



Ohio Sunset Review Committee
Agency Questionnaire

Agency Name Ohio Latino Affairs Commission

Point of Contact Giovanna Alvarez, Executive Director

Agency's primary purpose and its various goals and objectives

The Ohio Revised Code establishes the agency's purpose. The agency has three statutory mandates. They are:

- To Advise policymakers on issues affecting Hispanic Ohioans
§121.32 (E,F,G) 121.33 (A,C,D)
- To Connect Ohio's Latino communities with each other, with state agencies, and vice-versa
§121.32 (A,B,C) 121.33 (F,G)
- To Build the capacity of Latino community serving organizations
§121.32 (D,H) 121.33 (B)

Each biennium, the commission selects a number of strategic initiatives guided by the stated priorities of members of the General Assembly and the Office of the Governor. Examples of our work include:

1. Economic Empowerment

We promote entrepreneurship, support small businesses, and help stimulate economic growth through our work with the Ohio Hispanic Chambers of Commerce and other economic development organizations. We are committed to increasing the number of Hispanic MBE-EDGE registered businesses, and consistently promote the services of the Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs) and Minority Business Assistance Centers (MBACs), so that Latino businesses can grow, compete, and contribute to Ohio's economic development. The Commission's support of Hispanic businesses will continue to grow.

2. Health Transformation

In keeping with the Governor's top priorities, our commission has prioritized mental health programming.

Since 2019, OCHLA has partnered with the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services and secured grants in the following amounts:

- As reported on our annual report 2020: \$150,000
- As reported on our annual report 2022 for prior fiscal year: \$735,939
- Between 03/15/2022 to 06/30/2023: \$885,939
- From July 2023 to June 30th, 2024: \$325,000

Total dollar amount: \$2'096,878.00 dollars

Our Latino Mental Health Navigator Program seeks to reduce disparities in availability, accessibility, and quality of behavioral healthcare services for members of the Hispanic community. Seven project sites were strategically placed throughout the state of Ohio, with each site receiving specialized technical mental health training led by El Centro de Servicios Sociales in Lorain, Prevention Action Alliance, and the Mental Health Technology Transfer Center (MHTTC). Our Navigators program has successfully made mental health resources more accessible for Ohio communities, and we intend to apply for future grant funding to support this priority health initiative. We are currently having conversations about grant opportunities for this fiscal year.

3. Improving Educational Opportunities

Our annual Latino Affairs Summit convenes the Department of Education, universities, and community organizations to share and apply solutions that increase educational opportunities for Hispanic students in Ohio. Kent State University partnered for the 2023 Latino Affairs Summit that brought together Latinos, advocates, state and local government, educators and the public to discuss education, health, workforce and economic development. Their economic and in-kind investment to make this event possible is another example of our partnerships, along with support from the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce and the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services

4. Connect Constituents with State Government, Increase Civic Engagement and Foster Relationships with State Agencies

The Latino Affairs Commission serves as a link to connect Latinos and other diverse populations to each other and to State Government. We consistently provide expertise in cultural competence, language access, and diversity. Furthermore, by means of our inter-agency council statute, our agency works to maximize efficiencies, reduce costs, increase communication capabilities, and strengthen relationships between state agencies and the community. We work closely with ODJFS, the Secretary of State's office, the Attorney General's office, the Bureau of Workers Compensation and DAS, among others. Additionally, we work to connect Hispanic and Latino Constituents to their State Representatives and foster relationships between state agencies and the communities they serve.

Agency's past and anticipated workload, number of staff required to complete workload, and total number of staff

The agency's past and anticipated workload is in an ever-increasing direction, as the size and percentage of Ohio's Latino population continues to grow at unprecedented rates.

Our agency currently employs three full time positions (Executive Director, Public Policy Officer, Latino Community Liaison) and one intermittent position (Administrative Professional)

To complete the workload ideally, we would have a at least 5 full time staff members: (Administrative Professional, Executive Director, Public Policy Officer, Latino Community Liaison, and Organizational Development Officer. These key personnel could supervise volunteers and interns and increase the positive impact of our work statewide!

We hope to secure enough resources for this position in order to meet our capacity development mandates.

Agency's past and anticipated budgets and its sources of funding

The agency's past and anticipated budget for operational expenses may be found below. Approximately 95 percent of the agency's total funding is derived from the General Revenue Fund (GRF).

FY 2020: \$458,889

FY 2021: \$379,941

FY 2022: \$430,508

FY 2023: \$409,354

FY 2024: \$479,000

FY 2025: \$490,000

Number of members of its governing board or other governing entity and their compensation, if any

The agency has eleven *positions* (11) commissioners who are voting members of the governing board and are appointed by the Governor directly. According to statute:

All voting members of the commission shall speak Spanish, shall be of Spanish-speaking origin, and shall be American citizens or lawful, permanent, resident aliens. Voting members shall be from urban, suburban, and rural geographical areas representative of Spanish-speaking people with a numerical and geographical balance of the Spanish-speaking population throughout the state.

§121.31

As to compensation, according to statute:

Each voting member shall be compensated for work as a member for each day that the member is actually engaged in the performance of work as a member. No voting member shall be compensated for more than one day each month. In addition, each voting member shall be reimbursed for all actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of official business.

§121.31

Additional notes

Annual Events Held by OCHLA

- Hispanic Legislative Visit Day
- Distinguished Hispanic Ohioans Awards Event
- Ohio Hispanic Chambers of Commerce Quarterly Meetings
- Minority Health Month Workshops
- Ohio Latino Affairs Summit

OCHLA Reports & Directories

- Online directory of 200+ Hispanic service providers in the state
- Catalogue of Latino Outreach Initiatives on behalf of state agencies
- Annual Report
- Latino Community Reports
- Monthly Policy Newsletter
- Monthly Status Reports