



Consumer Protection

RECOMMENDED FY24 BUDGET

\$2,622,214

FULL TIME EQUIVALENTS

19.00

 ERIC FRIEDMAN, DIRECTOR

MISSION STATEMENT




The mission of the Office of Consumer Protection (OCP) is to enforce consumer protection laws prohibiting unfair and deceptive business acts or practices to ensure a fair marketplace for consumers and businesses. Activities include complaint resolution, business registration, law enforcement, education, legislation, advocacy, and outreach to vulnerable consumers.

BUDGET OVERVIEW

The total recommended FY24 Operating Budget for the Office of Consumer Protection is \$2,622,214, an increase of \$144,771 or 5.84 percent from the FY23 Approved Budget of \$2,477,443. Personnel Costs comprise 95.00 percent of the budget for 20 full-time position(s) and no part-time position(s), and a total of 19.00 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 5.00 percent of the FY24 budget.

COUNTY PRIORITY OUTCOMES

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

-  **Thriving Youth and Families**
-  **A Growing Economy**
-  **Effective, Sustainable Government**

INITIATIVES

-  Enhance business education and outreach services in the Business Education and Registration Unit to perform business education presentations and provide subject matter expertise to help businesses follow consumer protection laws.

PROGRAM CONTACTS

Contact K. Samuel Buo of the Office of Consumer Protection at 240.777.3760 or Eva Acevedo of the Office of Management and Budget at 240.777.2763 for more information regarding this department's operating budget.

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Performance measures for this department are included below (where applicable). The FY23 estimates reflect funding based on the FY23 Approved Budget. The FY24 and FY25 figures are performance targets based on the FY24 Recommended Budget and funding for comparable service levels in FY25.

Measure	Actual FY21	Actual FY22	Estimated FY23	Target FY24	Target FY25
Program Measures					
Number of business registrations received ¹	707	707	750	805	825
Number of complaint cases received	1,040	1,047	1,050	1,065	1,100
Percent of consumer protection cases closed that are resolved by OCP	63.4%	59.1%	60.0%	62.0%	65.0%
Average number of calendar days to Issue a business license / certificate of registration (excluding new home builder registrations)	9.94	6.85	6.00	5.75	5.00
Average number of workdays to investigate and close a written complaint (All complaints)	38.26	43.63	40.00	38.26	38.00
Average OCP customer satisfaction rating - Outcome of the customer's case (5-point scale) based on customer satisfaction survey	3.54	4.60	4.50	4.50	4.50

¹ Actual FY22 amount includes registrations received for new home builders, new home sellers, motor vehicle repair and towing operators, secondhand personal property dealers, and small electrical repair dealers.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

Consumer Protection

The Consumer Protection program is a law enforcement function established in 1971 responsible for enforcing consumer protection laws to prohibit unfair and deceptive business acts to ensure fairness and integrity in the marketplace for consumers and businesses. The program is responsible for receiving, investigating, and resolving complaints, educating consumers and merchants, and registering and licensing certain businesses. The program has the authority to issue civil citations for violations of law, issue subpoenas to compel testimony and documents, and collaborate with other agencies to advocate for legislation. The program also staffs the Patient Advocate, administers the Domestic Worker law, and beginning in May 2021, the program now provides the County's Public Election Fund Liaison Service.

BUDGET SUMMARY

	Actual FY22	Budget FY23	Estimate FY23	Recommended FY24	%Chg Bud/Rec
COUNTY GENERAL FUND					
EXPENDITURES					
Salaries and Wages	1,580,003	1,869,261	1,760,761	1,961,776	5.0 %
Employee Benefits	452,883	476,209	427,981	529,456	11.2 %
County General Fund Personnel Costs	2,032,886	2,345,470	2,188,742	2,491,232	6.2 %
Operating Expenses	68,295	131,973	131,973	130,982	-0.8 %
County General Fund Expenditures	2,101,181	2,477,443	2,320,715	2,622,214	5.8 %
PERSONNEL					

BUDGET SUMMARY

	Actual FY22	Budget FY23	Estimate FY23	Recommended FY24	%Chg Bud/Rec
Full-Time	19	19	19	20	5.3 %
Part-Time	0	0	0	0	—
FTEs	18.00	18.00	18.00	19.00	5.6 %
REVENUES					
New Home Builder's License	146,170	153,000	153,000	153,000	—
Other Licenses/Permits	55,445	51,000	51,000	51,000	—
Other Fines/Forfeitures	3,100	5,000	5,000	3,000	-40.0 %
Miscellaneous Revenues	25	0	0	0	—
County General Fund Revenues	204,740	209,000	209,000	207,000	-1.0 %

FY24 RECOMMENDED CHANGES

	Expenditures	FTEs
COUNTY GENERAL FUND		
FY23 ORIGINAL APPROPRIATION	2,477,443	18.00
Changes (with service impacts)		
Enhance: Program Specialist for Business Education and Registration Unit [Consumer Protection]	51,794	1.00
Other Adjustments (with no service impacts)		
Increase Cost: FY24 Compensation Adjustment	99,471	0.00
Increase Cost: Annualization of FY23 Compensation Increases	89,650	0.00
Increase Cost: Printing and Mail	358	0.00
Decrease Cost: Retirement Adjustment	(458)	0.00
Decrease Cost: Motor Pool Adjustment	(1,349)	0.00
Decrease Cost: Annualization of FY23 Personnel Costs	(94,695)	0.00
FY24 RECOMMENDED	2,622,214	19.00

CHARGES TO OTHER DEPARTMENTS

Charged Department	Charged Fund	FY23 Total\$	FY23 FTEs	FY24 Total\$	FY24 FTEs
COUNTY GENERAL FUND					
Fire and Rescue Service	Fire	95,778	1.00	89,372	1.00

FUNDING PARAMETER ITEMS

CE RECOMMENDED (\$000S)

Title	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29
COUNTY GENERAL FUND						

FUNDING PARAMETER ITEMS

CE RECOMMENDED (\$000S)

Title	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29
EXPENDITURES						
FY24 Recommended	2,622	2,622	2,622	2,622	2,622	2,622
No inflation or compensation change is included in outyear projections.						
Annualization of Positions Recommended in FY24	0	42	42	42	42	42
New positions in the FY24 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	40	40	40	40	40
These figures represent the estimated annualized cost of general wage adjustments, service increments, and other negotiated items.						
Subtotal Expenditures	2,622	2,704	2,704	2,704	2,704	2,704

ANNUALIZATION OF FULL PERSONNEL COSTS

	FY24 Recommended		FY25 Annualized	
	Expenditures	FTEs	Expenditures	FTEs
Program Specialist for Business Education and Registration Unit	51,794	1.00	93,977	1.00
Total	51,794	1.00	93,977	1.00