




Board of Elections

RECOMMENDED FY26 BUDGET

\$14,234,830

FULL TIME EQUIVALENTS

56.68

 BORIS BRAJKOVIC, ELECTIONS DIRECTOR

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Board of Elections is to register voters, conduct elections, assist persons seeking elective office with candidate filings and campaign fund reports, assist citizens seeking to place questions on the ballot, and preserve election data.

BUDGET OVERVIEW




The total recommended FY26 Operating Budget for the Montgomery County Board of Elections is \$14,234,830, a decrease of \$2,906,307 or 16.96 percent from the FY25 Approved Budget of \$17,141,137. Personnel Costs comprise 44.12 percent of the budget for 34 full-time position(s) and no part-time position(s), and a total of 56.68 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 55.88 percent of the FY26 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**
-  **Effective, Sustainable Government**

INNOVATIONS AND PRODUCTIVITY IMPROVEMENTS

-  The Board of Elections will provide on-site training of election judges and canvassing of mail-in ballots, accommodating the changing voters' preferences that result in the highest number of vote by mail ballots in Maryland.
-  The office expansion will improve operational efficiency and reduce use of outside facilities.
-  Building on the initial efforts made in 2024 elections, Board of Elections will further utilize technological solutions to improve efficiency of election administration at polling places (use of tablets to replace paper forms and streamline real-time communication) and further improve communication with the voters.

PROGRAM CONTACTS

Contact Lisa Merino of the Montgomery County Board of Elections at 240-777-8562 or Hamza Ahmed of the Office of Management and Budget at 240-777-2783 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 FY25 estimates reflect funding based on the FY25 Approved Budget. The FY26 and FY27 figures are performance targets based on the FY26 Recommended Budget and funding for comparable service levels in FY27.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

☀ Administration

The Administration program of the Board of Elections is responsible for delivering a fundamental and legally mandated public good by ensuring that all eligible citizens have the right to vote, and that elections are accurate, fair, and equitable. This requires effective management of resources from the State Board of Elections and County Government, as well as adherence to all Federal, State, and local laws and regulations. This is accomplished through the following activities: public records management, including the certification of election results with the Board of Canvassers; support to the County Board of Elections and its attorney; compliance with Montgomery County Government policies and regulations related to human resources, procurement, budget, etc.; liaising with the Maryland State Board of Elections; compliance with Federal and State statutory and regulatory requirements; and the effective coordination of public information. These combined activities are essential to ensure the accuracy and integrity of the election process and to instill public confidence in election results.

Program Performance Measures	Actual FY23	Actual FY24	Estimated FY25	Target FY26	Target FY27
Total ballots cast (000s)	347	172	533	200	350
Percent of precincts reporting election results by 11:00 p.m.	96.50%	99.22%	96.50%	96.50%	96.50%
Average voter wait time on Election Day (minutes)	1	0	10	0	0
Number of public outreach events	149	303	300	220	250

FY26 Recommended Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY25 Approved	7,740,710	3.00
Increase Cost: Overtime Adjustment	463,786	0.00
Increase Cost: Seasonal Temps	300,119	0.00
Increase Cost: Restore One-Time Lapse Increase	207,333	0.00
Increase Cost: Restore Election Judge Stipend	200,000	0.00
Increase Cost: Printing	91,000	0.00
Increase Cost: Legal/Attorney Services	47,500	0.00
Increase Cost: Restore Election Board Members' Stipend	30,896	0.00
Increase Cost: Outside Postage (Sample Ballot)	25,000	0.00
Increase Cost: Two Office Services Coordinator Positions moved from PT to FT	21,867	0.33
Increase Cost: Background Checks for Temporary Part-Time Employees	2,000	0.00
Increase Cost: Three Percent Inflationary Adjustment to Non-Profit Service Provider Contracts	340	0.00
Decrease Cost: Lapse Adjustment	(158,694)	0.00
Decrease Cost: State Board of Elections Expenses	(708,598)	0.00
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.	(2,444,187)	0.67
FY26 Recommended	5,819,072	4.00

Election Operations

The Election Operations program consists of three independent sections that ensure that both early voting and Election Day are successful. These sections are Polling Place Management, Election Judge Recruitment, and Training and Outreach.

