

Agency Budget Comparison

The following table compares the 2023 biennium appropriated budget and the adopted budget for the 2025 biennium by type of expenditure and source of funding.

Agency Budget Comparison				
Budget Item	Appropriated Budget 22-23	Legislative Budget 24-25	Biennium Change	Biennium % Change
Personal Services	1,105,609	1,158,392	52,783	4.77 %
Operating Expenses	513,680	587,345	73,665	14.34 %
Transfers	6,000	0	(6,000)	(100.00)%
Total Expenditures	\$1,625,289	\$1,745,737	\$120,448	7.41 %
General Fund	1,625,289	1,745,737	120,448	7.41 %
Total Funds	\$1,625,289	\$1,745,737	\$120,448	7.41 %
Total Ongoing	\$1,387,700	\$1,749,025	\$361,325	26.04 %
Total OTO	\$237,589	(\$3,288)	(\$240,877)	(101.38)%

Agency Description

The Commissioner of Political Practices (COPP) is an independent and nonpartisan office, whose mission is to monitor and enforce, in a fair and impartial manner: campaign practices and campaign finance disclosure; lobbying disclosure; business interest disclosure of statewide and state district candidates, elected state officials, and state department directors, ethical standards of conduct for legislators, public officers, and state employees, and to investigate legitimate complaints that arise concerning any of the foregoing. The COPP has responsibilities that were defined by a legislative initiative in 1980 requiring disclosure of acts by lobbyists and business interests of elected officials. COPP also has responsibility for the ethical standards of conduct for legislators, public officers, and state employees pursuant to Title 2, Chapter 2, MCA.

Agency Highlights

Commissioner of Political Practices Major Budget Highlights
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The legislature adopted an increase to the Commissioner of Political Practices 2025 biennium budget of approximately \$120,000 or 7.4% compared to the 2023 biennium budget. Changes adopted by the legislature include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Increases in general fund for statewide present law adjustments in personal services and fixed costs ◦ An additional 1.0% vacancy savings and a reduction to the statewide present law adjustment for inflation ◦ The reestablishment of the COPP's 1.00 FTE legal position in the ongoing base budget ◦ The passage and approval of HB 132, which eliminated the restricted legislative audit appropriation in FY 2024

Agency Actuals and Budget Comparison

The following table compares FY 2022 actual expenditures, FY 2022 and FY 2023 appropriations, and the adopted budget for FY 2024 and FY 2025 by type of expenditure and source of funding.

Agency Actuals and Budget Comparison						
Budget Item	Actuals Fiscal 2022	Approp. Fiscal 2022	Approp. Fiscal 2023	Legislative Fiscal 2024	Legislative Fiscal 2025	
FTE	0.00	6.00	6.00	7.00	7.00	
Personal Services	496,459	541,375	564,234	578,311	580,081	
Operating Expenses	193,644	262,185	251,495	292,115	295,230	
Transfers	0	6,000	0	0	0	
Total Expenditures	\$690,103	\$809,560	\$815,729	\$870,426	\$875,311	
General Fund	690,103	809,560	815,729	870,426	875,311	
Total Funds	\$690,103	\$809,560	\$815,729	\$870,426	\$875,311	
Total Ongoing	\$577,584	\$690,811	\$696,889	\$872,070	\$876,955	
Total OTO	\$112,519	\$118,749	\$118,840	(\$1,644)	(\$1,644)	

Summary of Legislative Action

The legislature adopted an increase to the Commissioner of Political Practice's total biennial appropriations of approximately 7.4% or \$120,000 compared to the 2023 biennium budget. The primary reason for the increase was due to the adoption of the statewide present law adjustments for personal services, fixed costs, and inflation.

In addition, the legislature approved general fund appropriation authority for 1.00 FTE for a legal position in the ongoing budget, removing it as one-time-only. Finally, the legislature reduced general fund in FY 2024 and FY 2025 for the adopted Risk Management and Tort Defense (RMTD) premium rate holiday as one-time-only.

