

**Agency:** 075 Office of the Governor  
**Decision Package Code/Title:** A0 Executive Operations 15% Reduction

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**Budget Period:** 2015-17  
**Budget Level:** PL - Performance Level

**Recommendation Summary Text:**

15% General Fund - State Reduction Package

**Fiscal Detail**

<b>Operating Expenditures</b>	<b><u>FY 2016</u></b>	<b><u>FY 2017</u></b>	<b><u>Total</u></b>
001-1 General Fund - Basic Account-State	(555,000)	(555,000)	(1,110,000)
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>(555,000)</b>	<b>(555,000)</b>	<b>(1,110,000)</b>
<b>Staffing</b>	<b><u>FY 2016</u></b>	<b><u>FY 2017</u></b>	<b><u>Annual Average</u></b>
FTEs	-4.0	-4.0	-4.0

**Package Description:**

This budget proposal for the 2015-2017 biennium anticipates a 15% reduction below maintenance level from the 2013-2015 biennium budget.

The Executive Operations program within the Governor's Office had a total allotment for the 2013-2015 biennium of \$7.4 million - of which approximately 83% is comprised of staff salaries and benefits for 30 FTEs. The 15% budget reduction described below is realized through elimination of approximately 4 FTEs and the associated salary, benefits, goods & services, and travel.

A review and restructuring of the work throughout the office will be done in order determine the FTEs to be reduced.

**Narrative Justification and Impact Statement**

*What specific performance outcomes does the agency expect?*

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**Performance Measure Detail**

**Activity: A001 Executive Operations for Governor's Office**

Incremental Changes

No measures submitted for package

*Is this decision package essential to implement a strategy identified in the agency's strategic plan?*

No

*Does this DP provide essential support to one or more of the Governor's Results Washington priorities?*

Yes. Introducing a balanced budget.

*What are the other important connections or impacts related to this proposal?*

None.

*What alternatives were explored by the agency, and why was this alternative chosen?*

None. Since approximately 83% of the expenditures are related to staff costs, the only way to realize cuts of this magnitude is through FTE reductions.

*What are the consequences of adopting or not adopting this package?*

State reductions would need to be taken in other agencies.

*What is the relationship, if any, to the state's capital budget?*

None.

*What changes would be required to existing statutes, rules, or contracts, in order to implement the change?*

None.

*Expenditure and revenue calculations and assumptions*

Amounts are based on actual costs.

*Which costs and functions are one-time? Which are ongoing? What are the budget impacts in future biennia?*

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Unless funds are restored, these reductions will be ongoing.

<u>Object Detail</u>	<u>FY 2016</u>	<u>FY 2017</u>	<u>Total</u>
A Salaries And Wages	(375,000)	(375,000)	(750,000)
B Employee Benefits	(125,000)	(125,000)	(250,000)
E Goods\Other Services	(30,000)	(30,000)	(60,000)
G Travel	(25,000)	(25,000)	(50,000)
<b>Total Objects</b>	<b>(555,000)</b>	<b>(555,000)</b>	<b>(1,110,000)</b>

**Agency:** 075 Office of the Governor  
**Decision Package Code/Title:** A1 Off of Educ Ombuds 15% Reduction

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**Budget Period:** 2015-17  
**Budget Level:** PL - Performance Level

**Recommendation Summary Text:**

15% General Fund - State Reduction Package

**Fiscal Detail**

<b>Operating Expenditures</b>	<b><u>FY 2016</u></b>	<b><u>FY 2017</u></b>	<b><u>Total</u></b>
001-1 General Fund - Basic Account-State	(102,600)	(102,600)	(205,200)
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>(102,600)</b>	<b>(102,600)</b>	<b>(205,200)</b>
<b>Staffing</b>	<b><u>FY 2016</u></b>	<b><u>FY 2017</u></b>	<b><u>Annual Average</u></b>
FTEs	-1.3	-1.3	-1.3

**Package Description:**

The Office of the Education Ombuds (OEO) total allotment for the 2013-2015 biennium is \$1,390,200. Appropriations of \$719,000 occurred in FY14 (\$684,000 in regular appropriation and \$35,000 for a feasibility study on training for school-based interpreters). The appropriation for FY15 is \$671,200.

This budget proposal for the 2015-2017 biennium anticipates a 15% reduction below maintenance level from the 2013-2015 biennium budget. About 80% of OEO's budget is comprised of staff salaries and benefits for 6.45 FTEs. The 15% budget reduction described below is realized through elimination of 1.25 FTE positions. In addition, Ombuds travel reimbursements to mediate disputes in person and provide outreach to vulnerable populations and communities would be significantly restricted. All printed outreach publications would be suspended in lieu of online availability. All other goods and services would remain at their 2013-2015 budget levels.

