

**OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES  
FISCAL YEAR 2027 BUDGET TESTIMONY  
MARCH 31, 2026**

**INTRODUCTION**

Good Morning, President Johnson and Members of City Council. I am Candi Blossom Jones, Chief Human Resources Officer. Joining me today are Deputy Chiefs Marsha Greene-Jones, Janine LaBletta, Ardena Starks, and Nicole Morris. I am pleased to provide testimony on the Office of Human Resources' Fiscal Year 2027 Operating Budget.

**DEPARTMENT MISSION & PLANS**

**Mission:** Under the guidance of the Civil Service Commission, the Office of Human Resources (OHR) works to attract, select, and retain a qualified, diverse, and effective workforce to support the Mayor's goal to make Philadelphia the safest, cleanest, and greenest big city in the nation with access to economic opportunity for all. OHR is committed to ensuring that the City is an employer of choice. OHR continually reviews its processes to improve the services it provides and works closely with partner agencies, such as the Office of the Chief Administrative Officer, to develop people strategies that are innovative and focus on creating an environment that values diversity and inclusion. A key component of OHR's mission is to effectively administer the City's civil service system to create and maintain workforce management practices that are based on merit and equity. The Office regularly reviews all aspects of the system to assure that merit is the driving value in the selection of staff while working to break down traditional barriers to diversity and inclusion.

**Plans for Fiscal Year 2027:** As the City works to realize Mayor's vision for a Safer, Cleaner, Greener Philadelphia with Access to Economic Opportunity for All, the Office of Human Resources stands ready to ensure our workforce strategies are aligned, modernized, and people-centered.

As part of our continued transformation, we are actively strengthening the capability and alignment of our citywide HR community. We have established a standardized approach to professional development that builds technical expertise, reinforces regulatory knowledge, and promotes consistency in HR practices across departments. At the same time, we are creating intentional opportunities for collaboration and shared problem-solving among HR leaders to ensure greater alignment and accountability across the enterprise.

Our focus for FY27 is on deepening engagement and ensuring consistent application of HR practices Citywide. We are advancing a more unified HR model—one that supports departments with clear guidance, strengthens accountability, and improves both the employee and candidate experience.

In parallel, we are enhancing recruitment and onboarding processes to provide greater transparency, efficiency, and support. These efforts are contributing to measurable progress in reducing vacancies, shortening time to hire, and strengthening workforce stability across departments. We have also increased internal communications with employees to strengthen engagement, improve awareness of available resources, and ensure

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greater clarity and consistency across the workforce. In addition, we are expanding our external outreach by leveraging social media and modern communication strategies to better connect with prospective candidates and promote City employment opportunities.

We are also continuing to promote a more holistic approach to employee well-being—recognizing that a healthy, informed, and supported workforce is essential to performance and retention. This includes strengthening access to benefits education, encouraging proactive engagement with available resources, and advancing a culture where employees are equipped to advocate for their own well-being.

My vision as the City’s Chief Human Resources Officer is to continue advancing HR as a strategic partner—one that not only supports operations, but shapes workforce strategy, strengthens leadership, and builds public trust. OHR remains committed to building a high-performing and aligned human resources system that supports every City department—and ultimately delivers better outcomes for every Philadelphian.

Our Fiscal Year 2027 plans reflect this commitment and center on four key priorities:

1. Modernize Civil Service hiring and identify barriers to Civil Service employment including time to hire

OHR focuses on advancing [Executive Order 3-24](#) for alternative pathways to four-year college degrees where industry appropriate. This goal also requires we communicate more clearly with candidates about application process and screening process for City employment.

2. Enhance HR value Citywide through People Practice and Policy

This goal is supported by our hosting of Chief Human Resources Officers’ (CHRO) circles for HR Managers to bring issues and express concerns with their peers in similar positions. OHR trains Citywide HR community through HR University to reinforce various skills in fundamental HR functions across disciplines. OHR develops or updates guidelines and ensures alignment of policies across departments while considering unique departmental needs.

