

ETHICS COMMISSION

GOVERNOR'S BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS

Source of Funds	FY25 Adjusted Base	FY26 Recommended	% Change Over FY25	FY27 Recommended	% Change Over FY26
GPR	1,033,900	4,420,200	327.5	4,075,200	-7.8
PR-O	543,200	36,200	-93.3	36,200	0.0
TOTAL	1,577,100	4,456,400	182.6	4,111,400	-7.7

FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT POSITION SUMMARY

Source of Funds	FY25 Adjusted Base	FY26 Recommended	FTE Change Over FY25	FY27 Recommended	FTE Change Over FY26
GPR	4.70	27.00	22.30	27.00	0.00
PR-O	3.30	0.00	-3.30	0.00	0.00
TOTAL	8.00	27.00	19.00	27.00	0.00

AGENCY DESCRIPTION

The commission is comprised of six members, who serve for five-year terms. One member is appointed by the Senate majority leader; one is appointed by the Senate minority leader; one is appointed by the speaker of the Assembly; one is appointed by the Assembly minority leader; and two are individuals who formerly served as judges for a court of record in this state, who were elected to the positions in which they served, and who are nominated by the Governor with the advice and consent of a majority of the members of the Senate. The transition plan from the Government Accountability Board to the commission put forth by the Department of Administration established a rotational term schedule of the commissioners. The commission elects a chair and vice-chair from its members by a majority vote.

The administrator serves as the agency head and is responsible for the daily operations of the commission. The commission staff is nonpartisan. The commission administers and enforces Wisconsin campaign finance, lobbying and ethics laws.

Commission activities are arranged by five general functions: general administration; assistance to state public officials, candidates, lobbyists, principals, political committees and officeholders; assistance to local governments; education and training; and enforcement. Within these functional areas, the commission develops policy, issues formal and informal opinions, promulgates administrative rules, prescribes procedures and forms, audits disclosure reports, carries out investigations, conducts hearings and reviews appeals, brings civil actions to assess forfeitures, and addresses other related activities.

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MISSION

The mission of the commission is to promote and strengthen the faith and confidence of the people of Wisconsin in their government; support the operation of open and responsible government; preserve the integrity of the governmental decision making process; and protect the rights of individuals through the administration of Wisconsin campaign finance, lobbying and ethics laws and through readily available and understandable disclosure of information.

PROGRAMS, GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Program 1: Ethics, Campaign Finance and Lobbying Regulation

Goal: Facilitate compliance with the requirements of Wisconsin's campaign finance, lobbying and ethics laws.

Objective/Activity: Provide training, educational materials and assistance to the regulated community and the public, focusing on applicable registration and reporting requirements.

Objective/Activity: Conduct timely audits of registration and report information, consistent with statutory requirements.

Objective/Activity: Provide formal and informal advisory opinions, as well as informal guidance, in a timely manner upon request.

Goal: Support the operation of open and responsible government, preserve the integrity of governmental decision making and protect the rights of individuals.

Objective/Activity: Promptly make reported campaign finance, lobbying and financial disclosure information publicly available.

Objective/Activity: Maintain the Wisconsin Campaign Finance Information System, Eye on Lobbying website and Statements of Economic Interests website in order to facilitate the registration and reporting requirements under applicable Wisconsin statutes, as well as making the disclosure of reported information readily accessible and understandable.

Objective/Activity: Investigate complaints of possible violations of the ethics code, lobbying law and campaign finance law and seek appropriate remedies as circumstances merit.

