



To: David Whitaker, Legislative Policy Division
From: Julianne Pastula, Director of Dept. of Appeals and Hearings
Date: March 21, 2025
Re: Responses to 2025-2026 Department of Appeals & Hearings Budget Analysis

Please find below responses to your questions sent on March 18, 2025, regarding the Fiscal Year 2026 Proposed Budget for the Department of Appeals & Hearings (DAH).

- 1. Please briefly explain the new expense initiatives the Department of Appeals and Hearings is planning to implement in FY 2026. Please provide which appropriation/cost center the new initiatives will affect in FY 2026.**

There are no new expense initiatives at this time. The initiatives are listed in the Budget Book within Section B.

- 2. Please briefly explain the new capital funding requests the Department of Appeals and Hearings is planning to implement in FY 2026. Please provide which appropriation/cost center the new requests will affect in FY 2026.**

There are no new capital funding requests at this time. The initiatives are listed in the Budget Book within Section B.

- 3. Please briefly explain the operational reform and savings proposals the Department of Appeals and Hearings is planning to implement in FY 2026. Please provide which appropriation/cost center the new reforms/proposals will affect in FY 2026.**

The Department of Appeals and Hearings (DAH) conducted a comprehensive review of its departmental operations and implemented improvements last fiscal year, efforts to streamline processes and enhance efficiencies are ongoing.

- 4. Please briefly explain the new revenue initiatives/proposals the Department of Appeals and Hearings is planning to implement in FY 2026. Please provide which appropriation/cost center the new initiatives/proposals will affect in FY 2026.**

As the DAH functions as an independent hearings tribunal, no new revenue initiatives/proposals are forthcoming. However, DAH aims to implement process improvements and policy modifications that are expected to increase internal efficiencies and impact our overall collection rate. Additionally, DAH has expanded community outreach and education efforts to raise public awareness and encourage participation in



the DAH process.

- 5. What are your projected performance metrics for each division/operational program in the current fiscal year? What are your target metrics for each division/operational program for fiscal year 2026?**

DAH will maintain its current metrics capture for the current fiscal year and foresees presenting expanded metrics in FY26 with additional detail on department operations.

- 6. Please explain the need for the increase of one FTE in FY 2026.**

DAH has assumed funding responsibility in its budget for a position currently funded by another department. This change will not result in an increase in staffing, as the individual already supports our operations.

- 7. Revenue from Use of Assets revenue increased by \$125,452, or 23.67%. Please explain the cause of the increase.**

This revenue increase results from a rise in late payment fees paid to DAH, driven by a higher number of payments from Respondents.

- 8. Sales & Charges for Service revenue increased by \$1,296,916, or 27.09%. Please explain the cause of the increase.**

This revenue increase is driven by a higher number of payments received from Respondents, resulting in greater collections of fines and administrative fees. This includes the state-mandated justice system assessment fee, which DAH collects and remits to the State.

- 9. Operating Services expenditure decreased by \$9,727, or 24%. Please explain the cause of the decrease and the impact on operations.**

The decrease is due to rightsizing of this expenditure including a reduction in lease equipment. No impact on operations is expected from this decrease.

- 10. Other Expenses expenditure increased by \$1,925, or by 81.05%. Please explain the cause of the increase and the impact on operations.**

This proposed increase would support staff training and enable the expansion of our ongoing training initiatives.



11. Please provide details and updates on Community Blight Court and explain any successes or challenges this initiative has faced.

To date, DAH has prioritized its internal review of operations and the implementation of process improvements. DAH carries its goal to reintroduce the Community Blight Court initiative and rotate its location across Council Districts into its FY26 planning.

12. Please explain the successes and challenges of the DAH digital court

DAH remains dedicated to ensuring equitable access to the court. While digital court has enhanced accessibility and convenience, especially for individuals with mobility challenges or scheduling conflicts, some participants may face difficulties due to technological barriers. To address this, individuals are able to participate in hearings through multiple channels including the digital platform and via telephone.

Signature: _____ *JWP* _____

Date: March 24, 2025 _____