

Office of the Employee Ombud

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<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 shares information on patterns of inappropriate workplace conduct at the City.

Budget Snapshot

	2025 Actuals	2026 Adopted	2027 Proposed	2028 Proposed
Department Support				
General Fund Support	1,264,249	1,314,006	1,360,651	1,378,482
Total Operations	1,264,249	1,314,006	1,360,651	1,378,482
Total Appropriations	1,264,249	1,314,006	1,360,651	1,378,482

Full-Time Equivalents Total*	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00
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** 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 2027-2028 Proposed Budget maintains core services for the Office of Employee Ombud (OEO). The department will maintain full staffing levels and will continue its current service levels to City of Seattle employees, including conflict management and resolution, and training and capacity building to departments. Budgetary adjustments are all baseline items related to standard costs of operation.

Office of the Employee Ombud

Incremental Budget Changes

Office of the Employee Ombud

	Dollars	FTE
2026 Adopted Budget	1,314,006	6.00
Baseline		
Citywide Adjustments for Standard Cost Changes	41,994	-
Reduce SCERS Retirement Contribution Rate	(12,849)	-
Baseline Correction to Non-Labor Budget	17,500	-
Proposed Technical		
Align Department Revenues with August Forecast	-	-
Total Incremental Changes	\$46,646	-
Total 2027 Proposed Budget	\$1,360,651	6.00

Description of Incremental Budget Changes

Baseline

Citywide Adjustments for Standard Cost Changes

Expenditures \$41,994

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 and other central cost factors. These adjustments reflect initial assumptions about these costs and inflators early in the budget process.

Reduce SCERS Retirement Contribution Rate

Expenditures \$(12,849)

The City's employee retirement system, the Seattle City Employees Retirement System (SCERS) is a defined benefit pension program funded by a combination of salary-based employer (i.e., the City) and employee contributions, and investment earnings. Based on the updated actuarial valuation for 2026, this item reduces the employer contribution rate from the endorsed rate of 15.06% to the SCERS minimum actuarial required rate of 13.48% for 2027 and 13.52% for 2028.

Baseline Correction to Non-Labor Budget

Expenditures \$17,500

This item corrects for \$17,500 in spending appropriation that was inadvertently removed in the 2025-2026 biennium due to incorrect budget coding. The \$17,500 pays for a case management software subscription that has always been part of and is required to maintain status quo operations.

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Proposed Technical

Align Department Revenues with August Forecast

Revenues	\$43,750
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This is a technical adjustment to capture centrally projected revenue in line with the August Forecast. OEO's revenue results from cost allocation of their services to other departments.

Office of the Employee Ombud

Expenditure Overview

	2025 Actuals	2026 Adopted	2027 Proposed	2028 Proposed
Appropriations				
OEO - BO-EM-V10MB - Office of Employee Ombud				
00100 - General Fund	1,264,249	1,314,006	1,360,651	1,378,482
Total for BSL: BO-EM-V10MB	1,264,249	1,314,006	1,360,651	1,378,482
Department Total	1,264,249	1,314,006	1,360,651	1,378,482
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

	2025 Actuals	2026 Adopted	2027 Proposed	2028 Proposed
00100 - General Fund	1,264,249	1,314,006	1,360,651	1,378,482
Budget Totals for OEO	1,264,249	1,314,006	1,360,651	1,378,482

Revenue Overview

2027 Estimated Revenues

Account Code	Account Name	2025 Actuals	2026 Adopted	2027 Proposed	2028 Proposed
341900	General Government-Other Rev	550,970	553,963	597,713	605,930
Total Revenues for: 00100 - General Fund		550,970	553,963	597,713	605,930
Total OEO Resources		550,970	553,963	597,713	605,930

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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	2025 Actuals	2026 Adopted	2027 Proposed	2028 Proposed
Employee Ombud Office	1,264,249	1,314,006	1,360,651	1,378,482
Total	1,264,249	1,314,006	1,360,651	1,378,482
Full-time Equivalents Total*	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00

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