



**ALBANY COUNTY
BOARD OF ELECTIONS**
224 S. Pearl St Albany, NY 12202
(518) 487-5060 • Fax (518) 487-5077
boardofelections@albanycounty.com
www.albanycounty.com/vote

Commissioners
ALISON MCLEAN LANE, DEMOCRATIC
RACHEL BLEDI, REPUBLICAN

Deputy Commissioners
DAVID CADY, DEMOCRATIC
MELISSA KERMANI, REPUBLICAN

TO: Hon. Wanda Willingham, Chair
Audit & Finance Committee

FROM: Alison McLean Lane, Democratic Elections Commissioner
Rachel Bledi, Republican Elections Commissioner

Date: October 16, 2025

RE: Proposed 2026 Budget

1. The department representatives appearing before the Audit & Finance Committee will be: Alison McLean Lane and Rachel Bledi.
2. There are no vacant positions.
3. There are two new proposed positions:
Information Technology Specialist (Democrat & Republican) pay rate is \$85,000.
4. There are proposed salary increases. Please see attached Memo.
5. There are two positions proposed for elimination: Part Time Laborer (Democrat & Republican). Salary is \$24,517 per position.
6. There are no positions funded by grant money.
7. There are no proposed job title changes or movements to another line item.
8. Overall, there is a significant increase in contractual expenses, approximately \$387,000 due to the purchase of additional election equipment, including pollbooks, that require software licenses and cellular connectivity. We also allocated additional funds for mailings and staffing due to the anticipated implementation of the Even-Year Law.
9. For the 2025-2026 budgets, the Board of Elections received three (2) new reimbursable grants: The *Ballot By Mail Grant* and *General Election Grant*. The *Ballot By Mail Grant*, allocates funding in the amount of \$81,802.99, being used to reimburse the county for the purchase of a ballot audit machine. The *General Elections Grant* is 100% reimbursable and provides \$16,288 in funds for eligible operating costs related to the General Election to be held in November 2025. We do not anticipate receiving additional grant funding at this time.
10. The Board of Elections has two (2) county vehicles, a 2008 Ford box truck and a 2009 Chevy van, which are used to transport voting machines and election-related supplies to polling sites and voter outreach presentations. There are no county vehicles assigned to any specific staff member of the Board of Elections.
11. There is \$15,000 allocated to the Conferences Training Tuition line (#44039) which covers expenses for two major conferences held annually for Commissioners and staff. Both conferences are hosted by the NYS Elections Commissioners Association.



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12. Our request for overtime for 2026 remains the same as 2025 -\$100,000. In 2024, we expended \$137,151 in overtime and thus far in 2025, we have utilized \$34,000 but anticipate utilizing more of the allocated funds as we near the General Election.
13. There were no positions established or changed in 2025.
14. Cyberattacks pose a serious threat to election security and is an ongoing concern and challenge. We have applied for a Cybersecurity Remediation Grant, in the amount of \$145,220 to address vulnerabilities identified in risk assessments. We have developed a remediation plan with a nonprofit technology consulting company, NYSTEC, to ensure that our systems are more secure and significantly increased the amount of training board staff receives. We are also requesting the creation of an IT Specialist position to help further safeguard elections.
15. The Board of Elections sole performance metric is the successful conduct of elections with minimal disruption at poll sites, zero impediments to register to vote and all absentee ballots requests fulfilled timely.
16. The Board of Elections is being required to purchase new Ballot Marking Devices used to assist voters with disabilities. The estimated price tag is \$1.7 million for the machines, not including ancillary equipment. We anticipate applying for Capital Plan Funds to purchase the machines.

Fees for Services	2025	2026
Delivery of Machines	\$70,000.00	\$70,000.00
Crystal rock (water)	\$1,200.00	\$1,200.00
Sheriffs Dept.	\$18,000.00	\$18,000.00
Steno Services	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
Election Meals	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00
Elections Systems & Services Maintenance agreement	\$130,000.00	\$130,000.00
Verizon for poll books	\$50,000.00	\$150,000.00
Stanley Security	\$6,000.00	\$6,000.00
CHA Integrated Solutions LLC	\$7,000.00	\$0.00
Knowink	\$60,000.00	\$100,000.00
Misc /machine supplies	\$15,000.00	\$15,000.00
Cleaning of polling sites for 3 elections	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
Eclipse Network Solutions-doorbell intercom	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00
Redistricting Services	\$0.00	\$2,500.00
MISC CONTRACTUAL EXPENSES		
Fort Orange Press- Absentee Ballot Mailing & Printing Service	\$ 101,000.00	\$ 101,000.00
Voter Informational Mailer	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 100,000.00
Vincy's Printing- Ballot Paper	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 40,000.00
NTS	\$ 107,762.00	\$ 118,537.65
Vote by Mail Grant	\$ 123,995.00	\$ 81,802.99
Election Day Grant	\$ 80,522.00	\$ 16,288.81
Cybsersecurity Grant	\$ 38,000.00	\$ 38,000.00
BUDGETED EXPENSES		
Office Equipment	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 25,000.00
Computer Equipment	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 15,000.00
Election Equipment	\$ 367,223.00	\$ 367,223.00
Warehouse Equipment	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 25,000.00
Office supplies	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 12,000.00
Computer Supplies	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,000.00
Other Supplies	\$ 45,000.00	\$ 45,000.00
Postage	\$ 175,000.00	\$ 175,000.00
Travel, Mileage, Freight	\$ 25,500.00	\$ 25,500.00
Conferences, Tuition, Training	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,000.00
Printing and Advertising	\$ 217,000.00	\$ 310,387.00
Election Day Staffing	\$ 841,450.00	\$ 1,050,400.00
TOTAL	\$2,682,652.00	\$3,069,839.45



