

FY 2026-27 Budget Briefing Summary

Human Services

The Department of Human Services is charged with the administration and supervision of most non-medical public assistance and welfare programs in the state. The Department's FY 2025-26 appropriation represents approximately 7.8 percent of statewide General Fund appropriations.

The divisions included in this document are the Executive Director's Office, Administration and Finance, and Office of Children, Youth and Families. Other divisions will be addressed in separate staff briefings.

Summary of Request

Department of Human Services

| Item | Total Funds | General Fund | Cash Funds | Reapprop. Funds | Federal Funds | FTE |
|--------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------|
| FY 2025-26 Appropriation | | | | | | |
| SB 25-206 (Long Bill) | \$2,668,676,927 | \$1,323,288,949 | \$454,233,575 | \$235,269,773 | \$655,884,630 | 5,511.1 |
| Other legislation | 4,214,533 | -647,338 | 8,739,414 | -4,104,819 | 227,276 | 56.4 |
| Total | \$2,672,891,460 | \$1,322,641,611 | \$462,972,989 | \$231,164,954 | \$656,111,906 | 5,567.5 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------|
| FY 2026-27 Requested Appropriation | | | | | | |
| FY 2025-26 Appropriation | \$2,672,891,460 | \$1,322,641,611 | \$462,972,989 | \$231,164,954 | \$656,111,906 | 5,567.5 |
| R1 Youth services radios [1] | 327,600 | 327,600 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| R2 Autism treatment [1] | 561,540 | 477,309 | 0 | 0 | 84,231 | 4.6 |
| R3 SNAP federal changes | 12,453,035 | 36,846,852 | 0 | 0 | -24,393,817 | 0.0 |
| R4 Hospital revenues and contracts | 2,080,500 | -1,800,672 | 7,765,022 | -3,883,850 | 0 | 0.0 |
| R5 Reduce TANF | -19,180,663 | 0 | -19,180,663 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| R6 County block grant support fund | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| R7 Reduce home care allowance | -531,629 | -531,629 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| R8 Reduce county admin | -400,000 | -100,000 | 0 | -160,000 | -140,000 | 0.0 |
| R9 Reduce department admin [1] | -3,455,758 | -2,961,750 | -43,916 | -22,700 | -427,392 | 0.0 |
| R10 Reduce reg center records | -290,000 | 0 | 0 | -290,000 | 0 | 0.0 |
| R11 Reduce peer support | -649,260 | -649,260 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| R12 Reduce Tony Grampas [1] | -200,000 | -400,000 | 200,000 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| R13 Reduce collab management [1] | 0 | -700,000 | 700,000 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| R14 Reduce foster training [1] | -150,000 | -150,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| R15 Reduce NGRI transition serv | -300,000 | -300,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| R16 Reduce child abuse hotline [1] | -629,000 | -629,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| R17 Reduce summer EBT | -360,066 | -180,033 | 0 | 0 | -180,033 | 0.0 |
| R18 Reduce SNAP outreach | -1,250,000 | -500,000 | 0 | 0 | -750,000 | 0.0 |
| BHA R1 Reduce admin | -551,200 | -551,200 | 0 | 0 | 0 | -4.0 |
| BHA R2 Repeal safety net assist | -500,000 | -500,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| BHA R3 Reduce substance treatment | -3,000,000 | -3,000,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| BHA R4 Reduce care coordination | -250,000 | -250,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Statewide R6 Prior reduction ops [1] | -1,695,771 | -1,679,490 | 0 | 0 | -16,281 | 0.0 |
| Employee compensation common policies [1] | 21,224,398 | 13,004,403 | 996,120 | 5,618,758 | 1,605,117 | 0.0 |

| Item | Total Funds | General Fund | Cash Funds | Reapprop. Funds | Federal Funds | FTE |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|---------|
| Operating common policies [1] | -20,222,425 | -2,408,502 | -1,174,673 | -10,588,100 | -6,051,150 | 0.0 |
| Impacts driven by other agencies [1] | 1,544,765 | 1,511,638 | 105,337 | -1,272,691 | 1,200,481 | 0.9 |
| Prior year actions [1] | 131,939 | 2,179,888 | -1,214,090 | 46,871 | -880,730 | 11.9 |
| Technical adjustments [1] | 865,378 | 865,378 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Total | \$2,658,464,843 | \$1,360,563,143 | \$451,126,126 | \$220,613,242 | \$626,162,332 | 5,580.9 |
| Increase/-Decrease | -\$14,426,617 | \$37,921,532 | -\$11,846,863 | -\$10,551,712 | -\$29,949,574 | 13.4 |
| Percentage Change | -0.5% | 2.9% | -2.6% | -4.6% | -4.6% | 0.0% |

[1] Items addressed in this document. Other requests will be addressed in separate staff briefings.