OEO is a statewide organization that resolves complaints, disputes and problems between families/students and Washington state elementary and secondary public schools in all areas that affect student learning. OEO functions independently from the public school system. Services are free, confidential and available to families and students from kindergarten through 12th grade. Because some students with disabilities are eligible for public school services from birth through age 21, OEO's services also extend to a broad range of students who receive early intervention services from their public schools as well as transition services to adult employment and postsecondary settings when funded by public schools.

OEO received a record-number of complaints during the 2013-2014 school year, an increase of 15% with no additional staffing or capacity made available. Since OEO was established in 2006, complaints have consistently increased an average of 10-15% each year. Last year, OEO received a total of 1039 complaints from every region of the state regarding Washington's public schools. Ombuds

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worked in over 650 schools and 166 school districts in major urban districts like Seattle and Renton, and in small rural districts from Adna to Zillah. The work was conducted with the support of interpreter services for limited English speaking families in Spanish, Russian, Japanese, Korean, Ukranian, Mandarin and others.

Complainants who received the highest priority for assignment to an Ombuds included: students who were: suspended or expelled from school; experienced restraint/isolation; in truancy status or who had dropped out and wanted to reenter the school system; experienced homelessness, reside in foster care, reside with their grandparents; experienced bullying, harassment or intimidation; could not get access to appropriate health and safety supports at school (including medication, behavioral support, and mental health services); or experienced a significant violation of civil rights or evidence of discriminatory behavior based on race/ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, or gender.

OEO directly intervened in the majority of cases, which means that an Ombuds spent time counseling, coaching and assisting complainants to understand their options and interests, obtaining school records, contacting school district authorities at appropriate levels to get more information and facilitate resolution of the concern, and organizing and attending structured meetings to facilitate an outcome focused on the student. OEO does not have the authority or charge to conduct formal investigations, or to direct district personnel or OSPI to take certain action, so we work primarily by mediating between the parties, and providing information or other assistance. Not all inquiries and complaints require a formal or lengthy involvement by the Ombuds, and in these cases information, referral, limited legal/policy research, or counseling may be provided to encourage the caller to take action on their own behalf. Even without a 15% reduction in services, during OEO's most recent strategic planning session in July, 2014, criteria was developed for a waitlist for services and priorities were outlined for targeted populations of students in order to address the increasing caseloads of the Ombuds as a result of the growing demand for mediation and alternative conflict resolution services designed to assist students and their families.

The proposed reduction of 1.25 FTEs will significantly adversely impact OEO's ability to fulfill its primary duties and will broadly restrict Ombuds ability to travel to conduct and facilitate mediations in person in districts across Washington in order to address the conflicts and issues brought in the form of complaints.

This reduction would also jeopardize maintenance of a regional presence in Eastern Washington due to travel reimbursement restrictions. This would impact our ability to outreach and serve populations that are largely limited English speaking families in immigrant and migrant communities, many of whom have significant difficulty accessing and navigating the public school system due to linguistic and cultural barriers to the local school system.

The proposed reduction will also significantly reduce OEO's ability to conduct its other charges, including acting as the lead agency on issues of bullying, harassment and intimidation, collaboration with the state's ethnic Commissions, working with human rights and student advocacy organizations, as well as train and develop resources to promote family engagement in the public school system.

OEO is named in legislation and mandated to participate in several statewide task forces for systemic change, including the state Opportunity Gap (EOGOAC), Quality Education Committee (QEC), the state Disability Task Force, state Discipline Task Force, state Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying Workgroup (HIB) and the Paraeducator Task Force. The Director Ombuds also serves on the RESULTS Washington - Goal One Committee - World Class Education. OEO provides student and family perspective when discussing strategies for reducing the Opportunity Gap, decreasing the state dropout rate, and improving graduation rates among students of color, with disabilities, and who have high mobility rates. Participation in these task forces would be balanced with the demand for conflict resolution services under reduced capacity parameters.

