

Office of the Employee Ombud

Director Position – Vacant

Department contacts not yet available.

Department Overview

The Office of the Employee Ombud (OEO) is a newly created department in 2019 with the mission to support individual City employees in all branches of City government in assessing their concerns about workplace conduct that may be considered inappropriate; may constitute harassment, discrimination, or retaliation; and/or is in conflict with the City's Personnel Rules, Citywide workplace expectations, and other City policies.

The OEO will provide assistance to individual City employees with options to address these concerns. Options include offering employees with an understanding of the City's processes and systems for reporting and investigations, facilitating discussions to break down miscommunication, providing the contact for represented employees' unions, and understanding what remedies are available through State or Federal agencies. It can also support employees with referrals to the City's contracted Employees Assistance Program (EAP) for appropriate emotional assistance.

In addition to individual employee services, the OEO will be engaged with policy improvements that support the City's continuous effort to provide every City employee a safe and respectful workplace where they can do their best work in serving the residents of Seattle. Beginning in 2020, the OEO will submit an annual report to the Mayor's Office and City Council that addresses issues that extend beyond the experiences of individual employees and have a broader, systemic impact on the City. The report may include recommendations to change the City's Personnel Rules, complaint and investigations systems, or trainings, and share information on patterns of inappropriate workplace conduct at the City.

The Mayor issued an [Executive Order](#) in 2018 on anti-harassment and anti-discrimination to create the OEO, following the recommendations by the Anti-Harassment Inter-departmental Team (AH IDT) recommendations on improving the City's workplace culture. The AH IDT will provide oversight of the OEO and help draft the recommendations in OEO's annual report to the Mayor's Office and City Council.

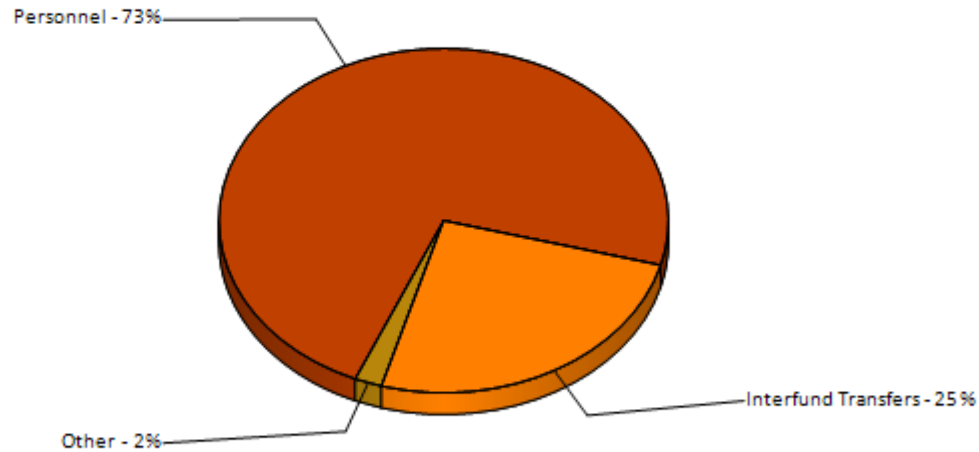
Budget Snapshot

Department Support	2018 Adopted	2019 Adopted	2020 Endorsed
General Fund Support	\$0	\$509,472	\$561,310
Total Operations	\$0	\$509,472	\$561,310
Total Appropriations	\$0	\$509,472	\$561,310
Full-time Equivalent Total*	0.00	3.00	3.00

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

Office of the Employee Ombud

2019 Adopted Budget - Expenditure by Category



Budget Overview

The 2019 Adopted and 2020 Endorsed Budget establishes a budget and staffing for the new Office of the Employee Ombud's first and second years of operation. The budget provides the foundation for staff and resources to carry out the office's mission as described above in the department overview.

The adopted budget adds three full-time positions in the newly created office: one position will serve as the Ombud director, who will develop and manage all functions and responsibilities of the OEO, and two staff positions that will also provide information to individual department employees to assist in understanding options to address inappropriate workplace conduct.

In addition to staffing, the adopted budget provides OEO with budget to receive internal services from the Seattle Department of Human Resources, Finance and Administrative Services, and the Seattle Information Technology Department. Support such as health care charges for departmental staff and a small budget for consulting services for outreach and counsel are also provided.

City Council Changes to the Proposed Budget

The City Council reduced \$53,742 of General Fund in 2019 from the Office of the Employee Ombud to reflect hiring of staff half-way through the first quarter of 2019.

