

BUREAU OF MEDIATION SERVICES
FY 22 – 23 FY 24-25

Operating Funds

The forecast operating funds for the Bureau for the 22-23 Biennium are slightly decreased from the 20-21 Biennium due to the transfer of the Office Collaborations and Dispute Resolutions to the Administration Department. It does not account for the salary and insurance cost increases incurred during this past Biennium.

The Governor's budget request accounts for these already incurred cost increases into the next Biennium with a forward projection into FY 24-25. Short this base increase will impact the staffing ability of the Bureau having already delayed replacing staff in order to absorb cost increases over the past Biennium.

Public Employee Relations Board

The base funding for the Board over the previous 4 Bienniums has been \$ 125,000 per year. The Board started accepting complaints on July 1, 2020 for issues arising after January 1, 2020. To date there are 16 filings with 1 scheduled for hearing in the near future. Other cases have either been deferred or handed over to a mediator who have been able to work with the parties to resolve the issues. The Governor's budget requests \$435 in additional funding per year in order to ensure the Board has the resources to do its work.

Mediator Training Program

We are fortunate to have been given the opportunity to resurrect the Mediator training program previously existing within the Bureau in order to bring in non-experienced individuals and train them in the unique profession of labor mediators. Employee Relations is a highly competitive field and the extensive travel and irregular hours have not been recruiting strong points. While those who actually succeed in this profession are highly dedicated professionals who actually love the work, convincing a person this is a better career than a higher paying position in a Metro area city or county where there is a set work day at a recurring location can be difficult. This program provides individuals who have an interest in Employee Relations to get into a section of the industry which currently presents to only seasoned and experienced people. Mediators are involved with every type of public employer within the state, and are successful due to their vast knowledge and experience in Labor-Management relations. The ability to bring in less experienced individuals and provide them the training and education necessary to perform as a qualified Mediator opens the door for a more diverse candidate pool.

After updating old programs and developing training that is time relevant, we are in the process of acquiring the first trainee.

Police Reform

With the Special Session Police Reform actions, the Bureau is charged with establishing and maintaining special arbitrator lists for certain police discipline grievances. Along with the creation of this list comes the requirements unique to these individuals as well as the assignment process. The Bureau is in the process of drafting rules required to process these requirements and necessary to fulfill the training, assigning and maintaining functions for certain arbitrations.