### **Narrative Justification and Impact Statement**

**Agency:** 075 Office of the Governor  
**Decision Package Code/Title:** A1 Off of Educ Ombuds 15% Reduction

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*What specific performance outcomes does the agency expect?*

Impact Statement: This proposal to eliminate at least 1 FTE Ombuds position will require OEO to institute a waitlist for services across the state and decrease OEO's capacity to:

- Respond to all complaints made to OEO in a timely manner.
- Provide mediation to resolve conflicts between students/parents and schools and provide coaching to school teams for problem-solving.
- Provide community trainings regarding student rights, parent rights, how to navigate the school system, and promote family engagement.
- Identify trends and recommend improvements to individual school districts and the public school system regarding practices and procedures that inequitably affect students and their families and exacerbate state dropout rates, the opportunity gap and state graduation rates.

**Performance Measure Detail**

**Activity: A007 Education Ombudsman**

**Incremental Changes**

No measures submitted for package

*Is this decision package essential to implement a strategy identified in the agency's strategic plan?*

No

*Does this DP provide essential support to one or more of the Governor's Results Washington priorities?*

Yes. Introducing a balanced budget.

*What are the other important connections or impacts related to this proposal?*

Proposed Implementation Plan:

In order to meet the increased demands on this office, while incurring a reduction in staff, OEO would immediately begin to design and implement changes to intake procedures and the manner in which we carry out our core duties and responsibilities. Preliminary plans to address a reduction in staff are summarized below:

1. Decrease the number of complaints assigned to an Ombuds for resolution. OEO has discretion in determining which complaints will receive direct intervention and which receive consultation level support. OEO would maintain a focus on its core mission of providing individual help to resolve student concerns.
2. Discontinue outreach efforts to communities that require travel outside of the Puget Sound region or that cannot be connected by webinar, Skype or other electronic meeting means.
3. Modify practices for attendance at meetings in person by Ombuds to conduct mediation and other forms of complaint resolution. Ombuds would like have to significantly reduce travel to outside of the Puget Sound region. Phone attendance or mediation via electronic meeting media would be encouraged, but it has proven to be unsatisfactory in establishing the communication needed to

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influence successful outcomes during high-conflict meetings.

4. Reduce participation in task forces and other collaborative efforts with agencies and stakeholders on work related to systemic change in order to meet the demands for conflict resolution services.

***What alternatives were explored by the agency, and why was this alternative chosen?***

None. Since approximately 80% of the expenditures are related to staff costs, the only way to realize cuts of this magnitude is through FTE reductions.

***What are the consequences of adopting or not adopting this package?***

Impact on clients and services:

Due to increased workload and a reduction in staff, some complaints to OEO will not be addressed or resolved. Other individuals, with legitimate complaints regarding the public education system will wait longer for OEO to intervene or provide information or other resources for conflict resolution. Delays in resolving complaints between students, families and schools will result in fewer students returning to their public schools following suspension, absence, exclusion, or procedural breakdown, and put increased pressure on other formal complaint resolution processes, including OSPI and the Office of Civil Rights administrative complaints, due process hearings at the Office of Administrative Hearings, and potentially increased litigation. OEO will continue to prioritize assisting students who are out of school or whose safety and health are jeopardized in the school setting. OEO will be largely limited to providing publications and outreach except through its website. This will have a disparate impact on immigrant communities, communities of color for whom English is not their primary language, and families living in poverty due to a frequent lack of technical resources to obtain services and get information this way. To be culturally sensitive, outreach to these communities is most effectively conducted in person where trusted relationships can be built between the Ombuds and the groups who need the most access to our services.

While not all complaints require extensive involvement to resolve, if there are not enough resources to investigate every complaint, and most members of the public are turned away without any assistance, confidence in the value of bringing a matter to the Ombuds will be lost.

***What is the relationship, if any, to the state's capital budget?***

None.

***What changes would be required to existing statutes, rules, or contracts, in order to implement the change?***

None.

***Expenditure and revenue calculations and assumptions***

Amounts are based on actual costs.

***Which costs and functions are one-time? Which are ongoing? What are the budget impacts in future biennia?***

Unless funds are restored, the reductions will be ongoing.

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Decision Package Code/Title: A1 Off of Educ Ombuds 15% Reduction

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<u>Object Detail</u>	<u>FY 2016</u>	<u>FY 2017</u>	<u>Total</u>
A Salaries And Wages	(80,000)	(80,000)	(160,000)
B Employee Benefits	(22,600)	(22,600)	(45,200)
<b>Total Objects</b>	<b>(102,600)</b>	<b>(102,600)</b>	<b>(205,200)</b>

**Agency:** 075 Office of the Governor  
**Decision Package Code/Title:** A2 OFCO 15% Reduction

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**Budget Period:** 2015-17  
**Budget Level:** PL - Performance Level

