

FY 2026-27 Budget Briefing Summary

State

The Secretary of State is one of five independently-elected constitutional officers and is the chief election official for the State of Colorado. The Department is responsible for overseeing elections, registering businesses, and publishing public records. The Department’s FY 2025-26 appropriation represents approximately 0.1 percent of statewide operating appropriations and no statewide General Fund.

Summary of Request

Department of State

Item	Total Funds	General Fund	Cash Funds	Reapprop. Funds	Federal Funds	FTE
FY 2025-26 Appropriation						
SB 25-206 (Long Bill)	\$48,252,479	\$4,254	\$48,248,225	\$0	\$0	173.4
Other legislation	710,592	0	710,592	0	0	1.0
Total	\$48,963,071	\$4,254	\$48,958,817	\$0	\$0	174.4
FY 2026-27 Requested Appropriation						
FY 2025-26 Appropriation	\$48,963,071	\$4,254	\$48,958,817	\$0	\$0	174.4
R1 Phone modernization	185,000	0	185,000	0	0	0.0
R2 Informix database migration	100,000	0	100,000	0	0	0.0
R3 Accessibility resources	94,350	0	94,350	0	0	1.0
Employee compensation common policies	1,329,974	0	1,329,974	0	0	0.0
Operating common policies	-665,928	0	-665,928	0	0	0.0
Impacts driven by other agencies	137,281	0	137,281	0	0	0.9
Technical adjustments	-669,616	0	-669,616	0	0	0.0
Prior year actions	-1,900,838	0	-1,900,838	0	0	0.0
Total	\$47,573,294	\$4,254	\$47,569,040	\$0	\$0	176.3
Increase/-Decrease	-\$1,389,777	\$0	-\$1,389,777	\$0	\$0	1.9
Percentage Change	-2.8%	0.0%	-2.8%	n/a	n/a	1.1%

Changes are assumed to be ongoing unless otherwise noted. Cash funds are from the CDOS Cash Fund unless otherwise noted.

R1 Phone modernization: The Department requests upgrading their phone system to a modern, cloud-based system.

- Year 1: The cost is \$185,000 cash funds.
- Year 2: The cost is \$116,000 cash funds.

The Department indicates that the current system lacks capabilities, such as call recording, automated routing, and Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software integration. This results in long constituent wait times and inefficient interactions. The upgrade would modernize the Department’s communication infrastructure and enhance constituent services through improved routing, reporting, and staff response.

R2 Informix database migration: The Department requests a consultant to design and plan a database transition.

- Year 1: The one-time cost is \$100,000 cash funds.

The Department states that relying on Informix is creating technical debt, cybersecurity risks, and challenges to recruit and retain IT staff with obsolete specialized skills. The consultant will produce a roadmap outlining solutions, necessary resources, and risk mitigation strategies for a future migration.

R3 Accessibility resources: The Department requests an additional staff position to comply with state accessibility laws, including H.B. 21-1110 (Colorado Laws for Persons with Disabilities) and S.B. 23-244 (Technology Accessibility Cleanup).

- Year 1: The cost is \$94,350 cash funds and 1.0 FTE.

The Department indicates that compliance is challenging due to the workload for auditing, remediating, and maintaining accessibility across dozens of internal and vendor-hosted systems. An additional staff member is intended to reduce the risk of non-compliance fines, provide equitable access to digital services, and prevent the overextension of current staff.

Employee compensation common policies: The request includes a net increase of \$1.3 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
Health, life, and dental	\$700,993	\$0	\$700,993	\$0	\$0	0.0
Salary survey	545,695	0	545,695	0	0	0.0
Unfunded liability amortization payments	67,740	0	67,740	0	0	0.0
Step plan	11,823	0	11,823	0	0	0.0
Paid family and medical leave insurance	3,048	0	3,048	0	0	0.0
Short-term disability	474	0	474	0	0	0.0
PERA direct distribution	201	0	201	0	0	0.0
Total	\$1,329,974	\$0	\$1,329,974	\$0	\$0	0.0

Operating common policies: The request includes a net decrease of \$665,928 for operating common policies.

Operating common policies

Item	Total Funds	General Fund	Cash Funds	Reapprop. Funds	Federal Funds	FTE
Leased space	\$60,000	\$0	\$60,000	\$0	\$0	0.0
Office of Information Technology services	38,227	0	38,227	0	0	0.0
Workers' compensation	25,503	0	25,503	0	0	0.0
State accounting system (CORE)	15,291	0	15,291	0	0	0.0
Legal services	-700,559	0	-700,559	0	0	0.0
Risk management & property	-95,479	0	-95,479	0	0	0.0
Administrative law judge services	-8,200	0	-8,200	0	0	0.0
Vehicle lease payments	-711	0	-711	0	0	0.0

Item	Total Funds	General Fund	Cash Funds	Reapprop. Funds	Federal Funds	FTE
Total	-\$665,928	\$0	-\$665,928	\$0	\$0	0.0

Impacts driven by other agencies: The request includes a net increase of \$137,281 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 SB24-205 AI compliance	\$134,997	\$0	\$134,997	\$0	\$0	0.9
NP State accounting system (CORE) staff	4,699	0	4,699	0	0	0.0
NP Statewide enable AI	621	0	621	0	0	0.0
NP IT efficiencies	-3,036	0	-3,036	0	0	0.0
Total	\$137,281	\$0	\$137,281	\$0	\$0	0.9

Technical adjustments: The request includes a net decrease of \$669,616 for technical adjustments.

Technical adjustments

Item	Total Funds	General Fund	Cash Funds	Reapprop. Funds	Federal Funds	FTE
Document solutions common policy	\$201,048	\$0	\$201,048	\$0	\$0	0.0
Adj to ERTB info only line	-523,664	0	-523,664	0	0	0.0
FY 23-24 HAVA ES state match	-200,000	0	-200,000	0	0	0.0
Odd FY IT OpEx decrease	-147,000	0	-147,000	0	0	0.0
Total	-\$669,616	\$0	-\$669,616	\$0	\$0	0.0

Prior year actions: The request includes a net decrease of \$1.9 million 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
SB 25-001 Voting rights act	\$48,752	\$0	\$48,752	\$0	\$0	0.0
SB 24-072 Confined eligible electors	25,080	0	25,080	0	0	0.0
FY 25-26 Increase security	6,942	0	6,942	0	0	0.0
SB 23-276 Modify election laws	-1,344,090	0	-1,344,090	0	0	0.0
HB 25-1315 Vacancies in GA	-320,240	0	-320,240	0	0	0.0
HB 25-1319 County vacancies	-314,920	0	-314,920	0	0	0.0
FY 25-26 Fraudulent filings	-2,362	0	-2,362	0	0	0.0
Total	-\$1,900,838	\$0	-\$1,900,838	\$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.

Budget Reduction Options: Budget cut options are limited because the Department is fully cash-funded with limited cash fund reserves. Transfers out of the cash fund would likely increase business filing fees. This issue brief discusses these considerations and budget balancing options identified by JBC staff.

R2 Informix database migration: This issue brief discusses challenges to remaining on the Department's old database, assumptions within the Department's request, and future risks.

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.