

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

Statute section 81-1113 directs the State Budget Division to prescribe the forms and procedures that all agencies must use in compiling their budget requests and establishes the deadline for submitting biennial budget requests. **Budget requests for the 2025-2027 biennium are due by 5:00 p.m., Sunday, September 15, 2024.**

The budget request process is used by the State of Nebraska to assist in the development of the state budget, the State's most significant public policy statement and strategic plan for the use of public resources. The State budget embodies the policy and financial priorities for State government.

The Nebraska Budget Request and Reporting System (NBRRS) will again be utilized as the method for agencies to prepare and submit their biennial budget requests. The system facilitates ease of access and the most efficient use of resources to accomplish budget request submission.

These instructions provide guidance to agencies, boards, and commissions relative to preparation of their budget requests and include helpful step-by-step instructions on the use of the system screens. The instructions contain the following sections:

- General Instructions - Summary information including requirements for submission
- Section I –Operations and aid budget request
- Section II –Budget Modification process
- Section III – Capital Construction and Building Renewal
- Section IV –IT Project Proposals
- Section V – Agency Administrator / Request Submission technical instructions
- Appendices – Includes projected rates, NBRRS login and password help, along with information on public servants who may be contacted for assistance.

Budget Request Process

The Nebraska Budget Request and Reporting System includes the following components:

- Narratives – Agency, Division (if applicable,) and Program
- Base (i.e. FY 2024-25) – Permanent Salaries and Appropriation
- Issues – Issue Details and Issues Summary
- Budget Modifications – Modification Details and Modifications Summary
- Funds – Funds Analysis
- Capital Construction/Building Renewal – Reaffirmations, Building Renewal Projects, Capital Construction Project, Request Summary, and Building Renewal Copy.
- Information Technology – IT Project Proposals

Certain elements of the Agency, Division, and Program narratives can be copied forward from the final 2023-2025 biennial budget request upon request to the State Budget Division.

Operations and aid request data for FY 2025-26 and FY 2026-27 changes compared to the FY 2024-25 Base Appropriation will be entered at the subprogram level within each *Issue*. Historical data will be pre-loaded into the system in the Base Appropriation and Personal Services Base screens. You may view your request at the program, division and/or agency level via reports that are available in the system, but editing is generally done at the subprogram level.

Strategic Plans

For agency convenience, enhanced NBRRS functionality will allow, at an agency's request, the agency, division (if applicable), and program narratives to be copied forward from the 2023-2025 biennium budget request. While this functionality has been developed to promote efficiency in the preparation and submission of the biennial budget request, it is important that this information be revised to accurately reflect the product of an agency's current strategic planning efforts leading into preparation of your 2025-2027 biennium budget request. Agencies should carefully review and edit this information to ensure that the narrative to be submitted represents the agency's current goals, statutory responsibilities, process improvement strategies, program objectives and priorities, among other elements. Taxpayers and their elected representatives expect state agencies and other recipients of state funding to respect the critical link that exists between agency strategic, results-based planning and the allocation of finite public resources.

Attachment of Additional Agency Strategic Plan Documents

Please use the attachment function on the Agency Narrative screen to attach any additional strategic plan documents developed by the agency, independent of the strategic results-based elements already included in the Agency, Division, and Program Narrative screens.

Narrative Due in Preliminary Form

The Agency, Division (if applicable), and Program level narratives should be completed in a preliminary form in the NBRRS by Friday, August 9th. At that time, the assigned State Budget Division budget analyst will begin reviewing the strategic results-based elements (vision, mission, goals, objectives) of these narratives for conformity with the narrative content instructions as provided in the *2025-2027 Biennium Budget Instructions*. The information contained in the narrative budget request screens are considered to be in draft form until finalized and electronically submitted with information contained in other completed budget request screens on or before September 15, 2024.

