



Public Information

RECOMMENDED FY23 BUDGET

\$6,735,699

FULL TIME EQUIVALENTS

63.90

BARRY HUDSON, DIRECTOR

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Office of Public Information (PIO) is to provide timely, accurate, and effective communication with the public. PIO works with the County Executive, departments and agencies, media, County employees, the County Council and other elected officials, businesses, civic groups, and every other segment of the Montgomery County community. PIO provides information through the mass media, social media, internet, presentations, publications and graphics, cable television programming, and telephone and electronic requests for information and assistance via the MC311 Customer Service Center.

BUDGET OVERVIEW

The total recommended FY23 Operating Budget for the Office of Public Information is \$6,735,699, an increase of \$779,505 or 13.09 percent from the FY22 Approved Budget of \$5,956,194. Personnel Costs comprise 96.35 percent of the budget for 79 full-time position(s) and one part-time position(s), and a total of 63.90 FTEs. Total FTEs may include seasonal or temporary positions and may also reflect workforce charged to or from other departments or funds. Operating Expenses account for the remaining 3.65 percent of the FY23 budget.

COUNTY PRIORITY OUTCOMES

While this program area supports all seven of the County Executive's Priority Outcomes, the following is emphasized:

Effective, Sustainable Government

INITIATIVES

- Funding provided for Spanish language communications outreach via Radio America, communicating directly with this specific segment of the County's population.
- Fund 6 new Term MC311 positions to increase the productivity of Service Center operations.
- Provide funding for two new Public Information Officers due to expanded County-wide communications programming.

INNOVATIONS AND PRODUCTIVITY IMPROVEMENTS

- MC311 created a feature where customers can press "3" during the welcome message to be directed to an agent focused on trash collection and recycling, which increased customer satisfaction.

- MC311 altered training for remote operations which also accelerated training, getting customer service representatives handling calls professionally after 3-4 weeks vs. 8-10 weeks.
- During the past year, MC311 has reduced complexity and streamlined business processes to handle requests for service and information with the Office of Human Resources (OHR), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), and the Department of Permitting Services (DPS) resulting in shorter wait times for customers.
- While standardizing and simplifying Knowledge Based Articles (KBA) with plain language, to improve customer satisfaction, MC311 has reduced the number of KBAs considerably.
- MC311 continues to hire Spanish speaking customer service representatives for both permanent and contract positions. MC311 currently has 21 multi-lingual speakers on staff, including contractors.

PROGRAM CONTACTS

Contact Alyce Leach of the Office of Public Information at 240.777.6513 or Derrick Harrigan of the Office of Management and Budget at 240.777.2759 for more information regarding this department's operating budget.

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Performance measures for this department are included below (where applicable), with multi-program measures displayed at the front of this section and program-specific measures shown with the relevant program. The FY22 estimates reflect funding based on the FY22 Approved Budget. The FY23 and FY24 figures are performance targets based on the FY23 Recommended Budget and funding for comparable service levels in FY24.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

MC311 Customer Service Center

MC311 is a key strategic, enterprise-wide initiative that provides the public with a single three-digit number (311) to call for County information and service. In addition, it provides the County with a sophisticated ability to count, track, and respond to resident requests. MC311 provides the general public with a higher quality of service delivery and accountability, while helping the government achieve operational efficiencies.

Program Performance Measures	Actual FY20	Actual FY21	Estimated FY22	Target FY23	Target FY24
Total number of General Information Service Requests created ¹	355,104	338,329	340,000	342,000	345,000
Total number of Fulfillment Service Requests created ²	242,792	272,507	272,507	265,000	265,000
Percent of calls classified as General Information	71.90%	70.41%	71.0%	71.2%	71.4%
Average rate of Fulfillment Service Requests created on the MC311 website and the mobile enabled portal ³	37.53%	41.61%	40.0%	40.5%	41.0%
Average percent of callers requesting to speak Spanish	6.68%	8.38%	6%	6%	6%
Average amount of time it takes to reach an MC311 Customer Service Representative after welcome announcement (in seconds) ⁴	70	241	43	40	40
Average rate of calls that come into 311, but are not answered by a Customer Service Representative (CSR) ⁵	6.15%	15.05%	4%	4%	4%

Program Performance Measures	Actual FY20	Actual FY21	Estimated FY22	Target FY23	Target FY24
Cost per customer contact (in dollars) (salary expenditures divided by the total number of customer contacts by phone, web portal, mobile-enabled portal, Twitter)	\$5.44	\$5.00	\$4.95	\$5.00	\$5.00
Percent of MC311 survey respondents reporting satisfaction	85%	86%	85%	85%	85%

¹ General Information Service Requests are those created, handled and closed in the Customer Service Center.

² Fulfillment Service Requests are those that are forwarded to departments for handling and completion. The numbers and types of service requests are driven by many factors including seasonal events such as tax notices, mass mailings, weather events, and global pandemics.

³ The slow and steady increase in web traffic is expected to resume in FY22, after the increase experienced during the pandemic.

⁴ Surge in social services calls related to COVID-19 in FY20 and FY21, which take more time than other call types, drove this number up.

