

Office of Hearing Examiner

Sue Tanner, Hearing Examiner

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<http://www.seattle.gov/examiner/>

Department Overview

The Office of Hearing Examiner is Seattle's quasi-judicial forum for reviewing factual and legal issues raised by the application of City Code requirements to specific people or property. As authorized by the Seattle Municipal Code, the office conducts hearings and decides appeals in cases where citizens disagree with a decision made by a City agency. Many of the matters appealed to the Hearing Examiner relate to land use and environmental permit decisions and interpretations made by the Department of Planning and Development. The Hearing Examiner also hears appeals in many other subject areas and makes recommendations to the City Council on rezone petitions, major institution master plans, and other Council land-use actions. Pursuant to authority granted in 2004, the Hearing Examiner also provides contract hearing examiner services to other local governments.

The Hearing Examiner is appointed by the City Council, and Deputy Hearing Examiners are then appointed by the Hearing Examiner. Examiners handle all pre-hearing matters, regulate the conduct of hearings, and prepare decisions and recommendations based upon the hearing record and applicable law. The code requires all examiners to be attorneys with training and experience in administrative hearings. The Hearing Examiner also manages an executive assistant to oversee the administrative areas of the office, a legal assistant to assist with hearings and decision preparation, and an administrative specialist to support all other office positions and provide information to the public.

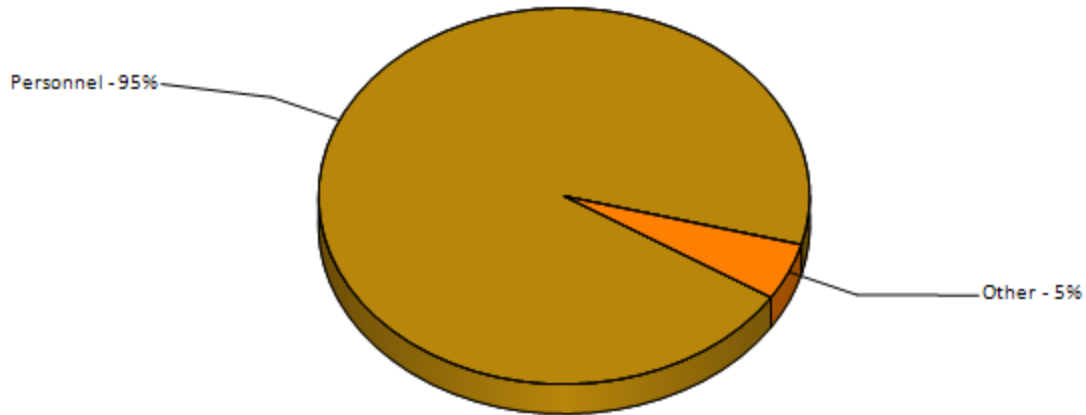
Budget Snapshot

Department Support	2014 Actuals	2015 Adopted	2016 Endorsed	2016 Proposed
General Fund Support	\$637,620	\$665,618	\$670,273	\$666,708
Total Operations	\$637,620	\$665,618	\$670,273	\$666,708
Total Appropriations	\$637,620	\$665,618	\$670,273	\$666,708
Full-time Equivalent Total*	4.63	4.63	4.63	4.63

* FTE totals are provided for information purposes only. Changes in FTEs resulting from City Council or Human Resources Director actions outside of the budget process may not be detailed here.

Office of the Hearing Examiner

2016 Proposed Budget - Expenditure by Category



Budget Overview

The 2016 Proposed Budget does not recommend any significant changes to the Office of Hearing Examiner budget.

Incremental Budget Changes

Office of Hearing Examiner

	2016 Budget	FTE
Total 2016 Endorsed Budget	\$ 670,273	4.63
Baseline Changes		
Citywide Adjustments for Standard Cost Changes	-\$ 7,565	0.00
Proposed Technical Changes		
IT Maintenance for Case Management System Support	\$ 4,000	0.00
Total Incremental Changes	-\$ 3,565	0.00
2016 Proposed Budget	\$ 666,708	4.63

Office of the Hearing Examiner

Descriptions of Incremental Budget Changes

Baseline Changes

Citywide Adjustments for Standard Cost Changes - (\$7,565)

Citywide technical adjustments made in the initial planning phase reflect changes in the internal services costs, health care rate reduction, retirement contribution rate reduction, and updates to unemployment and industrial insurance charges. There was also an adjustment made to the 2016 base to recoup savings from a higher-than-expected inflation provided in the 2015 Adopted Budget for non-labor expenses. These adjustments reflect initial assumptions about these costs and inflators early in the budget process.

Proposed Technical Changes

IT Maintenance for Case Management System Support - \$4,000

The Office of Hearing Examiner uses an electronic case management system, which is no longer supported by the Seattle IT Department. This change reflects increased cost for the Office of Hearing Examiner to continue supporting their case management system until a new system can be developed.

Expenditure Overview

Appropriations	Summit Code	2014 Actuals	2015 Adopted	2016 Endorsed	2016 Proposed
Office of Hearing Examiner Budget Control Level	V1X00	637,620	665,618	670,273	666,708
Department Total		637,620	665,618	670,273	666,708
Department Full-time Equivalent Total*		4.63	4.63	4.63	4.63

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Office of the Hearing Examiner

Appropriations By Budget Control Level (BCL) and Program

Office of Hearing Examiner Budget Control Level

The purpose of the Office of Hearing Examiner Budget Control Level is to conduct fair and impartial hearings in all subject areas where the Seattle Municipal Code grants authority to do so (there are currently more than 75 subject areas) and to issue decisions and recommendations consistent with applicable law.

	2014	2015	2016	2016
Program Expenditures	Actuals	Adopted	Endorsed	Proposed
Office of Hearing Examiner	637,620	665,618	670,273	666,708
Total	637,620	665,618	670,273	666,708
Full-time Equivalents Total*	4.63	4.63	4.63	4.63

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