**Recommendation Summary Text:**

15% General Fund - State Reduction Package

**Fiscal Detail**

<b>Operating Expenditures</b>	<b><u>FY 2016</u></b>	<b><u>FY 2017</u></b>	<b><u>Total</u></b>
001-1 General Fund - Basic Account-State	(99,000)	(99,000)	(198,000)
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>(99,000)</b>	<b>(99,000)</b>	<b>(198,000)</b>
<b>Staffing</b>	<b><u>FY 2016</u></b>	<b><u>FY 2017</u></b>	<b><u>Annual Average</u></b>
FTEs	-1.3	-1.3	-1.3

**Package Description:**

The Office of the Family and Children Ombuds (OFCO) total allotment for the 2013-2015 biennium is \$1,313,200. This budget proposal for the 2015-2017 biennium, anticipates a 15% reduction below maintenance level from the 2013-2015 biennium budget. Nearly 90% of OFCO's budget (\$1,176,440) is comprised of staff salaries and benefits for 6.8 FTEs. The 15% budget reduction described below is realized through elimination of at least one FTE and reduction in salaries and benefits. Other items (personal service contracts, goods & services, and travel) remain at their 2013- 2015 biennium budget levels.

OFCO is mandated by statute to: (1) investigate administrative acts and omissions in the provision of child protection/child welfare services; (2) monitor child protection/child welfare policies, procedures and practices; (3) recommend improvements in the child protection/child welfare system; (4) periodically review children's institutions and residential facilities; (5) track the implementation status of child fatality review recommendations; and (5) submit an annual report to the Governor and the Legislature.

OFCO has also experienced a significant increase in complaints received during our 2013-2014 reporting year. Last year, OFCO received 525 complaints and completed 512 investigations involving 849 children and more than 488 families. This year, OFCO is on pace to receive 650 complaints. As in past years, the vast majority of these complaints concern the welfare of children under the age of 7 years. The proposed reduction of 1.3 FTEs will adversely impact OFCO's ability to fulfill its statutory duties, and to accommodate the growing public demand for complaint and systemic investigation, as well as legislative requests for formal and ad hoc system recommendations and reports.

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**Decision Package Code/Title:** A2 OFCO 15% Reduction

**Narrative Justification and Impact Statement**

*What specific performance outcomes does the agency expect?*

Impact Statement:

This proposal to eliminate at least one FTE ombuds office position will increase caseloads and decrease OFCO's capacity to:

- Respond to complaints regarding children and families involved with the child welfare system;
- Conduct systemic investigations;
- Review state licensed facilities;
- Review and report on cases of recurrent maltreatment and child fatalities; and
- Identify trends and recommend improvements to the child welfare system.

However, the adverse impact of some of these steps might be ameliorated by ongoing activities of other state child welfare agencies. For example, Child Fatality Executive Review Reports, and their recommendations, are published on line and available to stakeholders and policymakers, although their implementation status is not readily available. Additionally, decreasing the rate of recurrent child maltreatment is a focus area of Governor Inslee's Results Washington -Goal Four Healthy and Safe Communities. The Children's Administration has lead responsibility and reports on this success metric. The Director Ombuds also serves on the Results Washington Goal Council and monitors progress towards reducing recurrent maltreatment.

**Performance Measure Detail**

**Activity: A003 Office of the Family and Children's Ombudsman**

**Incremental Changes**

No measures submitted for package

*Is this decision package essential to implement a strategy identified in the agency's strategic plan?*

*Does this DP provide essential support to one or more of the Governor's Results Washington priorities?*

Yes. Introducing a balanced budget.

*What are the other important connections or impacts related to this proposal?*

Proposed Implementation Plan

In order to meet increased demands on this office, while incurring a reduction in staff, OFCO would immediately begin to design and implement changes to the procedures and manner in which we carry out our core duties and responsibilities. Preliminary plans to address a reduction in staff are summarized below:

1. Decrease the number of complaints accepted for investigation. OFCO has the authority to decline to investigate any complaint. OFCO will expand the criteria and types of complaints that would be declined for investigation, while maintaining focus on OFCO's

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core mission of promoting the health, welfare and safety of children in state care and preserving families.

2. Discontinue analysis and reporting on cases of recurrent maltreatment. The Children's Administration is required to notify OFCO of families and children who experience three or more founded reports of child abuse or neglect within twelve months. Currently, OFCO reviews potentially problematic cases and will intervene as needed. Additionally, OFCO will continue to review and intervene regarding child safety issues, but will no longer report annually on systemic issues and common factors identified in recurrent maltreatment cases.

