

VERMONT ETHICS COMMISSION

Fiscal Year 2020 Budget Request



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VERMONT ETHICS COMMISSION

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Budget Development

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VERMONT
ETHICS COMMISSION

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Mission

The mission of the State Ethics Commission is to promote, practice and maintain the highest level of ethical standards and accountability in state government. The Commission provides governmental ethics training to all public officials, accepts complaints of governmental misconduct, provides information to the public, and issues ethical guidance and advisory opinions by interpreting and applying state law, governmental codes of conduct, and the General Principles set forth in Section 1 of the State Code of Ethics.

Key Initiatives

Financial Disclosure Statements

In December 2017, the Ethics Commissioners drafted two financial disclosure forms – one for candidates; state senators or state representatives and another for statewide executive officers, state ethics commissioners, and the executive director of the state ethics commission. The forms were available for the January 15 filing deadline. First used in 2018 election season of the 316 primary candidates, 296 completed the financial disclosure form, which translates into a 94% compliance percentage.

General Principles of Governmental Ethical Conduct

The Vermont legislature as described in 3 V.S.A. § 1202 in Sect 7 vested the State Ethics Commission with the authority to adopt a State Code of Ethics pertaining to conflicts of interest that would interfere with the performance by a public official of their duty to work in the best interests of Vermont residents.

The General Principles of Governmental Ethical Conduct are modeled after the standards of ethical conduct for federal officers and employees. The Vermont State General Principles of Ethical Conduct were adopted on June 6, 2018.

Complaints of Ethical Misconduct

The Vermont State Ethics Commission is responsible for accepting, reviewing, and tracking complaints about governmental conduct. If a complaint alleges a violation of governmental conduct regulated by law, or of the Department of Human Resources Ethics Policies, the State Campaign Finance law set forth in 17 V.S.A. Chapter 61, the commission will refer the complaint to the appropriate state agency.

In 2018 the Commission received 36 complaints. The complaints addressed state executives, legislators, municipal employees, and employees of state agencies. Topics ranged from Official Duties or Responsibilities, Campaign/Political Activity, Financial or Business Transactions, and Employment to Use of Government Property and Resources.

Ethics Guidance

Pursuant to 3 V.S.A. §1225 the Executive Director of the Ethics Commission may issue guidance on any issue related to governmental ethics to a statewide officer or state employee upon request. The Executive Director may consult with Ethics Commission members and the Department of Human Resources in preparing the guidance. Guidance is exempt from public inspection and copying under the Public Records Act and is confidential unless the recipient chooses to publically disclose it.

In the first 12 months, the Executive Director received 62 contacts from Statewide and local public officials and State employees requesting ethics guidance.

Ethics Advisory Opinions

Pursuant to 3 V.S.A. §1225 (b)(1)(2) The Executive Director may issue advisory opinions that provide general advice or interpretation regarding standards of governmental ethical conduct or any issue related to governmental ethics. Ethics advisory opinions may be initiated by a request or be issued by the Executive Director on an ethics issue that may have been the subject of recurring ethics guidance requests. The Executive Director may consult with members of the Ethics Commission and the Department of Human Resources in preparing these advisory opinions which will be posted on the Ethics Commission website.

In 2018, State Ethics Commission received one request for an ethics advisory opinion from an entity outside of State government that requested an interpretation and application of the State Ethics Code. Ethics advisory opinions are available on the State Ethics Commission website.

Governmental Ethics Training and Outreach

Pursuant to 3 V.S.A. § 1224, at least annually, in collaboration with the Department of Human Resources, the Commission shall make available to legislators, State officers, and State employees training on issues related to governmental ethics. The training shall include topics related to those covered in any guidance or advisory opinion issued under 3 V.S.A. § 1225.

The governmental ethics training program offered by the Ethics Commission is designed to provide both general and customized training on specific conflicts of interest risks that a legislator, public official or State employee may encounter related to their specific occupation and workplace.

On June 12, 2018, Commissioners presented a governmental ethics training at the Vermont Government Finance Officers Association (VGFOA) 2018 Summer Workshop and Annual Meeting held at the Vermont Technical College in Randolph.

The Commission was an exhibitor at the Vermont League of Cities and Towns Town Fair held in South Burlington on October 3 and 4, 2018. Commissioners and the Executive Director answered questions from VLCT members on conflicts of interest and other governmental ethics issues.

Ethics Commission Brochures and Posters

The Ethics Commission produced an information brochure with a State Ethics Code insert and a series of governmental ethics posters that have been distributed at public events and in mailings.

