



City Clerk’s Office – BGA Policy 2026 Budget Snapshot

Description

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The city clerk is one of three elected city-wide officials, along with the mayor and the treasurer. The clerk’s office maintains city records, including legislation and other city council documents, vehicle and parking permits, city IDs, and amusement device and dog licenses.

Departmental Highlights

Snapshot: Appropriation & Staffing Changes from 2025 Budget

	2025 Budgeted	2026 Proposed	Net Change	Percent Change	Average Annual Rate of Change (2011-2025)	Inflation- adjusted Rate of Change (2011-2024)
Appropriations	\$15,093,753	\$15,267,028	\$173,275	1.1%	4.8%	2.1%
Positions & FTEs	92	93	1	1.1%	-1.1%	NA

- The net increase of one position at the clerk’s office includes the elimination of the Director of Collection Processing and Executive Administrative Assistant II titles from the department’s budget, as well as a reduction of one Director of License Administration position. Counterbalancing those cuts, a new Deputy City Clerk title has been added, along with one

Assistant Director and two Deputy Director positions.

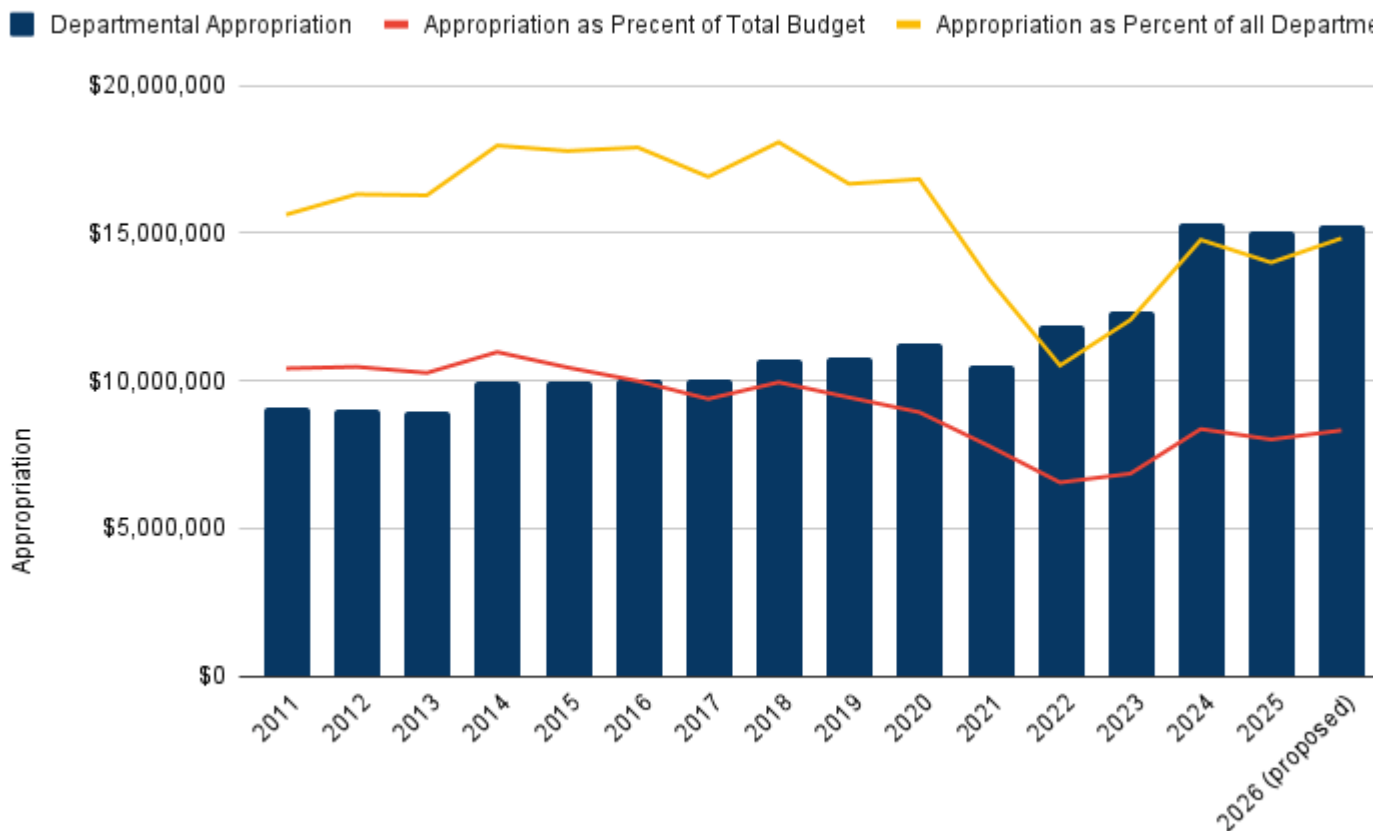
- Salaries and wages saw the largest single-category increase in clerk's office appropriations, up roughly \$472,000 (6.1%) from the previous year. Pass-through spending to delegate agencies also saw a significant increase, up \$200,000 (66.7%) from 2025.
- The department's largest appropriation reductions were in Software Maintenance and Licensing, down roughly -\$207,000 (-9.2%) and outside contracting through the Professional and Technical Services appropriation, down -\$172,000 (-13%).

