STATE OF OHIO
OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL
RANDALL J. MEYER, INSPECTOR GENERAL

October 1, 2026

OpinionsRequest@OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov.

Attorney General Andy Wilson
Opinions Section
30 East Broad Street, 26th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215

RE: Opinion Request

Dear Attorney General Wilson:

Pursuant to O.R.C. 109.12, I am respectfully requesting a formal, written opinion on behalf of the Office of the Ohio Inspector General concerning the scope of the office's jurisdiction over the Board of Directors for the nonprofit corporation JobsOhio and the applicability of public records provisions as it pertains to the Inspector General having publicly available reports concerning JobsOhio.

The Office of the Ohio Inspector General was established by Ohio law in 1990 through the passing of Amended Substitute House Bill 588. The office's purpose is to investigate and make recommendations for the prevention and/or detection of wrongful acts or omissions within the agencies of state government. Statutes specific to the operation of the Office of the Ohio Inspector General, including jurisdiction, are located in O.R.C. 121.41 through 121.52.

The nonprofit corporation JobsOhio was established by statute[1] for the purposes of promoting economic development, creating and retaining jobs, and recruiting businesses to Ohio. While not considered a state agency pursuant to O.R.C. 1.60, JobsOhio was formed by the governor, and the governor is responsible for appointing its Board of Directors.

The Office of the Inspector General interprets a limited jurisdiction over JobsOhio through statutory language[2].

Pursuant to O.R.C. 121.42 (B), the Inspector General must:

> Receive complaints under section 121.46 of the Revised Code alleging wrongful acts and omissions, determine whether the information contained in those complaints allege facts that give reasonable cause to investigate, and, if so, investigate to determine if there is reasonable cause to believe that the alleged

[1] *See* O.R.C. Chapter 187.
[2] *See* O.R.C. 121.41 and 121.42.

wrongful act or omission has been committed or is being committed by a state officer or state employee.

State employee is defined by O.R.C. 121.41 as the following:

> Any person who is an employee of a state agency, or any person who does business with the state including, only for the purposes of sections 121.41 to 121.50 of the Revised Code, the nonprofit corporation formed under section 187.01 of the Revised Code.

Taking these two statutory provisions in conjunction, the Office of the Inspector General must receive a complaint involving the wrongful acts or omissions of JobsOhio employees and the facts alleged give reasonable cause to investigate. Should the received complaint meet this threshold, then the Inspector General may open an investigation. The Inspector General cannot investigate JobsOhio under his own initiative to determine if wrongful acts or omissions have been or are being committed by the employees of JobsOhio.

I have provided a historical bill analysis published by the Ohio Legislative Services Commission when JobsOhio was established into law which specifically mentions the Office of the Ohio Inspector General possessing jurisdiction over JobsOhio on the same terms as a state employee, but that JobsOhio itself is not considered a state agency.

Within recent months, the Office of the Ohio Inspector General has received several complaints concerning JobsOhio. In particular, the office received a complaint regarding a member of JobsOhio's Board of Directors.

As related to JobsOhio, The Inspector General's statutory jurisdiction includes "state officers" in addition to "state employees." "State officers" is defined to include officials appointed to a public office in a state agency. Other boards of directors throughout state government generally fall within this definition and therefore, within the Inspector General's jurisdiction.

With the aforementioned receipt of complaints, a question has been raised concerning the ability of this office to publish reports of investigations involving JobsOhio. Pursuant to O.R.C. 121.44, a report of any investigation conducted by the Inspector General or any deputy inspector general is a public record. I may give my written approval to designate all or part of a report as confidential should it preserve matters which are confidential by law, matters which appear reasonably necessary to protect the safety of a witness, or if the disclosure would reveal investigative techniques that if disclosed, would cause persons who have or who are committing wrongful acts or omissions to avoid detection.

O.R.C. 187.04 details the applicability of public records law to JobsOhio's records.

To assist with a determination on the office's appropriate jurisdiction as it pertains to JobsOhio's Board of Directors and the ability of the office to make a report involving JobsOhio public, I am seeking your opinion on the following questions:

1. Does the Office of the Ohio Inspector General have the authority to open an investigation involving the JobsOhio board of directors should the office receive a complaint involving their wrongful acts or omissions and if the facts alleged in the complaint give reasonable cause to investigate?
2. Are records acquired from JobsOhio subject to public release in a report of investigation issued by the Office of the Ohio Inspector General?

Please contact me if you need any further information or if I can be of any assistance to you while reviewing this letter. I may be reached 614-644-9110 or via email at Randall.Meyer@oig.ohio.gov. Thank you in advance for your time and attention in this matter.

Sincerely,

Randall J. Meyer
Ohio Inspector General

Attachments: Legislative Services Commission Bill Analysis