

# LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

## FY 20 BUDGET REQUEST NARRATIVE

### SUMMARY

There are no increments in the Legislative Council FY 20 Proposed Budget Request; however, there are structural changes to improve efficiency and align structure with the appropriate authority and/or function. In the FY 19 Legislative Council Budget, there were five RDU's (Results Delivery Unit), which are a group of allocations combined to achieve a specific goal.

In consultation with the Legislative Finance Director and House and Senate Leadership, RDU's have been reduced from five to two:

1. Legislative Council RDU, which includes the administrative functions of the Legislature, as well as special committees and offices, such as Ethics, Ombudsman and Office of Victims' Rights; and
2. Legislative Operating Budget RDU, which includes those functions directly connected to the operations of the Legislature, i.e., Session Expenses, House and Senate Operating, and Legislators' Salaries and Allowances.

Below is a description of each allocation, as well as any structural changes, which serves as the narrative companion to the Legislative Council FY 20 Budget Request.

### LEGISLATORS' SALARIES & ALLOWANCES

This allocation currently pays for legislator salaries, relocation expenses to and from session, and annual office allowance accounts. In the past, it has been budgeted under the Legislative Council RDU.

In FY 18, session per diem was moved out of this allocation into two separate RDU's: one for House Per Diem and one for Senate Per Diem. Each RDU contained two allocations: a 90-Day Session Per Diem and a 30-Day Extended Session Per Diem.

FY 20 Structural Changes: (1) Transfer allocation from Legislative Council RDU to Legislative Operating Budget RDU; and (2) return Session Per Diem to this allocation, which allows for efficient transfers between allocations as necessary with approval of both Presiding Officers.

*NOTE:* the federal per diem rate increased to \$302 per day through April 15, when it will increase again to \$322. As such, the current budget request is short \$144.6; however, Salaries and Allowances lapsed almost \$400.0 in FY 18, so it's likely the increase could be absorbed, and no increment is needed should per diem remain at the federal rate.

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### ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

This allocation pays for the Division of Administrative Services, the main support division for the Legislature along with the Division of Legal and Research Services. The sections in this allocation are the Executive Director's Office, Accounting, Information Technology, Maintenance, Personnel, Print Shop, and Supply.

#### Budget Authority Changes

1. Legislative Organization Dues: transfer authority (\$262.3) for membership dues to House/Senate Legislative Operating Budget allocation.

Historically, dues for national organizations to which the Legislature belongs have been budgeted in Administrative Services, specifically: NCSL (National Conference of State Legislatures), CSG (Council of State Governments), Energy Council, PNWER (Pacific NW Economic Region), Pacific Fisheries Legislative Task Force, and Western Legislative Forestry Task Force. Payment of dues requires approval by the Presiding Officers and should be budgeted in the Legislative Operating Budget allocation. In some years, organization dues have not been fully funded.

2. State Equipment Fleet: transfer authority (\$20.0) for State Equipment Fleet from State Facilities Rent to this allocation.
3. Program and Inter-Agency Receipts:
  - a. The Wells Fargo lease at the Anchorage Legislative Office Building will generate \$251.3 of revenue in FY 20; to reflect the increase in revenue from FY 19, program receipts have been increased by \$6.6 (reducing UGF by the same amount).
  - b. Information and Teleconference services used by the Executive Branch have increased; to reflect anticipated revenue, inter-agency receipts have been increased by \$5.0 (reducing UGF by the same amount).

FY 20 Structural Change: Return Information and Teleconference to this allocation, which was removed in FY 16, to align budget authority with institutional authority.

### COUNCIL & SUBCOMMITTEES

This allocation pays for the operation of the Legislative Council Committee, Joint Armed Services Committee and any task forces or special committees established by statute or resolution; there are currently no additional task forces or special committees in this budget.

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An existing PCN was removed from the Legislative Council Chair account to reflect that the Chair is not limited to a single PCN, but rather the authorized budget for personal services.

No structural changes to this allocation.

### **LEGAL AND RESEARCH SERVICES**

This allocation pays for the operation of the Division of Legal and Research Services including bill drafting, legal services, legislative library, and research services.

No structural changes to this allocation.

### **SELECT COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE ETHICS**

This allocation pays for the operation of the Select Committee on Legislative Ethics. In FY 18 and the first part of FY 19, the Select Committee on Legislative Ethics experienced an unanticipated increase in complaints and investigations. In FY 18, Ethics lapsed \$1.2; it's possible Ethics may need an increment in FY 21.

