

Office of the Employee Ombud

Amarah Khan, Director

(206) 256-5982

<https://www.seattle.gov/ombud>

Department Overview

In 2018 Executive Order 2018-04 created the **Office of Employee Ombud (OEO)** following the recommendations issued by the Anti-Harassment Inter-departmental Team on improving the City's workplace culture. The OEO's mission is to support City employees in all branches of City government in assessing their concerns regarding workplace conduct that may be considered inappropriate; may constitute harassment, discrimination, or retaliation; and/or is in conflict with the City's Personnel Rules, Citywide workplace expectations, and other City policies.

The OEO provides assistance to City employees through a variety of means including conflict management and resolution; clarifying the City's processes and systems for reporting and investigations; facilitating discussions to break down miscommunication; providing the contact for represented employees' unions; and understanding what remedies are available through State or Federal agencies. The OEO also supports employees with referrals to the City's contracted Employees Assistance Program (EAP) for appropriate emotional assistance.

The OEO offers trainings and capacity building to City departments so that practices and behaviors that cause conflict among us can be addressed in a proactive manner. The OEO submits an annual report to the Mayor's Office and City Council that addresses issues extending beyond the experiences of individual employees. The report includes recommendations to clarify the City's Personnel Rules, complaint and investigations systems or trainings, and share information on patterns of inappropriate workplace conduct at the City.

Budget Snapshot

	2023 Actuals	2024 Adopted	2025 Proposed	2026 Proposed
Department Support				
General Fund Support	1,105,279	1,154,216	1,234,561	1,296,310
Total Operations	1,105,279	1,154,216	1,234,561	1,296,310
Total Appropriations	1,105,279	1,154,216	1,234,561	1,296,310
Full-Time Equivalents Total*	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00

* FTE totals are provided for informational purposes only. Changes in FTEs resulting from City Council or Human Resources Director actions outside of the budget process may not be detailed here

Budget Overview

The City's 2025-2026 Proposed Budget maintains core services for the Office of Employee Ombud (OEO). The department will maintain full staffing levels and will continue the current levels of support to the City of Seattle employees, including conflict management.

The General Fund revenue forecast for the City's 2025-2026 Proposed Budget is insufficient to cover all anticipated Citywide costs. General Fund reductions were identified to mitigate this shortfall. OEO will readjust expenditures in their lease space costs, to reflect current expenses for the office space.

Office of the Employee Ombud

Incremental Budget Changes

Office of the Employee Ombud

	Dollars	FTE
2024 Adopted Budget	1,154,216	6.00
Baseline		
Bargained Annual Wage and Market Wage Increases to Base Budget	121,534	-
Citywide Adjustments for Standard Cost Changes	(38,984)	-
Proposed Operating		
Align Lease Cost	(41,000)	-
Proposed Technical		
Final Adjustments for Standard Cost Changes	38,795	-
Total Incremental Changes	\$80,345	-
Total 2025 Proposed Budget	\$1,234,561	6.00

Description of Incremental Budget Changes

Baseline

Bargained Annual Wage and Market Wage Increases to Base Budget

Expenditures \$121,534

This centrally administered change adjusts appropriations to reflect the Annual Wage Increases and Market Adjustments, as outlined in the agreements between the City and the Coalition of Unions or other standalone Unions, for personnel costs included in this department's baseline budget. This includes increases to salary, FICA, Medicare, retirement, overtime and temporary labor.

Citywide Adjustments for Standard Cost Changes

Expenditures \$(38,984)

Citywide technical adjustments made in the baseline phase reflect changes to internal services costs, including rates from the Department of Finance & Administrative Services, Seattle Information Technology Department, Seattle Department of Human Resources, and for healthcare, retirement, and industrial insurance charges for the department. These adjustments reflect initial assumptions about these costs and inflators early in the budget process.

Proposed Operating

Align Lease Cost

Expenditures \$(41,000)

The General Fund revenue forecast for the City's 2025-2026 Proposed Budget is insufficient to cover all anticipated Citywide costs. General Fund reductions were identified to mitigate this shortfall. This item reduces appropriation authority by \$41,000 in the Office of Employee Ombud Budget Control Level (BO-EM-V10MB). This item reduces the budgeted amount for lease costs to align with the current expenditures for the office space for the Office of Employee Ombud.

Office of the Employee Ombud

Proposed Technical

Final Adjustments for Standard Cost Changes

Expenditures \$38,795

Citywide technical adjustments made in the proposed phase reflect changes to internal services costs, including rates from the Department of Finance & Administrative Services, Seattle Information Technology Department, Seattle Department of Human Resources, and for healthcare for the department. These adjustments reflect final decisions about these costs made during the Proposed Phase of the budget process.

Expenditure Overview

	2023 Actuals	2024 Adopted	2025 Proposed	2026 Proposed
Appropriations				
OEO - BO-EM-V10MB - Office of Employee Ombud				
00100 - General Fund	1,105,279	1,154,216	1,234,561	1,296,310
Total for BSL: BO-EM-V10MB	1,105,279	1,154,216	1,234,561	1,296,310
Department Total	1,105,279	1,154,216	1,234,561	1,296,310
Department Full-Time Equivalents Total*	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00

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Budget Summary by Fund Office of the Employee Ombud

	2023 Actuals	2024 Adopted	2025 Proposed	2026 Proposed
00100 - General Fund	1,105,279	1,154,216	1,234,561	1,296,310
Budget Totals for OEO	1,105,279	1,154,216	1,234,561	1,296,310

Revenue Overview

2025 Estimated Revenues

Account Code	Account Name	2023 Actuals	2024 Adopted	2025 Proposed	2026 Proposed
341900	General Government-Other Rev	514,087	446,483	527,565	553,963
Total Revenues for: 00100 - General Fund		514,087	446,483	527,565	553,963
Total OEO Resources		514,087	446,483	527,565	553,963

Office of the Employee Ombud

Appropriations by Budget Summary Level and Program

OEO - BO-EM-V10MB - Office of Employee Ombud

The purpose of the Office of Employee Ombud (OEO) Budget Summary Level is to support City of Seattle employees in navigating the City's conflict management system, including processes related to harassment, discrimination, and misconduct. OEO provides recommendations to the Mayor and City Council on policies and procedures that can help create an inclusive and respectful workplace environment.

Program Expenditures	2023 Actuals	2024 Adopted	2025 Proposed	2026 Proposed
Employee Ombud Office	1,105,279	1,154,216	1,234,561	1,296,310
Total	1,105,279	1,154,216	1,234,561	1,296,310
Full-time Equivalents Total*	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00

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