



MINNESOTA

OFFICE OF
ADMINISTRATIVE
HEARINGS

Building a Public Comment Portal for Minnesota Rulemaking

Jenny Starr

Chief Administrative Law Judge

Agenda

- OAH
- Project update
- Project management

OAH



OAH

- An **energetic, responsive, and respected** service provider to Minnesotans, state and local governments, and the workers' compensation system
- **Renders justice** through fair, timely, and impartial administrative hearings and high-quality dispute resolution services

Values

We respect the tenets of **procedural fairness**.

Voice



Respect



Neutrality



Trust



Understanding Helpfulness

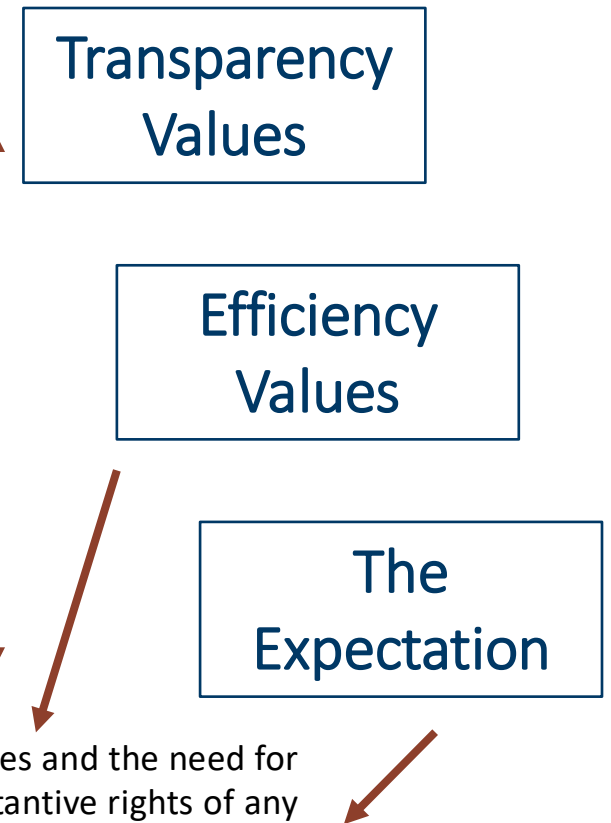


The Guiding Stars for ALJs

Minn. Stat. § 14.001: The purposes of the APA are to:

- (1) provide **oversight** of powers and duties delegated to administrative agencies;
- (2) increase public **accountability** of administrative agencies;
- (3) ensure a **uniform** minimum procedure;
- (4) increase public **access** to governmental information;
- (5) increase public **participation** in the formulation of administrative rules;
- (6) to increase the **fairness** of agencies in their conduct of contested case proceedings; and
- (7) to simplify the process of judicial review of agency action as well as increase its **ease** and **availability**.

In accomplishing its objectives, the intention of this chapter is to strike **a fair balance** between these purposes and the need for **efficient, economical, and effective government** administration. The chapter is not meant to alter the substantive rights of any person or agency. Its impact is limited to procedural rights with the **expectation that better substantive results** will be achieved in the everyday conduct of state government by improving the process by which those results are attained.



Project initiation



eComments allows the public to

Find

Rulemaking matters open for comment

Download

Agencies' rulemaking materials
(e.g. proposed rules, applicable public notices,
Statement of Need and Reasonableness, and
related exhibits)

Review

Comments submitted by the public on
pending rulemaking matters

Submit

Comments on pending rulemaking
matters

eComments Feedback

- Unprofessional
- Difficult to find and navigate
- Designed like social media
- Does not combine all important information in one place
- Does not create a report of all comments in the order received
- Provides central location
- Allows for a range of formality
- Promotes transparency by publishing comments in real time

Federal Comment Site

11/3/2022

Regulations.gov
Your Voice in Federal Decision Making

SUPPORT


Make a difference. Submit your comments and let your voice be heard.

Search for Rules, Proposed Rules, Notices or Supporting Documents

Welcome to the new Regulations.gov

The new Regulations.gov is a re-envisioning of the classic Regulations.gov, with enhanced search capabilities, a simplified commenting process, and an interface that adapts to various screen sizes for mobile devices.