No structural changes to this allocation.

### **OFFICE OF VICTIMS' RIGHTS**

This allocation pays for the operation of the Office of Victims' Rights (OVR). OVR provides free legal services to victims of crime to help them obtain the rights they are guaranteed under the Alaska Constitution and statutes regarding their contacts with police, prosecutors, judges and other criminal justice agencies in this state.

OVR has a vacancy rate of almost 10% in FY 19; there is generally no turn-over and the current funding level is inadequate to maintain services. An increment may be needed in FY 21.

No structural changes to this allocation.

### **OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN**

This allocation pays for the operation of the Office of the Ombudsman. The Ombudsman investigates citizen complaints against state executive and court branch agencies including boards and commissions, corporations and the University system. By doing so, the Ombudsman serves as a resource for the Alaska Legislature in its oversight of state government.

The Anchorage Ombudsman office currently occupies space in the Anchorage Legislative Office Building, resulting in a savings of \$42.0 in lease costs in FY 19.

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Budget Authority Change: The Ombudsman's new case management system resulted in increased operating costs. The lease cost reduction of \$42.0 was transferred from State Facilities Rent to the Ombudsman to support case management system operations.

#### **LEGISLATURE STATE FACILITIES RENT**

This allocation pays for leases and some operating expenses associated with space rented by the Legislature statewide. There are 21 Legislative Information Offices (LIO's) outside of Juneau. Many of the LIO's include space for legislator interim offices. There are two sites for legislator interim offices which are not co-located with an LIO (North Pole and Eagle River).

No structural changes to this allocation.

#### **INFORMATION AND TELECONFERENCE**

This allocation pays for the operation of the Information & Teleconference Section. There are 22 Legislative Information Offices (LIO) facilitating communication between the Legislature and the public through teleconferencing services, publications and online access.

There are presently no full-time LIO staff statewide. The 11 LIO's that are open year-round are closed on Friday afternoons during the interim.

FY 20 Structural Change: This allocation was transferred to Administrative Services.

#### **LEGISLATIVE OPERATING BUDGET**

This allocation pays for most House and Senate staff during the interim, including majority and minority staff, committee expenses during the interim such as travel for legislators and staff, supplies, phones, contracts and equipment. Funds are discretionary to the Senate President and the Speaker of the House.

FY 20 Structural Change: House and Senate Operating budgets were divided into two sub-allocations to more easily track and report activity to appropriate authority.

#### **SESSION EXPENSES**

This allocation pays for the operations of a 90-day session, including most House and Senate staff; Offices of the Chief Clerk and Senate Secretary; Floor Staff; Lounge staff; and Security. Also budgeted in this allocation are travel during session for legislators, legislative staff, and witnesses; moving offices to and from session; staff relocation; and committee meeting travel costs; as well as, service and commodity expenses to support Session work. Session Per Diem is not included in this allocation.

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The Rules Chairs control these funds except for travel, which is approved by the Presiding Officers, and Security personnel hired by the Agency.

FY 20 Structural Change: Special Session/Contingency was transferred back to this allocation to allow for reporting efficiencies.

#### **SPECIAL SESSION/CONTINGENCY**

This allocation pays for special session expenses or necessary contingency funds.

FY 20 Structural Change: This allocation was transferred to Session Expenses.

#### **HOUSE SESSION PER DIEM, 90-DAY SESSION**

This was a new allocation in FY 19. This allocation pays for session per diem for House members for a 90-day legislative session.

FY 20 Structural Change: This allocation was transferred to Legislators' Salaries and Allowances.

#### **HOUSE SESSION PER DIEM, 30-DAY EXTENDED SESSION**

This was a new allocation in FY 19 and pays for per diem for House members if the legislative session is extended beyond 90 days set in statute to the constitutional limit of 120 days.

FY 20 Structural Change: This allocation was transferred to Legislators' Salaries and Allowances.

#### **SENATE SESSION PER DIEM, 90-DAY SESSION**

This was a new allocation in FY 18. This allocation pays for session per diem for Senate members for a 90-day legislative session.

FY 20 Structural Change: This allocation was transferred to Legislators' Salaries and Allowances.

#### **SENATE SESSION PER DIEM, 30-DAY EXTENDED SESSION**

This was a new allocation in FY 18 and pays for per diem for Senate members if the legislative session is extended beyond 90 days set in statute to the constitutional limit of 120 days.

FY 20 Structural Change: This allocation was transferred to Legislators' Salaries and Allowances.