





April 24, 2025

MEMORANDUM

TO: Ingrid S. Watson, Chair
Government Operations and Fiscal Policy (GOFP) Committee

THRU: Joseph R. Hamlin 
Director of Budget and Policy Analysis

FROM: Roger G. Banegas 
Legislative Budget and Policy Analyst

RE: Office of Human Rights
Fiscal Year 2026 Budget Review

Budget Overview

- The FY 2026 Proposed Budget for the Office of Human Rights is \$2,774,600. This represents a decrease of \$277,300, or 9.1%, below the FY 2025 Approved Budget.
- The decrease is largely due to a decrease in operating costs for contracts for legal services to residents under threat of deportation, investigation, and language access. There is also a decrease in operating costs for Human Trafficking funds to align with projected costs, a decrease due to adjusting the vacant executive director salary requirements and reduction in overtime, and a decrease in operating costs for court reporter fees, office supplies, and advertising reduced to align with projected costs.
- The General Fund portion of the FY 2026 proposed budget is \$2,717,600. This is a decrease of 280,300, or 9.3%, below the FY 2025 Approved Budget.
- The FY 2026 Proposed Grant Budget for the Office of Human Rights is \$57,000, which is an increase of \$3,000, or 5.6%, above the FY 2025 Approved Budget.
- Major source of grant funds in the FY 2026 Proposed Budget includes the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) Worksharing Agreement.

Expenditures by Fund Type

| Fund | FY 2024 Actual | FY 2025 Approved | FY 2025 Estimated | % Change - Est vs App | FY 2026 Proposed | \$ Change | % Change |
|--------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| General Fund | \$ 2,855,509 | \$ 2,997,900 | \$ 2,841,600 | -5.2% | \$ 2,717,600 | \$ (280,300) | -9.3% |
| Grants | \$ 63,555 | \$ 54,000 | \$ 51,900 | -3.9% | 57,000 | 3,000 | 5.6% |
| Total | \$ 2,919,064 | \$ 3,051,900 | \$ 2,893,500 | -5.2% | \$ 2,774,600 | \$ (277,300) | -9.1% |

Budget Comparison - General Fund

Actual Fiscal Year 2024 to Proposed Fiscal Year 2026

| Category | FY 2024 Actual | FY 2025 Approved | FY 2025 Estimated | FY 2026 Proposed | Change Amount | Percentage Change |
|--------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| Compensation | \$ 1,270,029 | \$ 1,428,100 | \$ 1,341,300 | \$ 1,423,500 | \$ (4,600) | -0.3% |
| Fringe Benefits | 451,573 | 507,000 | 454,000 | 503,000 | (4,000) | -0.8% |
| Operating Expenses | 1,133,907 | 1,062,800 | 1,046,300 | 791,100 | (271,700) | -25.6% |
| Total | \$ 2,855,509 | \$ 2,997,900 | \$ 2,841,600 | \$ 2,717,600 | \$ (280,300) | -9.3% |

| Authorized Staffing - All Classifications | | | | | |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|---------------|-----------------|--|
| | FY 2025 Approved | FY 2026 Proposed | Change | % Change | |
| General Fund | 14 | 14 | 0 | 0.0% | |
| Grants | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0.0% | |
| Total | 15 | 15 | 0 | 0.0% | |

Staffing Changes and Compensation

The FY 2026 General Fund compensation is proposed at \$1,423,500, which is a decrease of \$4,600, or 0.3%, below the FY 2025 approved level. The decrease is primarily due to the annualization of FY 2025 and planned FY 2026 salary adjustments to align with projected costs.

- The FY 2026 General Fund staffing level remains unchanged compared to the FY 2025 approved level, with fourteen authorized General Fund positions. The compensation budget includes funding for thirteen of the fourteen full-time positions.
- As of March 20, 2025, the Office reported two (2) General Fund vacant full-time positions (Community Developer – G18 and Executive Director – G33) in FY 2025.
- As of March 20, 2025, the Office reported that it had experienced one (1) resignation in FY 2025, with an attrition rate of 6% YTD. The position most affected was the Executive Director

position. This resignation had minimal impact on office operations because another employee is currently performing in an acting capacity.

