

2025-2026 Supplemental Department Questions

Please answer the following questions in a word document and return to Council. The answers to these questions will be provided to council as supplemental information. While not part of the physical budget presentation to Council, departments should be prepared to answer questions Council may have on these supplemental questions. If you feel that you have provided an answer in a previous question, please don't repeat your answer, simply refer to the earlier question/answer.

Strategic Goals

1. Provide your 2025-2026 strategic goals; How are they reflected in your budget request?

The single, overarching goal for the Office of the Public Advocate is to provide independent, impartial, and confidential services to assist the people of Snohomish County with their complaints and concerns involving the operation of Snohomish County government.

Our strategic objectives are:

- a. To investigate complaints to ensure that individuals are receiving fair and just treatment in the administrative action of the departments or offices of Snohomish County government.
- b. To share an understanding of the governing regulations and to educate when necessary.
- c. To identify and advise county governmental entities when the need for efficiencies and other adjustments are identified.
- d. To promote fairness, justice and equity in administrative action while safeguarding the rights of individuals in their dealings with county government.

National, state, and local landscape:

1. What critical issues are you facing in your department/industry, and how are you addressing them?

The Office of the Public Advocate is not facing federal, state, or local issues/risks that impact the functions of the office. However, the office is certainly impacted anytime there are uncertainties faced by government entities.

2. Are there federal, state, and local issues/mandates that will impact your department, operationally and/or fiscally. Please address what it is, the anticipated impact, and how you plan to mitigate it.

The Office of the Public Advocate does not have any new mandates.

Programs

1. With ARPA funding ending, what programs/services will be impacted and how? What is your plan for mitigating the impacts?

Our office did not receive any ARPA funding.

2. What new programs are you proposing for 2025-2026? What need or efficiency is that new program addressing? How is that program funded for sustainability? What metrics are in place to determine effectiveness?

Our office does not have any new programs for 2025-2026. However, our office did take over responsibility of the County switchboard. We were able to do so with the hire of a 1.0 FTE administrative specialist in early 2024.

3. Are there departmental change requests not in the Executive's Recommended Budget that you feel Council should consider including? If so, please provide the change request number and justification for the inclusion of the request.

Our office is not recommending any changes to the proposed budget for 2025-2026.

Internal Operations

1. Please explain how you intended to meet the Executive's 3% Resource Alignment request.

Our office did not receive a resource alignment request.

2. How are increasing Internal Service Rates impacting your department/programs?

Our office has not been impacted by the increasing rates.

3. To help inform Council on experiences around hiring and retention, please provide a list of all vacant position titles, position codes, FTE amount (1.0, 0.5, etc.), date vacated, and date first posted. Template spreadsheet attached for convenience and conformity; if already tracking information in another format, that is acceptable as well. Please list each vacancy separately.

Our office does not have any vacant positions.

4. When was the last time your department implemented a fee increase? Do you have any plans to increase fees? Are your current fees established based on a full cost recovery model?

Our office does not charge any fees for our services.