Funding

The following table shows adopted agency funding for all sources of authority.

Total Commissioner of Political Practices Funding by Source of Authority 2025 Biennium Budget Request - Commissioner of Political Practices						
Funds	HB2 Ongoing	HB2 OTO	Non-Budgeted Proprietary	Statutory Appropriation	Total All Sources	% Total All Funds
General Fund	1,749,025	(3,288)	0	0	1,745,737	100.00 %
State Special Total	0	0	0	0	0	0.00 %
Federal Special Total	0	0	0	0	0	0.00 %
Proprietary Total	0	0	0	0	0	0.00 %
Other Total	0	0	0	0	0	0.00 %
Total All Funds	\$1,749,025	(\$3,288)	\$0	\$0	\$1,745,737	
Percent - Total All Sources	100.19 %	(0.19)%	0.00 %	0.00 %		

The Commissioner of Political Practices is entirely funded with general fund.

Budget Summary by Category

The following table summarizes the total budget by base, present law adjustments, and new proposals. For a description of these categories, please see the glossary.

Budget Summary by Category									
Budget Item	-----General Fund-----				-----Total Funds-----				
	Budget Fiscal 2024	Budget Fiscal 2025	Biennium Fiscal 24-25	Percent of Budget	Budget Fiscal 2024	Budget Fiscal 2025	Biennium Fiscal 24-25	Percent of Budget	
2023 Base Budget	696,889	696,889	1,393,778	79.84 %	696,889	696,889	1,393,778	79.84 %	
SWPL Adjustments	74,572	57,403	131,975	7.56 %	74,572	57,403	131,975	7.56 %	
PL Adjustments	28	24	52	0.00 %	28	24	52	0.00 %	
New Proposals	98,937	120,995	219,932	12.60 %	98,937	120,995	219,932	12.60 %	
Total Budget	\$870,426	\$875,311	\$1,745,737		\$870,426	\$875,311	\$1,745,737		

Other Legislation

HB 947 – *Revise election laws*

This legislation changes the statute of limitations for actions of a person who intentionally or negligently violates any of the reporting provisions of election laws. It changes the retention schedule for campaign account records from 4 years to 2 years. There is a \$500 general fund appropriation to the commissioner of political practices for FY 2024 to fund the updates to their website for the changes.

Executive Budget Comparison

The following table compares the legislative budget for the biennium to the budget requested by the Governor by type of expenditure and source of funding.

Executive Budget Comparison									
Budget Item	Approp. Fiscal 2023	Executive Budget Fiscal 2024	Legislative Budget Fiscal 2024	Leg — Exec. Difference Fiscal 2024	Executive Budget Fiscal 2025	Legislative Budget Fiscal 2025	Leg — Exec. Difference Fiscal 2025	Biennium Difference Fiscal 24-25	
FTE	6.00	7.00	7.00	0.00	7.00	7.00	0.00	0.00	
Personal Services	564,234	579,588	578,311	(1,277)	581,355	580,081	(1,274)	(2,551)	
Operating Expenses	251,495	314,479	292,115	(22,364)	295,206	295,230	24	(22,340)	
Transfers	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Total Costs	\$815,729	\$894,067	\$870,426	(\$23,641)	\$876,561	\$875,311	(\$1,250)	(\$24,891)	
General Fund	815,729	894,067	870,426	(23,641)	876,561	875,311	(1,250)	(24,891)	
Total Funds	\$815,729	\$894,067	\$870,426	(\$23,641)	\$876,561	\$875,311	(\$1,250)	(\$24,891)	
Total Ongoing	\$696,889	\$771,461	\$872,070	\$100,609	\$754,292	\$876,955	\$122,663	\$223,272	
Total OTO	\$118,840	\$122,606	(\$1,644)	(\$124,250)	\$122,269	(\$1,644)	(\$123,913)	(\$248,163)	