The Polling Place Management section is responsible for leasing early voting locations and Election Day polling places; assigning all Montgomery County voters to Election Day polling places that are in the same or an adjacent precinct to the voter's home address; ensuring each polling place complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and other State and Federal requirements; ensuring all polling places have adequate ballots and supplies; and providing the Board of Elections with information about the cost of facilities, the accessibility of voting sites, and other criteria.

The timeline of Montgomery County's election process is dictated by the Maryland State Election Calendar and begins with the establishment of early voting centers and Election Day polling places. As Polling Place Management is preparing the supplies and equipment necessary to facilitate an election, other sections within Election Operations are preparing Election Judges, and providing voter outreach to the public.

Election Judge Recruitment and Training is responsible for the recruitment of registered Maryland voters to serve as Election Judges during early voting and Election Day. This section also provides training, assigns Election Judges to sites, and provides payment to each volunteer. Recruitment of volunteers is done year-round utilizing a variety of methods, with increased effort and focus in the six months preceding an election. A database of interested volunteers is managed by the section to maintain the efficiency of the selection process.

Training for all election workers is required by State law and is necessary for successful operations on Election Day. The training program includes both on-line and in-person class instruction throughout the County over a period of approximately 12 weeks. Each precinct team includes volunteers that are registered in different political parties, have various levels of experience, and have bilingual language capabilities. Following each election, the Election Judge Recruitment and Training staff completes payroll processing and conducts a thorough precinct performance review and audit.

Montgomery County is required under Section 203 of the Voting Rights Act to provide voting information in Spanish as well as English, and the Outreach section is responsible for meeting the cultural and linguistic needs of Montgomery County voters. This section is responsible for working with community groups and providing direct assistance to eligible residents, including those who are unregistered, for whom English is a second language, who have special needs or disabilities, who are homeless, or who live in underserved communities. Montgomery County is a nationally recognized leader in providing effective voter outreach through voter-focused planning and community engagement. A key asset for the Outreach section is its national award-winning Future Vote Initiative that has recruited over 48,000 students to participate in elections since 2004. The initiative has also recruited nearly 11,000 students that are at least 16 years old to serve as Election Judges.

Program Performance Measures	Actual FY23	Actual FY24	Estimated FY25	Target FY26	Target FY27
Number of designated polling place equivalents per election ¹	343	344	344	344	344
Percent of polling places opening on time	100%	99.7%	100%	100%	100%
Percent of voters rating Election Day polling place as well organized	95%	98%	95%	95%	95%

Program Performance Measures	Actual FY23	Actual FY24	Estimated FY25	Target FY26	Target FY27
Number of in-person training sessions for election workers	247	248	250	240	250
Tax dollars saved by leveraging Future Vote students earning Student Learning (SSL) hours ²	\$29,072	\$44,008	\$60,408	\$41,046	\$56,460
Recruitment and Training: Number of election workers who served at polling places during early voting and Election Day	2,791	3,190	4,100	3,900	4,000
Number of election judges trained per Trainer FTE	400	438	563	540	549
Percent of no-show election workers on Election Day	3.0%	7.6%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%

¹ Figures include both polling places and each day of voting at an early voting site, which is listed separately as a "polling place equivalent" for purposes of staffing.

² This performance measure is based on the number of Future Vote students who assist at the polling places without monetary compensation. The data is captured through the internal tracking of Future Vote assignments. The increase in reported and projected tax dollars saved reflects the increase in the election workers' stipend, the increased number of Future Vote Students, and a more comprehensive calculation that also includes students' assistance throughout the polling place setup and operation on Election Day.

