

2024 – 2025

Recommended Biennial Budget Overview

For the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections

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2024-2025 Election Cycle

The Cuyahoga County Board of Elections (CCBOE) is currently scheduled to conduct five (5) elections over the course of the 2024-2025 biennial budget cycle.

- In 2024 the Presidential Primary and General Election.
- In 2025 two Municipal Primaries and a General Election.

2024-2025 Budget

The CCBOE budgeting cycle is challenging to fund in that it builds off both the previous year's budget in some areas and what was budgeted four years prior in the similar election type for other areas.

The current base budget provided to the CCBOE for the upcoming biennium is not sufficient to execute elections under current CCBOE election administration standards.

Overall Budget Request

Based on these parameters the current base budget recommended for the CCBOE is:

- 2024 – Recommended is \$18,979,908
CCBOE needs \$19,243,024

Shortage of \$263,092, specifically for poll worker recruitment.

- 2025 – Recommended is \$16,017,000
CCBOE needs \$16,652,047

Shortage of \$635,047, not accurately accounting for inflationary increases spread across multiple budget line items and new initiatives authorized in the 2022-2023 biennium budget.

New Initiatives for 2024-2025 Biennial Budget

The focus of these initiatives is to prepare for the Presidential Election Cycle while also obtaining longer term election administration benefits.

New Initiative-Agilis In-Bound Mail Sorting Equipment

Procurement of an additional Agilis In-Bound Mail Ballot Processor – approximately \$350,000

- The Agilis is the machine used to sort returned VBM ballots and facilitate the review and authorization of these ballots for inclusion in the election.
- The Agilis also impacts the timely reporting of returned ballots in the CCBOE's "Track my Ballot" online tool.
- The addition of a second Agilis provides two key operational benefits:
 - An automated contingency tool to keep VBM ballot processing moving forward under tight deadlines. The current contingency plan is a manual hand processing of the documents.
 - When not being used as an emergent contingency tool, incorporated into frontline VBM ballot processing to further enhance operational efficiencies.

New Initiative -Seasonal Temporary Employee Wages

Seasonal Temporary Employee Wages – approximately \$41,500 annually

- Effective 2022 the hourly rate of pay for the seasonal employees increased to \$15.00.
 - Any COLA increase giving to permanent employees is not passed onto the season employees.
- The CCBOE wants to increase the hourly rate by \$0.25 in 2024 and again in 2025.
 - This 1.7% increase would set the 2024 rate to \$15.25 and 2025 rate to \$15.50 per hour.

New Initiatives-**Employee Election Cycle Overtime**

Permanent Employee Election Cycle Overtime – approximately \$100,000 annually

- The CCBOE currently is not budgeted to pay monetary overtime to permanent staff and compensates them for their additional hours worked with compensatory and exchange time off.
- The CCBOE is requesting in countywide elections that the first 5-hours of overtime worked each week be monetary overtime in lieu of accrued time-off. This would cap 30 hours of paid overtime per employee.
- Countywide election cycles naturally generate the need to work extended hours to administer an election. The Early In-person voting window itself requires at least an additional 47 hours of overtime to stay compliant with the law.
- In the years 2020 through the end of 2023 the anticipated number of elections the CCBOE planned to conduct was **10 elections**. After the completion of the December 5, 2023, East Cleveland Recall Election the CCBOE will have conducted **19 elections** during the period.
- It is extremely difficult to find periods of time for staff to use their accumulated compensatory time and reducing their time balances by 30-hours per cycle aides in resolving this challenge.

New CCBOE Operations Center

- Following the November 2022 Gubernatorial General Election, the CCBOE began working with the Department of Public Works to identify a new space to address the substantial lack of voter parking, small space to conduct Early In-Person Voting, and inefficiencies conducting elections out of two building locations.
- Since the CCBOE moved into its current location at the Hughes Building in 1987, Ohio elections have undergone major changes, most notably no-fault voting by mail and a near month of early in-person voting. The CCBOE's facilities have not kept up with the functional needs for voters on account of building limitations.

This is a sampling of what other larger Ohio Boards of Elections have done to keep up with the growing demands of election administration.

County	Registered Voters	EIP Square Feet	EIP Parking Spaces	Moved into Facility
Cuyahoga County	876,592	8,000	48	1987
Franklin County	875,190	20,000	500	2015
Hamilton County	595,209	15,000	125 + 300 shared	2020
Lucas County	295,233	4,490	183	2022
Summit County	367,984	5,300	209	2016

Overall Budget Recommendation

The CCBOE is asking Council to approve :

- The total recommended budget of \$19,243,024, 2024, a presidential election year.
- The total recommended budget of \$16,652,047 for 2025, a municipal election year.
- The total recommended budget of for the new CCBOE initiatives as presented.
 - 2024- CCBOE new initiatives approximately \$500,000
 - 2025-CCBOE new initiatives approximately \$150,000

Questions?