



Ethics Commission

APPROVED FY27 BUDGET

\$678,092

FULL TIME EQUIVALENTS

2.00

 ERIN O'CONNOR, DIRECTOR

MISSION STATEMENT

The Ethics Commission exercises authorities granted to it under the Public Ethics Law to promote the public's trust of the Montgomery County Government and to ensure the impartiality of County employees, including elected officials, in the execution of their responsibilities.

BUDGET OVERVIEW

The total approved FY27 Operating Budget for the Ethics Commission is \$678,092, an increase of \$312,274 or 85.36 percent from the FY26 Approved Budget of \$365,818. Personnel Costs comprise 54.00 percent of the budget for two full-time position(s) and no part-time position(s), and a total of 2.00 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 46.00 percent of the FY27 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

 In partnership with TEBS, update the electronic systems associated with the County's ethics programs of financial disclosure, outside employment, and lobbying registration and reporting.

INNOVATIONS AND PRODUCTIVITY IMPROVEMENTS

 Began working with leadership in individual departments to make ethics training more widely available beyond those employees currently mandated to receive ethics training. In the year ahead, Commission staff will continue seeking out partnerships with County leaders in an effort to bring ethics training to the full County workforce.

PROGRAM CONTACTS

Contact Erin O'Connor of the Ethics Commission at 240-777-6676 or Eva Acevedo of the Office of Management and Budget at

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Performance measures for this department are included below (where applicable). The FY26 estimates reflect funding based on the FY26 Approved Budget. The FY27 and FY28 figures are performance targets based on the FY27 Approved Budget and funding for comparable service levels in FY28.

Measure	Actual FY24	Actual FY25	Estimated FY26	Target FY27	Target FY28
Program Measures					
Number of financial disclosure statements required (calendar year)	1,964	1,970	1,970	1,970	1,970
Number of formal opinions, waivers, and guidance (calendar year)	15	18	18	18	18
Number of lobbyist activity reports (calendar year)	261	210	210	210	210
Number of lobbyists registered (calendar year)	162	138	138	138	138
Number of outside employment requests processed (calendar year)	1,506	1,595	1,595	1,595	1,595
Percentage of Executive Branch public financial disclosure filers in compliance with ethics training requirement	99%	99%	99%	99%	99%

PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

Ethics Program Compliance

Financial Disclosure: The Public Ethics Law requires filing of financial disclosure reports by certain County employees. The Ethics Commission administers the electronic filing system for reporting and coordinates with the Office of Human Resources and all County agencies regarding the status of filers. It resolves all anomalous circumstances and questions from filers that routinely arise associated with the filing of financial disclosure reports and the system designed for that purpose.

Outside Employment: The Public Ethics Law requires that County employees obtain approval from the Ethics Commission prior to engaging in any employment other than County employment. The Ethics Commission administers an online process pursuant to which requests are made and reviewed by the employee's agency. The Ethics Commission staff prepares all requests for consideration by the Ethics Commission, including obtaining additional information from requestors and County agencies and conducting preliminary legal analysis of requests. The Ethics Commission approves requests, as appropriate, setting conditions on approval as necessary to ensure compliance with ethics requirements, and staff notifies requestors by letter of the disposition of requests. The Ethics Commission publishes and updates approved outside employment information required to be made public by the Public Ethics Law.

Lobbying: The Public Ethics Law requires certain persons who spend or receive over \$500 to communicate with County officials and employees to register as lobbyists and to file semi-annual activity reports with the Ethics Commission. Annual registration fees are required and are paid to the Ethics Commission then processed and deposited in the General Fund. The Ethics Commission publishes and updates information required to be made public by the Public Ethics Law.

Complaints, Investigations, and Hearings: Pursuant to the Public Ethics Laws, the Ethics Commission receives complaints and, as appropriate, conducts investigations and/or hearings, makes findings, and imposes sanctions and penalties, if warranted.

Advisory Opinions, Waivers, and Advice: In accordance with the Public Ethics Law, the Ethics Commission answers inquiries on the application of the Public Ethics Law, publishes opinions, and grants waivers of Ethics Law requirements, as appropriate.

Education: The Ethics Commission conducts public education and other information programs regarding the Public Ethics Law.

Legislative and Regulatory: The Ethics Commission recommends and prepares new ethics legislation and regulations.

Coordination and Outreach: The staff of the Ethics Commission coordinates with the Office of the County Attorney and the Office of the Inspector General as necessary on legal and investigative matters. The staff also serves as the principal public resource on the County's Ethics Laws, including managing a website that reflects Ethics Commission programs, activities, and publications such as annual reports, approvals of outside employment requests, lobbying data, waivers, and opinions.

Administration: The staff of the Ethics Commission is responsible for ensuring that Ethics Commission meetings are conducted in accordance with the Open Meetings Act and other applicable laws. The Ethics Commission members are informed and advised as to all material matters under their jurisdiction.

BUDGET SUMMARY

	Actual FY25	Budget FY26	Estimated FY26	Approved FY27	%Chg Bud/App
COUNTY GENERAL FUND					
EXPENDITURES					
Salaries and Wages	224,554	258,675	231,824	286,336	10.7 %
Employee Benefits	57,823	68,632	56,871	79,805	16.3 %
County General Fund Personnel Costs	282,377	327,307	288,695	366,141	11.9 %
Operating Expenses	35,796	38,511	38,511	311,951	710.0 %
County General Fund Expenditures	318,173	365,818	327,206	678,092	85.4 %
PERSONNEL					
Full-Time	2	2	2	2	—
Part-Time	0	0	0	0	—
FTEs	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	—
REVENUES					
Miscellaneous Revenues	17,630	20,000	20,000	20,000	—
County General Fund Revenues	17,630	20,000	20,000	20,000	—

FY27 APPROVED CHANGES

	Expenditures	FTEs
COUNTY GENERAL FUND		
FY26 ORIGINAL APPROPRIATION	365,818	2.00
<u>Changes (with service impacts)</u>		

FY27 APPROVED CHANGES

	Expenditures	FTEs
Enhance: Ethics Program IT Systems [Ethics Program Compliance]	273,000	0.00
<u>Other Adjustments (with no service impacts)</u>		
Increase Cost: Annualization of FY26 Personnel Costs	19,054	0.00
Increase Cost: FY27 Compensation Adjustment	13,921	0.00
Increase Cost: Annualization of FY26 Compensation Increases	6,839	0.00
Increase Cost: Printing and Mail	440	0.00
Decrease Cost: Retirement Adjustment	(980)	0.00
FY27 APPROVED	678,092	2.00

FUNDING PARAMETER ITEMS

CC APPROVED (\$000S)

Title	FY27	FY28	FY29	FY30	FY31	FY32
COUNTY GENERAL FUND						
EXPENDITURES						
FY27 Approved	678	678	678	678	678	678
No inflation or compensation change is included in outyear projections.						
Elimination of One-Time Items Approved in FY27	0	(263)	(263)	(263)	(263)	(263)
Items recommended for one-time funding in FY27, including \$263,000 for contractor costs for an IT systems upgrade, will be eliminated from the base in the outyears.						
Labor Contracts	0	2	2	2	2	2
These figures represent the estimated annualized cost of general wage adjustments, service increments, and other negotiated items.						
Subtotal Expenditures	678	417	417	417	417	417