Fringe Benefits

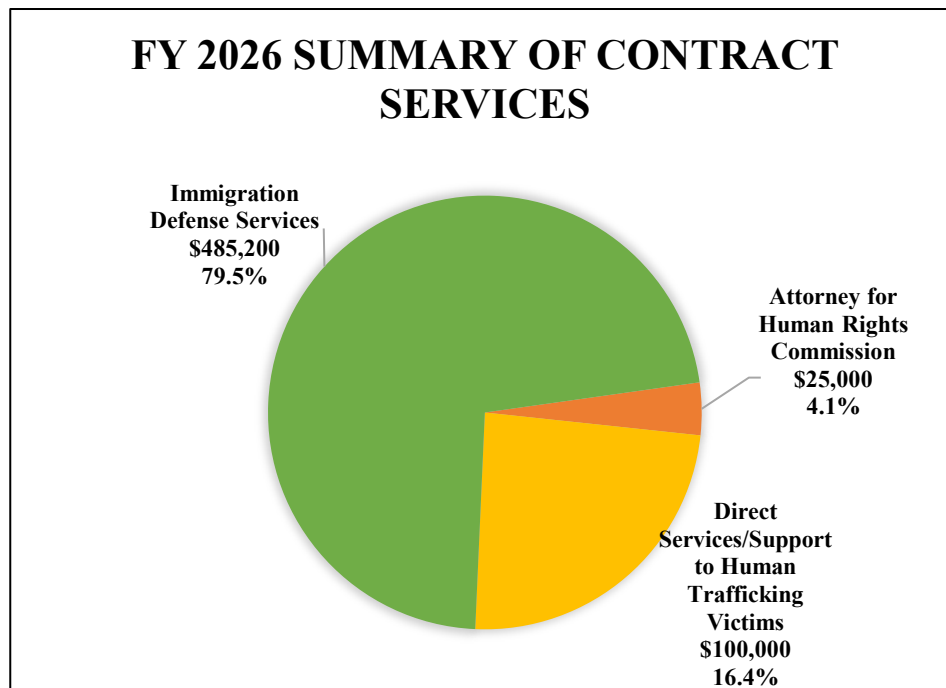
- FY 2026 Fringe Benefits are proposed at \$503,000, a decrease of \$4,000, or 0.8%, below the FY 2025 approved level, to align with projected costs. The fringe benefit rate decreases from 35.5% to 35.3%.

Operating Expenses

- FY 2026 Operating Expenses are proposed at \$791,100, which is a decrease of \$271,700, or 25.6%, below the FY 2025 approved level. The operating expenses are comprised of the following major items:
 - Administrative Contracts \$510,200
 - Operating Contracts \$100,000
 - Office Automation \$80,500
 - Miscellaneous \$35,800
- The accompanying table compares the FY 2026 Proposed Budget operating expenditures with the FY 2025 Approved Budget operating expenditures. In five (5) of the categories, the FY 2026 Proposed Budget decreases planned spending from the FY 2025 budget. In three (3) categories, expenditures remain unchanged, while in two (2) categories, the FY 2026 Proposed Budget level increases compared to the FY 2025 budget.

| Operating Objects | FY 2024 Actual (OHR) | FY 2025 Budget | FY 2026 Proposed | FY 2025 - FY 2026 | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|---------------------|---------------|
| | | | | \$ Change | % Change |
| Telephone | 11,296 | 12,800 | 14,800 | 2,000 | 15.6% |
| Printing | 140 | 1,000 | 1,000 | - | 0.0% |
| Office Automation | \$ 74,400 | \$ 78,600 | \$ 80,500 | \$ 1,900 | 2.4% |
| Training | 9,089 | 16,500 | 16,500 | - | 0.0% |
| Advertising | 71,504 | 35,400 | 18,400 | (17,000) | -48.0% |
| General and Administrative Contracts | 714,998 | 698,000 | 510,200 | (187,800) | -26.9% |
| General Office Supplies | 20,101 | 18,900 | 13,900 | (5,000) | -26.5% |
| Court Reporter/ PP | 32,679 | - | - | - | N/A |
| Miscellaneous | - | 40,000 | 35,800 | (4,200) | -10.5% |
| Operating Contracts | 199,700 | 161,600 | 100,000 | (61,600) | -38.1% |
| TOTAL | \$ 1,133,907 | \$ 1,062,800 | \$ 791,100 | \$ (271,700) | -25.6% |