⁵ Target of 5% was exceeded in FY21 due in part to COVID-19 call surge. An Erlang analysis, which assists call centers with calculating staffing requirements, supports the conclusion that higher staffing drives down unanswered calls.

FY23 Recommended Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY22 Approved	4,322,078	43.95
Enhance: Term MC311 Positions	259,092	6.00
Shift: Customer Service Representative Supervisor	70,110	0.75
Shift: Program Manager II	(123,506)	(1.00)
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.	18,964	0.00
FY23 Recommended	4,546,738	49.70

Public Relations

Under this program, the Public Information Office:

- Educates and informs residents about County issues, programs, and services through press releases, media advisories, news, public events, the County website, e-mail and online newsletters, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, and podcasts.
- Works directly with media organizations to ensure that reporters and editors have accurate and timely information about County issues, programs, and services.
- Develops promotional campaigns to increase awareness of critical issues such as public health and emergency preparedness.
- Develops culturally competent outreach (radio programming) to inform and engage the County's Spanish speaking constituency.
- Provides television and video direction/production services at no cost to the County Executive's Office, and any additional County department requesting assistance.

Program Performance Measures	Actual FY20	Actual FY21	Estimated FY22	Target FY23	Target FY24
Number of press events ¹	64	90	70	75	75
Total attendance at press conferences and press events ²	3,520	3,150	3,308	3,473	3,647
Internal County staff satisfaction with PIO services (scale of 1-4)	3.14	3.27	3.3	3.3	3.3
Total utilization of direct resident communication systems - web, YouTube, video, podcasts, Facebook, Twitter (in millions) ³	83.9	155.2	130	120	110

¹ The increase is due to the possibility of an updated vision of the current administration. With the addition of virtual press events, it makes it easier to hold more events within a year.

² Virtual attendance is tallied from logged-in accounts, so this total is much lower than actual participants and views.

³ FY21 was an anomaly because of COVID-19. Impressions from communications are expected to reduce as the pandemic emergency transitions to a more steady state.

FY23 Recommended Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY22 Approved	1,472,539	8.75
Add: Public Information Officers - Communications	165,324	2.00
Shift: Program Manager II	123,506	1.00
Re-align: Position Change in Program and Funding	122,166	1.20
Enhance: Radio America	48,480	0.00
Shift: Customer Service Supervisor	(70,110)	(0.75)
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.	47,192	0.00
FY23 Recommended	1,909,097	12.20

Web Content and Graphic Management

The Web Content and Graphic Development Program has four major functions.

- Providing creative and technical support to Public Relations, Cable Programming, MC311, and to departments.
- Developing and overseeing the County's graphic identity program to ensure consistency in the County's printed communication for the public. The program develops printing guidelines for departments in accordance with Administrative Procedure 1-7, Use of the Montgomery County Coat of Arms, Logotype and Emblem, and Public Communication Guide.
- Managing the growth and activity on the County's website and the MC311 web portal, which involves the development of policies and procedures for adding information to the website, as well as providing a leadership role in internet management.
- Producing artwork and design services for publications, fliers, decals, exhibits, charts, maps, and other promotional and educational products. Graphic artists provide advice to departments in cost-effective and attractive ways to meet project requirements and objectives.

Program Performance Measures	Actual FY20	Actual FY21	Estimated FY22	Target FY23	Target FY24
Number of press releases and media advisories posted on website	756	1,114	1,110	850	850
Number of subscribers to county communications ¹	203,552	1,187,120	1,180,000	900,000	800,000
Average open rate for email communications ²	20.4%	66%	55%	35%	35%

¹ FY21 was unprecedented which contributed to the specific set of circumstances, increasing the demand for information.

² As information related to COVID-19 unfolded, information needs increased. As the pandemic's emergency status subsides, the rate of engagement is expected to reduce.

FY23 Recommended Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY22 Approved	161,577	1.00
Re-align: Position Change in Program	119,067	1.00
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.	(780)	0.00
FY23 Recommended	279,864	2.00

BUDGET SUMMARY

	Actual FY21	Budget FY22	Estimate FY22	Recommended FY23	%Chg Bud/Rec
COUNTY GENERAL FUND					
EXPENDITURES					
Salaries and Wages	4,030,989	4,178,667	4,386,412	4,937,491	18.2 %
Employee Benefits	1,265,212	1,314,375	1,354,832	1,552,687	18.1 %
County General Fund Personnel Costs	5,296,201	5,493,042	5,741,244	6,490,178	18.2 %
Operating Expenses	821,275	463,152	463,152	245,521	-47.0 %
County General Fund Expenditures	6,117,476	5,956,194	6,204,396	6,735,699	13.1 %
PERSONNEL					
Full-Time	70	71	71	79	11.3 %
Part-Time	1	1	1	1	—
FTEs	52.70	53.70	53.70	63.90	19.0 %
County General Fund Revenues	0	0	0	0	—
GRANT FUND - MCG					
EXPENDITURES					
Salaries and Wages	1,869	0	0	0	—
Employee Benefits	0	0	0	0	—
Grant Fund - MCG Personnel Costs	1,869	0	0	0	—
Operating Expenses	4,535	0	0	0	—
Grant Fund - MCG Expenditures	6,404	0	0	0	—
PERSONNEL					
Full-Time	0	0	0	0	—
Part-Time	0	0	0	0	—
FTEs	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—
REVENUES					
Federal Grants	6,404	0	0	0	—
Grant Fund - MCG Revenues	6,404	0	0	0	—
DEPARTMENT TOTALS					
Total Expenditures	6,123,880	5,956,194	6,204,396	6,735,699	13.1 %
Total Full-Time Positions	70	71	71	79	11.3 %
Total Part-Time Positions	1	1	1	1	—
Total FTEs	52.70	53.70	53.70	63.90	19.0 %
Total Revenues	6,404	0	0	0	—

