Consumer Protection

APPROVED FY27 BUDGET	FULL TIME EQUIVALENTS
$3,294,480	20.00

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 approved FY27 Operating Budget for the Office of Consumer Protection is $3,294,480, an increase of $97,005 or 3.03 percent from the FY26 Approved Budget of $3,197,475. Personnel Costs comprise 96.79 percent of the budget for 21 full-time position(s) and no part-time position(s), and a total of 20.00 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 3.21 percent of the FY27 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**

INNOVATIONS AND PRODUCTIVITY IMPROVEMENTS

- Established community forums to gather consumer feedback and inform the development of educational initiatives, public-facing campaigns, and future policy decisions.
- Reestablished the volunteer program to strengthen community involvement and expand support services for consumers.
- Revamped OCP's website to modernize, streamline, and improve access to educational and outreach materials.
- Developed a video production process for OCP's YouTube channel, delivering regular content through short-form videos and other educational formats.

- Expanded podcast production by increasing episode frequency to a monthly release schedule and introducing filmed video segments that are also published on YouTube.

PROGRAM CONTACTS

Contact Shaun Carew of the Office of Consumer Protection at 240-777-3675 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 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 business registrations received [1]	666	700	612	640	700
Number of complaint cases received	1,119	1,051	1,242	1,304	1,356
Percent of consumer protection cases closed that are resolved by OCP	59.7%	61.2%	60.0%	60.0%	60.0%
Average number of calendar days to issue a business license or certificate of registration (excluding new home builder registrations)	4.9	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0
Average number of workdays to investigate and close a written complaint (all complaints)	37.5	39.7	38.0	38.0	38.0
Average OCP customer satisfaction rating - Outcome of the customer's case (5-point scale) based on customer satisfaction survey	4.5	4.6	4.0	4.0	4.0

[1] *Actual FY24 amount includes registrations issued 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 prohibiting 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 provides the County's Public Election Fund Liaison Service.

BUDGET SUMMARY

	Actual FY25	Budget FY26	Estimated FY26	Approved FY27	%Chg Bud/App

COUNTY GENERAL FUND

BUDGET SUMMARY

	Actual FY25	Budget FY26	Estimated FY26	Approved FY27	%Chg Bud/App
EXPENDITURES					
Salaries and Wages	1,985,900	2,410,414	2,121,159	2,477,094	2.8 %
Employee Benefits	531,724	673,846	562,238	711,778	5.6 %
County General Fund Personnel Costs	**2,517,624**	**3,084,260**	**2,683,397**	**3,188,872**	**3.4 %**
Operating Expenses	120,296	113,215	263,215	105,608	-6.7 %
County General Fund Expenditures	**2,637,920**	**3,197,475**	**2,946,612**	**3,294,480**	**3.0 %**
PERSONNEL					
Full-Time	19	21	21	21	—
Part-Time	0	0	0	0	—
FTEs	18.00	20.00	20.00	20.00	—
REVENUES					
New Home Builder's License	165,690	140,000	140,000	140,000	—
Other Licenses/Permits	60,780	51,000	51,000	51,000	—
Other Fines/Forfeitures	5,350	3,000	3,000	3,000	—
Miscellaneous Revenues	25	0	0	0	—
County General Fund Revenues	**231,845**	**194,000**	**194,000**	**194,000**	**—**

FY27 APPROVED CHANGES

	Expenditures	FTEs
COUNTY GENERAL FUND		
FY26 ORIGINAL APPROPRIATION	**3,197,475**	**20.00**
Other Adjustments (with no service impacts)		
Increase Cost: FY27 Compensation Adjustment	110,882	0.00
Increase Cost: Annualization of FY26 Lapsed Positions	59,890	0.00
Increase Cost: Annualization of FY26 Compensation Increases	19,562	0.00
Increase Cost: Printing and Mail	6,429	0.00
Decrease Cost: Motor Pool Adjustment	(4,036)	0.00
Decrease Cost: Retirement Adjustment	(7,562)	0.00
Decrease Cost: Elimination of One-Time Items Approved in FY26	(10,000)	0.00
Decrease Cost: Lapse Adjustment	(15,131)	0.00
Decrease Cost: Annualization of FY26 Personnel Costs	(63,029)	0.00
FY27 APPROVED	**3,294,480**	**20.00**

CHARGES TO OTHER DEPARTMENTS

Charged Department	Charged Fund	FY26 Total$	FY26 FTEs	FY27 Total$	FY27 FTEs

CHARGES TO OTHER DEPARTMENTS

Charged Department	Charged Fund	FY26 Total$	FY26 FTEs	FY27 Total$	FY27 FTEs
COUNTY GENERAL FUND					
Fire and Rescue Service	Fire	99,140	1.00	114,750	1.00

FUNDING PARAMETER ITEMS

CC APPROVED ($000S)

Title	FY27	FY28	FY29	FY30	FY31	FY32
COUNTY GENERAL FUND						
EXPENDITURES						
FY27 Approved	**3,294**	**3,294**	**3,294**	**3,294**	**3,294**	**3,294**
No inflation or compensation change is included in outyear projections.						
Labor Contracts	**0**	**16**	**16**	**16**	**16**	**16**
These figures represent the estimated annualized cost of general wage adjustments, service increments, and other negotiated items.						
Subtotal Expenditures	**3,294**	**3,310**	**3,310**	**3,310**	**3,310**	**3,310**