- The most significant decreases between the FY 2026 Proposed Budget and the FY 2025 Approved Budget are contained within the General and Administrative Contracts (-\$187,800 decrease), Operating Contracts (-\$61,600 decrease), and Advertising (-\$17,000 decrease) line items. This is a result of a net change in GA Contracts (\$139,800), Non-contracts Investigation (\$25,000), and Language Access (\$23,000). The decrease in Operating Contracts is due to an adjustment to the Human Trafficking contract (\$25,000). The decrease in Advertising is due to an anticipated decline in FY 2026 usage.
- The increase is in Office Automation (\$4,200 increase) due primarily to an increase in the OIT technology allocation charge.
- FY 2026 proposed contracts are \$610,200, which is a decrease of \$248,800 compared to the FY 2025 Approved Budget. The Office reports that the FY 2026 proposed amount will be primarily utilized for the following contract services:



Budget Comparison - Grant Fund

- FY 2026 Grant Funds are proposed at \$57,000, an increase of \$3,000, or 5.6%, above the FY 2025 Approved Budget.
- The Office reports that the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) provides reimbursement through a work-sharing agreement. These funds are provided as a

result of investigations conducted by the Office of Human Rights with regard to allegations of discrimination. EEOC reimburses the Office of Human Rights a fixed amount per case. In FY 2026, funding is provided for one limited-term grant-funded (LTGF) position. There is no change in staffing from the FY 2025 approved budget.

| Category | FY 2024 Actual | FY 2025 Approved | FY 2025 Estimated | FY 2026 Proposed | Change Amount | Percentage Change |
|--------------------|-------------------|---------------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------|----------------------|
| Compensation | \$ 54,877 | \$ - | \$ 44,100 | \$ 48,400 | \$ 48,400 | N/A |
| Fringe Benefits | 8,678 | - | 7,800 | 8,600 | 8,600 | N/A |
| Operating Expenses | \$ - | \$ 54,000 | \$ - | \$ - | \$ (54,000) | -100.0% |
| Total | \$ 63,555 | \$ 54,000 | \$ 51,900 | \$ 57,000 | \$ 3,000 | 5.6% |

Workload and Program Impact

The Office reports that 140 discrimination complaints were opened investigations in FY 2024 and 79 YTD in FY 2025. Additionally, during the current FY 2025, as of February 2025, OHR has completed the investigation of 43 cases, 41 of which were dually filed with the EEOC.

- The Office reports that the Human Trafficking Division keeps track of people reached through training and educational engagements to the extent possible. However, in certain open public settings, such as tabling events and recorded virtual settings, it is not feasible to accurately track engagement efforts. During the first six months of FY 2025, OHR has reached 600 individuals, approximately 360 individuals through direct virtual training and awareness sessions, and approximately 250 individuals through in-person awareness sessions.
- The Office reports that in FY 2025, through the Public Outreach and Engagement Division, it continued its ongoing relationships and programs while creating new partnerships and diversifying its programming. OHR debuted a Lunch and Learn virtual series in partnership with its longstanding event partners the Prince George’s County Memorial Library System (PGCMLS). The Office has also partnered with Marietta House Museum to participate in some of their community days and to develop a film screening sometime in FY 2026. During FY 2025, the Public Outreach and Engagement Division plans to conduct over 170 events, which are in-person and virtual events. *Additional public outreach and engagement efforts can be found on page 10, question 26 of the FY 2026 First Round Responses.*
- The Office reports that the Language Access team has registered and trained all 43 government entities on the use of the Language Access Data Collection and Reporting Systems (LADCRS). Currently, the Language Access Compliance Program (LACP) counts on the active participation of a total of 31 entities that have utilized the system to report Non-English encounters with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) and Non-English Proficiency (NEP) community members including five (5) non-major contact entities that did not have encounters

to report, and 12 entities have failed to report any encounters. Additionally, the system has served as a centralized location to request document translation and language interpretation services amongst different entities.