FY23 RECOMMENDED CHANGES

	Expenditures	FTEs
COUNTY GENERAL FUND		

FY23 RECOMMENDED CHANGES

	Expenditures	FTEs
FY22 ORIGINAL APPROPRIATION	5,956,194	53.70
Changes (with service impacts)		
Enhance: Term MC311 Positions [MC311 Customer Service Center]	259,092	6.00
Add: Public Information Officers - Communications [Public Relations]	165,324	2.00
Enhance: Radio America [Public Relations]	48,480	0.00
Other Adjustments (with no service impacts)		
Increase Cost: Annualization of FY22 Personnel Costs	137,284	0.00
Shift: Program Manager II [Public Relations]	123,506	1.00
Re-align: Position Change in Program and Funding [Public Relations]	122,166	1.20
Re-align: Position Change in Program [Web Content and Graphic Management]	119,067	1.00
Increase Cost: Annualization of FY22 Compensation Increases	111,963	0.00
Increase Cost: FY23 Compensation Adjustment	87,207	0.00
Shift: Customer Service Representative Supervisor [MC311 Customer Service Center]	70,110	0.75
Increase Cost: Printing and Mail Adjustment	1,900	0.00
Increase Cost: Motor Pool Adjustment	1,653	0.00
Decrease Cost: Retirement Adjustment	(4,967)	0.00
Shift: Customer Service Supervisor [Public Relations]	(70,110)	(0.75)
Shift: Program Manager II [MC311 Customer Service Center]	(123,506)	(1.00)
Decrease Cost: Elimination of One-Time Items Approved in FY22	(269,664)	0.00
FY23 RECOMMENDED	6,735,699	63.90

PROGRAM SUMMARY

Program Name	FY22 APPR Expenditures	FY22 APPR FTEs	FY23 REC Expenditures	FY23 REC FTEs
MC311 Customer Service Center	4,322,078	43.95	4,546,738	49.70
Public Relations	1,472,539	8.75	1,909,097	12.20
Web Content and Graphic Management	161,577	1.00	279,864	2.00
Total	5,956,194	53.70	6,735,699	63.90

CHARGES TO OTHER DEPARTMENTS

Charged Department	Charged Fund	FY22 Total\$	FY22 FTEs	FY23 Total\$	FY23 FTEs
COUNTY GENERAL FUND					
Human Resources	Employee Health Self Insurance	0	0.00	0	0.00
Health and Human Services	General Fund	144,613	1.50	153,719	1.50
Permitting Services	Permitting Services	275,558	2.90	305,352	2.90
Housing and Community Affairs	Montgomery Housing Initiative	69,408	0.90	75,942	0.90

CHARGES TO OTHER DEPARTMENTS

Charged Department	Charged Fund	FY22 Total\$	FY22 FTEs	FY23 Total\$	FY23 FTEs
Recycling and Resource Management	Solid Waste Disposal	415,289	4.75	445,804	4.75
Recycling and Resource Management	Solid Waste Collection	107,552	1.25	115,708	1.25
Cable Television Communications Plan	Cable TV	798,744	6.50	554,040	4.30
Total		1,811,164	17.80	1,650,565	15.60

FUNDING PARAMETER ITEMS

CE RECOMMENDED (\$000S)

Title	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27	FY28
COUNTY GENERAL FUND						
EXPENDITURES						
FY23 Recommended	6,736	6,736	6,736	6,736	6,736	6,736
No inflation or compensation change is included in outyear projections.						
Annualization of Positions Recommended in FY23	0	44	44	44	44	44
New positions in the FY23 budget are generally assumed to be filled at least two months after the fiscal year begins. Therefore, the above amounts reflect annualization of these positions in the outyears.						
Labor Contracts	0	297	297	297	297	297
These figures represent the estimated annualized cost of general wage adjustments, service increments, and other negotiated items.						
Subtotal Expenditures	6,736	7,078	7,078	7,078	7,078	7,078

ANNUALIZATION OF FULL PERSONNEL COSTS

	FY23 Recommended		FY24 Annualized	
	Expenditures	FTEs	Expenditures	FTEs
Public Information Officer	82,662	1.00	104,848	1.00
Public Information Officer (Program Manager II) - Communications	82,662	1.00	104,848	1.00
Total	165,324	2.00	209,696	2.00

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK