Agency Name: State Ethics Commission
Agency Code: R520 Section: 110

Fiscal Year FY 2027-2028
Agency Budget Plan

FORM A - BUDGET PLAN SUMMARY

OPERATING REQUESTS *(FORM B1)*

For FY 2027-2028, my agency is (mark "X"):	
X	Requesting General Fund Appropriations.
	Requesting Federal/Other Authorization.
	Not requesting any changes.

NON-RECURRING REQUESTS *(FORM B2)*

For FY 2027-2028, my agency is (mark "X"):	
X	Requesting Non-Recurring Appropriations.
	Requesting Non-Recurring Federal/Other Authorization.
	Not requesting any changes.

CAPITAL REQUESTS *(FORM C)*

For FY 2027-2028, my agency is (mark "X"):	
	Requesting funding for Capital Projects.
X	Not requesting any changes.

PROVISOS *(FORM D)*

For FY 2027-2028, my agency is (mark "X"):	
	Requesting a new proviso and/or substantive changes to existing provisos.
	Only requesting technical proviso changes (such as date references).
X	Not requesting any proviso changes.

Please identify your agency's preferred contacts for this year's budget process.

	Name	*Phone*	*Email*
PRIMARY CONTACT:	Ami R. Franklin	(803) 253-4192	ami@ethics.sc.gov
SECONDARY CONTACT:	Kristin S. Nabors	(803) 253-4192	kristin@ethics.sc.gov

I have reviewed and approved the enclosed FY 2027-2028 Agency Budget Plan, which is complete and accurate to the extent of my knowledge.

	Agency Director	*Board or Commission Chair*
SIGN/DATE:	9/23/26	9/25/26
TYPE/PRINT NAME:	Meghan W. Dayson	NEAL D. TRUSLOW

This form must be signed by the agency head – not a delegate.

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BUDGET REQUESTS			FUNDING					FTES				
Priority	Request Type	Request Title	State	Federal	Earmarked	Restricted	Total	State	Federal	Earmarked	Restricted	Total
1	B2 - Non-Recurring	Live Stream System	90,000	0	0	0	90,000	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
2	B1 - Recurring	Live Streaming System Maintenance Agreement and Closed Captioning Add-On	20,846	0	0	0	20,846	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
TOTALS			110,846	0	0	0	110,846	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

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FORM B1 – RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY

2

Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE

Live Streaming System Maintenance Agreement and Closed Captioning Add-On

Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT

General: $20,846

Federal: $0

Other: $0

Total: $20,846

What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2027-2028? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

NEW POSITIONS

0.00

Please provide the total number of new positions needed for this request.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST

Mark "X" for all that apply:	
X	Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience
	Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines
	Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program
X	Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas
X	Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative
	Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program
	Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program
X	IT Technology/Security related
	HR/Personnel Related
	AI Related
X	Related to a Non-Recurring request – If so, Priority # 1

STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Mark "X" for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:	
	Education, Training, and Human Development
	Healthy and Safe Families
	Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security
	Public Infrastructure and Economic Development
X	Government and Citizens

ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS

1.1: Increase efficiency of investigations and hearings

Live streaming will offer more transparency and increase citizen engagement with the Commission. In addition, offering a closed captioning/assisted listening system will comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act Title II Web and Mobile Application Accessibility Rule. https://www.ada.gov/resources/... The use of these funds will be evaluated by completion of the installation of the three camera system, completion of maintenance and software updates, and utilization of this new service.

What specific strategy, as outlined in the most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template of agency's accountability report, does this funding request support? How would this request advance that strategy? How would the use of these funds be evaluated?

The State Ethics Commission would receive these funds, and they would be allocated

RECIPIENTS OF FUNDS	to a vendor with a South Carolina State Contract.

What individuals or entities would receive these funds (contractors, vendors, grantees, individual beneficiaries, etc.)? How would these funds be allocated – using an existing formula, through a competitive process, based upon predetermined eligibility criteria?

JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST	Citizens have requested alternatives to Zoom and in-person attendance for viewing Commission meetings. Live streaming will offer more transparency and increase citizen engagement with the Commission. In addition, the ability to view previous meetings and hearings will provide further transparency. To protect the investment of the system, we are requesting funds for the annual service agreement to include software updates and maintenance. We are also requesting funds for a closed captioning/assisted listening system add-on so that we can comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act Title II Web and Mobile Application Accessibility Rule. Complying with the rule will help serve South Carolinians with visual, auditory, physical, speech, cognitive, and neurological disabilities. If the funds are not received, the State Ethics Commission will not be able to proceed with the live stream option and will continue with in-person and Zoom attendance.

Please thoroughly explain the request to include the justification for funds, potential offsets, matching funds, and method of calculation. Please include any explanation of impact if funds are not received. If new positions have been requested, explain why existing vacancies are not sufficient.