## Historical Context

After a relatively steady decade from 2011-2021, the clerk's office saw increasing budget growth starting in 2022 and plateauing in 2024 and 2025. This year's budget keeps funding relatively stable, up 1.1% from the previous year.

Overall, from 2011-2025, clerk's office appropriations grew at an average rate of 4.8% annually, or 2.1% adjusted for inflation, compared to a citywide average rate of 8.3% (inflation-adjusted 4.4%).

### City Clerk Appropriation, Chicago City Budgets 2011-2026 (proposed)

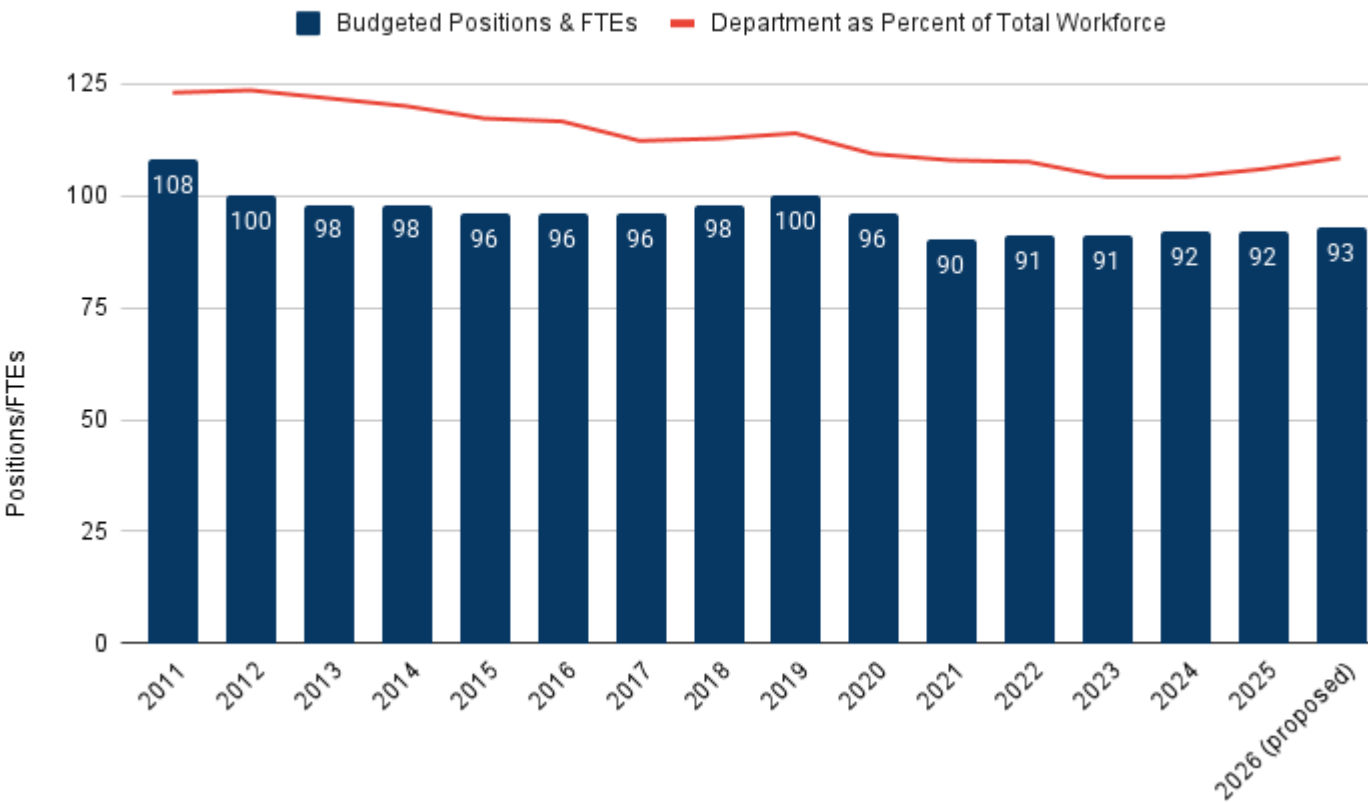


Over the past three complete budget years for which local fund actuals/encumbrances data is available, the clerk's office spent on average 86.9% of its locally funded budget, very close to the citywide

average 86.4% local fund spend.

The recent-year increases in the clerk’s office budget have largely come from non-personnel expenses. Headcount has largely declined since 2011, with an average annual change of -1.1%, compared to a citywide average over the same period of -0.1% annually.

Departmental Budgeted Workforce, 2011-2026 (proposed)



From February through September of 2025, the months for which the city released full-time position vacancy data, the clerk’s office averaged a 12.2% vacancy rate, compared to the citywide average of 11.2%.

Four of the department’s budgeted full-time positions were persistent vacancies, meaning that the same title/division/section/subsection combination was vacant for all eight months of available data, with one unfilled vacancy from Feb-Sept 2025 in each of the following titles:

- Proofreader – City Clerk
- Payment Services Representative
- Payment Reconciler
- Senior Labor Relations Specialist