The legislature adopted appropriations that are approximately \$25,000 lower than proposed appropriations for the 2025 biennium. Significant differences in the legislative budget compared to the proposed budget include:

- The legislature adopted an additional 1.0% vacancy savings
- Reestablishing the Risk Management and Tort Defense Division (RMTD) premium rate in the agency budgets and establishing a one-time-only reduction for the RMTD premium rate, due to the adopted premium holiday. This change has no effect on the agency's overall budget
- The legislature adopted 1.00 FTE legal position in the ongoing base budget and removed it as one-time-only. The net effect of this change on the overall budget amount is zero
- The legislature passed and approved HB 132, which modifies the timing of legislative audits and removes the appropriation authority for the COPP legislative audit

Language and Statutory Authority

The legislature adopted the following language in HB 2:

"The Commissioner of Political Practices includes a one-time-only reduction in FY 2024 and FY 2025 for a suspension of insurance premium payments to the Risk Management and Tort Defense Division's proprietary fund."

Additionally, the legislature adopted the following HB 2 language, contingent on the passage and approval of other bills, and the adjustments to HB 2 appropriations are included as decision packages and incorporated in the tables in the fiscal report:

"If HB 132 is passed and approved by the Legislature, Legislative Audit is void."

"The Commissioner of Political Practices includes an increase in general fund of \$6,560 in FY 2024 and \$8,173 in FY 2025. The increase was provided to offset inflationary impacts."

"If HB 774 is passed and approved, the Commissioner of Political Practices is increased by \$90,170 general fund in FY 2024 and \$84,570 general fund in FY 2025, and the Commissioner of Political Practices may increase full-time equivalent positions authorized in HB 2 by 1.50 FTE in FY 2024 and 1.50 FTE in FY 2025."

Program Actuals and Budget Comparison

The following table compares FY 2022 actual expenditures, FY 2022 and FY 2023 appropriations, and the adopted budget for FY 2024 and FY 2025 by type of expenditure and source of funding.

Program Actuals and Budget Comparison					
Budget Item	Actuals Fiscal 2022	Approp. Fiscal 2022	Approp. Fiscal 2023	Legislative Fiscal 2024	Legislative Fiscal 2025
FTE	0.00	6.00	6.00	7.00	7.00
Personal Services	496,459	541,375	564,234	578,311	580,081
Operating Expenses	193,644	262,185	251,495	292,115	295,230
Transfers	0	6,000	0	0	0
Total Expenditures	\$690,103	\$809,560	\$815,729	\$870,426	\$875,311
General Fund	690,103	809,560	815,729	870,426	875,311
Total Funds	\$690,103	\$809,560	\$815,729	\$870,426	\$875,311
Total Ongoing	\$577,584	\$690,811	\$696,889	\$872,070	\$876,955
Total OTO	\$112,519	\$118,749	\$118,840	(\$1,644)	(\$1,644)

Present Law Adjustments

The "Present Law" Adjustments table shows the changes from the base appropriation to the adopted budget. "Statewide Present Law" adjustments (DP 1, DP 2, DP 3) are standard categories of adjustments made to all agencies. Decisions on these items were applied globally to all agencies.

	-----Fiscal 2024-----					-----Fiscal 2025-----				
	FTE	General Fund	State Special	Federal Special	Total Funds	FTE	General Fund	State Special	Federal Special	Total Funds
DP 1 - Personal Services	0.00	11,588	0	0	11,588	0.00	13,692	0	0	13,692
DP 2 - Fixed Costs	0.00	48,361	0	0	48,361	0.00	26,372	0	0	26,372
DP 3 - Inflation Deflation	0.00	14,623	0	0	14,623	0.00	17,339	0	0	17,339
DP 20 - SABHRS Rate Adjustment	0.00	52	0	0	52	0.00	46	0	0	46
DP 30 - Motor Pool Rate Adjustment	0.00	(24)	0	0	(24)	0.00	(22)	0	0	(22)
DP 222 - RMTD Adjustment	0.00	1,644	0	0	1,644	0.00	1,644	0	0	1,644
DP 223 - RMTD Adjustment (OTO)	0.00	(1,644)	0	0	(1,644)	0.00	(1,644)	0	0	(1,644)
Grand Total All Present Law Adjustments	0.00	\$74,600	\$0	\$0	\$74,600	0.00	\$57,427	\$0	\$0	\$57,427

**"Total Funds" amount includes funding from sources other than General Fund, State Special, or Federal Special (i.e. Proprietary).