3. Discontinue analysis and reporting on child fatality and near fatality cases. OFCO reviews all child fatalities when the family had an open case with the Children's Administration within one year prior to the child's death. This includes cases where the death is suspected to be caused by abuse or neglect, as well as fatalities unrelated to maltreatment. OFCO will continue to conduct reviews and attend Executive Child fatality Reviews, but will no longer maintain a database on child fatalities and near fatalities, nor annually report on trends, and common risk factors related to these child fatalities.

4. Discontinue reporting on the implementation status of recommendations made in child fatality reviews. OFCO is required to issue an annual report on the implementation status of recommendations resulting from child fatality reviews. This would require modification of OFCO's statutory duties (RCW 43.06A.110)

5. Modify practices for reviewing state institutions and licensed facilities serving children. OFCO has carried out this duty by periodically conducting special investigations surveying a broad scope of children and youth in state care. To accommodate a reduction in staff, OFCO will instead, identify specific residential facilities for review, based on issues and concerns arising from OFCO complaint investigations.

***What alternatives were explored by the agency, and why was this alternative chosen?***

None. Since approximately 90% of the expenditures are related to staff costs, the only way to realize cuts of this magnitude is through FTE reductions.

***What are the consequences of adopting or not adopting this package?***

Due to increased workload and reduction in staff, some complaints to OFCO will not be investigated. Other individuals, with legitimate complaints regarding the child welfare system, will wait longer for OFCO to complete an investigation and address their concerns. Delays in resolving complaints and OFCO's decision not to investigate certain complaints may cause increased pressure on other areas of the child welfare system. OFCO will continue to prioritize complaints regarding child safety issues so that these concerns are addressed in a timely manner.

***What is the relationship, if any, to the state's capital budget?***

None.

***What changes would be required to existing statutes, rules, or contracts, in order to implement the change?***

Discontinue reporting on the implementation status of recommendations made in child fatality reviews. OFCO is required to issue an annual report on the implementation status of recommendations resulting from child fatality reviews. This would require modification of OFCO's statutory duties (RCW 43.06A.110)

***Expenditure and revenue calculations and assumptions***

Amounts are based on actual costs.

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*Which costs and functions are one-time? Which are ongoing? What are the budget impacts in future biennia?*

Unless funds are restored, the reductions would be ongoing.

<u>Object Detail</u>	<u>FY 2016</u>	<u>FY 2017</u>	<u>Total</u>
A Salaries And Wages	(75,000)	(75,000)	(150,000)
B Employee Benefits	(24,000)	(24,000)	(48,000)
<b>Total Objects</b>	<b>(99,000)</b>	<b>(99,000)</b>	<b>(198,000)</b>

**Agency:** 075 Office of the Governor  
**Decision Package Code/Title:** N0 Restore OFCO's 15% reduction

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**Budget Period:** 2015-17  
**Budget Level:** PL - Performance Level

**Recommendation Summary Text:**

Restore the Office of the Family and Children Ombuds (OFCCO) 15% reduction.

**Fiscal Detail**

<b>Operating Expenditures</b>	<b><u>FY 2016</u></b>	<b><u>FY 2017</u></b>	<b><u>Total</u></b>
001-1 General Fund - Basic Account-State	99,000	99,000	198,000
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>99,000</b>	<b>99,000</b>	<b>198,000</b>
 <b>Staffing</b>	 <b><u>FY 2016</u></b>	 <b><u>FY 2017</u></b>	 <b><u>Annual Average</u></b>
FTEs	1.3	1.3	1.3

**Package Description:**

This package would restore the 15% to OFCO's budget.

OFCCO is mandated by statute to: (1) investigate administrative acts and omissions in the provision of child protection/child welfare services; (2) monitor child protection/child welfare policies, procedures and practices; (3) recommend improvements in the child protection/child welfare system; (4) periodically review children's institutions and residential facilities; (5) track the implementation status of child fatality review recommendations; and (5) submit an annual report to the Governor and the Legislature.

OFCCO has also experienced a significant increase in complaints received during our 2013 2014 reporting year. Last year, OFCCO received 525 complaints and completed 512 investigations involving 849 children and more than 488 families. This year, OFCCO is on pace to receive 650 complaints. As in past years, the vast majority of these complaints concern the welfare of children under the age of 7 years. The restoration of 1.3 FTEs will allow OFCCO to fulfill its statutory duties, and to accommodate the growing public demand for complaint and systemic investigation, as well as legislative requests for formal and ad hoc system recommendations and reports.