- The data has helped to identify agencies and services most frequently requested by LEP and NEP communities. The top three (3) entities with the highest number of single inquiries are the Office of Homeland Security (OHS) with 34,352 inquiries, the Office of Community Relations (OCR) with 10,357 inquiries, and the Department of Social Services (DSS) with 4,993 inquiries.
- The Office reports that as of FY 2025, the number of entities under the Language Access Compliance Program increased to a total of 43 entities. There are a total of 14 entities in compliance with a score of 90% or higher, in addition to nine (9) entities that are in progress to compliance with a score between 80-89%. Currently, there are 20 entities in non-compliance with a score of 79% or lower.
 - A key factor that affects an entity's compliance is the high turnover of the appointed Language Access Compliance Program Coordinators (LACPCs). Each time an entity has a new LACPC, the LACPC must undergo extensive training and onboarding, thus setting the entity behind in its compliance journey. Other key factors include:
 - Non-active Language Access Coordinator/Lack of engagement from Language Access Coordinator
 - Lack of data reporting
 - Missing key Language Access trainings
 - Lack of document translation identification and reporting.

Additional information related to the Language Access Data Collection Reporting System (LADCRS) can be found on pages 11 and 12, Questions 27 and 28 of the FY 26 First Round Responses.

- During FY 2025, OHR has not received any complaints alleging violations of CB-023-2024 (Prohibition of Contractors Engaging in Sex Trafficking and Labor Trafficking) directly from an employee of a County contractor or a referral from the Office of Procurement. OHR met with the Director of the Office of Procurement and other representatives from the Office of Procurement to discuss the mutual impacts of the Bill and to discuss how cases would be deferred between agencies. Currently, Steptoe LLC (a law firm that provided Pro Bono assistance to discuss training opportunities and support in developing recommendations that will support the implementations and awareness of the prohibitions set forth by CB-023-2024) is in the process of developing suggestions as well as training for submission to the Office of Procurement.

Facilities

- OHR has not acquired a new facility or relocated in FY 2025. However, OHR did submit a request to the Office of Central Services to find a new space for the Agency or to remodel the Agency's current space. This request was submitted because the current space does not have enough workstations for all employees when everyone is in the office.

Highlights

- The Office's top accomplishments in **FY 2025** included:
 - Successfully met its contractual obligation with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission through its Investigation Division.
 - Continued its efforts to coordinate anti-trafficking trainings by educating the public and enhancing its data and analytical efforts through its Human Trafficking Division.
 - Conducted trainings for County Government agencies to assist in compliance with the Language Access for Public Services Act of 2017 and 2020.
 - Continued its partnership efforts with outside organizations to build a robust education and outreach events strategy to bring awareness to civil and human rights issues through its Public Outreach and Engagement Division.
- The Office's top priorities for **FY 2026** include:
 - Provide civil and human rights protection to aid in positive economic development and public safety.
 - Provide education and outreach engagement opportunities to positively impact safe neighborhoods and reduce hate, bias, and violent crimes and incidents.
 - Increase the number of coordinated anti-trafficking efforts to positively impact public safety and economic development.
 - Lead/facilitate coordinated anti-trafficking efforts to positively impact public safety, economic development, and violent crime reduction.
 - Increase the percentage of County agencies in compliance with the Language Access for Public Services Act of 2017 and 2022.
 - Additionally, OHR does anticipate, due to the issuing of Executive Orders by the Federal Government, that the Investigation Division might receive more cases based on national origin, sexual orientation, and gender identity because the U.S. Equal Opportunity Commission might take a more reserved position on those discrimination complaints to comply with the Executive Orders. Even if the Investigation Division encounters this increase in cases, the Agency does not project it to become a workload challenge.