limited Liability Company Forms (Microsoft Teams Meeting) - Grace L. Elliott	11	12	13
16	17	18 8:30am LOC Prep Meeting (Microsoft Teams Meeting; 9:00am Legislative Operating Committee Meeting (Microsoft 1:30pm LOC Work Session	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30	31	Jan 1, 25	2	3