

# Office of the Employee Ombud

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## 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

	2024 Actuals	2025 Adopted	2026 Endorsed	2026 Proposed
<b>Department Support</b>				
General Fund Support	1,222,321	1,234,561	1,296,310	1,314,006
<b>Total Operations</b>	<b>1,222,321</b>	<b>1,234,561</b>	<b>1,296,310</b>	<b>1,314,006</b>
<b>Total Appropriations</b>	<b>1,222,321</b>	<b>1,234,561</b>	<b>1,296,310</b>	<b>1,314,006</b>

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 2026 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.

## **Office of the Employee Ombud**

The 2026 Proposed Budget funds the lease of new office space for OEO, as the existing office space will no longer be available for OEO use. OEO will lease new space in the same office building and the suite leased will provide a private, secure environment for the sensitive conversations and activities that OEO facilitates for Seattle employees.

## Office of the Employee Ombud

### Incremental Budget Changes

#### Office of the Employee Ombud

	2026 Budget	FTE
<b>Total 2026 Endorsed Budget</b>	<b>1,296,310</b>	<b>6.00</b>
<b>Baseline</b>		
Citywide Adjustments for Standard Cost Changes	(2,477)	-
<b>Proposed Operating</b>		
New Office Space Lease	34,800	-
<b>Proposed Technical</b>		
Bargained Annual Wage Adjustment to Base Budget	(13,721)	-
SCERS Retirement Contribution Rate Reduction	(906)	-
Reallocation of budget to align with actuals	-	-
<b>Total Incremental Changes</b>	<b>\$17,696</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total 2026 Proposed Budget</b>	<b>\$1,314,006</b>	<b>6.00</b>

### Description of Incremental Budget Changes

#### Baseline

##### Citywide Adjustments for Standard Cost Changes

Expenditures \$(2,477)

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.

#### Proposed Operating

##### New Office Space Lease

Expenditures \$34,800

This item funds the lease of new office space. The Office of the Employee Ombud is in subleased office space that will no longer be available for their use as of Dec. 1, 2025. This additional funding allows OEO to lease a different space within their current building that provides the privacy and security needed for OEO's conflict mediation work.

#### Proposed Technical

##### Bargained Annual Wage Adjustment to Base Budget

Expenditures \$(13,721)

## Office of the Employee Ombud

This centrally administered change adjusts base budget appropriations to reflect the proper Annual Wage Increase (AWI) increment for 2026, as outlined in the agreements between the City and the Coalition of City Unions for personnel costs. AWI increments are determined based on the average change in the local Consumer Price Index (CPI). This change represents a true-up between the forecasted CPI assumption included in the Endorsed Budget and the actual CPI data.

### **SCERS Retirement Contribution Rate Reduction**

Expenditures	\$(906)
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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 2025, this item reduces the employer contribution rate from the endorsed rate of 15.17% to the SCERS minimum actuarial required rate of 15.06%.

### **Reallocation of budget to align with actuals**

Expenditures	-
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This item is a cost-neutral reallocation in budget to align with actual expenditures.

# Office of the Employee Ombud

## Expenditure Overview

	2024 Actuals	2025 Adopted	2026 Endorsed	2026 Proposed
<b>Appropriations</b>				
<b>OEO - BO-EM-V10MB - Office of Employee Ombud</b>				
00100 - General Fund	1,222,321	1,234,561	1,296,310	1,314,006
<b>Total for BSL: BO-EM-V10MB</b>	<b>1,222,321</b>	<b>1,234,561</b>	<b>1,296,310</b>	<b>1,314,006</b>
<b>Department Total</b>	<b>1,222,321</b>	<b>1,234,561</b>	<b>1,296,310</b>	<b>1,314,006</b>
<b>Department Full-Time Equivalents Total*</b>	<b>6.00</b>	<b>6.00</b>	<b>6.00</b>	<b>6.00</b>

*\* 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 Summary by Fund Office of the Employee Ombud

	2024 Actuals	2025 Adopted	2026 Endorsed	2026 Proposed
00100 - General Fund	1,222,321	1,234,561	1,296,310	1,314,006
<b>Budget Totals for OEO</b>	<b>1,222,321</b>	<b>1,234,561</b>	<b>1,296,310</b>	<b>1,314,006</b>

## Revenue Overview

### 2026 Estimated Revenues

Account Code	Account Name	2024 Actuals	2025 Adopted	2026 Endorsed	2026 Proposed
341900	General Government-Other Rev	427,784	527,565	553,963	553,963
<b>Total Revenues for: 00100 - General Fund</b>		<b>427,784</b>	<b>527,565</b>	<b>553,963</b>	<b>553,963</b>
<b>Total OEO Resources</b>		<b>427,784</b>	<b>527,565</b>	<b>553,963</b>	<b>553,963</b>

## 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.

<b>Program Expenditures</b>	<b>2024 Actuals</b>	<b>2025 Adopted</b>	<b>2026 Endorsed</b>	<b>2026 Proposed</b>
Employee Ombud Office	1,222,321	1,234,561	1,296,310	1,314,006
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,222,321</b>	<b>1,234,561</b>	<b>1,296,310</b>	<b>1,314,006</b>
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*