DHR- CAPS Training Collaborative

The Ethics Commission and the Vermont Department of Human Resources are collaborating on ethics training through the Center for Achievement in Public Service (CAPS). The proposed plan is that the Ethics Commission's Executive Director will provide governmental ethics training sessions as part of the CAPS workforce development services to State agencies and departments.

Website Development

The Ethics Commission website was developed and online in 2018, available on the website are financial disclosure forms, the State code of ethics, and ethics advisories. A governmental ethics training video addressing conflicts of interest for government employees will be available for viewing on the Ethics Commission website this month.

Policies and Procedures

In 2018, the Ethics Commission focused on drafting policies and procedures to guide the work of the Commission. The policies and procedures relate to three key operational areas namely, the procedure for handling complaints, ethics guidance and advisory opinions. Once finalized and adopted by the Commission, these policies and procedures will be available on the commission website in the coming months.

Summary

The Vermont State Ethics Commission is a valuable resource for elected officials and state employees to answer ethics and conflict of interest questions, provide ethics guidance and receive complaints.

Fiscal Year 2020 Budget Development Form - State Ethics Commission

	General \$\$	Transp \$\$	Special \$\$	HR Internal Service Fund	All other \$\$	Total \$\$
State Ethics Commission: FY 2019 (As Passed)	0	0	0	120,843	0	120,843
Changes to Salaries				2,273		2,273
Changes to Benefits				(2,498)		(2,498)
Changes to Internal Service Fund Charges				4,371		4,371
Reduce Furniture and Fixtures and Other Personal Services	0			(4,146)		(4,146)
Subtotal of increases/decreases	0	0	0	0	0	0
FY 2020 Governor's Recommended Budget	0	0	0	120,843	0	120,843

State of Vermont - Budget Rollup Report

Organization: 1300001000 - Ethics Commission

Budget Object Group: 1. PERSONAL SERVICES

Budget Object Rollup Name	FY2018 Actuals	FY2019 Original As Passed Budget	FY2019 Governor's BAA Recommended Budget	FY2020 Governor's Recommended Budget	Difference Between FY2020 Governor's Recommend and FY2019 As Passed	Percent Change FY2020 Governor's Recommend and FY2019 As Passed
Salaries and Wages	19,656	42,840	42,840	45,113	2,273	5.3%
Fringe Benefits	17,295	39,662	39,662	37,182	(2,480)	-6.3%
Contracted and 3rd Party Service	3,631	-	-	-	-	0.0%
PerDiem and Other Personal Services	3,000	24,360	24,360	20,289	(4,071)	-16.7%
Budget Object Group Total: 1. PERSONAL SERVICES	43,582	106,862	106,862	102,584	(4,278)	-4.0%

Budget Object Group: 2. OPERATING

Budget Object Rollup Name	FY2018 Actuals	FY2019 Original As Passed Budget	FY2019 Governor's BAA Recommended Budget	FY2020 Governor's Recommended Budget	Difference Between FY2020 Governor's Recommend and FY2019 As Passed	Percent Change FY2020 Governor's Recommend and FY2019 As Passed
Equipment	1,193	3,500	3,500	3,425	(75)	-2.1%
IT/Telecom Services and Equipment	-	2,148	2,148	1,961	(187)	-8.7%
Travel	1,843	2,000	2,000	2,000	-	0.0%
Supplies	1,714	500	500	500	-	0.0%
Other Purchased Services	3,602	833	833	270	(563)	-67.6%
Rental Other	236	-	-	-	-	0.0%
Rental Property	200	5,000	5,000	10,103	5,103	102.1%
Budget Object Group Total: 2. OPERATING	8,788	13,981	13,981	18,259	4,278	30.6%

Total Expenses	52,370	120,843	120,843	120,843	-	0.0%
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Fund Name	FY2018 Actuals	FY2019 Original As Passed Budget	FY2019 Governor's BAA Recommended Budget	FY2020 Governor's Recommended Budget	Difference Between FY2020 Governor's Recommend and FY2019 As Passed	Percent Change FY2020 Governor's Recommend and FY2019 As Passed
ISF Funds	-	120,843	120,843	120,843	-	0.0%
IDT Funds	52,370	-	-	-	-	0.0%
Funds Total	52,370	120,843	120,843	120,843	-	0.0%

Position Count				1		
FTE Total				1		

State of Vermont - Budget Detail Report

Organization: 1300001000 - Ethics Commission

Budget Object Group: 1. PERSONAL SERVICES

Salaries and Wages		FY2018 Actuals	FY2019 Original As Passed Budget	FY2019 Governor's BAA Recommended Budget	FY2020 Governor's Recommended Budget	Difference Between FY2020 Governor's Recommend and FY2019 As Passed	Percent Change FY2020 Governor's Recommend and FY2019 As Passed
Description	Code						
Classified Employees	500000	19,656	-	-	-	-	0.0%
Exempt	500010	-	42,840	42,840	45,113	2,273	5.3%
Total: Salaries and Wages		19,656	42,840	42,840	45,113	2,273	5.3%