**Narrative Justification and Impact Statement**

*What specific performance outcomes does the agency expect?*

Impact Statement:

**Agency:** 075 Office of the Governor  
**Decision Package Code/Title:** N0 Restore OFCO's 15% reduction

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The restoration of 1.3 FTE ombuds will allow OFCO to:

- Respond to complaints regarding children and families involved with the child welfare system;
- Conduct systemic investigations;
- Review state licensed facilities;
- Review and report on cases of recurrent maltreatment and child fatalities; and
- Identify trends and recommend improvements to the child welfare system.

**Performance Measure Detail**

**Activity: A003 Office of the Family and Children's Ombudsman**

**Incremental Changes**

No measures submitted for package

***Is this decision package essential to implement a strategy identified in the agency's strategic plan?***

OFCO's mission is to protect children and parents from harmful agency action or inaction, and to make agency officials and state policy makers aware of system-wide issues in the child protection and child welfare system so they can improve services.

***Does this DP provide essential support to one or more of the Governor's Results Washington priorities?***

Decreasing the rate of recurrent child maltreatment is a focus area of Governor Inslee's Results Washington Goal Four Healthy and Safe Communities. The Children's Administration has lead responsibility and reports on this success metric. The Director Ombuds also serves on the Results Washington Goal Council and monitors progress towards reducing recurrent maltreatment.

***What are the other important connections or impacts related to this proposal?***

***What alternatives were explored by the agency, and why was this alternative chosen?***

The alternatives to not funding this package are outlined in the reduction package. Restoration will improve OFCO's services.

***What are the consequences of adopting or not adopting this package?***

Due to increased workload and reduction in staff, some complaints to OFCO will not be investigated. Other individuals, with legitimate complaints regarding the child welfare system, will wait longer for OFCO to complete an investigation and address their concerns. Delays in resolving complaints and OFCO's decision not to investigate certain complaints may cause increased pressure on other areas of the child welfare system. OFCO will continue to prioritize complaints regarding child safety issues so that these concerns are addressed in a timely manner.

***What is the relationship, if any, to the state's capital budget?***

None.

***What changes would be required to existing statutes, rules, or contracts, in order to implement the change?***

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**Decision Package Code/Title:** N0 Restore OFCO's 15% reduction

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Discontinue reporting on the implementation status of recommendations made in child fatality reviews. OFCO is required to issue an annual report on the implementation status of recommendations resulting from child fatality reviews. This would require modification of OFCO's statutory duties (RCW 43.06A.110).

*Expenditure and revenue calculations and assumptions*

Amounts are based on actual costs.

*Which costs and functions are one-time? Which are ongoing? What are the budget impacts in future biennia?*

Amounts would be ongoing.

<u>Object Detail</u>	<u>FY 2016</u>	<u>FY 2017</u>	<u>Total</u>
A Salaries And Wages	75,000	75,000	150,000
B Employee Benefits	24,000	24,000	48,000
<b>Total Objects</b>	<b>99,000</b>	<b>99,000</b>	<b>198,000</b>

**Agency:** 075 Office of the Governor  
**Decision Package Code/Title:** N1 Restore OEO's 15% Reduction

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**Budget Period:** 2015-17  
**Budget Level:** PL - Performance Level

**Recommendation Summary Text:**

Restore OEO 15% Reduction

**Fiscal Detail**

<b>Operating Expenditures</b>	<b><u>FY 2016</u></b>	<b><u>FY 2017</u></b>	<b><u>Total</u></b>
001-1 General Fund - Basic Account-State	102,600	102,600	205,200
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>102,600</b>	<b>102,600</b>	<b>205,200</b>
<b>Staffing</b>	<b><u>FY 2016</u></b>	<b><u>FY 2017</u></b>	<b><u>Annual Average</u></b>
FTEs	1.3	1.3	1.3

**Package Description:**

This package restores the 15% reduction to the Office of the Education Ombuds (OEO) budget.

OEO is a statewide organization that resolves complaints, disputes and problems between families/students and Washington state elementary and secondary public schools in all areas that affect student learning. OEO functions independently from the public school system. Services are free, confidential and available to families and students from kindergarten through 12th grade. Because some students with disabilities are eligible for public school services from birth through age 21, OEO's services also extend to a broad range of students who receive early intervention services from their public schools as well as transition services to adult employment and postsecondary settings when funded by public schools.