The Council also made an across-the-board reduction to all General Fund appropriation authority in order to support other priorities. The percentage reduction in 2019 is about 0.07% and in 2020 about 0.1%. This reduced OEO's budget by \$384 in 2019 and \$595 in 2020.

Office of the Employee Ombud

Incremental Budget Changes

Office of the Employee Ombud

	2019		2020	
	Budget	FTE	Budget	FTE
Proposed Changes				
Create Office of the Ombud	\$ 563,598	3.00	\$ 561,905	3.00
Council Changes				
Council Reduction to Labor Costs	-\$ 53,742	0.00	\$ 0	0.00
Errata Changes	\$ 0	0.00	\$ 0	0.00
General Fund Appropriation Reduction	-\$ 384	0.00	-\$ 595	0.00
Total Incremental Changes	\$ 509,472	3.00	\$ 561,310	3.00
2019 Adopted/2020 Endorsed Budget	\$ 509,472	3.00	\$ 561,310	3.00

Descriptions of Incremental Budget Changes

Proposed Changes

Create Office of the Ombud - \$563,598/3.00 FTE

This item funds the first year of operations for the new Office of the Employee Ombud (OEO). This includes funding for three positions:

- 1.0 FTE Manager 2 Ombud position, to direct the office's work and supervise the other staff; and
- 2.0 FTE Strategic Advisor 1 positions that will assist executive department employees in navigating the City's processes when experiencing a workplace that conflicts with the City's workplace expectations.

This adjustment includes \$128,900, annually, for Citywide cost allocations for Finance & Administrative Services, Human Resources services, and Information Technology services. The proposed budget also includes \$10,000 in 2019 and \$5000 in 2020 for professional consulting services to aid the department in its launch and early operations.

Council Changes

Council Reduction to Labor Costs - (\$53,742)

The City Council reduced \$53,742 of General Fund in 2019 to support labor costs for the new Office of the Employee Ombud to reflect staff hiring halfway through the first quarter of 2019.

Office of the Employee Ombud

Errata Changes

This is a net zero technical adjustment for 2020 appropriations between BSLs to reverse an error made in the 2019-2020 Proposed Budget.

General Fund Appropriation Reduction - (\$384)

The Council made an across-the-board reduction to all General Fund appropriation authority in order to support other priorities. The percentage reduction in 2019 is about 0.07% and in 2020 about 0.1%. This reduces OEO's budget by \$384 in 2019 and \$595 in 2020.

City Council Provisos

The City Council adopted the following budget proviso:

- *None of the money appropriated in the 2019 budget for the Office of Employee Ombud may be spent to hire staff, set up administrative functions, or establish the office until the City Council passes an ordinance approving the establishment of an Office of Employee Ombud; however, this spending restriction shall not apply to the initial administrative tasks of identifying a physical office space, beginning the recruitment for the Director, or assessing the equipment needed for a new office.*

On December 10, 2018, the City Council approved legislation ([Ordinance 125735](#)) which established the new Office of the Employee Ombud. This completely removes the spending restriction imposed in the budget proviso listed above and the Office of the Employee Ombud's 2019 Adopted Budget is available effective January 1, 2019.

Expenditure Overview

Appropriations	2018 Adopted	2019 Adopted	2020 Endorsed
Office of the Employee Ombud Budget Summary Level			
General Fund	0	509,472	561,310
Total for BSL: PO-OM-V1OMB	0	509,472	561,310
Department Total	0	509,472	561,310
Department Full-time Equivalents Total*	0.00	3.00	3.00

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

Office of the Employee Ombud

Budget Summary by Fund for Ombud

	2018 Adopted	2019 Adopted	2020 Endorsed
00100 - General Fund	0	509,472	561,310
Budget Totals for OEO	0	509,472	561,310

Appropriations By Budget Summary Level (BSL) and Program

Office of the Employee Ombud Budget Summary Level

The purpose of the Office of Employee Ombud Budget Summary Level is to assist executive department employees in navigating the City's human resource and other processes relating to harassment or discrimination, and to provide recommendations to the Mayor and City Council on the City's policies and procedures relating to harassment, discrimination, and creating an inclusive workplace environment.

	2018 Adopted	2019 Adopted	2020 Endorsed
Program Expenditures			
Office of the Employee Ombud	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0
Office of the Employee Ombud	0	509,472	561,310
Total	0	509,472	561,310
Full-time Equivalents Total*	0.00	3.00	3.00

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

The following information summarizes the programs in Office of the Employee Ombud Budget Summary Level:

Office of the Employee Ombud Program

	2018 Adopted	2019 Adopted	2020 Endorsed
Expenditures/FTE			
Office of the Employee Ombud	0	509,472	561,310
Full-time Equivalents Total	0.00	3.00	3.00