3. Monitor, improve, and streamline employee records and administration

OHR is working in partnership with departments to increase efficiency of timely separations and decrease delays in processing due to errors. OHR provides training to the HR community at all staff levels to ensure consistent and accurate understanding of HR policies and processes.

4. Promote holistic employee well-being and self-advocacy through health literacy

OHR leverages preventative measures and educational offerings to employees about benefits. OHR continually tries to expand the value and menu of benefits to drive impact while managing costs in the health and wellness of our employees, their families, and their communities.

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Thank you for your continued support.

**PROPOSED BUDGET OVERVIEW & OTHER BUDGET DRIVERS**

<b>General Fund Financial Summary by Class</b>						
	FY25 Original Appropriations	FY25 Actual Obligations	FY26 Original Appropriations	FY26 Estimated Obligations	FY27 Proposed Appropriations	Difference: FY27 Proposed-FY26 Estimated
Class 100 - Employee Compensation	\$6,730,282	\$7,277,162	\$7,528,300	\$7,770,545	\$8,061,912	\$291,367
Class 200 - Purchase of Services	\$3,572,871	\$3,164,378	\$10,757,871	\$10,757,871	\$14,831,619	\$4,073,748
Class 300/400 - Materials, Supplies & Equipment	\$72,903	\$37,690	\$72,903	\$72,903	\$72,903	\$0
	<b>\$10,376,056</b>	<b>\$10,479,230</b>	<b>\$18,359,074</b>	<b>\$18,601,319</b>	<b>\$22,966,434</b>	<b>\$4,365,115</b>

<b>Contracts Summary (Professional Services only)</b>						
	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY26 YTD (Q1 & Q2)	FY27 Projected
Total amount of contracts	\$521,500	\$1,959,773	\$4,354,654	\$8,000,000	\$4,741,438	\$13,857,902
Total amount to S/LBE	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total amount to M/W/DSBE	\$148,000	\$568,459	\$1,624,000	\$2,400,000	\$1,857,000	
S/LBE Participation Rate	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
M/W/DSBE Participation Rate	28%	29%	37%	30%	39%	

*\*S/LBE not yet available as the City works to build the S/LBE registry and begin setting small and local business participation goals.*

<b>Total S/LBE Contract Participation Goal (Public Works; Services, Supplies &amp; Equipment; and Professional Services combined)</b>			
	FY25	FY26	FY27 Projected
S/LBE Contract Participation Goal	N/A	N/A	N/A

*\*S/LBE not yet available as the City works to build the S/LBE registry and begin setting small and local business participation goals.*

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### **Proposed Funding Request:**

The proposed Fiscal Year 2027 General Fund budget totals \$22,966,434, an increase of \$4,365,115 over Fiscal Year 2026 estimated obligation levels. This increase is primarily due to additional funding to maintain the SEPTA employee benefit program and wage increases.

The proposed budget includes:

- \$8,061,912 in Class 100, a \$291,267 increase over FY26 estimated obligations. This increase is attributable to the transfer of two positions from the Office of the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) and contracted wage increases for members of DC33 and DC47, along with increases for non-represented and exempt employees. This funding will support wages for OHR staff.
- \$14,831,619 in Class 200, a \$4,073,748 increase over FY26 estimated obligations. This increase is attributable to increased costs to maintain the employee SEPTA program, offset to some extent by reductions in certain marketing contracts. This funding will continue to support contracted services like benefits initiatives and recruitment campaigns.
- \$72,903 in Class 300/400, level with FY25. This funding will continue to support the office's material purchases.

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**STAFFING LEVELS**

The department is requesting 108 budgeted positions for FY27, an increase of two position over FY26.

The increase is attributable to the transfer of two positions from CAO.