OEO received a record number of complaints during the 2013 2014 school year, an increase of 15% with no additional staffing or capacity made available. Since OEO was established in 2006, complaints have consistently increased an average of 10 - 15% each year. Last year, OEO received a total of 1039 complaints from every region of the state regarding Washington's public schools. Ombuds worked in over 650 schools and 166 school districts in major urban districts like Seattle and Renton, and in small rural districts from Adna to Zillah. The work was conducted with the support of interpreter services for limited English speaking families in Spanish, Russian, Japanese, Korean, Ukranian, Mandarin and others.

Complainants who received the highest priority for assignment to an Ombuds included: students who were suspended or expelled from school; experienced restraint/isolation; in truancy status or who had dropped out and wanted to reenter the school system; experienced homelessness, reside in foster care, reside with their grandparents; experienced bullying, harassment or intimidation; could not get access to appropriate health and safety supports at school (including medication, behavioral support, and mental health services); or

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**Decision Package Code/Title:** N1 Restore OEO's 15% Reduction

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experienced a significant violation of civil rights or evidence of discriminatory behavior based on race/ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, or gender.

OEO directly intervened in the majority of cases, which means that an Ombuds spent time counseling, coaching and assisting complainants to understand their options and interests, obtaining school records, contacting school district authorities at appropriate levels to get more information and facilitate resolution of the concern, and organizing and attending structured meetings to facilitate an outcome focused on the student. OEO does not have the authority or charge to conduct formal investigations, or to direct district personnel or OSPI to take certain action, so we work primarily by mediating between the parties, and providing information or other assistance.

The restoration of 1.25 FTEs will increase OEO's ability to fulfill its primary duties and will allow Ombuds to travel to conduct and facilitate mediations in person in districts across Washington in order to address the conflicts and issues brought in the form of complaints.

This restoration would allow OEO to maintain a regional presence in Eastern Washington for outreach and to serve populations that are largely limited English speaking families in immigrant and migrant communities, many of whom have significant difficulty accessing and navigating the public school system due to linguistic and cultural barriers to the local school system.

The restoration will increase OEO's ability to conduct its other charges, including acting as the lead agency on issues of bullying, harassment and intimidation, collaboration with the state's ethnic Commissions, working with human rights and student advocacy organizations, as well as train and develop resources to promote family engagement in the public school system.

OEO is named in legislation and mandated to participate in several statewide task forces for systemic change, including the state Opportunity Gap (EOGOAC), Quality Education Committee (QEC), the state Disability Task Force, state Discipline Task Force, state Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying Workgroup (HIB) and the Paraeducator Task Force. The Director Ombuds also serves on the RESULTS - Washington Goal One Committee - World Class Education. OEO provides student and family perspective when discussing strategies for reducing the Opportunity Gap, decreasing the state dropout rate, and improving graduation rates among students of color, with disabilities, and who have high mobility rates.

**Narrative Justification and Impact Statement**

*What specific performance outcomes does the agency expect?*

Impact Statement: The restoration of 1.25 increase OEO's capacity to:

- Respond to all complaints made to OEO in a timely manner.
- Provide mediation to resolve conflicts between students/parents and schools and provide coaching to school teams for problem solving.
- Provide community trainings regarding student rights, parent rights, how to navigate the school system, and promote family engagement.
- Identify trends and recommend improvements to individual school districts and the public school system regarding practices and procedures that inequitably affect students and their families and exacerbate state dropout rates, the opportunity gap and state graduation rates.

**Performance Measure Detail**

**Agency:** 075 Office of the Governor  
**Decision Package Code/Title:** N1 Restore OEO's 15% Reduction

**Activity: A007 Education Ombudsman**

Incremental Changes

No measures submitted for package

*Is this decision package essential to implement a strategy identified in the agency's strategic plan?*

Yes. The additional FTE will increase OEO's ability to meet all of the goals in their strategic plan.

*Does this DP provide essential support to one or more of the Governor's Results Washington priorities?*

Yes. OEO serves on the Goal 1 committee - World Class Education.

*What are the other important connections or impacts related to this proposal?*

*What alternatives were explored by the agency, and why was this alternative chosen?*

The alternatives to not funding this package are outlined in the reduction package submitted by OEO. Restoration will improve OEO's services to the citizens they serve.