Changes are assumed to be ongoing unless otherwise noted.

R1 Youth services radios: The Department asks to increase funding for radios in the Division of Youth Services (DYS).

Year 1: The total cost is \$327,600 General Fund.

The current radios used in secure DYS facilities are no longer supported by the manufacturer. Costs support the annual replacement of radios and supporting equipment for two facilities each year. The radios for each facility would be replaced every five years on an ongoing basis.

R2 Autism treatment [legislation]: The Department asks to increase funding to license autism treatment facilities.

Year 1: The total cost is \$561,540. This includes \$477,309 General Fund, \$84,231 federal funds, and 4.6 FTE.

The Department asks for the Committee to sponsor legislation to include autism treatment within existing licensing responsibilities. The Department has indicated that this is a Proven request. Additional information is provided in the second issue brief.

R9 Reduce department administration: The Department asks to decrease funding for administrative costs.

Year 1: The total decrease is \$3.5 million. This includes a decrease of \$2.9 million General Fund, \$43,916 cash funds, \$22,700 reappropriated funds, and \$427,392 federal funds.

Year 2: The decrease is \$1.8 million in future years. This includes \$1.3 million General Fund.

The decrease includes a one-time decrease for employee health insurance and ongoing decreases for several administrative line items throughout the department. Administrative decreases include reduced spending on travel and other operating costs as well as not filling vacant staff positions.

R9 Reduce department administration

| Item | Total Funds | General Fund | Cash Funds | Reapprop. Funds | Federal Funds | FTE |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|------------|-----------------|---------------|-----|
| Health, life, dental | -\$2,177,791 | -\$1,683,783 | -\$43,916 | -\$22,700 | -\$427,392 | 0.0 |
| Division of Child Welfare | -855,000 | -855,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Office of Adults, Aging & Disability | -190,326 | -190,326 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Adult Protective Services | -168,641 | -168,641 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Office of Children, Youth & Families | -32,000 | -32,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Community Services for the Elderly | -32,000 | -32,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Total | -\$3,455,758 | -\$2,961,750 | -\$43,916 | -\$22,700 | -\$427,392 | 0.0 |

R12 Reduce Tony Grampsas: The Department asks to decrease funding for the Tony Grampsas Youth Services Program.

Year 1: The total decrease is \$200,000. This includes a decrease of \$400,000 General Fund, partially offset by an increase of \$200,000 from the Marijuana Tax Cash Fund.

The Tony Grampsas Youth Services Program currently awards one- and three-year grants. Grants support community programs intended to reduce youth crime and substance use. Three-year grants served 51,423 youth in FY 2023-24, compared to 350 served by the one-year grants.

The request is a budget balancing measure to eliminate the one-year grants. Eliminating one-year grants is anticipated to have less of a service impact than reducing three-year grants. The Department has indicated that this is an Evidence-informed request.

R13 Reduce collaborative management: The Department asks to decrease funding for the Collaborative Management Program (CMP).

Year 1: The total decrease is net-zero. Amounts include a decrease of \$700,000 General Fund, offset by an equal increase of cash funds from the Collaborative Management Cash Fund.

Year 2: The total decrease is \$300,000. Amounts include a decrease of \$700,000 General Fund, partially offset by Collaborative Management cash funds.

Year 3 and ongoing: The ongoing decrease is \$700,000 General Fund, not offset by cash funds.

The Collaborative Management Program (CMP) provides funding to counties for programs that encourage resource sharing across county departments of human services, school districts, judicial districts, law enforcement, and other entities. Programs are intended to reduce child welfare and juvenile justice involvement while also reducing local costs.

The request is a budget balancing measure that would reduce awards to counties by the third year. The General Fund reduction is partially offset by cash funds in the first two years. However, cash fund revenues are not sufficient to offset the General Fund reduction on an ongoing basis. The Department has indicated that this is a Proven request.

R14 Reduce foster training: The Department asks to decrease funding for foster parent training and recruitment.

Year 1: The total decrease is \$150,000 General Fund.

Funding for foster parent training and recruitment supports events and contracts for marketing materials. The request is a budget balancing measure that would reduce marketing contracts and discretionary event expenditures without impacting access to services.

R16 Reduce child abuse hotline: The Department asks to decrease funding for the child abuse and neglect hotline (844-CO-4-KIDS).

Year 1: The total decrease is \$629,000 General Fund.

Counties receive reports of child abuse and neglect through the hotline. Operating costs for the hotline have decreased after moving to lower maintenance cloud-based system in 2024. The reduction will not impact access to the hotline. However, under-expenditures for the hotline can be used to backfill the Child Welfare Block

allocation. A reduction to the hotline therefore reduces the total funding available for basic child welfare services.