<b>Employment Levels (as of November 2025)</b>			
	FY26 Budgeted	Filled as of November 2025	FY27 Proposed
Number of Full-Time Positions	106	95	108
Number of Exempt Positions	10	12	12
Number of Executive Positions (deputy level and above)		5	
Average Salary of All Full-Time Positions		\$78,455	
Median Salary of All Full-Time Positions		\$64,336	

**NEW HIRES**

<b>New Hires (from 7/1/2025 to November 2025)</b>	
	Total Number of New Hires
Black or African American	4
Total	4

<b>New Hires (from November 2025 to March 2026)</b>	
	Total Number of New Hires
Black or African American	2
Total	2

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**VACANCY RATE AND ALLOWANCE**

<b>Vacancy Rate Summary (General Fund)</b>						
	<b>FY25 Actual Vacancy Rate</b>	<b>FY26 Budgeted Vacancy Allowance</b>	<b>FY26 Vacancy Rate</b>	<b>FY26 Budgeted Vacancy Allowance Rate</b>	<b>FY27 Budgeted Vacancy Allowance</b>	<b>FY27 Budgeted Vacancy Allowance Rate</b>
Departmental Total	6.1%	(\$766,262)	5.9%	10.2%	(\$764,443)	10.3%

**OTHER BUDGETARY IMPACTS**

**Federal and State (Where Applicable)**

N/A

**CONTRACTING EXPERIENCE**

M/W/DSBE Participation on Large Professional Services Contracts											
Top Five Largest Contracts, FY26											
Vendor Name	Service Provided	Dollar Amount of Contract	RFP Issue Date	Contract Start Date	Ranges in RFP	% of M/W/DSBE and SBE Participation Achieved	\$ Value of M/W/DSBE and SBE Participation	Total % Participation - All DSBEs	Total \$ Value Participation - All DSBEs	Local Business	Waiver for Living Wage Compliance?
Securian	Atlanta Life Insurance Ebert Enterprise	\$7,800,000	6/1/2023	1/1/2024	MBE: BGFE	0%	\$0	0%	\$14,820	Yes	No
					WBE: BGFE	0%	\$14,820				
					DSBE: BGFE	0%	\$0				
					S/LBE: BGFE	0%	\$0				
AON	Benefits Plus	\$231,000	5/2/2021	8/1/2021	MBE: BGFE	0%	\$0	20%	\$46,200	Yes	No
					WBE: BGFE	20%	\$46,200				
					DSBE: BGFE	0%	\$0				
					S/LBE: BGFE	0%	\$0				
Wellthy	Care and Concierge Services	\$1,500,000	6/1/2024	8/1/2024	MBE: BGFE	0%	\$0	100%	\$1,500,000	No	No
					WBE: BGFE	100%	\$1,500,000				
					DSBE: BGFE	0%	\$0				
					S/LBE: BGFE	0%	\$0				
NeoGov	Application and Eligible List Management software	\$750,000	12/1/2025	11/30/2026	MBE: BGFE	0%	\$0	0%	\$0	No	No
					WBE: BGFE	0%	\$0				
					DSBE: BGFE	0%	\$0				
					S/LBE: BGFE	0%	\$0				
Boom Chicka	Marketing and Branding	\$750,000	10/26/2023	1/8/2024	MBE: BGFE	7%	\$52,500	100%	\$750,000	Yes	No
					WBE: BGFE	85%	\$637,500				
					DSBE: BGFE	0%	\$0				
					S/LBE: BGFE	8%	\$60,000				

*Non-Profit Vendor Demographics not applicable.*

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### **PROGRAM BASED BUDGETING:**

**Program Name:** Planning and Strategy

**Program Number:** 40

**FY27 Proposed General Fund:** \$1,779,678

**Program Description:** OHR provides strategic guidance to departments and agencies across the City to effectively manage a workforce of over 31,000 full-time employees. Planning and Strategy is responsible for developing and executing initiatives in support of the Administration's strategic goals and operational needs. A key focus is to provide consistent human resources (HR) policy direction and to facilitate open discussion and the sharing of ideas among the City's key HR leadership.