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PERFORMANCE MEASURES

2023 AND 2024 GOALS AND ACTUALS

Prog. No.	Performance Measure	Goal 2023	Actual 2023	Goal 2024	Actual 2024
1.	Percentage of fees received by electronic payment methods.	95%	88% ¹	95%	96.4%
1.	Percentage of campaign finance reports filed on or before the required date.	96%	91.6% ²	96%	88.5%
1.	Percentage of committees in compliance, based on audit findings.	95%	94%	95%	93%
1.	Percentage of lobbyist time reports completed on or before the required date.	99%	99.6%	99%	99.6%
1.	Percentage of registered principals completing their Statements of Lobbying Activities and Expenditures on or before the required date.	99%	97.1%	99%	97.5%
1.	Percentage of principals in compliance, based on audit findings. ³	99%	99%	99%	99%
1.	Percentage of required Statements of Economic Interest filed on or before the required date.	96%	92.1%	96%	96.1%
1.	Statements of Economic Interest filed electronically.	96%	99%	96%	98.1%

Note: Based on fiscal year.

¹Some lobbyists and principals pay fees by mail prior to the legislative session in odd fiscal years.

²The commission typically provides notice of an upcoming filing deadline several times before the due date, including a reminder on the due date.

³Performance measure goals are approximations due to the impact of the commission's new lobbying website on auditing processes.

2025, 2026 AND 2027 GOALS

Prog. No.	Performance Measure	Goal 2025	Goal 2026	Goal 2027
1.	Percentage of fees received by electronic payment methods.	95%	95%	95%
1.	Percentage of campaign finance reports filed on or before the required date.	96%	96%	96%
1.	Percentage of committees in compliance, based on audit findings.	95%	95%	95%

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Prog. No.	Performance Measure	Goal 2025	Goal 2026	Goal 2027
1.	Percentage of lobbyist time reports completed on or before the required date.	99%	99%	99%
1.	Percentage of registered principals completing their Statements of Lobbying Activities and Expenditures on or before the required date.	99%	99%	99%
1.	Percentage of principals in compliance, based on audit findings.	99%	99%	99%
1.	Percentage of required Statements of Economic Interest filed on or before the required date.	96%	96%	96%
1.	Statements of Economic Interest filed electronically.	96%	98%	98%

Note: Based on fiscal year.

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GOVERNOR'S BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Additional Staff and Office Resources
2. Modify Funding of Lobbying Administration
3. New Campaign Finance Registration and Reporting System
4. Information Technology Contractor
5. Standard Budget Adjustments

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**Table 1
Department Budget Summary by Funding Source (in thousands of dollars)**

	ACTUAL FY24	ADJUSTED BASE FY25	AGENCY REQUEST		GOVERNOR'S RECOMMENDATION	
			FY26	FY27	FY26	FY27
GENERAL PURPOSE REVENUE	\$1,073.3	\$1,033.9	\$4,436.4	\$4,091.4	\$4,420.2	\$4,075.2
State Operations	1,073.3	1,033.9	4,436.4	4,091.4	4,420.2	4,075.2
PROGRAM REVENUE (2)	\$506.0	\$543.2	\$36.2	\$36.2	\$36.2	\$36.2
State Operations	506.0	543.2	36.2	36.2	36.2	36.2
TOTALS - ANNUAL	\$1,579.3	\$1,577.1	\$4,472.6	\$4,127.6	\$4,456.4	\$4,111.4
State Operations	1,579.3	1,577.1	4,472.6	4,127.6	4,456.4	4,111.4

(2) Includes Program Revenue-Service and Program Revenue-Other

**Table 2
Department Position Summary by Funding Source (in FTE positions)**

	ADJUSTED BASE FY25	AGENCY REQUEST		GOVERNOR'S RECOMMENDATION	
		FY26	FY27	FY26	FY27
GENERAL PURPOSE REVENUE	4.70	27.00	27.00	27.00	27.00
State Operations	4.70	27.00	27.00	27.00	27.00
PROGRAM REVENUE (2)	3.30	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
State Operations	3.30	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
TOTALS - ANNUAL	8.00	27.00	27.00	27.00	27.00
State Operations	8.00	27.00	27.00	27.00	27.00

(2) Includes Program Revenue-Service and Program Revenue-Other

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**Table 3
Department Budget Summary by Program (in thousands of dollars)**