Statewide R6 Prior reduction options: The Executive Branch asks for a decrease of \$1.7 million for other reduction options as a statewide request. The statewide request includes the reductions submitted as prioritized requests by the Department, as well as two options the JBC discussed but did not approve last year.

Statewide R6 Prior reduction options

| Item | Total Funds | General Fund | Cash Funds | Reapprop. Funds | Federal Funds | FTE |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|--------------|------------|-----------------|---------------|-----|
| BHA Repeal Recovery Support Grant | -\$1,600,000 | -\$1,600,000 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | 0.0 |
| Child welfare admin | -95,771 | -79,490 | 0 | 0 | -16,281 | 0.0 |
| Total | -\$1,695,771 | -\$1,679,490 | \$0 | \$0 | -\$16,281 | 0.0 |

Employee compensation common policies: The request includes a net increase of \$21.2 million for employee compensation common policies. A common policy refers to general policies applied consistently to all departments.

Employee compensation common policies

| Item | Total Funds | General Fund | Cash Funds | Reapprop. Funds | Federal Funds | FTE |
|---------------------------------|--------------|--------------|------------|-----------------|---------------|-----|
| Salary survey | \$12,758,306 | \$7,759,870 | \$655,842 | \$1,873,031 | \$2,469,563 | 0.0 |
| Health, life, and dental | 8,283,439 | 3,614,641 | 702,618 | 2,767,072 | 1,199,108 | 0.0 |
| Step plan | 1,624,940 | 1,157,853 | 113,954 | 201,220 | 151,913 | 0.0 |
| PERA direct distribution | 124,986 | 84,366 | 0 | 40,620 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Unfunded liability amortization | 64,442 | -1,218,878 | 49,189 | 741,556 | 492,575 | 0.0 |
| Paid family and medical leave | 2,898 | -54,851 | 2,214 | 33,370 | 22,165 | 0.0 |
| Short-term disability | 451 | -8,532 | 344 | 5,191 | 3,448 | 0.0 |
| Shift differential | -1,635,064 | 1,669,934 | -528,041 | -43,302 | -2,733,655 | 0.0 |
| Total | \$21,224,398 | \$13,004,403 | \$996,120 | \$5,618,758 | \$1,605,117 | 0.0 |

Operating common policies: The request includes a net decrease of \$20.2 million for operating common policies.

Operating common policies

| Item | Total Funds | General Fund | Cash Funds | Reapprop. Funds | Federal Funds | FTE |
|---|---------------|--------------|--------------|-----------------|---------------|-----|
| Workers' compensation | \$1,982,365 | \$1,231,049 | \$0 | \$751,316 | \$0 | 0.0 |
| State accounting system (CORE) | 770,144 | 415,878 | 0 | 354,266 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Digital trunked radios | 32,884 | 32,884 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Indirect costs | -10,192,669 | 0 | -1,174,673 | -2,966,846 | -6,051,150 | 0.0 |
| Office of Information Technology services | -7,674,257 | 0 | 0 | -7,674,257 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Risk management & property | -3,069,099 | -2,670,116 | 0 | -398,983 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Administrative law judge services | -898,401 | -664,817 | 0 | -233,584 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Legal services | -764,308 | -557,181 | 0 | -207,127 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Vehicle lease payments | -325,120 | -160,934 | 0 | -164,186 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Capitol Complex leased space | -83,964 | -35,265 | 0 | -48,699 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Total | -\$20,222,425 | -\$2,408,502 | -\$1,174,673 | -\$10,588,100 | -\$6,051,150 | 0.0 |

Impacts driven by other agencies: The request includes a net increase of \$1.5 million for requests from other state agencies. These are also called “non-prioritized requests.” The amount shown in the table below applies only to this department and does not necessarily reflect the total value of the request.

Impacts driven by other agencies

| Item | Total Funds | General Fund | Cash Funds | Reapprop. Funds | Federal Funds | FTE |
|--|-------------|--------------|------------|-----------------|---------------|-----|
| HCPF R7 Benefits service delivery | \$2,455,447 | \$1,149,629 | \$105,337 | \$0 | \$1,200,481 | 0.0 |
| OIT SB24-205 AI compliance | 401,616 | 210,932 | 0 | 190,684 | 0 | 0.0 |
| OIT accessibility | 198,438 | 72,628 | 0 | 125,810 | 0 | 0.9 |
| DPA State accounting system (CORE) staff | 145,276 | 78,449 | 0 | 66,827 | 0 | 0.0 |
| OIT Statewide enable AI | 95,688 | 0 | 0 | 95,688 | 0 | 0.0 |
| OIT operating offset | -1,247,873 | 0 | 0 | -1,247,873 | 0 | 0.0 |
| OIT efficiencies | -503,827 | 0 | 0 | -503,827 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Total | \$1,544,765 | \$1,511,638 | \$105,337 | -\$1,272,691 | \$1,200,481 | 0.9 |

Technical adjustments: The request includes a net increase of \$865,378 for annual lease adjustments.

