

OFFICE OF THE PHILADELPHIA SHERIFF

OFFICE OF THE PHILADELPHIA SHERIFF FISCAL YEAR 2023 BUDGET TESTIMONY APRIL 26TH, 2022 1:30 PM (EST)

INTRODUCTION

Good afternoon, President Clarke and Members of City Council. I am Rochelle Bilal [Sheriff of Philadelphia City and County. **Joining me today are** Tariq-El Shabazz, Esquire, Undersheriff; Mike Dructor, Director of Criminal & Civil Court Operations; Patrick Lee, Chief Financial Officer and Craig Martin, Chief Budget Officer.

I will be providing testimony on the Philadelphia Sheriff's Office Fiscal Year 2023 Operating Budget.

For decades the Philadelphia Sheriff's Office has been underfunded. We are responsible for the protection and security of the courts and judges, conducting Sheriff's Sales, serving writs and Protection from Abuse Orders, serving warrants and other civil processes. We pride ourselves on our effectiveness, transparency, and ability to manage these responsibilities. However, the current budget has placed a heavy burden on myself and my staff, forcing us to overcompensate in certain areas due to lack of staffing, to maintain effectiveness. As we approach a new fiscal year, our goal is to advocate for appropriate funding so we can continue to be a pillar in the community and impact change.

To begin, the Sheriff's Office is concerned with administrative professional development and improving the quality of all candidates. Being understaffed has noticeably put a strain on the advancement of programs we implemented with the hopes of better assisting the community. For example, we currently have one staff member responsible for the H.A.R.T program. This program assists homeowners with retrieving excess proceeds from the sale of their homes. Our staff also educates homeowners on preventative measures for losing their properties. Herein lies the issue of properly and effectively assisting homeowners through this program, due to a significant difference in the staff to homeowner ratio. Hiring more personnel would significantly increase the turnover time for homeowners to receive excess proceeds from a sale.

Secondly, the Sheriff's Office is responsible for serving Protection from Abuse Orders (PFAs) while working with limited staff. In order to maintain our task as a law enforcement agency, we recently collaborated on a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Philadelphia Police Department (PPD). The MOU outlines the responsibilities of the Sheriff's Office and PPD regarding the gun relinquishment tasks for PFAs. The MOU further ensures that citizens who responsibly surrender their weapons will have a clear understanding of the time and locations that are available to do so. In order to comply with the statutory requirements of Act 79 and the MOU, we need to increase staff to assure the procedural process does not continue to exhaust our current personnel.

Further, the Sheriff's Office aims to increase the number of deputies on the force in order to accommodate the demand from the courts and the city. As our deputies have worked diligently to protect and serve, they are challenged with the responsibility of being available in multiple courtrooms at one time. While serving in this capacity, it is important that deputies have the proper equipment to ensure their safety. Our deputies have been utilizing outdated vest, which puts their safety at risk and creates a liability for the city. Should the Sheriff's office receive the appropriate funding for staffing, the office and personnel will be safe and afforded the opportunity to be more effective in the community.

I draw your attention to our Fiscal Budget year slide presentation for 2023.

OFFICE OF THE PHILADELPHIA SHERIFF

DEPARTMENT MISSION & PLANS

Mission: [budget will insert *mission statement* from the Five-Year Plan]

Plans for Fiscal Year 2023

1. An aggressive hiring initiative for both uniformed and civilian personnel through 2023 into 2024.
2. Assumption of responsibility for all protection from abuse, (PFA) and gun relinquishment tasks from the Philadelphia Police Department, effective immediately.
3. Increased involvement in **Special Task Forces** such as: the **Delaware Valley Intelligence Center (DVIC):A Joint State and Federal Intelligence Agency Operation; The States' Attorney General Task Force on Drugs and Gun Violence; Dignitary Protection Details; Civil Unrest Support (Police & Court Command); Tactical Response Team Support; FBI, Bureau of Narcotics, Mayors Task Force on Violent Crime.**
4. Equipping the Office with 21st century automation in the form of software, IT professional services, supplies and related equipment to further build efficiency and financial transparency.
5. Implementation of a multi-layered financial systems to address requests for financial information generated from the civil-real estate divisions.

[Note: Departments are encouraged to limit their plans to one page.]

OFFICE OF THE PHILADELPHIA SHERIFF

BUDGET SUMMARY & OTHER BUDGET DRIVERS

[Budget will insert the Excel tables: *staff demographics summary, employment levels, financial summary by class, contracts summary, and total M/W/DSBE contract participation goal*]

OFFICE OF THE PHILADELPHIA SHERIFF

PROPOSED BUDGET OVERVIEW

Proposed Funding Request:

The proposed Fiscal Year 2023 General Fund budget totals **\$45,225,308.92**, an increase of **\$18,429,434.92** over Fiscal Year 2022 estimated obligation levels. This increase is primarily due to the following factors and a severe under-funding of the office over the years:

1. **Continued Response to Emergent or Imminent Danger, To the Public or Property, Within the City and County of Philadelphia:** The sheriff's office, is called upon to support and augment, the Philadelphia Police Department, (PPD), on many occasions, both in a pre-pandemic and pandemic environment. Our office accomplished this despite severe staffing shortages.
2. **Reduction of IOD Claims:** Additional uniform staff increase coverage capabilities, that are the responsibility of the Sheriff, within the 1st Judicial District and City Hall area footprint. The current staff shortages leave Judges and members of council at risk.
3. **Reduced Use of Overtime for Personnel Activities:** Increasing staff levels will continue to reduce the need for overtime, unless essential. This is one critical cost control items that is mitigate by proper staffing levels.
4. **Increased Community Engagement:** The Sheriff's office community outreach division is responsible for all community outreach activities. Some of these activities include the home asset recovery team, (HART), program/excess proceeds investigations, from all sheriff sale activities, along with gun control operations, that are support by executed protection from abuse, (PFA), orders—which increase safety within neighborhoods in concert with gun lock distributions throughout the city.
5. **System Creation and Implementation for Full Financial Accountability, Control and Transparency:**
 - a. **Factors under this item that support the requested increase are**
 1. Automation in the form of either software, hardware or systems, for this office are outdated.
 2. The office's connection to the 1st Judicial District, requires upgraded systems that can interacted and allow for transfer of shared information between the Sheriff's Office and the Office of Judicial Records.
 3. Faster preparation for any city, state or internal audits and the “on-demand” information requirements, from the Pennsylvania State Auditor and City of Philadelphia's Controller, as mandated by state statute or Philadelphia Home Rule charter or City Council

OFFICE OF THE PHILADELPHIA SHERIFF

4. The lack of a robust financial accounting platforms, procurement, human platform—which is required to support a judicious flow and control of funds. The current systems do not exist because of under-funded budget request.

Increase Human Resource Operations: I entered office with an insufficient level of uniformed and civilian staff.. Our office requires a diverse pool of human resources personnel to obtain the best qualified candidates. My current hiring initiative for uniformed personnel, requires candidates are trainable and experienced. The estimated candidate pipeline, for uniformed personnel, **will exceed 900**—so for every 5 deputies I hire, a minimum of (1) civilian is required to support these additions of personnel.

The proposed budget includes:

- [\$35,338,685] in Class 100, a \$10,146,235 increase over FY22. This funding will support hiring of additional uniformed and civilian personnel
- [\$6,358,678.92] in Class 200, a \$5,253,411.92 an increase over FY22. This funding will the acquisition of professional services, commercial off the shelf software, and information technology related equipment.
- [\$3,032,672] in Class 300/400 combined, a \$2,534,515 increase over FY22. This funding will duty equipment for uniform personnel, both current and new hires; professional development training for both uniformed and civilian staff; support services related to inmate transportation, meals and extradition activities.

OFFICE OF THE PHILADELPHIA SHERIFF

STAFFING LEVELS

The department is requesting 660 budgeted positions for FY23, an increase of 308 position composed of 257 more officers and 52 additional civilians from the level of FY22.

This increase is attributed to staff shortages occurring due to injuries to officers, retirement, resignation/terminations and the lack of full funding, to hire the missing officers, that composed the 425 employees arbitrarily assigned, for budget purposes, to this department, before and since I entered office.

NEW HIRES

[Budget will insert the Excel table: *new hires*]

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PERFORMANCE, CHALLENGES, AND INITIATIVES

[Budget will insert *performance measures table(s)* from the Five-Year Plan]

OFFICE OF THE PHILADELPHIA SHERIFF

OTHER BUDGETARY IMPACTS

Federal and State (Where Applicable)

Our office is attempting to acquire grants; however, we have not been able to obtain a grant profile at the time of this hearing. Our offices' last contact with **Ashley Del Bianco**, Chief Grants Officer, Office of the Director of Finance | City of Philadelphia was on February 10th, 2022 which has not yielded any results.

OFFICE OF THE PHILADELPHIA SHERIFF

CONTRACTING EXPERIENCE

[Budget will insert the Excel tables: *M/W/DSBE participation on large professional services contracts and/or non-profit vendor demographics*]

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EMPLOYEE DATA

[Budget will insert the Excel table: *staff demographics*]

OFFICE OF THE PHILADELPHIA SHERIFF

LANGUAGE ACCESS

[ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS FOR YOUR DEPARTMENT IN THE SPACE BELOW].

- 1. Provide the name of your language access coordinator, the date of your last department training, and a link to the posting of your language access plan.**

Carolyn Waters will serve as our access coordinator. Training related information will not be applicable for the current process. We are currently, using the City’s translations services, via 311, however, we are developing a backup process and training modules to have in place along with DEI initiatives.

- 2. Breakdown new hires and existing staff by race and language. Breakdown how many front-line personnel are trained to provide language access services.**

Not applicable with current process-please refer to #1

- 3. How many requests for language access services did your department receive in the past year? How many language access services were delivered by staff? Breakdown language access services provided, by language, including but not limited to the language line, translation of public notices and documents, website language services, and advertisement/publication services.**

Not applicable with current process-please refer to #1

- 4. Explain what your department has done to improve language access services over the past year.**

Not applicable with current process-please refer to #1

OFFICE OF THE PHILADELPHIA SHERIFF

CLIMATE CHANGE

1. **How has climate change affected your department's provision of services?** No, climate change has not affected our department's provision of services.
2. **How might worsening climate change increase costs and demands for your department?** The worsening of climate change would increase our fuel, food and transportation costs related to inmates, and increase travel cost, in and around the city and county of Philadelphia, for designated staff, responsible for inmate transportation or security details.
3. **How does your department intend to mitigate and adapt to climate change?** We are in the process of researching how climate change is impacting law enforcement offices of our size and composition.