

Legislative Department

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Department Overview

The Legislative Department includes the Seattle City Council, the City's representative electoral body composed of nine at-large, nonpartisan, elected councilmembers. Starting in 2016, the Council will be composed of two at-large members and seven members elected by geographic districts. In addition to the City Council, the Legislative Department has two other primary programs: the Central Staff and the Office of the City Clerk. Each program supports some aspect of the representative role of the City Council, and works with citizens and City departments to develop effective and responsive public policy.

The City Council establishes City laws, approves the City's annual operating and capital improvement budgets, provides oversight to the City's Executive departments, and creates policy for the City. Each councilmember has a staff of legislative assistants who help accomplish this work and who interact with and conduct outreach to the community.

Central Staff provides policy and budget analysis for councilmembers and their staffs as well as finance, budget, accounting, payroll and consultant contracting services to the Legislative Department, the Office of City Auditor and the Office of Professional Accountability Review Board.

The Office of the City Clerk supports and facilitates the City's legislative process; maintains and makes publicly accessible the Council's work product; coordinates public records disclosure requests; oversees and facilitates Citywide compliance with records retention laws; preserves and provides access to the City's official and historical records; maintains the City's Boards and Commissions registry; and provides information technology and operational support to the Legislative Department, Office of City Auditor and Office of Professional Accountability Review Board.

Communications and Human Resources teams are also a part of the Legislative Department. Communications staff assists councilmembers and the Council as a whole in communicating values, goals and issues to the public by providing marketing and public relations services, including website and social media management, strategic media relations and public affairs work. Human Resources staff provides services including employee relations, recruitment, organizational development and training.

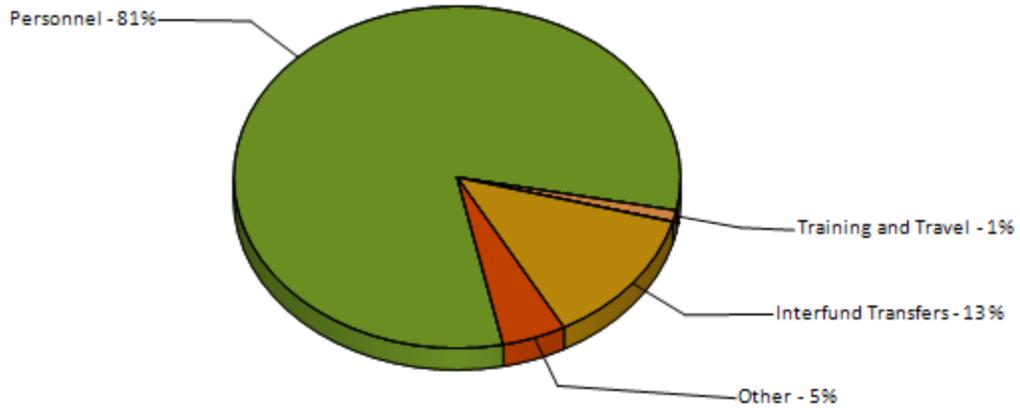
Budget Snapshot

Department Support	2013 Actual	2014 Adopted	2015 Proposed	2016 Proposed
General Fund Support	\$11,869,962	\$12,926,146	\$14,069,242	\$14,181,503
Total Operations	\$11,869,962	\$12,926,146	\$14,069,242	\$14,181,503
Total Appropriations	\$11,869,962	\$12,926,146	\$14,069,242	\$14,181,503
Full-time Equivalent Total*	86.50	87.50	88.50	88.50

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

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2015 Proposed Budget - Expenditure by Category



Budget Overview

The 2015-2016 Proposed Budget maintains support to the City Council and preserves the services provided by the City Council to residents and City departments.

Incremental Budget Changes

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	2015		2016	
	Budget	FTE	Budget	FTE
Total 2014 Adopted Budget	\$ 12,926,146	87.50	\$ 12,926,146	87.50
Baseline Changes				
Citywide Adjustments for Standard Cost Changes	\$ 214,017	0.00	\$ 242,861	0.00
Salary Changes and Position Reclassifications	\$ 300,397	-1.00	\$ 300,397	-1.00
Add Personnel Specialist Position	\$ 106,598	1.00	\$ 106,598	1.00
Remove One-Time Funding	-\$ 145,000	0.00	-\$ 145,000	0.00

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Proposed Changes

Implement Recommendations of Compensation Study	\$ 304,000	0.00	\$ 304,000	0.00
Add Senior Finance Analyst Position	\$ 111,697	1.00	\$ 111,697	1.00
Increase Professional Development Budget for Central Staff	\$ 21,000	0.00	\$ 21,000	0.00
Add Funds for Software Licensing Costs	\$ 29,000	0.00	\$ 29,000	0.00

Proposed Technical Changes

Citywide Training and Travel Reallocation	-\$ 7,374	0.00	-\$ 7,374	0.00
Technical Adjustments	-\$ 31,274	0.00	-\$ 27,832	0.00
Final Citywide Adjustments for Standard Cost Changes	\$ 240,035	0.00	\$ 320,010	0.00

Total Incremental Changes	\$ 1,143,096	1.00	\$ 1,255,357	1.00
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2015 - 2016 Proposed Budget	\$ 14,069,242	88.50	\$ 14,181,503	88.50
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Descriptions of Incremental Budget Changes

Baseline Changes

Citywide Adjustments for Standard Cost Changes - \$214,017

Citywide technical adjustments made in the "Baseline Phase" reflect changes due to inflation, central cost allocations, retirement, healthcare, workers' compensation, and unemployment costs. These adjustments reflect initial assumptions about these costs and inflators early in the budget process.

