

Office of the Healthcare Advocate

MCO39400

Permanent Full-Time Positions

Fund	Actual FY 23	Actual FY 24	Appropriation FY 25	Governor Recommended		Legislative	
				FY 26	FY 27	FY 26	FY 27
Insurance Fund	18	19	19	20	20	19	19

Budget Summary

Account	Actual FY 23	Actual FY 24	Appropriation FY 25	Governor Recommended		Legislative	
				FY 26	FY 27	FY 26	FY 27
Personal Services	1,620,031	1,539,474	1,876,329	2,072,836	2,072,836	1,947,836	1,947,836
Other Expenses	210,303	226,766	292,991	302,991	302,991	392,991	292,991
Equipment	4,715	4,239	5,000	10,000	10,000	5,000	5,000
Other Current Expenses							
Fringe Benefits	1,550,653	1,373,342	1,831,655	1,949,199	1,949,199	1,831,655	1,831,655
Indirect Overhead	95,934	49,885	49,885	79,775	79,775	79,775	79,775
Agency Total - Insurance Fund	3,481,636	3,193,706	4,055,860	4,414,801	4,414,801	4,257,257	4,157,257

Account	Governor Recommended		Legislative		Difference from Governor	
	FY 26	FY 27	FY 26	FY 27	FY 26	FY 27

Policy Revisions

Maintain the Office of the Behavioral Health Advocate

Personal Services	125,000	125,000	-	-	(125,000)	(125,000)
Other Expenses	10,000	10,000	-	-	(10,000)	(10,000)
Equipment	5,000	5,000	-	-	(5,000)	(5,000)
Fringe Benefits	117,544	117,544	-	-	(117,544)	(117,544)
Total - Insurance Fund	257,544	257,544	-	-	(257,544)	(257,544)
Positions - Insurance Fund	1	1	-	-	(1)	(1)

Background

The Office of the Behavioral Health Advocate (OBH) was established by Sections 10 and 11 of PA 23-101, *An Act Concerning the Mental, Physical and Emotional Wellness of Children*. The office's responsibilities are to: (1) assist mental and behavioral health care providers with receiving payments for claims submitted to health carriers for services provided to covered patients, and (2) assist residents with accessing mental and behavioral health care and related resources. One of the four positions, the Behavioral Health Advocate, originally funded in FY 24 has been filled.

Governor

Transfer one position, the Behavioral Health Advocate, and funding of \$257,544 in both FY 26 and FY 27 from the Office of the Behavioral Health Advocate to the Office of the Healthcare Advocate (OHA).

Legislative

Maintain OBH as a separate agency and do not transfer any positions or funding from OBH to OHA.

Provide Funding for Hospital Financial Assistance Portal

Other Expenses	-	-	100,000	-	100,000	-
Total - Insurance Fund	-	-	100,000	-	100,000	-

Account	Governor Recommended		Legislative		Difference from Governor	
	FY 26	FY 27	FY 26	FY 27	FY 26	FY 27

Background

Hospitals provide financial assistance programs to help low-income and uninsured patients reduce or eliminate their medical bills. These programs vary by hospital but typically include discounts, payment plans, or full coverage for those who qualify based on income and financial hardship. To improve access and transparency, Section 182 of PA 25-168, the FY 26 and FY 27 Budget, requires the Office of the Healthcare Advocate to contract with a vendor to create a portal where patients can easily find these assistance options.

Legislative

Provide funding of \$100,000 in FY 26 to contract with a vendor to develop an online hospital financial assistance portal for patients and family members.

Current Services

Annualize the Cost of Existing Wage Agreements

Personal Services	71,507	71,507	71,507	71,507	-	-
Total - Insurance Fund	71,507	71,507	71,507	71,507	-	-

Background

The Governor's Recommended Budget provides funding of \$124.4 million in FY 26 and FY 27, across nine appropriated funds, to reflect current wage-related adjustments resulting from existing wage agreements.

Governor

Provide funding of \$71,507 in both FY 26 and FY 27 to reflect this agency's increased wage costs.

Legislative

Same as Governor

Fund Indirect Overhead at Comptroller's Projected Amount

Indirect Overhead	29,890	29,890	29,890	29,890	-	-
Total - Insurance Fund	29,890	29,890	29,890	29,890	-	-

Background

Agencies funded outside the General Fund are charged with indirect overhead costs by the Office of the State Comptroller for utilizing certain centralized state agency services.

Governor

Provide funding of \$29,890 in both FY 26 and FY 27 to ensure sufficient funds for indirect overhead.

Legislative

Same as Governor

Totals

Budget Components	Governor Recommended		Legislative		Difference from Governor	
	FY 26	FY 27	FY 26	FY 27	FY 26	FY 27
FY 25 Appropriation - IF	4,055,860	4,055,860	4,055,860	4,055,860	-	-
Policy Revisions	257,544	257,544	100,000	-	(157,544)	(257,544)
Current Services	101,397	101,397	101,397	101,397	-	-
Total Recommended - IF	4,414,801	4,414,801	4,257,257	4,157,257	(157,544)	(257,544)

Positions	Governor Recommended		Legislative		Difference from Governor	
	FY 26	FY 27	FY 26	FY 27	FY 26	FY 27
FY 25 Appropriation - IF	19	19	19	19	-	-
Policy Revisions	1	1	-	-	(1)	(1)
Total Recommended - IF	20	20	19	19	(1)	(1)