Issues

The Nebraska Budget Request and Reporting System (NBRRS) places the emphasis on explanation, justification and furtherance of the State's and individual agency's goals and priorities, rather than accounting codes or job codes. An *Issue* is a change to the FY 2024-25 Base Appropriation and therefore could be a positive (increase) or negative (decrease) during the two request years, FY 2025-26 and FY 2026-27. Using the "*Issue Details*" screen, an agency can identify the specific goals, objectives, outcomes, cost-drivers, activities, or initiatives for which the agency is requesting a change in appropriated resources. The *Issue* is defined by the agency on one screen with all of the justification necessary to support the request encapsulated within the identified issue, emphasizing how the requested Issue relates to the State's and agency's goals and priorities. This information becomes a "decision point" for the Governor and Legislature and facilitates public transparency.

Issues are categorized into Issue Types, including:

- *Agency Issues* (specific to the agency)
- *IT Issues* (an issue created to accompany an IT Project Proposal to be submitted to the NITC)
- *Multi-Agency Issues* (an issue in which two or more agencies collaborate), and
- *Enterprise Issues* (an issue common to most, if not all, agencies).

Multi-Agency and *Enterprise Issues* are created by the State Budget Division and assigned to agencies. In the case of *Multi-Agency Issues* can also be created and assigned at the request of the agencies.

Two *Enterprise Issues* have been established for the 2025-2027 biennial budget, “2025-2027 Public Servant Salary Increase”, “2025-2027 Public Servant Health Insurance”. The enterprise issue requests should reflect pay adjustments of 3% in July of each year and employer health insurance premium increases of 5% in July of each year. These placeholder estimates provided in the *Enterprise Issues* will allow for agencies to account for these costs as they consider their overall biennial budget request. The amount ultimately included in agency budgets for the 2025-2027 biennium will be determined through the budget setting process, and will reflect the outcome of bargaining with labor organizations representing the state workforce. See the Narrative Content instructions for the Issue Details screen for more information.

Budget Modifications

The budget modification process for the 2025-2027 biennial budget request requires that agencies with General Fund appropriations submit modifications at the 95% base level. Budget modifications represent the lowest priorities for continued or additional new funding within the budget request and will be considered as such during the budget process. It is our expectation that the 95% base level will generate a number of thoughtful choices and priorities for each affected agency for the Governor’s and Legislature’s consideration and that agencies will give serious attention to their identification of modification issues.

Certification of Evidence-Based Programs and Practices

Pursuant to statute section 81-1113(4)(a), each department and agency shall certify with their biennial budget request, for each program or practice it administers, whether such program or practice is evidence-based, or, if not, whether it is reasonably capable of becoming evidence-based. An Excel template form is provided on the State Budget Division website at <https://das.nebraska.gov/budget/nbrs.html>. The template must identify all programs and practices they administer and indicate whether the programs or practices are evidence-based or reasonably capable of becoming evidence-based. Use the file attachment function to attach the agency completed certification form to the Executive Summary, Management Processes, and Service Delivery Methods tab of the Agency Narrative screen.

Amended Budget Requests

Revising a budget request after submission requires a formal request by the agency to the State Budget Division. The System Administrator in the State Budget Division will need to “unlock” the final version of the budget request to allow revisions to be made by an agency. Once the revisions have been made in the NBRRS and the version re-submitted by the agency, the assigned State Budget Division budget analyst must be contacted to explain the revisions. The NBRRS System Administrator will “post” the final version to the web.

Supplemental Deficit Budget Requests for FY 2024-25

Supplemental deficit budget requests for FY 2024-25 will be submitted using the NBRRS. The instructions will be posted on the State Budget Division website.

The deadline for submission of supplemental deficit requests for FY 2024-25 will be Monday, October 21, 2024. The 2025-2027 biennium budget request should not assume any change in the current FY 2024-25 base appropriation related to anticipated FY 2024-25 supplemental deficit requests. In other words, the FY 2024-25 base appropriation entered in the NBRRS should reflect appropriations as of the completion of the 2024 legislative session. Any necessary continuation funding for a FY 2024-25 supplemental deficit request should be included as an Issue in the agency’s 2025-2027 biennium budget request.