FY26 Recommended Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY25 Approved	5,504,322	22.53
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.	(1,232,140)	(2.00)
FY26 Recommended	4,272,182	20.53

Information Technology

The Information and Technology (IT) program supports the year-round security of all data and the efficient performance of voting equipment for thousands of voters during an election cycle. The IT program is responsible for network infrastructure; the production of data reports; the maintenance of systems related to election operations; the maintenance, storage and security of equipment; and the maintenance of website and database applications mandated for use by the State Board of Elections. The program coordinates with the Maryland State Board of Elections to organize and integrate voter registration information, modify polling place precincts and district boundaries, and transport voting equipment.

The IT program collaborates with Montgomery County's Department of Technology and Enterprise Business Solutions (TEBS) to implement enhancements to the Election Management System. The Election Management System is used to manage election workers, Future Vote students, and polling places. The program also coordinates with TEBS to implement technology that provides valuable information and resources to voters such as the display of wait times on the department website and allows voters to request and receive voting information by text message.

Program Performance Measures	Actual FY23	Actual FY24	Estimated FY25	Target FY26	Target FY27
Number of pieces of election equipment (scanners, ballot marking devices, and pollbooks) prepared for an election	2,348	2,152	2,342	2,100	2,300
Average response time to resolve equipment and/or maintenance concerns during voting hours (hours)	1	1	1	1	1

FY26 Recommended Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY25 Approved	1,505,197	12.45
Increase Cost: Rebuild Election Worker Management System	300,000	0.00
Increase Cost: Electronic Pollbooks Transportation	30,000	0.00

FY26 Recommended Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.	(271,682)	1.00
FY26 Recommended	1,563,515	13.45

Voter Services

Accurate voter registration records are the foundation for fair and equitable elections and are the basis of effective election planning. The Voter Services program administers voter registration and mail-in voting under procedures established by the State Board of Elections and is consistent with election law. Voter Services is also responsible for answering voters' questions and ensuring compliance with Federal and State confidentiality requirements. In addition, the Voter Services program coordinates the counting of mail-in and provisional ballots and ensures that each ballot for an election corresponds to a single eligible voter who has not cast more than one ballot.

Voter Services is a deadline-driven program that diligently processes a constant stream of incoming data. The program processes all changes to name, address, and party affiliation, and maintains a database of citizens that may not vote for reasons of death, felony conviction, ineligibility for jury duty, residency outside of the jurisdiction, or other valid legal reasons.

The program provides legally required training for volunteer registrars; responds to various voter and candidate requests for voter registration applications, listings, and data regarding registered voters; files candidates for office; verifies nominating and referenda petitions; and issues and canvasses mail-in and provisional ballots. The program also tracks returned mail and sends multiple mailings to voters for whom new eligibility information is obtained in order to comply with State and Federal requirements.

The program also provides voter registration data to municipalities within Montgomery County, and is responsible for researching provisional ballots; verifying same-day registration; performing monthly peer audits of other jurisdictions within the state; assisting military and overseas voters; administering voting for residents of nursing homes and assisted living facilities; receiving and staging ballots; conducting the post-election canvassing; counting and auditing of ballots cast; and reconciling and auditing mail-in and provisional voter credit.

Program Performance Measures	Actual FY23	Actual FY24	Estimated FY25	Target FY26	Target FY27
Number of active registered voters (000s)	678	684	685	675	680
Number of registered voters served per program FTE	35,190	35,025	35,385	35,000	35,000
Number of mail-in ballots requested (000s)	142	134	170	130	150
Number of mail-in ballots returned (000s)	119	80	130	90	110
Number of provisional ballots issued on election day(s)	13,879	6,563	8,000	6,000	8,000
Number of Nursing Homes and Assisted Living Facilities Served	29	43	53	53	53

FY26 Recommended Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY25 Approved	2,390,908	18.37
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.	189,153	0.33
FY26 Recommended	2,580,061	18.70