Fringe Benefits		FY2018 Actuals	FY2019 Original As Passed Budget	FY2019 Governor's BAA Recommended Budget	FY2020 Governor's Recommended Budget	Difference Between FY2020 Governor's Recommend and FY2019 As Passed	Percent Change FY2020 Governor's Recommend and FY2019 As Passed
Description	Code						
FICA - Classified Employees	501000	1,265	-	-	-	-	0.0%
FICA - Exempt	501010	-	3,277	3,277	3,451	174	5.3%
Health Ins - Classified Empl	501500	12,648	-	-	-	-	0.0%
Health Ins - Exempt	501510	-	27,747	27,747	27,405	(342)	-1.2%
Retirement - Classified Empl	502000	3,227	-	-	-	-	0.0%
Retirement - Exempt	502010	-	7,484	7,484	5,098	(2,386)	-31.9%
Dental - Exempt	502510	-	812	812	853	41	5.0%
Life Ins - Classified Empl	503000	142	-	-	-	-	0.0%
Life Ins - Exempt	503010	-	181	181	190	9	5.0%
LTD - Exempt	503510	-	99	99	104	5	5.1%
EAP - Classified Empl	504000	14	-	-	-	-	0.0%
EAP - Exempt	504010	-	30	30	31	1	3.3%
Workers Comp - Ins Premium	505200	-	32	32	50	18	56.3%
Total: Fringe Benefits		17,295	39,662	39,662	37,182	(2,480)	-6.3%

Contracted and 3rd Party Service		FY2018 Actuals				Difference Between Recommend and As Passed	Percent Change Recommend and As Passed
Description	Code						
Contr&3Rd Pty-Educ & Training	507350	3,601	-	-	-	-	0.0%
Advertising/Marketing-Other	507563	30	-	-	-	-	0.0%
Total: Contracted and 3rd Party Service		3,631	-	-	-	-	0.0%

PerDiem and Other Personal Services		FY2018 Actuals	FY2019 Original As Passed Budget	FY2019 Governor's BAA Recommended Budget	FY2020 Governor's Recommended Budget	Difference Between FY2020 Governor's Recommend and FY2019 As Passed	Percent Change FY2020 Governor's Recommend and FY2019 As Passed
Description	Code						
Per Diem	506000	3,000	10,800	10,800	10,800	-	0.0%
Other Pers Serv	506200	-	13,560	13,560	9,489	(4,071)	-30.0%
Total: PerDiem and Other Personal Services		3,000	24,360	24,360	20,289	(4,071)	-16.7%

Total: 1. PERSONAL SERVICES		43,582	106,862	106,862	102,584	(4,278)	-4.0%
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State of Vermont - Budget Detail Report

Organization: 1300001000 - Ethics Commission

Budget Object Group: 2. OPERATING

Equipment		FY2018 Actuals	FY2019 Original As Passed Budget	FY2019 Governor's BAA Recommended Budget	FY2020 Governor's Recommended Budget	Difference Between FY2020 Governor's Recommend and FY2019 As Passed	Percent Change FY2020 Governor's Recommend and FY2019 As Passed
Description	Code						
Hardware - Desktop & Laptop Pc	522216	1,113	2,000	2,000	2,000	-	0.0%
Furniture & Fixtures	522700	80	1,500	1,500	1,425	(75)	-5.0%
Total: Equipment		1,193	3,500	3,500	3,425	(75)	-2.1%

IT/Telecom Services and Equipment		FY2018 Actuals	FY2019 Original As Passed Budget	FY2019 Governor's BAA Recommended Budget	FY2020 Governor's Recommended Budget	Difference Between FY2020 Governor's Recommend and FY2019 As Passed	Percent Change FY2020 Governor's Recommend and FY2019 As Passed
Description	Code						
It Intsvccost-Vision/Isdassess	516671	-	1,037	1,037	715	(322)	-31.1%
ADS Allocation Exp.	516685	-	1,111	1,111	1,246	135	12.2%
Total: IT/Telecom Services and Equipment		-	2,148	2,148	1,961	(187)	-8.7%