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FORM B2 – NON-RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY	1

Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE	Live Stream System

Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	$90,000

What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2027-2028? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST

Mark "X" for all that apply:	
	Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience
	Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines
	Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program
X	Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas
X	Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative
	Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program
	Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program
X	IT Technology/Security related
	AI Related
	HR/Personnel Related
X	Request for Non-Recurring Appropriations
	Request for Federal/Other Authorization to spend existing funding
X	Related to a Recurring request – If so, Priority # Live Streaming System Maintenance Agreement and Closed Captioning Add-On

STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Mark "X" for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:	
	Education, Training, and Human Development
	Healthy and Safe Families
	Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security
	Public Infrastructure and Economic Development
X	Government and Citizens

ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS

1.1 Increase efficiency of investigations and hearings

Live streaming will offer more transparency and increase citizen engagement with the Commission. The use of these funds will be evaluated by completion of the installation of the three-camera system and utilization of this new service.

What specific strategy, as outlined in the most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template of agency's accountability report, does this funding request support? How would this request advance that strategy? How would the use of these funds be evaluated?

RECIPIENTS OF FUNDS

The State Ethics Commission would receive these funds, and they would be allocated to a vendor with a South Carolina State Contract.

What individuals or entities would receive these funds (contractors, vendors, grantees, individual beneficiaries, etc.)?

How would these funds be allocated – using an existing formula, through a competitive process, based upon predetermined eligibility criteria?

JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST	Citizens have requested alternatives to in-person and Zoom attendance for viewing Commission meetings. Live streaming will offer more transparency and increase citizen engagement with the Commission. In addition, the ability to view previous meetings will provide further transparency. If the funds are not received, the State Ethics Commission will not be able to proceed with the live stream option and will continue with in-person and Zoom attendance. This non-recurring appropriation request will create the need for recurring funds for a service agreement for yearly software updates and maintenance and for a closed captioning/assisted listening system to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act Title II Web and Mobile Application Accessibility Rule set to take effect in April 2027.

Please thoroughly explain the request to include the justification for funds, potential offsets, matching funds, and method of calculation. Please include any explanation of impact if funds are not received. If new positions have been requested, explain why existing vacancies are not sufficient.

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FORM E – AGENCY COST SAVINGS AND GENERAL FUND REDUCTION CONTINGENCY PLAN

TITLE	Agency Cost Savings and General Fund Reduction Contingency Plan
AMOUNT	$67,502 *What is the General Fund 3% reduction amount? This amount should correspond to the reduction spreadsheet prepared by EBO.*
ASSOCIATED FTE REDUCTIONS	1 *How many FTEs would be reduced in association with this General Fund reduction?*
PROGRAM / ACTIVITY IMPACT	Program:Administration *What programs or activities are supported by the General Funds identified?*
SUMMARY	The State Ethics Commission is a small agency (consisting of 23 FTE's and 2 PTE's), and each employee has multiple responsibilities, and many are cross-trainined in the various functions of this agency. A reduction in staff would affect the agency's ability to adequately perform its mission of enforcing the Ethics Reform Act. The method of calculation for the 3% reduction ($67,502) was provided by the Executive Budget Office, based on the $2,250,080 Total Recurring State Funds per the 26-27 Appropriations.

Please provide a detailed summary of service delivery impact caused by a reduction in General Fund Appropriations and provide the method of calculation for anticipated reductions. Agencies should prioritize reduction in expenditures that have the least significant impact on service delivery.

AGENCY COST SAVINGS PLANS

The State Ethics Commission could reduce its costs and operating expenses if a FTE position was eliminated, resulting in savings of approximately $90,000.

What measures does the agency plan to implement to reduce its costs and operating expenses by more than $50,000? Provide a summary of the measures taken and the estimated amount of savings. How does the agency plan to repurpose the savings?

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FORM F – REDUCING COST AND BURDEN TO BUSINESSES AND CITIZENS

TITLE	Education/Training for Public Employees, Public Officeholders, and Public Members

Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

EXPECTED SAVINGS TO BUSINESSES AND CITIZENS	The expected savings for South Carolina's businesses and citizens will vary each year. Commission anticipates a reduction in late filing penalties assesed and collected because of continuing training and education efforts.

What is the expected savings to South Carolina's businesses and citizens that is generated by this proposal? The savings could be related to time or money.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST	**Mark "X" for all that apply:**
	Repeal or revision of regulations.
X	Reduction of agency fees or fines to businesses or citizens.
	Greater efficiency in agency services or reduction in compliance burden.
	Other

METHOD OF CALCULATION	Reduction in the number of cases multiplied by the cost of enforcement

Describe the method of calculation for determining the expected cost or time savings to businesses or citizens.

REDUCTION OF FEES OR FINES	We do not intend to reduce any fees or fines since the enabling authority is by statute.

Which fees or fines does the agency intend to reduce? What was the fine or fee revenue for the previous fiscal year? What was the associated program expenditure for the previous fiscal year? What is the enabling authority for the issuance of the fee or fine?

REDUCTION OF REGULATION	We do not intend to amend or delete any regulations.

Which regulations does the agency intend to amend or delete? What is the enabling authority for the regulation?

SUMMARY	The State Ethics Commission expects savings due to increased training opportunities for Public Employees, Public Officials, and Public Members, which should result in a reduction in late filing penalties assessed and collected. In addition, our website houses several publications to help Public Employees, Public Officials, and Public Members understand and apply the Ethics Act. We also mail Candidate Newsletters to all County Election Officials for dissemination to constituents who file to run for public office. These efforts should increase the number of timely filed forms that the public can immediately access before filing deadlines, resulting in more efficient transparency.