[Read More](#) [Watch Our Introduction Video](#)



What's Trending

PR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
Revised 2023 and Later Model Year Light-Duty Vehicle Greenhouse Gas Emissions Standards

 Comments Due - September 27, 2021

N ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
Application: Pesticide Experimental Use Permit

 Comments Due - September 30, 2021

Explore

Comments Due Soon

| | |
|-------------|-----|
| Today | 21 |
| Next 3 Days | 71 |
| Next 7 Days | 173 |

Posted Recently

| | |
|-------------|-----|
| Today | 149 |
| Last 3 Days | 388 |
| Last 7 Days | 627 |

Dockets

| | |
|--------------------------|-----|
| Deregulatory | 644 |
| Economically Significant | 924 |
| Major Rule | 959 |

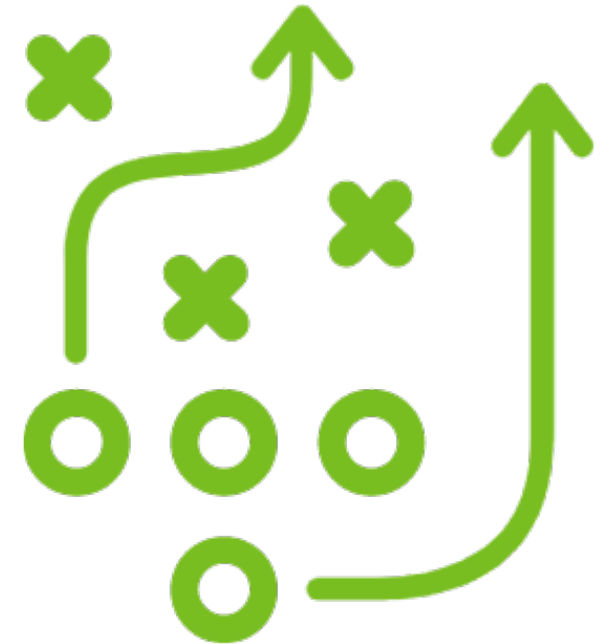
Our project

- Create an **accessible, easily-navigated**, web-based **portal** to collect and publish information and public comments on proposed rules
- Increase **public participation** and **engagement** in rulemaking across all Minnesotans and Minnesota communities
 - Improve public accountability in agency rulemaking
 - Simplify agencies' work collecting comments



Odyssey Fund

- OAH created an **Odyssey Fund** to support a new public comment portal for Minnesota rulemaking.
- Last year, **six agencies** contributed a total of **\$350,000** to this project.



Thank you!

Project planning



Our goals

Transparency



Engagement
Feedback



Shared
understanding



Stay connected

Hear from us:
GovDelivery

Sign Up: mn.gov/oah



Sign up for OAH updates

SUBSCRIBE

[No Thanks](#) [Remind Me Later](#)

Keep in touch:
Send your
questions and
feedback by
replying to our
emails

Project champions

| Name | Agency |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Stacie Christensen | Department of Administration |
| Doug Spanier | Department of Agriculture |
| Eamonn Gallagher | Department of Commerce |
| Josh Skaar Linda Prail | Department of Health |
| Vanessa Vogl | Department of Human Services |
| Brittany Wysokinski | Department of Labor and Industry |
| Beth Carlson Yengmy Thao | Department of Natural Resources |
| Terese Mitchell Phillip Aitken | Department of Revenue |
| Beth Scheffer | Department of Transportation |
| Katie Izzo | Pollution Control Agency |



Engagement model



Gathering feedback



Live virtual workshop sessions with project staff



Online forms



Direct reply to GovDelivery

Feedback reports

- Formal report listing everything we heard in response to our feedback request
- Categorized by topic to help review and digest information
- Each category is sorted alphabetically to support neutrality



What we've done so far



70

State agency
employees
engaged



14

Hours of
engagement
opportunities



8

Feedback
reports



1

Request for
Proposal
documented

Project execution



Request for Proposal

165

Business requirements

19

Topics

5

Priority levels:

Critical, high, medium, low, out of scope

MNSITE Procurement Program

- Administered jointly by MNIT and the Department of Administration
- Designed for technology professional services
- Competitive solicitation to all vendors with master contracts

1

Request and scoring criteria published

2

Solicitations received

3

Vendor selected

4

Work Order Contract executed

What's in

- Professional, user-friendly design and functionality
- Reporting and sorting tools for agencies
- Robust search capabilities
- Ability to subscribe to a rulemaking and receive status updates

Your ideas

- Automatically caption video comments
- Include fields to account for submittals that contain multiple comments
- Use artificial intelligence to automatically sort comments by keyword, topic, category.

What's out

- Ability to reply to comments
- Anonymous commenting
- Integrations:
 - GovDelivery
 - Agency websites
 - OAH eFiling

Funding

\$1,450,000 (current estimate)

- **\$350,000** (current contributions)

\$1,100,000 more needed

- Budget Change Item submitted for Governor approval
- Odyssey Fund remains available for agency contribution

2023!





Thank you!

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