

ORPA

Office of Research and
Policy Analysis

MONTANA LEGISLATIVE
SERVICES DIVISION

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TRAINING SURVEY 2021

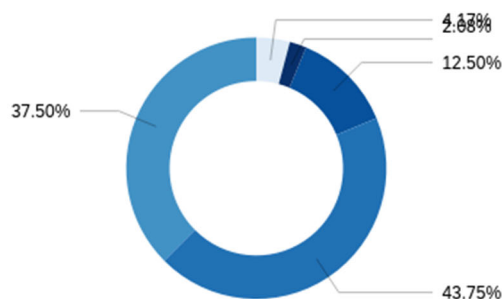
INTRODUCTION

One of the priorities of the Legislative Council is to provide training for new and

returning legislators. Training requires a significant investment of time from legislators and staff. The purpose of the survey is to meet the training needs and priorities of legislators and ensure efficient use of staff time and other resources.

Sixty legislators responded to the survey for a 40% response rate.

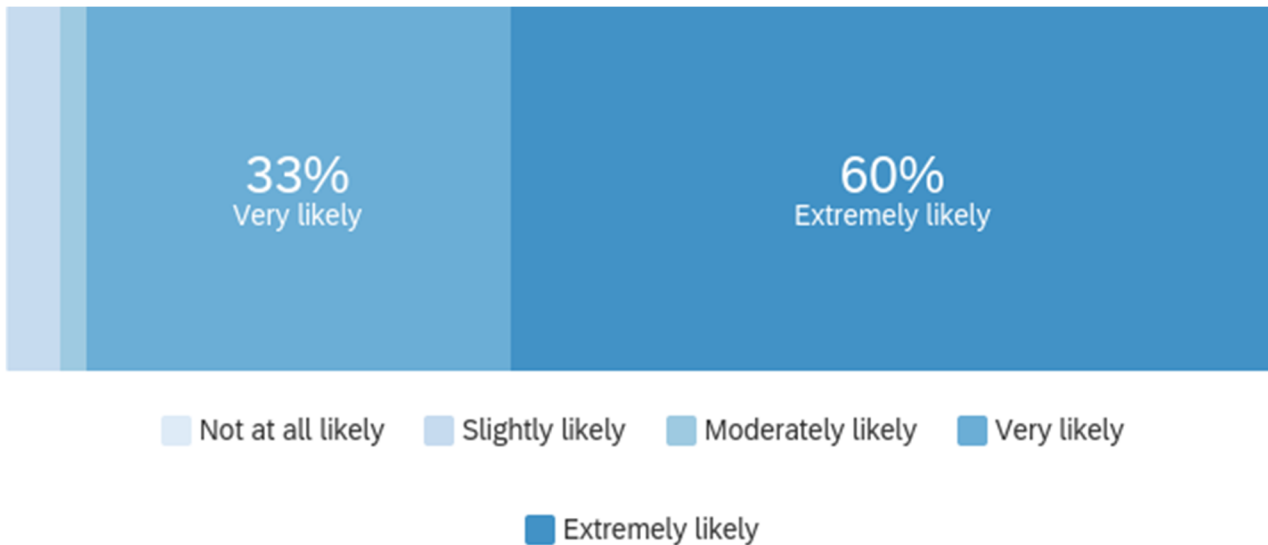
SATISFACTION



Extremely dissatisfied Somewhat dissatisfied Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
Somewhat satisfied Extremely satisfied

Eight of 10 respondents are at least somewhat satisfied with prior trainings offered by the branch.

All respondents said they recommend the training for new legislators. Nine of 10 say they are very likely or extremely likely to suggest the training.



MOVING FORWARD

One of the concerns raised by Legislative Council members is that so much training is offered in November right after the election and during caucus. The survey asked what trainings legislators would attend via a live Zoom session or watch a prerecorded training at their leisure.

If the Council elects to offer some training in January 2022, staff suggests offering timely trainings, such as an overview payroll and benefits, a primer on readying proposing legislation and working with drafters, and ethics and decorum.

At the March meeting, staff will offer options for in person training, Zoom sessions, and prerecorded trainings in advance of the 2023 Legislature.

COMMENTS

How could the training provided be improved?

Legislative staff does an incredible job providing training and, even more, responding quickly and professionally to any requests throughout the session — and before and after!

More in depth training on bill writing

Providing more days for training

Assure new legislators that they can repeat questions and training as necessary. It's a lot of information, and repetitiveness helps.

An education page dedicated.

Make sure the presenters have credibility.

Include Native issues. We used to provide an Indian Law training previously. In 2021, we had 40 out of 100 freshman legislators. We need to educate members to be aware the unique status of Natives in Montana, how the issues need to be elevated.

The Floor session training could be more in depth and utilize video clips from past floor sessions to help new legislators understand how the flow goes.

more Q & A instead of PowerPoint presentation or computer demonstration

Well first off if you did offer all that you said you did, it wasn't communicated very well, and except for about 3-4 hrs (max) all of the training was NOT in person.

I thought they were very good, but figure everyone was off their game due to covid.

Maybe a little more 'hand holding' for freshman. A lot of new info is presented and not all was clear when and where we needed to be.

The only problem I experienced during the pre-2021 session was the mock floor session via zoom. It was done very poorly for those of us on zoom. Everything else was exceptional and excellent. Thank you.

More time for mentoring/socializing

Develop “tracks” that cover specific training aimed at freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors. Approps, Leadership, Rules, Presiding Officer, etc. Use NCSL themes to create training “tracks”.

Spreading it out over the 1st week

Obviously 2021 was an anomaly and we should strive for comprehensive in-person training in the future. Zoom, or pre-recorded training on some topics is beneficial as well as long as in-person training is given a priority.

Better advertise availability. Provide recording that we could watch and once again advertising the availability of recorded training.

We need leadership training on how to bring folks together, so they feel heard and get consensus.

Small groups training. This would allow more interaction

Not so sing-songey

I would say give new and returning legislators a agenda on when these lessons would be available so that they can make arrangements to attend the training.

What training do you need that is not provided?

Appropriations and budget process

Constitutional analyses.

Audit functions

Discussion amongst legislators about how to organize materials. What are people's suggestions for organizing?

Constitution - Article X - section 1, sub 2

Session on the role of Interim Committee-Held after transmittal--Immediately after floor session

how to participate as a committee member, info on Open Meetings law

How to use the LAWS software resources. Look up bills, how to read bills, MCA etc.

Could have used more info on benefits, insurance, HR. Didn't really ever figure that out.

Decorum and respect

Pension funding

Comprehensive and granular rules training.

Above and the retreat was a huge start in bringing us together.

constitutional integrity

Training on religious diversity. There are many different religions in the state and the legislature but only one religion is respected. This is a problem.