### **FY27 Strategic Goals:**

- Planning and Strategy continues to promote the City as an employer of choice through communications, upskilling programs, and developing Citywide programs and initiatives that invest in human capital.
- Planning and Strategy will continue to professionalize HR staff by providing targeted training, development programs, and opportunities to enhance their skills and expertise. HR University continues to provide structured, standardized training for HR staff, covering technical topics and regulatory compliance. Planning and Strategy established small group sessions for HR Managers to hone their leadership skills and address HR concerns common in the workplace, such as accommodations, discipline, and use of leave time.
- Planning and Strategy will create and implement comprehensive communication strategies, including digital and social media, to engage internal and external stakeholders effectively and ensure messaging aligns with organizational goals and fosters transparency and inclusivity.
- Planning and Strategy will continue building the HR community space for peer-to-peer networking, knowledge sharing, and professional development. It will also serve as a centralized repository to house all HR-related forms, policies, and resources, ensuring easy access and consistency.
- Planning and Strategy will support initiatives that provide employees with the tools, training, and guidance needed to pursue new career opportunities with the City and enhance pathways for upskilling and reskilling to align with evolving organizational needs. OHR works directly with the City College for Municipal Employment (CCME) to align priorities with City positions; CCME's work training is informed by existing vacancies, needs, and classifications.
- Planning and Strategy will evaluate the capacity and efficiency of HR resources across the City to drive consistency and operational excellence. It will reimagine the reporting relationship of HR managers to the Office of Human Resources to strengthen accountability and ensure more consistent HR practices Citywide.

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**FY27 Performance Measures:**

Measure	FY25 Actual	FY26 Target	FY27 Target
City hiring time from cert request to hire (days)	110	≤ 90	≤ 90

<sup>1</sup> This is a measure of time-to-hire for Civil Service employees. The SLA is 90 days or less.

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**PROGRAM BASED BUDGETING:**

**Program Name:** Hiring Services

**Program Number:** 10

**FY27 Proposed General Fund:** \$5,410,125

**Program Description:** This program directs Citywide integrated workforce planning and key talent management activities, including succession and workforce planning, job classification, pay evaluation, exam development, exam administration, test scoring, test review, and preparation of new and revised Civil Service Regulations, as needed, to support changes in City operations and labor agreements.

**FY27 Strategic Goals:**

- The Department will drive diversity in hiring, recruitment, testing, interviewing, and job description management to remove barriers to City employment and address staffing shortages in collaboration with hiring department clients.
- Hiring Services will drive economic opportunity for all by forging and maintaining key talent pipeline partnerships, including collaboration with the CCME initiative. This partnership, along with sustained community-based or college recruiting efforts, will expand access and awareness of Civil Service careers from individuals in City ZIP codes with high unemployment rates, poverty, and disparate health and education outcomes.
- The Department will focus on time to hire and quality of hire in collaboration with hiring department clients. It will provide modernized and personalized candidate experience with emphasis on bridging the digital divide and supporting a fair and equitable screening process and enhanced candidate communication.

**FY27 Performance Measures:**

Measure	FY25 Actual	FY26 Target	FY27 Target
Percentage of civil service eligible lists produced on or by target date <sup>1</sup>	69%	≥ 80%	≥ 80%
Median number of days for producing civil service eligible list	31	≤ 35	≤ 35

<sup>1</sup> A transition to new scoring and a new application caused a decrease in results for FY25.

**PROGRAM BASED BUDGETING:**

**Program Name:** Benefits Administration

**Program Number:** 20

**FY27 Proposed General Fund:** \$13,357,208

**Program Description:** The division’s focus is to provide a quality health benefits package that serves the needs of both the City and our employees and our communities. A continued focus upon health equity is paramount in benefit initiatives and programming, meaning that all employees have fair and equal access to health benefits, wellness programs, and resources. This includes the design and administration of the City Administered Benefits Plan (CAP) for active employees and retirees, with a strong focus on employee wellness initiatives primarily intended to promote healthy lifestyles and self-advocacy while effectively managing costs. The unit provides effective management through a series of activities, including health provider contract solicitation and evaluation; oversight of the union-administered plans; administration of Citywide life insurance, dependent care, and other benefits. The division is also responsible for payment validation for self-insured union plans; provision of retiree data for actuarial analysis for inclusion in the City’s Annual Financial Report; maintenance of data on incurred-but-not-paid claims; annual provision of the 1095 form for employee tax compliance; administration of the City’s service-connected disability program under Regulation 32; and provision of ongoing training for department-based HR staff in benefits-related processes and procedures.