Prior year actions: The request includes a net increase of \$131,939 for the impact of prior year budget decisions and legislation.

Prior year actions

| Item | Total Funds | General Fund | Cash Funds | Reapprop. Funds | Federal Funds | FTE |
|---|-------------|--------------|--------------|-----------------|---------------|------|
| HB 22-1238 Youth mental health | \$4,449,395 | \$4,449,395 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | 9.0 |
| SB 25-169 Restaurant meals | 242,613 | 121,307 | 0 | \$0 | 121,306 | 0.5 |
| FY 25-26 Fort Logan Gwing staffing | 232,243 | 232,243 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1.2 |
| SB 25-235 Repeal temp youth shelter | 199,877 | 182,568 | 0 | 0 | 17,309 | 0.0 |
| HB 25-1271 Federal foster benefits | 109,179 | 109,179 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1.0 |
| FY 25-26 HCPF convert to FTE | 92,016 | 43,695 | 0 | 0 | 48,321 | 0.0 |
| FY 25-26 Fed fee increase | 64,963 | 10,394 | 0 | 40,927 | 13,642 | 0.0 |
| SB 25-238 Repeal school BH screens | 22,011 | 22,011 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| HB 24-1408 Adoption assistance | 21,596 | 9,718 | 2,160 | 0 | 9,718 | 0.0 |
| FY 25-26 Step plan | 11,249 | 11,249 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| FY 19-20 Salesforce | 6,724 | 780 | 0 | 5,944 | 0 | 0.0 |
| SB 25-308 Medicaid housing & reentry serv | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| FY 25-26 BHA admin reduction | 0 | 1,000,000 | -1,000,000 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| FY 25-26 Salary survey | -2,290,824 | -2,290,824 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| FY 25-26 HCPF county admin/CBMS | -1,687,943 | -790,287 | -72,412 | 0 | -825,244 | 0.0 |
| HB 25-1146 Juvenile detention cap | -325,870 | -325,870 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| SB 24-117 Eating disorder treat | -314,130 | -314,130 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| FY 25-26 Temporary emergency care | -199,877 | -182,568 | 0 | 0 | -17,309 | 0.0 |
| HB 25-1279 TANF state data | -154,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | -154,000 | 0.0 |
| HB 25-1159 Child support recs | -137,250 | -46,665 | 0 | 0 | -90,585 | 0.0 |
| FY 25-26 Nat School Lunch CF true-up | -100,000 | 0 | -100,000 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| HB 25-1154 Disability comm services | -40,105 | 0 | -40,105 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| FY 25-26 Transitional living homes | -39,220 | -39,220 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.2 |
| SB 23-039 Incarcerated parent time | -21,600 | -17,712 | 0 | 0 | -3,888 | 0.0 |
| HB 25-1188 Mandatory reporter | -5,375 | -5,375 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| FY 25-26 Behavioral health licensing | -3,733 | 0 | -3,733 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Total | \$131,939 | \$2,179,888 | -\$1,214,090 | \$46,871 | -\$880,730 | 11.9 |

Issues Presented

This is a summary of the briefing issues presented to the Joint Budget Committee by their dedicated non-partisan staff.

Budget Reduction Options: The Executive Budget Request includes reductions of \$13.8 million General Fund for the Department of Human Services. The reduction represents 1.0% percent of the current General Fund appropriations in this section of the budget.¹ This issue brief reviews these proposals and additional options identified by staff.

R2 Autism Treatment Licensing: Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) is a treatment option for youth with autism spectrum disorder. ABA facilities and providers are unlicensed in the state of Colorado. The Department asks that the JBC sponsor legislation to begin licensing ABA facilities. This issue provides background on ABA licensing and additional detail for the Department's request.

Recent Legislation Impacting County Expenditures: Recent legislation has increased county costs without covering the statutory state share of expenditures. This issue brief describes the child welfare allocations to counties and select legislation driving costs above appropriations.

For More Information

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To read the entire briefing: Go to leg.colorado.gov/content/budget#budget-documents-section to use the budget document search tool. Select this department's name under Department/Topic, "Briefing" under Type, and select a Start date and End date to show documents released in November and December of 2025.

¹ Current FY 2025-26 appropriations do not include mid-year reductions in executive orders.