DP 1 - Personal Services -

The legislature adopted adjustments to the present law personal services budget for expected changes, management decisions, and budget modifications.

DP 2 - Fixed Costs -

The legislature adopted the adjustment for the funding required in the proposed budget for fixed costs assessed by other agencies within state government for the services they provide. Examples include: warrant writer, motor pool, information technology services, etc. The rates charged for these services are approved in the section of the budget that provides the services.

DP 3 - Inflation Deflation -

The legislature adopted the adjustment for the budgetary changes generated from the application of inflation and deflation factors to specific expenditure accounts. Affected accounts include: other services, supplies and materials, communications, in-state motor pool and motor pool leased vehicles, and repair and maintenance.

DP 20 - SABHRS Rate Adjustment -

The legislature adopted an increase to proposed SABHRS rates.

DP 30 - Motor Pool Rate Adjustment -

The legislature adopted a reduction to proposed motor pool rates.

DP 222 - RMTD Adjustment -

The legislature adopted an adjustment to the insurance premiums paid to the Risk Management and Tort Defense Division proprietary fund. This decision package eliminates the reduction included in DP 2. This change is necessary to designate the reduction as one-time-only in the budgeting system.

DP 223 - RMTD Adjustment (OTO) -

The legislature adopted an adjustment to the insurance premiums paid to the Risk Management and Tort Defense Division proprietary fund. This decision package designates the reduction as one-time-only.

New Proposals

The “New Proposals” table shows new changes to spending.

New Proposals	-----Fiscal 2024-----					-----Fiscal 2025-----				
	FTE	General Fund	State Special	Federal Special	Total Funds	FTE	General Fund	State Special	Federal Special	Total Funds
DP 333 - Adjustment to Inflation	0.00	(6,560)	0	0	(6,560)	0.00	(8,173)	0	0	(8,173)
DP 555 - Additional Vacancy Savings	0.00	(1,277)	0	0	(1,277)	0.00	(1,274)	0	0	(1,274)
DP 1400 - HB 132 voids legislative audit	0.00	(22,392)	0	0	(22,392)	0.00	0	0	0	0
DP 3201 - Reestablish Legal Position	1.00	122,606	0	0	122,606	1.00	122,269	0	0	122,269
DP 3333 - Additional Adjustment to Inflation	0.00	6,560	0	0	6,560	0.00	8,173	0	0	8,173
Total	1.00	\$98,937	\$0	\$0	\$98,937	1.00	\$120,995	\$0	\$0	\$120,995

***Total Funds" amount includes funding from sources other than General Fund, State Special, or Federal Special (i.e. Proprietary).

DP 333 - Adjustment to Inflation -

The legislature adopted an adjustment to inflation included in DP 3.

DP 555 - Additional Vacancy Savings -

The legislature adopted an additional 1.0% vacancy savings.

DP 1400 - HB 132 voids legislative audit -

The legislature adopted contingency language to reduce appropriations if HB 132 was passed and approved and this decision package implements this language. HB 132 modifies the timing of legislative audits, providing for a transition from biennial audits to allowing the auditor to select agencies for auditing based on certain considerations.

DP 3201 - Reestablish Legal Position -

The legislature adopted general fund authority to reestablish 1.00 FTE for a legal position in the Commissioner of Political Practices.

DP 3333 - Additional Adjustment to Inflation -

The legislature adopted an additional adjustment to inflation included in DP 3.