BUDGET SUMMARY

	Actual FY24	Budget FY25	Estimate FY25	Recommended FY26	%Chg Bud/Rec
COUNTY GENERAL FUND					
EXPENDITURES					
Salaries and Wages	4,253,502	4,806,919	4,809,934	5,093,824	6.0 %
Employee Benefits	966,817	1,055,837	1,208,984	1,186,265	12.4 %
County General Fund Personnel Costs	5,220,319	5,862,756	6,018,918	6,280,089	7.1 %
Operating Expenses	7,202,939	11,278,381	11,122,186	7,954,741	-29.5 %
Capital Outlay	2,007	0	0	0	—
County General Fund Expenditures	12,425,265	17,141,137	17,141,104	14,234,830	-17.0 %
PERSONNEL					
Full-Time	32	32	32	34	6.3 %
Part-Time	2	2	2	0	-100.0 %
FTEs	56.35	56.35	56.35	56.68	0.6 %
REVENUES					
Other Charges/Fees	762	1,300	1,300	1,300	—
Miscellaneous Revenues	749	0	0	0	—
County General Fund Revenues	1,511	1,300	1,300	1,300	—

FY26 RECOMMENDED CHANGES

	Expenditures	FTEs
COUNTY GENERAL FUND		
	FY25 ORIGINAL APPROPRIATION	17,141,137 56.35
<u>Other Adjustments (with no service impacts)</u>		
Increase Cost: Overtime Adjustment [Administration]	463,786	0.00
Increase Cost: Seasonal Temps [Administration]	300,119	0.00
Increase Cost: Rebuild Election Worker Management System [Information Technology]	300,000	0.00
Increase Cost: Restore One-Time Lapse Increase [Administration]	207,333	0.00
Increase Cost: Restore Election Judge Stipend [Administration]	200,000	0.00
Increase Cost: FY26 Compensation Adjustment	192,137	0.00
Increase Cost: Printing [Administration]	91,000	0.00
Increase Cost: Annualization of FY25 Compensation Increases	88,624	0.00
Increase Cost: Legal/Attorney Services [Administration]	47,500	0.00
Increase Cost: Motor Pool Adjustment	33,055	0.00
Increase Cost: Restore Election Board Members' Stipend [Administration]	30,896	0.00
Increase Cost: Electronic Pollbooks Transportation [Information Technology]	30,000	0.00
Increase Cost: Outside Postage (Sample Ballot) [Administration]	25,000	0.00
Increase Cost: Two Office Services Coordinator Positions moved from PT to FT [Administration]	21,867	0.33
Increase Cost: Retirement Adjustment	8,893	0.00

FY26 RECOMMENDED CHANGES

	Expenditures	FTEs
Increase Cost: Background Checks for Temporary Part-Time Employees [Administration]	2,000	0.00
Increase Cost: Three Percent Inflationary Adjustment to Non-Profit Service Provider Contracts [Administration]	340	0.00
Decrease Cost: Printing and Mail Adjustment	(12,082)	0.00
Decrease Cost: Annualization of FY25 Personnel Costs	(142,827)	0.00
Decrease Cost: Lapse Adjustment [Administration]	(158,694)	0.00
Decrease Cost: State Board of Elections Expenses [Administration]	(708,598)	0.00
Decrease Cost: Elimination of One-Time Items Approved in FY25	(3,926,656)	0.00
FY26 RECOMMENDED	14,234,830	56.68

PROGRAM SUMMARY

Program Name	FY25 APPR Expenditures	FY25 APPR FTEs	FY26 REC Expenditures	FY26 REC FTEs
Administration	7,740,710	3.00	5,819,072	4.00
Election Operations	5,504,322	22.53	4,272,182	20.53
Information Technology	1,505,197	12.45	1,563,515	13.45
Voter Services	2,390,908	18.37	2,580,061	18.70
Total	17,141,137	56.35	14,234,830	56.68

FUNDING PARAMETER ITEMS

CE RECOMMENDED (\$000S)

Title	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29	FY30	FY31
COUNTY GENERAL FUND						
EXPENDITURES						
FY26 Recommended	14,235	14,235	14,235	14,235	14,235	14,235
No inflation or compensation change is included in outyear projections.						
Labor Contracts	0	36	36	36	36	36
These figures represent the estimated annualized cost of general wage adjustments, service increments, and other negotiated items.						
Subtotal Expenditures	14,235	14,271	14,271	14,271	14,271	14,271

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK