



STATE OF VERMONT
JOINT FISCAL OFFICE

Overview of Fiscal Year 2026 Legislative Budget

Prepared by:

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Legislative Finance Manager

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STATE OF VERMONT
JOINT FISCAL OFFICE

Legislative Branch Budgets by Department

Department	FY25 Appropriation	FY26 Recommended	Change in Dollar Amount	Change in Percentage
Legislature*	\$11,465,442	\$12,457,101	\$991,659	8.65%
Legislative Counsel	\$4,198,066	\$4,706,416	\$508,350	12.11%
Joint Fiscal Office	\$2,859,179	\$3,157,769	\$298,590	10.44%
Legislative IT	\$2,241,214	\$2,417,221	\$176,007	7.85%
Sgt. At Arms	\$1,663,504	\$1,806,196	\$142,692	8.58%
Subtotal:	\$22,427,405	\$24,544,703	\$2,117,298	9.44%
FY 26 Reversion		(\$121,815)	(\$121,815)	
Total:	\$22,427,405	\$24,422,888	\$1,995,483	8.90%

*The Legislature budget includes funding for the General Assembly, House Clerk, Senate Secretary, leadership positions, Office of Legislative Operations, and the Office of Human Resources.



STATE OF VERMONT
JOINT FISCAL OFFICE

MEMORANDUM

To: Joint Legislative Management Committee
From: Scott Moore, Joint Fiscal Office
Cc: Legislative Branch Department Heads
Date: December 6, 2024
Subject: Fiscal Year 2026 Legislative Branch Budget

2 V.S.A. § 42(a)(1), as established in Section 3 of Act 144 (2020), states that the Joint Legislative Management Committee shall: *“prepare a proposed budget for the Legislative Branch that includes a budget for each legislative office.”*

This memo contains the proposed Legislative Branch appropriations for fiscal year 2026. These budgets have been prepared by the Joint Fiscal Office in collaboration with other Legislative Branch departments. Summary budget figures are shown below.

FY25 Legislative Branch Budget	\$22,427,405
FY26 Legislative Branch Budget	\$24,026,591
Dollar Change (FY25 to FY26)	\$1,599,186
Percent Change (FY25 to FY26)	+7.13%
Proposed FY26 Reversions	\$121,815
Percent Change After Reversions	+6.59%

The growth in the Legislative Branch budget from fiscal year 2025 to fiscal year 2026 reflects increased costs to provide base services. Approximately 90% of the overall budget growth is associated with the following: annualizing the costs of the most recent “Pay Act” and the corresponding benefits cost increase, an increase in legislator expense reimbursement rates, and an increase in payroll taxes for childcare. The remainder of the growth is driven by organization dues, increases in IT operating expenses, staff professional development, and contractual obligations for consulting services.

Fiscal Year 2026 Staffing Request

1) Funding for Law Clerk: In fiscal year 2025 two session-only Law Clerk positions were converted into one exempt full-time, year-round position. Legislative Counsel has requested to fund this position for nine months. Doing so will introduce recent law school graduates to legislative legal work and create a much-needed pipeline of candidates for permanent Legislative Counsel positions when the legal unit has a vacancy. Clerks provide necessary research, drafting, and support services to the attorneys during high volume times of the year.

Budget Pressures:

1) Compensation and Benefits Changes: Legislative staff received 6.4% salary increases based on the annual “Pay Act.” This also has a corresponding impact on disability, family medical leave, FICA/Medicare, and life insurance costs.

2) Increased Payroll Taxes: Childcare payroll tax increases in fiscal year 2026.

3) Legislator Expense Reimbursements: Reimbursement rates are driven by federal reimbursement rates. The federal lodging reimbursement rate, which is put out by the General Services Administration (GSA), increased on October 1, 2024 from \$162/night to \$167/night. The meal reimbursement rate also increased from \$69/day to \$74/day.

4) Contractual Obligations: In fiscal year 2026 contracted third parties will have an increase in their contracted rates.

5) Law Clerk Position: Two session-only Law Clerk positions were converted into one full-time year-round position in fiscal year 2025. The fiscal year 2026 Legislative Branch budget includes funding for this position for nine months.

Legislative Branch Budgets by Department				
Department	FY25 Appropriation	FY26 Request	Change in Dollar Amount	Change in Percentage
Legislature*	\$11,465,442	\$12,250,184	\$784,742	6.84%
Legislative Counsel	\$4,198,066	\$4,544,229	\$346,163	8.25%
Joint Fiscal Office	\$2,859,179	\$3,087,551	\$228,372	7.99%
Legislative IT	\$2,241,214	\$2,368,405	\$127,191	5.68%
Sgt. At Arms	\$1,663,504	\$1,776,222	\$112,718	6.78%
Subtotal:	\$22,427,405	\$24,026,591	\$1,599,186	7.13%
FY 26 Reversion		(\$121,815)	(\$121,815)	
Total:	\$22,427,405	\$23,904,776	\$1,477,371	6.59%

*The “Legislature” department budget includes funding for the General Assembly, the Office of the Clerk of the House, the Office of the Secretary of the Senate, Legislative Leadership, the Office of Legislative Operations, and the Office of Human Resources.

Proposed Motion:

Fiscal Year 2026 Legislative Budget: *Move to support the proposed fiscal year 2026 Legislative Branch appropriations as presented to the Joint Legislative Management Committee on December 11, 2024 and require that the Joint Fiscal Office notify the Chair and Vice-Chair of any substantial changes prior to the release of the Executive Branch budget recommendation to determine whether formal review by the Committee is necessary.*



STATE OF VERMONT
JOINT FISCAL OFFICE

MEMORANDUM

To: President Pro Tempore Phil Baruth,
Ex officio member, Joint Legislative Management Committee

Speaker Jill Krowinski,
Ex officio member, Joint Legislative Management Committee

From: Scott Moore, Legislative Finance Manager

Cc: Legislative Department Heads

Date: January 21, 2025

Subject: Fiscal Year 2026 Legislative Branch Budget Update

This memo provides explanation for changes to the legislative branch fiscal year 2026 budgets since they were approved by the Joint Legislative Management Committee on December 11, 2024. As discussed at the meeting and outlined in the budget instructions, the budget would not be finalized until the Department of Finance and Management completed the allocation of internal service fund costs and established final benefit rates. Please note, these changes impact all Agencies and Departments in State Government and per the budget instructions were not expected to be absorbed by Agencies and Departments. The details of these changes are explained below:

- Benefit Rates will increase in fiscal year 2026. These costs include Healthcare, Dental, and Retirement, among other items. This has resulted in a \$401,270 increase in budgets across the branch. The Joint Fiscal Office received notice of the benefit rate increase on December 13, 2024.
- Internal Service Fund costs will increase in fiscal year 2026. These costs include fee-for-space, worker's compensation, and general liability insurance. This has resulted in a \$116,842 increase in budgets across the branch. The Joint Fiscal Office received notice of this increase on December 19, 2024.

The Administration will provide supplemental General Fund allocations to meet these new Internal Service Fund costs and benefit rate changes, as indicated in the fiscal year 2026 budget instructions. The new fiscal year 2026 budgets for the legislative branch are shown on the following page.

Department	Budget from 12/11/2024	Updated budget 01/21/2025	Difference
Legislature	\$12,250,184	\$12,457,101	+ \$206,917
Legislative Counsel	\$4,544,229	\$4,706,416	+ \$162,187
Joint Fiscal Office	\$3,087,551	\$3,157,769	+ \$70,218
Legislative IT	\$2,368,405	\$2,417,221	+ \$48,816
Sgt. At Arms	\$1,776,222	\$1,806,196	+ \$29,974
Subtotal:	\$24,026,591	\$24,544,703	+ \$518,112
FY 26 Reversion	(\$121,815)	(\$121,815)	-
Total:	\$23,904,776	\$24,422,888	+ \$518,112

These updated numbers are being reported as required by the motion that was adopted by the Joint Legislative Management Committee on December 11, 2024:

Fiscal Year 2026 Legislative Budget: Move to support the proposed fiscal year 2026 Legislative Branch appropriations as presented to the Joint Legislative Management Committee on December 11, 2024 and require that the Joint Fiscal Office notify the Chair and Vice-Chair of any substantial changes prior to the release of the Executive Branch budget recommendation to determine whether formal review by the Committee is necessary.

In summary, the change in the overall budget from December 11 to now is due to internal service fund cost increases as well as increased benefit rates. Per the fiscal year 2026 budget instructions, the Administration will provide supplemental General Fund allocations to cover the cost of these increases across all branches.

FY2026 Legislative Budget

		FY25 Appropriated	FY 26 JLMC Approved Prior to Additional ISF and Benefit Rate Increase	FY26 Including Additional ISF and Benefit Rate Increase
SOURCES OF FUNDS				
1	General fund appropriation	11,465,442	11,809,405	11,809,405
2	TOTAL SOURCES	11,465,442	11,809,405	11,809,405
3				
USES OF FUNDS				
5	Personal Services - Members			
6	Session salaries	2,764,533	2,941,387	2,941,387
7	Interim meetings salaries	140,000	150,000	150,000
8	FICA/Medicare	367,267	370,966	370,966
9	State payroll taxes - childcare	10,335	13,602	13,602
10				
11	Personal Services - Staff			
12	Staff Salaries	2,132,154	2,222,399	2,222,399
13	Overtime	-	5,000	5,000
14	FICA/Medicare	163,110	170,507	170,507
15	Health insurance	359,706	417,018	476,254
16	Retirement	388,341	434,935	473,552
17	Dental	16,019	17,056	17,056
18	Life insurance	7,553	8,898	7,668
19	Disability	2,827	2,991	2,991
20	Employee assistance program	594	713	777
21	FMLI	6,171	6,592	6,592
22	State payroll taxes - childcare	7,036	9,807	9,835
23	Worker's Compensation	47,987	47,987	51,568
24	Unemployment Compensation	10,000	10,000	10,000
25	Catamount Health	5,000	5,000	5,000
26	Other Contr and 3rd Pty Serv	102,500	132,500	132,500
27	Subtotal Personal Services	6,531,132	6,967,357	7,067,654
28				
29	Operating Expenses - Members			
30	Expenses	2,518,600	2,836,735	2,836,735
31				
32	Operating Expenses - Staff			
33	Equipment, repairs & maintenance	30,000	40,000	40,000
34	Hardware Lease-Print Copy Scan	90,000	90,000	90,000
35	Fee for space	1,356,325	1,356,325	1,460,470
36	Insurances Property	4,827	4,827	2,833
37	Insurances Liability	30,956	30,956	26,654
38	Organization dues	310,000	330,000	330,000
39	Communications	10,000	10,000	10,000
40	Accounting (VISION)	195,905	195,905	204,677
41	Advertising	15,000	15,000	15,000
42	Printing and binding	140,000	140,000	140,000
43	Photocopying	45,000	45,000	45,000
44	Registrations for meetings	20,000	20,000	20,000
45	Postage and mailing	4,000	4,000	4,000
46	In-State Travel and Training	25,000	25,000	25,000
47	Out-of-State Travel and Training	35,000	35,000	35,000
48	Other Purchased Services	15,000	15,000	15,000
49	Office supplies, books, other payments	45,500	45,500	45,500
50	Subscriptions	36,000	36,000	36,000
51	Office Furniture and Equipment	3,000	3,000	3,000
52	Single Audit allocation	4,197	4,579	4,579
53	Subtotal Operating Expenses	4,934,310	5,282,827	5,389,448
54				
55	TOTAL USES	11,465,442	12,250,184	12,457,102

		FY25 Appropriated	FY 26 JLMC Approved Prior to Additional ISF and Benefit Rate Increase	FY26 Including Additional ISF and Benefit Rate Increase
SOURCES OF FUNDS				
1	General fund appropriation	4,198,066	4,324,008	4,324,008
2	Pay Act			
3	TOTAL SOURCES	4,198,066	4,324,008	4,324,008
4				
USES OF FUNDS				
6	Personal Services			
7	Full-Time Staff Salaries	2,393,980	2,653,152	2,653,150
8	Session Staff Salaries	69,457	79,022	79,022
9	Overtime	2,500	2,500	2,500
10	FICA/Medicare	184,627	209,011	209,011
11	Health insurance	647,812	639,313	733,740
12	Retirement	528,464	587,034	655,738
13	Dental	27,330	23,190	23,195
14	Life insurance	8,781	11,799	10,185
15	Disability	3,985	4,590	4,590
16	Employee assistance program	839	923	999
17	FMLI	8,699	9,846	9,846
18	State payroll taxes - childcare	7,964	12,022	12,022
19	Worker's Compensation	8,729	8,729	11,982
20	Unemployment Compensation	2,500	2,500	2,500
21	Catamount Health	1,000	1,000	1,000
22	Other personal services	10,000	10,000	10,000
23	Subtotal Personal Services	3,906,667	4,254,630	4,419,480
24				
25	Operating Expenses			
26	Fee for space	210,511	210,511	204,873
27	Insurances Property	859	859	1,127
28	Insurances Liability	25,163	25,163	27,788
29	Licensing	5,800	5,000	5,000
30	Accounting (VISION)	18,929	18,929	19,011
31	Advertising	1,000	-	-
32	Conference/Meeting Registration	3,000	3,000	3,000
33	In-State Travel, Professional Dev.	2,000	2,000	2,000
34	Out-of-State Travel, Professional Dev.	12,000	12,000	12,000
35	Other Purchased Services	500	500	500
36	Office Supplies	1,000	1,000	1,000
37	Books & Periodicals - Library	500	500	500
38	Subscriptions	4,000	4,000	4,000
39	Office Furniture and Equipment	2,000	2,000	2,000
40	Single Audit allocation	4,137	4,137	4,137
41	Subtotal Operating Expenses	291,399	289,599	286,936
42				
43	TOTAL USES	4,198,066	4,544,229	4,706,416

FY2026 Joint Fiscal Office Budget

		FY25 Appropriated	FY 26 JLMC Approved Prior to Additional ISF and Benefit Rate Increase	FY26 Including Additional ISF and Benefit Rate Increase
SOURCES OF FUNDS				
1	General fund appropriation	2,859,179	2,944,954	2,944,954
2	TOTAL SOURCES	2,859,179	2,944,954	2,944,954
3				
4	USES OF FUNDS			
5	Personal Services			
6	Full-Time Staff Salaries	1,501,152	1,601,523	1,601,523
7	Session Staff Salaries	26,000	26,000	26,000
8	Overtime	-	1,000	1,000
9	FICA/Medicare	114,838	124,246	124,246
10	Health insurance	281,496	317,058	348,630
11	Retirement	334,870	376,444	410,767
12	Dental	13,648	14,501	14,501
13	Life insurance	7,008	8,023	6,888
14	Disability	2,552	2,693	2,693
15	Employee assistance program	528	578	629
16	FMLI	5,571	5,944	5,944
17	State payroll taxes - childcare	4,954	7,146	7,146
18	Employee tuition	2,500	5,000	5,000
19	Worker's Compensation	7,199	7,199	8,795
20	Catamount Health	500	500	500
21	Contract - Kavet	200,000	220,100	220,100
22	Contract - Agilis	85,000	101,500	101,500
23	Other personal services	74,000	74,000	74,000
24	Subtotal Personal Services	2,661,816	2,893,455	2,959,862
25				
26	Operating Expenses			
27	Fee for space	64,857	64,857	68,193
28	Insurances Property	442	442	449
29	Insurances Liability	12,198	12,198	11,076
30	Accounting (VISION)	15,238	15,238	16,828
31	Advertising	1,500	-	-
32	ADS Expense	-	-	-
33	Printing & copying	-	-	-
34	Registrations	3,000	2,500	2,500
35	In-State Travel and Training	3,000	2,500	2,500
36	Out-of-State Travel and Training	20,000	16,500	16,500
37	Office Supplies	5,000	5,000	5,000
38	Dues & subscriptions	20,000	20,000	20,000
39	Hardware & Software	46,307	50,000	50,000
40	Office Furniture and Equipment	5,000	4,000	4,000
41	Single Audit allocation	821	861	861
42	Subtotal Operating Expenses	197,363	194,096	197,907
43				
44	TOTAL USES	2,859,179	3,087,551	3,157,769

FY2026 Legislative Information Technology

		FY25 Appropriated	FY 26 JLMC Approved Prior to Additional ISF and Benefit Rate Increase	FY26 Including Additional ISF and Benefit Rate Increase
SOURCES OF FUNDS				
1	General fund appropriation	2,241,214	2,308,450	2,308,450
2	TOTAL SOURCES	2,241,214	2,308,450	2,308,450
3				
4	USES OF FUNDS			
5	Personal Services			
6	Full-Time Staff Salaries	803,372	829,890	829,890
7	Session Staff Salaries	18,935	21,610	21,610
8	Overtime	500	500	500
9	FICA/Medicare	64,533	65,140	65,140
10	Health insurance	262,410	280,189	296,370
11	Retirement	196,854	202,988	220,667
12	Dental	10,147	7,675	7,677
13	Life insurance	4,025	4,157	3,569
14	Disability	1,366	1,394	1,394
15	Employee assistance program	302	305	332
16	FMLI	2,981	3,080	3,080
17	State payroll taxes - childcare	2,651	3,731	3,731
18	Worker's Compensation	1,079	1,079	1,079
19	Unemployment Compensation	1,500	1,500	1,500
20	Catamount Health	522	522	522
21	IT Contracts and Services	60,000	45,000	45,000
22	Other personal services	2,500	2,500	2,500
23	Subtotal Personal Services	1,433,677	1,471,260	1,504,560
24				
25	Operating Expenses			
26	Repair & Maintenance - Hardware	20,139	11,147	11,147
27	Repair & Maintenance - Software	35,135	39,483	39,483
28	Fee for space	37,149	37,149	37,149
29	Insurances Property	334	334	79
30	Insurances Liability	3,431	3,431	3,431
31	Software Licenses	295,120	290,619	290,619
32	Telecommunications	50,472	53,472	53,472
33	Accounting (VISION)	8,390	8,390	8,370
34	ADS Telephone	-	31,200	31,200
35	ADS Internet	99,866	102,862	118,653
36	Advertising	1,000	-	-
37	Conference/Meeting Registration	2,000	2,000	2,000
38	Training - Information Tech	8,000	8,000	8,000
39	In-State Travel and Training	1,000	1,000	1,000
40	Out-of-State Travel and Training	9,000	9,000	9,000
41	Other Purchased Services	6,000	-	-
42	Software as a Service	104,501	118,258	118,258
43	Office Supplies	500	-	-
44	IT & Data Processing Supplies	24,500	24,500	24,500
45	Books & Periodicals	500	500	500
46	Hardware	99,000	133,300	133,300
47	Hardware-Storage	-	22,000	22,000
48	Office Furniture and Equipment	1,000	-	-
49	Single Audit allocation	500	500	500
50	Subtotal Operating Expenses	807,537	897,145	912,661
51				
52	TOTAL USES	2,241,214	2,368,405	2,417,221

FY2026 Sergeant at Arms

		FY25 Appropriated	FY 26 JLMC Approved Prior to Additional ISF and Benefit Rate Increase	FY26 Including Additional ISF and Benefit Rate Increase
SOURCES OF FUNDS				
1	General fund appropriation	1,663,504	1,713,409	1,713,409
2	TOTAL SOURCES	1,663,504	1,713,409	1,713,409
3				
USES OF FUNDS				
4	Personal Services			
5				
6	Full-Time Staff Salaries	787,525	814,978	814,978
7	Session Staff Salaries	113,583	119,195	119,195
8	Overtime	23,000	23,000	23,000
9	FICA/Medicare	67,787	71,464	71,464
10	Health insurance	238,704	290,466	304,554
11	Retirement	206,264	228,657	245,772
12	Dental	9,251	11,712	11,712
13	Life insurance	3,206	4,384	3,806
14	Disability	1,313	1,470	1,470
15	Employee assistance program	330	452	482
16	FMLI	2,867	3,025	3,025
17	State payroll taxes - childcare	2,924	4,109	4,109
18	Worker's Compensation	10,053	10,053	11,213
19	Unemployment Compensation	2,500	2,500	2,500
20	Catamount Health	1,500	1,500	1,500
21	Other Personal Services	6,000	6,000	6,000
22	Sheriffs	15,000	10,000	10,000
23	Contr&3rd Pty-Educ & Training	10,000	5,000	5,000
24	Subtotal Personal Services	1,501,807	1,607,965	1,639,780
25				
26	Operating Expenses			
27	Vehicle & Equipment Supplies	1,000	5,000	5,000
28	Fee for space	9,699	9,699	16,378
29	Insurance Property	260	260	277
30	Insurance Liability	6,675	6,675	6,062
31	Dues	4,000	4,000	4,000
32	Communications	25,000	25,000	25,000
33	Accounting (VISION)	16,049	16,049	8,125
34	Emp Training & Background Chks	5,200	5,200	5,200
35	Postage	500	500	500
36	In-State Travel	5,000	7,500	7,500
37	Out-of-State Travel	3,000	3,000	3,000
38	Other Purchased Services	11,000	11,000	11,000
39	Office Supplies	7,000	7,000	7,000
40	Uniforms	15,000	15,000	15,000
41	Fire, Protection & Safety	48,000	48,000	48,000
42	Office Furniture and Equipment	4,000	4,000	4,000
43	Single Audit allocation	314	374	374
44	Subtotal Operating Expenses	161,697	168,257	166,416
45				
46	TOTAL USES	1,663,504	1,776,222	1,806,196