FY 2027-28 Budget Briefing Summary

State

The Secretary of State is one of five independently-elected constitutional officers and serves as the chief election official for the State of Colorado. The Department of State consists of four divisions that are broadly responsible for overseeing elections, registering businesses, and publishing information and records for public use. The Department's FY 2026-27 appropriation represents approximately 0.1 percent of statewide operating appropriations and 0.0 percent of statewide General Fund appropriations.

Summary of Request

Department of State

Item	Total Funds	General Fund	Cash Funds	Reapprop. Funds	Federal Funds	FTE
FY 2026-27 Appropriation						
HB 26-1410 (Long Bill)	$46,886,559	$0	$46,886,559	$0	$0	176.5
Other legislation	341,042	0	341,042	0	0	1.7
Total	$47,227,601	$0	$47,227,601	$0	$0	178.2
FY 2027-28 Requested Appropriation						
FY 2026-27 Appropriation	$47,227,601	$0	$47,227,601	$0	$0	178.2
Employee compensation common policies	766,456	0	766,456	0	0	0.0
Operating common policies	-5,752	-318,157	-5,752	318,157	0	0.0
Impacts driven by other agencies	8,494	0	8,494	0	0	0.0
Technical changes	-1,111,947	0	-1,111,947	0	0	0.0
Prior year actions	15,514,134	12,147,000	3,367,134	0	0	0.0
Total	$62,398,986	$11,828,843	$50,251,986	$318,157	$0	178.2
Increase/-Decrease	$15,171,385	$11,828,843	$3,024,385	$318,157	$0	0.0
Percentage Change	32.1%	n/a	6.4%	n/a	0.0%	0.0%

The Department did not submit any prioritized requests with the FY 2027-28 budget.

Employee compensation common policies: The request includes a net increase of $766,456 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
Health, life, and dental	$376,902	$0	$376,902	$0	$0	0.0
Salary survey	269,321	0	269,321	0	0	0.0
Step plan	143,458	0	143,458	0	0	0.0
PERA direct distribution	3,310	0	3,310	0	0	0.0
Unfunded liability amortization payments	-25,498	0	-25,498	0	0	0.0
Paid family and medical leave insurance	-897	0	-897	0	0	0.0
Short-term disability	-140	0	-140	0	0	0.0
Total	$766,456	$0	$766,456	$0	$0	0.0

Operating common policies: The request includes a net decrease of $5,752 for operating common policies.

Operating common policies

Item	Total Funds	General Fund	Cash Funds	Reapprop. Funds	Federal Funds	FTE
Indirect cost adjustment	$79,333	$-318,157	$79,333	$318,157	$0	0.0
Leased space	62,000	0	62,000	0	0	0.0
Risk management & property	47,322	0	47,322	0	0	0.0
Office of Information Technology services	15,833	0	15,833	0	0	0.0
Legal services	-197,509	0	-197,509	0	0	0.0
Vehicle lease payments	-5,434	0	-5,434	0	0	0.0
Workers' compensation	-4,781	0	-4,781	0	0	0.0
Administrative law judge services	-2,285	0	-2,285	0	0	0.0
State accounting system (CORE)	-231	0	-231	0	0	0.0
Total	-$5,752	-$318,157	-$5,752	$318,157	$0	0.0

Impacts driven by other agencies: The request includes a net increase of $8,949 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
NP DPA Personnel Board	$5,454	$0	$5,454	$0	$0	0.0
NP Statewide training system	3,040	0	3,040	0	0	0.0
Total	$8,494	$0	$8,494	$0	$0	0.0

Technical adjustments: The request includes a net decrease of $1.1 million for technical adjustments.

Technical adjustments

Item	Total Funds	General Fund	Cash Funds	Reapprop. Funds	Federal Funds	FTE
Document solutions common policy	$184,248	$0	$184,248	$0	$0	0.0
Adj to ERTB info only line	-1,296,195	0	-1,296,195	0	0	0.0
Total	-$1,111,947	$0	-$1,111,947	$0	$0	0.0

Prior year actions: The request includes a net increase of $15.5 million for the impact of prior year budget decisions and legislation, primarily driven by periodic election costs. Specifically, SB 17-305 requires the state to reimburse local governments for the administration of presidential primary elections from the General Fund, which occurs every four years. SB 23-276 also increases the state's election reimbursement obligation resulting from an anticipated November 2027 coordinated election and a June 2028 state primary election.

Prior year actions

Item	Total Funds	General Fund	Cash Funds	Reapprop. Funds	Federal Funds	FTE
SB 17-305 Presidential primary	$12,147,000	$12,147,000	$0	$0	$0	0.0
SB 23-276 Modify election laws	3,037,714	0	3,037,714	0	0	0.0
HB 26-1113 Election modification	705,300	0	705,300	0	0	0.0
HB 24-1059 Comp elected official	26,594	0	26,594	0	0	0.0
HB 25-1315 GA vacancies	1,050	0	1,050	0	0	0.0
FY 26-27 Step Plan	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
HB 26-1088 Business filings	-121,739	0	-121,739	0	0	0.0
FY 26-27 R2 Informix data migration	-100,000	0	-100,000	0	0	0.0
SB 26-133 CO artist companies	-93,878	0	-93,878	0	0	0.0
FY 26-27 R1 Phone modernization	-69,000	0	-69,000	0	0	0.0
HB 26-1207 Demographic data	-18,907	0	-18,907	0	0	0.0
Total	$15,514,134	$12,147,000	$3,367,134	0	0	0.0

Issues Presented

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

Election Funding: The Department of State oversees statewide elections and reimburses counties for eligible costs associated with administering these elections. Colorado law establishes the types of elections eligible for reimbursements, funding sources, and reimbursement rates. This issue brief provides an overview of statewide election administration, funding details including assessment of upcoming reimbursement obligations and historical expenditures, and future budget considerations.

General Fund Support for Elections: Colorado currently uses business filing fee revenue to reimburse counties for election administration costs, unlike most states that rely on general tax revenues. This issue brief discusses the history of Colorado's unique financing mechanism, how other states fund elections, and the potential impact of reimbursing county election costs from the General Fund instead.

Budget Reduction Options: The Executive budget request includes an increase of $11.8 million General Fund for the Department of State. This issue brief reviews options identified by staff to reduce General Fund obligations and the Department's overall budget.

For More Information

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To read the entire briefing: Go to content.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 2026.