Other Purchased Services		FY2018 Actuals	FY2019 Original As Passed Budget	FY2019 Governor's BAA Recommended Budget	FY2020 Governor's Recommended Budget	Difference Between FY2020 Governor's Recommend and FY2019 As Passed	Percent Change FY2020 Governor's Recommend and FY2019 As Passed
Description	Code						
Insurance Other Than Empl Bene	516000	-	27	27	-	(27)	-100.0%
Insurance - General Liability	516010	-	45	45	40	(5)	-11.1%
Advertising-Print	516813	2,010	-	-	-	-	0.0%
Advertising - Job Vacancies	516820	788	-	-	-	-	0.0%
Printing and Binding	517000	159	-	-	-	-	0.0%
Agency Fee	519005	-	230	230	230	-	0.0%
Human Resources Services	519006	-	531	531	-	(531)	-100.0%
Moving State Agencies	519040	646	-	-	-	-	0.0%
Total: Other Purchased Services		3,602	833	833	270	(563)	-67.6%

Rental Other		FY2018 Actuals				Difference Between Recommend and As Passed	Percent Change Recommend and As Passed
Description	Code						
Rental - Other	515000	236	-	-	-	-	0.0%
Total: Rental Other		236	-	-	-	-	0.0%

Rental Property		FY2018 Actuals	FY2019 Original As Passed Budget	FY2019 Governor's BAA Recommended Budget	FY2020 Governor's Recommended Budget	Difference Between FY2020 Governor's Recommend and FY2019 As Passed	Percent Change FY2020 Governor's Recommend and FY2019 As Passed
Description	Code						
Rent Land&Bldgs-Non-Office	514010	200	-	-	-	-	0.0%
Fee-For-Space Charge	515010	-	5,000	5,000	10,103	5,103	102.1%
Total: Rental Property		200	5,000	5,000	10,103	5,103	102.1%

State of Vermont - Budget Detail Report

Organization: 1300001000 - Ethics Commission

Budget Object Group: 2. OPERATING cont.

Supplies		FY2018 Actuals	FY2019 Original As Passed Budget	FY2019 Governor's BAA Recommended Budget	FY2020 Governor's Recommended Budget	Difference Between FY2020 Governor's Recommend and FY2019 As Passed	Percent Change FY2020 Governor's Recommend and FY2019 As Passed
Description	Code						
Office Supplies	520000	1,704	500	500	500	-	0.0%
Electronic	520550	10	-	-	-	-	0.0%
Total: Supplies		1,714	500	500	500	-	0.0%

Travel		FY2018 Actuals	FY2019 Original As Passed Budget	FY2019 Governor's BAA Recommended Budget	FY2020 Governor's Recommended Budget	Difference Between FY2020 Governor's Recommend and FY2019 As Passed	Percent Change FY2020 Governor's Recommend and FY2019 As Passed
Description	Code						
Travel-Inst-Auto Mileage-Emp	518000	642	-	-	-	-	0.0%
Travel In-State Non-Employee	518299	-	2,000	2,000	2,000	-	0.0%
Travel-Inst-Auto Mileage-Nonemp	518300	1,171	-	-	-	-	0.0%
Travel-Inst-Meals-Nonemp	518320	30	-	-	-	-	0.0%
Total: Travel		1,843	2,000	2,000	2,000	-	0.0%

Total: 2. OPERATING		8,788	13,981	13,981	18,259	4,278	30.6%
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Total Expenses:		52,370	120,843	120,843	120,843	-	0.0%
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Fund Name		Fund Code	FY2018 Actuals	FY2019 Original As Passed Budget	FY2019 Governor's BAA Recommended Budget	FY2020 Governor's Recommended Budget	Difference Between FY2020 Governor's Recommend and FY2019 As Passed	Percent Change FY2020 Governor's Recommend and FY2019 As Passed
Inter-Unit Transfers Fund		21500	52,370	-	-	-	-	0.0%
Financial Management Fund		59300	-	120,843	120,843	38,598	(82,245)	-68.1%
Human Resource Services		59600	-	-	-	82,245	82,245	0.0%
Funds Total:			52,370	120,843	120,843	120,843	-	0.0%

Position Count						1		
FTE Total						1		

State of Vermont

FY2020 Governor's Recommended Budget Position Summary Report

1300001000-Ethics Commission

Position Number	Classification	FTE	Count	Gross Salary	Benefits Total	Statutory Total	Total
967001	95010E - Executive Director	0.50	1.00	\$ 45,113	\$ 33,681	\$ 3,451	\$ 82,245
Total		0.50	1.00	\$ 45,113	\$ 33,681	\$ 3,451	\$ 82,245

Fund Code	Fund Name	FTE	Count	Gross Salary	Benefits Total	Statutory Total	Total
59600	Human Resource Services	0.50	1.00	\$ 45,113	\$ 33,681	\$ 3,451	\$ 82,245
Total		0.50	1.00	\$ 45,113	\$ 33,681	\$ 3,451	\$ 82,245

Note: Numbers may not sum to total due to rounding.