	ACTUAL FY24	ADJUSTED BASE FY25	AGENCY REQUEST FY26	AGENCY REQUEST FY27	GOVERNOR'S RECOMMENDATION FY26	GOVERNOR'S RECOMMENDATION FY27
1. Ethics, campaign finance and lobbying regulation	\$1,579.3	\$1,577.1	\$4,472.6	\$4,127.6	\$4,456.4	\$4,111.4
TOTALS	\$1,579.3	\$1,577.1	\$4,472.6	\$4,127.6	\$4,456.4	\$4,111.4

**Table 4
Department Position Summary by Program (in FTE positions)**

	ADJUSTED BASE FY25	AGENCY REQUEST FY26	AGENCY REQUEST FY27	GOVERNOR'S RECOMMENDATION FY26	GOVERNOR'S RECOMMENDATION FY27
1. Ethics, campaign finance and lobbying regulation	8.00	27.00	27.00	27.00	27.00
TOTALS	8.00	27.00	27.00	27.00	27.00

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1. Additional Staff and Office Resources

Source of Funds	Agency Request				Governor's Recommendations			
	FY26		FY27		FY26		FY27	
	Dollars	Positions	Dollars	Positions	Dollars	Positions	Dollars	Positions
GPR	2,526,000	19.00	2,241,000	19.00	2,509,800	19.00	2,224,800	19.00
TOTAL	2,526,000	19.00	2,241,000	19.00	2,509,800	19.00	2,224,800	19.00

The Governor recommends providing funding and additional positions to increase office resources to meet the new workload related to local campaign finance committees registering with the commission following the enactment of 2023 Wisconsin Act 126.

2. Modify Funding of Lobbying Administration

Source of Funds	Agency Request				Governor's Recommendations			
	FY26		FY27		FY26		FY27	
	Dollars	Positions	Dollars	Positions	Dollars	Positions	Dollars	Positions
GPR	511,900	3.30	511,900	3.30	511,900	3.30	511,900	3.30
PR-O	-511,900	-3.30	-511,900	-3.30	-511,900	-3.30	-511,900	-3.30
TOTAL	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00

The Governor recommends modifying the fund source relating to the administration of lobbying so that all expenses are funded with general purpose revenue and all lobbying fee revenues are deposited in the general fund as general purpose revenue - earned.

3. New Campaign Finance Registration and Reporting System

Source of Funds	Agency Request				Governor's Recommendations			
	FY26		FY27		FY26		FY27	
	Dollars	Positions	Dollars	Positions	Dollars	Positions	Dollars	Positions
GPR	196,000	0.00	151,000	0.00	196,000	0.00	151,000	0.00
TOTAL	196,000	0.00	151,000	0.00	196,000	0.00	151,000	0.00

The Governor recommends providing one-time funding to finish the development of the new campaign finance reporting system.

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4. Information Technology Contractor

Source of Funds	Agency Request				Governor's Recommendations			
	FY26		FY27		FY26		FY27	
	Dollars	Positions	Dollars	Positions	Dollars	Positions	Dollars	Positions
GPR	164,800	0.00	149,800	0.00	164,800	0.00	149,800	0.00
TOTAL	164,800	0.00	149,800	0.00	164,800	0.00	149,800	0.00

The Governor recommends providing ongoing funding for an information technology contractor to support commission systems.

5. Standard Budget Adjustments

Source of Funds	Agency Request				Governor's Recommendations			
	FY26		FY27		FY26		FY27	
	Dollars	Positions	Dollars	Positions	Dollars	Positions	Dollars	Positions
GPR	3,800	0.00	3,800	0.00	3,800	0.00	3,800	0.00
PR-O	4,900	0.00	4,900	0.00	4,900	0.00	4,900	0.00
TOTAL	8,700	0.00	8,700	0.00	8,700	0.00	8,700	0.00

The Governor recommends adjusting the commission's base budget for: (a) full funding of continuing position salaries and fringe benefits (-\$14,600 in each year); and (b) reclassifications and semiautomatic pay progression (\$23,300 in each year).