## Budgeted Position Changes

The net increase of one position at the clerk’s office includes the elimination of the Director of Collection Processing and Executive Administrative Assistant II titles from the department’s budget, as well as a reduction of one Director of License Administration position. Counterbalancing those cuts, a new Deputy City Clerk title has been added, along with one Assistant Director and two Deputy Director positions.

## Appropriations

The clerk’s office is entirely locally-funded in this year’s budget, with a small amount of grant funding (less than one percent of the 2025 budget) eliminated in the 2026 proposal.

Roughly 60% of the department’s appropriations come from the Vehicle Tax Fund, with the Corporate Fund supplying the remainder.

Fund	2025 Budgeted	2026 Proposed	Net Change from 2025	Percent Change from 2025	Percent of 2026 Recommended Funds
Vehicle Tax Fund	\$9,029,275	\$9,270,973	\$241,698	2.7%	60.7%
Corporate Fund	\$6,025,478	\$5,996,055	-\$29,423	-0.5%	39.3%
Local Public and Private Grant Fund	\$39,000	\$0	-\$39,000	-100.0%	0.0%

## Largest Appropriations

As with most departments, personnel costs make up the bulk of the clerk’s office appropriations, with salaries and wages on payroll by far the largest expense category.

In 2024, the most recent complete budget year for which local fund actuals and encumbrances data is available, the clerk’s office spent 90.6% of its locally-funded budget.

## Change from Previous Year

Salaries and wages saw the largest single-category increase in clerk’s office appropriations, up roughly \$472,000 (6.1%) from the previous year. Pass-through spending to delegate agencies also saw a significant increase, up \$200,000 (66.7%) from 2025.

The department’s largest appropriation reductions were in Software Maintenance and Licensing, down roughly -\$207,000 (-9.2%) and outside contracting through the Professional and Technical Services appropriation, down -\$172,000 (-13%).