Salary Changes and Position Reclassifications - \$300,397/(1.00) FTE

This change contains several components based on the Human Resources Department's studies of several job classifications and their work in the Legislative Department. A 2014 compensation study compared the salaries of Central Staff legislative analysts to those who perform the same body of work for elected officials in other cities and found that the City analysts were paid less. As a result, the proposed budget includes \$188,094 to bring salaries into line with those in other jurisdictions. In addition, the Human Resources Department reclassified four positions as a result of job studies. An administrative staff analyst position and a legislative information supervisor position were both reclassified to executive assistant, senior, and two council clerk positions were reclassified to executive assistant for a total add of \$112,303.

This change also removes 1.0 FTE position authority for an unfilled office/maintenance aide position.

Add Personnel Specialist Position - \$106,598/1.00 FTE

This change increases the Legislative Department budget and adds a 1.0 FTE personnel specialist.

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Remove One-Time Funding - (\$145,000)

This item includes budget reductions for two one-time expenses that were added in the 2014 Adopted Budget. \$100,000 funded a consultant study of the City's options with respect to developing a parental-leave policy and \$45,000 funded the purchase of a software system to manage the process of legislation.

Proposed Changes

Implement Recommendations of Compensation Study - \$304,000

This item provides funding to increase pay for Councilmembers' legislative assistants, based on a compensation study conducted by the Human Resources Department which found that they were underpaid.

Add Senior Finance Analyst Position - \$111,697/1.00 FTE

This change adds a senior finance analyst, responsive to the current staff's workload issues. The position will also lead an effort to update and streamline existing systems and processes.

Increase Professional Development Budget for Central Staff - \$21,000

This change increases the professional development budget for Council Central Staff.

Add Funds for Software Licensing Costs - \$29,000

This change funds an annual license (\$24,000) for Citywide use of Legistar. Legistar is workflow-management software that supports a government's legislative process from initial department proposals through Council action. In addition, \$5,000 will fund customized reports.

Proposed Technical Changes

Citywide Training and Travel Reallocation - (\$7,374)

This adjustment makes small reductions to training and travel budget appropriations Citywide. The Budget reallocates these funds to a new Centralized Management and Leadership Development program in the Department of Human Resources. More information on the new training program can be found in the Department of Human Resources budget section.

Technical Adjustments - (\$31,274)

Changes reflected in this category include: adjustments within or between Budget Control Levels that align funding with spending requirements, corrections to baseline adjustments made during Executive phase, and other technical changes to staffing and program funding requirements. These changes are considered technical in nature because they do not significantly affect approved department service delivery or require new or additional policy decisions.

Final Citywide Adjustments for Standard Cost Changes - \$240,035

Citywide technical adjustments made in the "Proposed Phase" reflect changes due to inflation, central cost allocation, retirement, healthcare, workers' compensation, and unemployment costs. These adjustments reflect updates to preliminary cost assumptions established in the "Baseline Phase."

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The following information summarizes the programs in Legislative Department Budget Control Level:

Central Staff Program

The purpose of the Central Staff Program is to support the City Council in arriving at sound public policy by providing technical and policy analysis on issues before the Council and to provide finance, budget, accounting, payroll and consultant contracting services to the Legislative Department, Office of City Auditor and Office of Professional Accountability Review Board.

	2013	2014	2015	2016
Expenditures/FTE	Actual	Adopted	Proposed	Proposed
Central Staff	2,759,881	2,934,837	3,378,759	3,396,177
Full-time Equivalents Total	20.00	20.00	21.00	21.00

City Clerk Program

The purpose of the City Clerk Program is to support and facilitate the City's legislative process; maximize public access to the City Clerk's holdings and online records; preserve the City's official and historical records by establishing standards which promote compliance with the Public Records Acts; maintain the City's Boards & Commissions Registry; serve as the City's ex officio elections officer; oversee compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act; and provide information technology, human resources and operational support to the Legislative Department, Office of City Auditor and Office of Professional Accountability Review Board.

	2013	2014	2015	2016
Expenditures/FTE	Actual	Adopted	Proposed	Proposed
City Clerk	2,747,413	3,027,892	3,113,351	3,138,665
Full-time Equivalents Total	27.50	28.50	26.50	26.50

City Council Program

The purpose of the City Council Program is to set policy; review, consider and determine legislative action; approve the City's budget; and provide oversight of City departments. The goal of the City Council is to be an open and transparent, effective and accountable local government that is committed to the strength of our diversity and dedicated to the health of all of our neighborhoods. This program consists of the nine councilmembers, their Legislative Assistant staff and the Communications staff.

	2013	2014	2015	2016
Expenditures/FTE	Actual	Adopted	Proposed	Proposed
City Council	4,542,883	4,948,373	5,507,948	5,549,360
Full-time Equivalents Total	39.00	39.00	41.00	41.00

General Expense Program

The purpose of the General Expense Program is to account for expenses necessary to operate the entire department, and that are not necessarily attributable to a specific program. These expenditures include workers' compensation and unemployment claims; information technology hardware and software costs; common area equipment, furniture and related expenses; and internal city cost allocations and charges, such as space rent, information technology, telephone services and common area building maintenance. It also includes Office of Professional Accountability Review Board expenses.

	2013	2014	2015	2016
Expenditures	Actual	Adopted	Proposed	Proposed
General Expense	1,819,786	2,015,044	2,069,184	2,097,301