

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OFFICE

JOB PROFILE



ALBERTA HANSARD – PARLIAMENTARY PROGRAMS INDEXER

MAY 2023

The Legislative Assembly Office (LAO) supports the Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly, providing nonpartisan procedural, administrative and educational services.

Alberta Hansard is the official, substantially verbatim record of parliamentary debates and proceedings of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta.

Reporting to the Deputy Editor of *Hansard*, the Indexer is responsible for creating and maintaining comprehensive indexes for *Hansard* and committee transcripts so that Members of the Legislative Assembly, their staff and the general public have quick access to transcripts of debates.

Alberta Hansard operates in accordance with the Legislative Assembly Act, Standing Orders, Legislative Assembly Office (LAO) policies, procedures and protocols and direction from the Speaker, the Members' Services Committee, the Clerk and the Director of Parliamentary Programs.

Responsibilities

1. Create comprehensive and cumulative subject and speaker indexes for efficient and accurate information retrieval from daily *Hansard* issues and committee transcripts.

Activities:

- extract essential points from *Hansard* and committee transcripts by reviewing, analyzing and making judgments about the substance of debate and the relevance of topics and then cross-referencing according to established indexing policies
- create suitable index headings using a concise, descriptive style, applying standard and *Hansard* conventions and policies
- create accurate subject, speaker, business and page information using specialized indexing software to ensure ease in user searches
- research subjects needing verification or clarification by using in-house reference materials, Internet search tools and additional research services
- revise index entries on an ongoing basis to tie together related topics or to separate headings for particularly large topics
- work closely with the Deputy Editor and/or Editor, providing appropriate advice on indexing policy and receiving guidance on outstanding indexing matters
- draft headings for sets of questions in Oral Question Period in real time and under pressure

2. Ensure indexing services and products are accessible, accurate and consistent for *Hansard*, committee and Assembly documents.

Activities:

- oversee indexing support staff by monitoring work flow, setting priorities, providing training and giving feedback on performance, including assisting with yearly performance reviews
- make recommendations on style and precedents relating to indexing and consult with the Deputy Editor and/or Editor on any nonroutine issues

- monitor the publishing of *Hansard* issues and indexes to the external website upon completion, ensuring the accuracy of the search mechanism, recommending improvements and liaising with Information Technology Services on technical requirements and standards
 - produce and post weekly cumulative subject and speaker indexes
 - prepare a final edited index in printable format for publication at the end of each legislative session
 - ensure consistency of criteria for index headings to ensure that *Hansard* and committee transcript user searches are quick, accurate and consistent in retrieval
 - co-ordinate and complete corrections and updates to internally maintained index resources to ensure a high-quality standard is maintained
 - prepare indexes for other parliamentary documents such as the *Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta*
3. Research and provide information in response to inquiries from MLAs and their staff, LAO staff, government departments, the media and the general public.
- Activities:**
- respond to information requests using past and current print and online *Hansard* indexes, tables and lists to provide accurate information on a timely basis
 - provide assistance and instruction to support the retrieval of information from *Hansard* databases and related Assembly and parliamentary publications
 - provide training in online keyword searching for LAO staff, constituency office staff and caucus staff to allow for efficient information retrieval
4. Take a lead role in the ongoing recommendation and enhancement of products, processes and indexing methods to increase accessibility and production of indexes.
- Activities:**
- maintain a thorough understanding of *Hansard* indexing style, precedents, and professional conventions for application in *Alberta Hansard*
 - consult with indexing peers in other jurisdictions and in professional indexing organizations regarding innovations and improvements to methods and conventions
 - assess indexing processes and make ongoing recommendations to enhance the development and improvement of processes and practices
 - oversee the currency of the indexing manual for use throughout *Hansard* by ensuring that changes in indexing policy and new procedures are updated and that standards and consistency are maintained
 - solicit information from users to gather data on effectiveness and efficiency of the index and make recommendations on improvements based on the analysis of this feedback
 - advance the integration of indexing of *Hansard*, House Services and parliamentary documents to allow for comprehensive and accessible research and information retrieval
5. Support the operational requirements of *Alberta Hansard*.
- Activities:**
- actively contribute to *Hansard* projects or initiatives
 - provide assistance, where needed and appropriate, to the *Hansard* production process, including acting as a Transcript Editor or House notes editor when requested
 - represent *Hansard*, Parliamentary Programs and the LAO in a professional manner when dealing with internal and external clients

6. Support the overall operations of the LAO in the provision of support to the Legislature.

Activities:

- contribute as an active team member to branch and LAO activities, which may include supporting ceremonial and conference functions
- participate in cross-organizational initiatives as a representative of the Parliamentary Programs branch
- participate in planning, implementation and monitoring of services required to ensure a smooth transition from Legislature to Legislature, which includes assisting new members and staff during pre- and postelection activities
- demonstrate commitment to workplace health and safety by following safe work practices, reporting work-related accidents and hazards immediately
- participate in the classification, maintenance, retention and disposition of records within the guidelines of the LAO's File Classification and Retention Schedule

Scope

Alberta Hansard is the official, substantially verbatim account of proceedings of the Legislative Assembly and its committees and is an historical document that will serve as a research tool for future historians and politicians. Therefore, excellent use of judgment in the application of strict policies and guidelines in order to ensure that the record accurately reflects the proceedings is key.

Services impact the general public as well as MLAs, constituency and caucus offices, the Office of the Speaker and management and staff of the Legislative Assembly Office. Accordingly, the Indexer:

- carries out duties with considerable independence in making day-to-day operational/indexing decisions at times when policy and procedure may not have been outlined and/or indexing precedent set
- interacts with staff of the LAO, researchers, MLAs and their staff in response to requests
- provides services that impact the efficient operation of the branch and reflect on the LAO's nonpartisan role
- works under pressure to meet all required timelines, responding to strict deadlines in organizing work
- operates as part of a nonpartisan entity in a dynamic political environment

Knowledge and Skills

- related postsecondary education in a relevant program of study
- expertise in standard indexing conventions
- understanding of HTML coding and web publishing software
- strong analytical skills with the ability to make judgments to extract main points of debate while applying standard indexing conventions
- ability to effectively utilize specialized indexing software and web publishing technology
- knowledge of legislative processes and procedures and the nature of legislative debate
- knowledge of *Alberta Hansard's* mandate and proficiency in its editorial policies, practices and procedures
- knowledge of provincial, national and international current affairs, government programs and services, as well as Indigenous groups, public figures and geography is an asset

- excellent interpersonal and communication skills, both oral and written, along with superior English language skills
- effective public speaking and presentation skills
- ability to work independently and as part of a team while maintaining a high level of concentration for long periods of time
- ability to oversee work processes and coach staff
- strong skills in research and information retrieval methods
- meticulous attention to detail
- the ability to project a professional and efficient nonpartisan attitude in interactions with internal and external clients and a strong commitment to client service
- working knowledge of branch and LAO goals and objectives

Position Classification

Program Services 2 (022PS)