*What are the consequences of adopting or not adopting this package?*

Impact on clients and services:

Due to increased workload and a reduction in staff, some complaints to OEO will not be addressed or resolved. Other individuals, with legitimate complaints regarding the public education system will wait longer for OEO to intervene or provide information or other resources for conflict resolution. Delays in resolving complaints between students, families and schools will result in fewer students returning to their public schools following suspension, absence, exclusion, or procedural breakdown, and put increased pressure on other formal complaint resolution processes, including OSPI and the Office of Civil Rights administrative complaints, due process hearings at the Office of Administrative Hearings, and potentially increased litigation. OEO will continue to prioritize assisting students who are out of school or whose safety and health are jeopardized in the school setting. OEO will be largely limited to providing publications and outreach except through its website. This will have a disparate impact on immigrant communities, communities of color for whom English is not their primary language, and families living in poverty due to a frequent lack of technical resources to obtain services and get information this way. To be culturally sensitive, outreach to these communities is most effectively conducted in person where trusted relationships can be built between the Ombuds and the groups who need the most access to our services.

While not all complaints require extensive involvement to resolve, if there are not enough resources to investigate every complaint, and most members of the public are turned away without any assistance, confidence in the value of bringing a matter to the Ombuds will be lost.

*What is the relationship, if any, to the state's capital budget?*

None.

**Agency:** 075 Office of the Governor  
**Decision Package Code/Title:** N1 Restore OEO's 15% Reduction

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*What changes would be required to existing statutes, rules, or contracts, in order to implement the change?*

None.

*Expenditure and revenue calculations and assumptions*

Amounts are based on actual costs.

*Which costs and functions are one-time? Which are ongoing? What are the budget impacts in future biennia?*

Amounts will be ongoing.

<u>Object Detail</u>	<u>FY 2016</u>	<u>FY 2017</u>	<u>Total</u>
A Salaries And Wages	80,000	80,000	160,000
B Employee Benefits	22,600	22,600	45,200
<b>Total Objects</b>	<b>102,600</b>	<b>102,600</b>	<b>205,200</b>

**Agency:** 075 Office of the Governor  
**Decision Package Code/Title:** N2 Restore Exec Ops 15% Reduction

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**Budget Period:** 2015-17  
**Budget Level:** PL - Performance Level

**Recommendation Summary Text:**

Restore Executive Operations 15% Reduction

**Fiscal Detail**

<b>Operating Expenditures</b>	<b><u>FY 2016</u></b>	<b><u>FY 2017</u></b>	<b><u>Total</u></b>
001-1 General Fund - Basic Account-State	555,000	555,000	1,110,000
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>555,000</b>	<b>555,000</b>	<b>1,110,000</b>
<b>Staffing</b>	<b><u>FY 2016</u></b>	<b><u>FY 2017</u></b>	<b><u>Annual Average</u></b>
FTEs	4.0	4.0	4.0

**Package Description:**

This package restores the 15% reduction to the Executive Operations budget.

This proposal will significantly improve the office's ability to respond to constituent inquiries and provide constituent outreach.

**Narrative Justification and Impact Statement**

*What specific performance outcomes does the agency expect?*

**Performance Measure Detail**

Activity: A001 Executive Operations for Governor's Office

Incremental Changes

**Agency:** 075 Office of the Governor  
**Decision Package Code/Title:** N2 Restore Exec Ops 15% Reduction

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No measures submitted for package

*Is this decision package essential to implement a strategy identified in the agency's strategic plan?*

No

*Does this DP provide essential support to one or more of the Governor's Results Washington priorities?*

Yes.

*What are the other important connections or impacts related to this proposal?*

None.

*What alternatives were explored by the agency, and why was this alternative chosen?*

None.

*What are the consequences of adopting or not adopting this package?*

The ability to respond to constituent inquiries and proved constituent outreach will be significantly impacted.

*What is the relationship, if any, to the state's capital budget?*

None.

*What changes would be required to existing statutes, rules, or contracts, in order to implement the change?*

None.

***Expenditure and revenue calculations and assumptions***

Amounts are based on actual costs.

*Which costs and functions are one-time? Which are ongoing? What are the budget impacts in future biennia?*

Costs will be ongoing.

<b><u>Object Detail</u></b>	<b><u>FY 2016</u></b>	<b><u>FY 2017</u></b>	<b><u>Total</u></b>
A Salaries And Wages	375,000	375,000	750,000
B Employee Benefits	125,000	125,000	250,000

State of Washington  
Decision Package

**FINAL**

**Agency: 075 Office of the Governor**

**Decision Package Code/Title: N2 Restore Exec Ops 15% Reduction**

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E	Goods\Other Services	30,000	30,000	60,000
G	Travel	25,000	25,000	50,000
<b>Total Objects</b>		<b>555,000</b>	<b>555,000</b>	<b>1,110,000</b>