**FY27 Strategic Goals:**

- OHR will deliver benefits and health literacy programs to support the health of members, families, and communities through initiatives focused on obesity, hypertension, and emotional well-being.
- OHR will evaluate program effectiveness through member feedback and data analytics on utilization rates with resulting health outcomes.
- OHR will deliver effective training programs to close knowledge gaps of the human resources community.

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**FY27 Performance Measures:**

Measure	CY24 Actual	CY25 Actual	CY26 Target
Percent of employees and spouses/life partners who completed wellness initiatives <sup>1</sup>	42%	43%	45%
Number of employees who participated in the City's health literacy opportunities	4,063	5,745	6,330

<sup>1</sup> The CY26 target reflects recent results. At 43% in CY25, the percentage of employees and spouses/life partners completing wellness initiatives remains above industry standard.

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**PROGRAM BASED BUDGETING:**

**Program Name:** Human Resources Administration

**Program Number:** 30

**FY27 Proposed General Fund:** \$1,210,694

**Program Description:** HR Administration serves as the fundamental administrative function for the Department, ensuring that employee work events such as appointments, promotions, and retirements are processed both promptly and accurately. The responsibilities encompass the management of candidate certification and civil service eligible lists, as well as the auditing and approval of all employee transactions. Human Resources Administration collaborates with operating departments on maintaining records, developing reports, and providing workforce analysis services, while also offering continuous training for HR staff regarding processes, procedures, and the application of Civil Service Regulations in relation to employee work events. Additionally, the unit closely collaborates with OHR’s Information Technology (IT) unit and OnePhilly to deliver technical support throughout the City ensuring that the current systems for applicant tracking and Human Resources Information System (HRIS) function as effectively as possible.

**FY27 Strategic Goals:**

- OHR will collaborate with HR offices across departments and agencies to assess current processes, improving quality and accuracy while reducing errors in various transactions.
- The Office will leverage human capital resources from departments to provide enhanced direct support during periods of high transaction volume, ensuring timely and efficient service delivery.
- OHR will review and update the process for handling employee separations to streamline workflows, reduce errors, and address overpayment issues associated with late processing.
- OHR will work with departments to identify opportunities for centralizing HR functions to enhance consistency, accountability, and efficiency in HR administration.

**FY27 Performance Measures:**

Measure	FY25 Actual	FY26 Target	FY27 Target
Percent of time SLA is met for human resources initial transactions	100%	100%	100%

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**PROGRAM BASED BUDGETING:**

**Program Name:** Employee Medical Evaluation Unit

**Program Number:** 50

**FY27 Proposed General Fund:** \$1,208,729

**Program Description:** The Employee Medical Evaluation Unit (EMEU) ensures that job candidates can perform the essential functions of their position. The Unit conducts pre-employment medical screenings in conformance with City policy and the federal Americans with Disabilities Act and its Amendments for positions that have been identified as safety-sensitive or require significant physical labor. In addition, the Unit provides evaluations for employees returning to work from extended absences. The EMEU also serves as the Medical Review Officer for the City’s drug and alcohol policy and non-service-connected disability assessments.

**FY27 Strategic Goals:**

- EMEU will continue to implement standard operating procedures to ensure evaluations are completed on a timely basis. The Unit will continue to review processes and procedures to ensure it provides an excellent employee/candidate experience aligned with client departments’ time to hire and acceptable wait times.
- OHR will continue to evaluate the Employee Medical Evaluation Unit to ensure the effectiveness of the new psychologist position and ensure it is positioned to better serve the mental health needs of City employees.

**FY27 Performance Measures:**

Measure	FY25 Actual	FY26 Target	FY27 Target
Percent of medical evaluations completed under SLA	79%	80%	80%