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MEMO

TO: Hon. Wanda Willingham, Chair, Audit & Finance Committee
Hon. Dustin Reidy, Vice Chair, Audit & Finance Committee
Hon. Maggie Alix, Legislative Member, Audit & Finance Committee
Hon. Frank Commisso, Legislative Member, Audit & Finance Committee
Hon. Gary Domalewicz, Legislative Member, Audit & Finance Committee
Hon. Ray Joyce, Legislative Member, Audit & Finance Committee
Hon. Lynne Lekakis, Legislative Member, Audit & Finance Committee
Hon. Paul Burgdorf, Legislative Member, Audit & Finance Committee
Hon. Marc Grimm, Legislative Member, Audit & Finance Committee

FROM: Rachel Bledi, Board of Elections Commissioner
Alison McLean Lane, Board of Elections Commissioner

RE: Salary Increase Requests and New IT Position

DATE: 10/16/2025

The work to ensure fair and accessible elections has increased significantly in recent years, with several new federal and state laws changing the process of elections, broadening the time period for elections and even adding the number of electoral contests, creating new avenues for voters to participate in elections and the democratic process.

Board of Elections employees have taken on a multitude of new responsibilities with additional State requirements and mandates that have been increasing our daily workload. This now includes the addition of early canvassing of absentee ballots, 9 days of early voting and more intensive inspector training. Some have worked many overtime hours with no compensation and are paid less than their colleagues in similarly-sized counties.

Our employees at the Board of Elections are dedicated to their duties and possess the skillset and experience to do their jobs effectively. Workforce retention and fair wages is a necessary investment to ensure fair and accurate elections. It is for this reason we are requesting a redistribution of salaries based on the current needs of the board of elections, along with the creation of a new Information Technology position. This assessment is also made on the basis of future anticipated changes to elections, such as implementation of the even-year law, that will require a shift in job responsibilities and the use of more complicated software programs. This has required that our new hires have specialized skillsets and higher-education degrees; employees, who to retain, need to be compensated at a higher rate of pay.

To help fund the salary increases, we seek to eliminate two part-time Laborer positions (one Republican & one Democrat) and redistribute those allocated funds. This will result in a saving for benefits and retirement for both positions. Additionally, we propose the creation of a new IT Specialist position, paying \$85,000 per position (one Democrat & one Republican) to ensure proper compliance with state-mandated cybersecurity requirements, to serve as a liaison with our county IT Department, ensure proper ballot and machine programming and conduct other IT related functions.

Our budgetary requests aim to modernize office operations, promote staff retention and create efficient elections in the county. The existing apparatus pre-dates major election reforms. We believe our requests better reflect our growing needs.



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To help fund the redistribution of raises, we propose elimination of the following position:

Laborer P.T A1450 18404 002 2900017 (\$24,517)

Laborer P.T. A1450 18404 002 290018 (\$24,517)

We propose the following salary increases:

A1450 11015 001 290001 Commissioner of Elections \$5,000

A1450 11015 002 290002 Commissioner of Elections \$5,000

A1450 11115 001 29003 Deputy Commissioner Elections \$5,000

A1450 11115 002 29004 Deputy Commissioner Elections \$5,000

A1450 16802 001 290007 Supervising Elections Specialist \$2,517

A1450 16802 002 290008 Supervising Elections Specialist \$2,517

A1450 16804 002 290010 Senior Elections Specialist \$3,000

A1450 16804 003 290011 Senior Elections Specialist \$3,000

A1450 16806 002 290014 Elections Specialist \$3,000

A1450 16806 003 290015 Elections Specialist \$3,000

A1450 16806 004 290016 Elections Specialist \$3,000

A1450 16806 006 290024 Elections Specialist \$3,000

A1450 18403 001 290025 Laborer \$3,000

A1450 18403 002 290026 Laborer \$3,000

New position proposed:

IT Specialist Democrat \$85,000

IT Specialist Republican \$85,000