

Office of GENERAL COUNSEL

The Office of General Counsel: provides legal advice to the Commissioners, Executive Office and Divisions; handles legal enforcement actions to help assure compliance with RRC rules; develops new rules and amends existing rules; and processes open records requests.

CORE RESPONSIBILITIES

General Law Section

Legal Advice

- Provides general legal advice and counsel to the Commissioners, Executive Office and Divisions.
- Advises staff on Natural Resources Act and other jurisdictional, procedural, and substantive laws and rules, and represents staff in Hearings.
- Subject matter expert advice on Public Information Act, Open Meetings Act and Administrative Procedure Act.
- Prepares and finalizes RRC conference agendas.

Rulemaking

- Reviews proposals for new rules or amendments to existing rules, and drafts language for new or amended rules.
- Publishes proposed rules in the Texas Register, posts rule proposals for public comment and presents final proposed rule or amendment for approval.

Open Records

- Processes requests for RRC documents by mail, fax or email, and works to provide documents within 10 business days.
- Notifies requester in writing of a reasonable date and time if the request cannot be processed within 10 business days.

Legal Enforcement Section

- Handles referrals from RRC Divisions and District Offices for legal enforcement of alleged rule violations by operators.
- Commences enforcement actions against operators who fail to comply with applicable statutes and rules.
- Presents contested enforcement cases to Hearings Division ALJs.
- Administers and collects administrative penalties from operators for rule violations.
- Issues master default orders when operators fail to respond to legal complaints and agreed enforcement orders when operators and the RRC agree to settle rule violations.
- Works with industry and law enforcement to assist in investigation and prosecution of environmental and related violations.

PUBLIC DATA & RECORDS

- Legal Enforcement orders; Proposed Rules; Rules for Informal Comment; Emergency Rules; Procedures for requesting open records info; the Public Information Act; RRC Commission Open Meeting Archives.



Contact Information

General Law: 512-463-7149

Legal Enforcement: 512-463-6762

Open Records:

Tel: 512-463-6947

Fax: 512-463-6684

open.records@rrc.texas.gov

