

Vermont Labor Relations Board
FY 2020 Governor's Recommend Budget

MISSION: The Labor Relations Board is charged with resolving labor relations disputes and conducting union representation elections under seven different statutes. The Board strives to promote and maintain harmonious and productive labor relations in administering these statutes. The major goal of the Board is to ensure that cases coming before it are resolved justly and expeditiously, either through informal settlements or Board decisions. Through its decisions, which are published and indexed, the Board has developed a substantial body of labor relations law to provide guidance to labor and management. In addition, the Board includes within its mission an extensive educational role in labor relations.

FY 2020 BUDGET FUNDING SPLIT:
96% General Fund, 3% Special Fund, 1% IDT

FY 2020 SUMMARY & HIGHLIGHTS

- 3.1 % increase in General Fund
- No increase in other funds
- Increases to existing staff salaries, retirement rate, Board Member per diem and related reimbursement costs, and ADS allocation rate
- Decreases in medical insurance premiums and fee for space charge

FY 2020 Budget Narrative

Department/Program Description

The Labor Relations Board is charged with resolving labor relations disputes under the State Employees Labor Relations Act, Municipal Employee Relations Act, Labor Relations for Teachers Act, State Labor Relations Act, Judiciary Employees Labor Relations Act, Independent Direct Support Providers Labor Relations Act, and Early Care and Education Providers Labor Relations Act. The Board determines appropriate bargaining units, conducts representation elections, and adjudicates unfair labor practice charges in cases involving relations between employers (State of Vermont, Vermont State Colleges, University of Vermont, municipal employers, school districts, and small private employers) and their employees. In addition, with respect to the State, State Colleges and UVM, the Board makes final determinations on employee grievances, and provides assistance in resolving negotiations disputes. Further, there are other statutory provisions granting the Board jurisdiction to resolve disputes in various areas.

The Board consists of six citizen members whom are paid on a per diem basis. The Board has two employees - a full-time Executive Director and a part-time (20 hours per week) Clerk.

Key Budget Issues

The Governor's proposed FY 2020 General Fund budget for the Board represents a 3% increase (\$7,768) from our FY 2019 General Fund budget. The net increase primarily results from the following circumstances:

- The Executive Director and Clerk received salary increases in FY 2019 which will carry over into FY 2020. The cost of these increases is \$3,629.
- The retirement rate increase requires \$3,856 additional allocations in FY 2020.
- The amount allocated for Board member per diems and related reimbursement costs is increased \$6,256. This provides protection in the event of an increase in the number of hearings.
- The ADS allocation expense is \$745 higher.
- The State share of the medical insurance premiums for the Executive Director and Clerk for FY 2020 is \$6,827 lower than the amount budgeted in FY 2019. This is due mostly to the Executive Director moving from family coverage to two person coverage effective January 2019.
- The fee for space charge in FY 2020 is \$715 lower than FY 2019.

The Governor's proposed budget allows the Board to provide the current level of services with the exception that there is an increase in Board per diems to provide protection in the event of an increase in the number of hearings.

Goals/Objectives/Performance Measures

The major goal of the Board is to ensure that cases coming before it are resolved justly and expeditiously. The ability to achieve this goal is significantly impacted by the Board's workload each year and the funds appropriated to support the Board's efforts.

The Board has developed several quantitative and qualitative performance measures to determine whether the strategies adopted by the Board are having a positive impact on indicators demonstrating whether the Board is achieving its goal of just and expeditious resolution of labor relations disputes. In the following table, quantitative performance measures, and the actual experience for calendar years, are set forth:

Performance Measures	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
<i>Cases Filed</i>	69	51	73	60	54
<i>Cases Closed</i>	79	46	71	57	49
<i>Percentage of Cases Closed by Settlement or Withdrawal</i>	48	50	54	56	59
<i>Cases Open at End of Year</i>	16	21	23	26	31
<i>Board Hearing Days</i>	10	10	12	13	18
<i>Cases Heard</i>	13	7	12	6	13
<i>Average Days Between Case Filing and Case Closing</i>	131	156	150	167	170

These quantitative performance measures indicate that the steps taken by the Board have paid substantial dividends in the past several years in improving the timely resolution of labor relations disputes.

Existing performance measurements of the quality of Board resolutions of labor disputes concern appeals of Board decisions to the Vermont Supreme Court. There has been increasing effectiveness of Board decisions over time. During the past ten years, the number of Court decisions on appeals of Board decisions has been substantially reduced. There have been only 20 Court decisions

during this period, compared to 30 decisions during the preceding ten years. The Board has been fully affirmed in 15 cases of the 20, and reversed in 5 cases, an affirmance rate of 75 percent. During this period, the chance of a Board decision remaining in effect and not being reversed has been 98 percent.