

Multnomah County
 FY 2027 Budget Work Session Follow Up
Multnomah County Auditor’s Office
 May 20, 2026



Commissioner Singleton (**District 2**)

Is it possible to disaggregate the county-related cases the Ombudsperson worked on to see how many were complaints, requests for information, etc.?

Response:

2025 county-related cases of the County Ombudsperson, by primary report issue and department

Primary issue	Department	Total cases
Assistance request	Department of Community Justice	1
	Department of Community Services	3
	Department of County Human Services	24
	Department of County Management	6
	Health Department	5
	Homeless Services Department	4
	Multnomah County District Attorney's Office	1
	Multnomah County Sheriff's Office	2
	Total	46
Complaint	Department of Community Justice	6
	Department of Community Services	7
	Department of County Assets	2

Primary issue	Department	Total cases
	Department of County Human Services	21
	Department of County Management	5
	Health Department	10
	Homeless Services Department	20
	Library	3
	Multnomah County District Attorney's Office	3
	Multnomah County Sheriff's Office	19
	Non-Departmental	2
	Total	98
Information request	Department of Community Justice	1
	Department of Community Services	2
	Department of County Human Services	5
	Department of County Management	1
	Health Department	1
	Homeless Services Department	5
	Multnomah County District Attorney's Office	1
	Non-Departmental	1
	Total	17
Total county-related cases		161

Commissioner **Brim Edwards** (**District 3**)

Do we know how the number of reports to the Ombudsperson and the Hotline compare to other jurisdictions?

Response:

County Ombudsperson

The closest comparison we can make is to the City of Portland Ombudsman's Office, which received a total of 960 reports (they call them requests for assistance) in 2025. Of these, 651 were complaints about the city that were within their jurisdiction to investigate. Thirty-four of the 651 were city related, but outside the Ombudsman's jurisdiction to investigate - i.e. elected officials, collective bargaining agreements, etc.

Of note: Portland's Ombudsman's Office has been in existence since 1993 and has three Ombudsman positions - the City Ombudsman and two Deputy City Ombudsman, as well as intake assistance from a member of the Auditor's staff.

Good Government Hotline

Reports to the hotline per 100 employees is a standard hotline benchmark. We obtained the following comparison information most recently in 2024.

Comparison of 2024 reports to hotlines per 100 employees

Organization	Employee count	Total reports (includes non-jurisdictional)	Reports per 100 employees
Navex industry benchmark median (orgs 6,000-9,999 employees)	6,000-9,999	N/A	1.05
City of San Diego	19,322	268	1.39
Multnomah County Good Government Hotline	6,606	103	1.56
Navex industry	N/A	N/A	1.57

Organization	Employee count	Total reports (includes non-jurisdictional)	Reports per 100 employees
benchmark median (all org sizes)			
City and County of San Francisco	34,373	647	1.88
Austin	13,500	380	2.81

Notes:

- Smaller organizations (0 - 2,499 employees) have much higher reports per 100 employees figures: 3.11. This impacts the information in the column titled "Navex Industry Benchmark median (all org sizes)."
- Austin, San Diego, and San Francisco are generally considered the highest-performing hotlines.
- Other hotlines typically also investigate personnel violations, as well as fraud, waste, and abuse.

Commissioner Brim Edwards (District 3)

Can we provide the kinds of county cases by department disaggregated for cases reported by employees and community members?

Response:

The County Ombudsperson function’s purpose is to help county community members resolve issues with county programs and departments. While the Ombudsperson does help employees on occasion, the vast majority of their work is with community members.

In contrast, the Good Government Hotline is intended to receive reports from anyone who suspects wrongdoing in county government. Following is detailed information that responds to the Commissioner’s question about reports from employees and non-employees.

Tips are by far the most effective way to identify fraud in an organization, outpacing any other mode of detection by more than three times. Tips from county employees have historically been the most common source of tips to the Hotline. Employees often have access to information that the public does not, which can greatly improve the odds of a substantiated allegation. However, the

public, including county contractors and vendors, is an important source for reports of fraud, waste, and abuse, and have made impactful tips to the Hotline.

2025 employee and non-employee reports to the Good Government Hotline

Department	Reports from employees	Reports from non-employees (community members, contractors, etc.)
Department of Community Justice	7	0
Department of Community Services	1	1
Department of County Assets	1	3
Department of County Human Services	10	4
Department of County Management	4	1
Health Department	19	6
Homeless Services Department	7	3
Multnomah County District Attorney	0	1
Multnomah County Library	1	0
Multnomah County Sheriff’s Office	2	3
Non-Departmental	10	2
Unknown*	1	0
Total	63	24

Note: We received 96 total, unduplicated reports in calendar year 2025. Nine were not county-related, so not included in department figures here.

*Report was clearly about the county, but did not include enough information to determine the department.

2025 employee reports to the Good Government Hotline, by primary report issue and department

Primary issue	Department of incident	Total reports from employees
Complaint about services of operations	Department of Community Justice	1
	Department of County Management	1
	Health Department	6
	Homeless Services Department	2
	Non-Departmental	3
	Total	13
Discrimination, harassment, or retaliation	Health Department	1
	Non-Departmental	1
	Total	2
Fraud, waste, abuse of position, or inefficiency	Department of Community Justice	1
	Department of County Assets	1
	Department of County Human Services	3
	Department of County Management	1
	Health Department	4
	Homeless Services Department	4
	Multnomah County Library	1
	Multnomah County Sheriff's Office	1
	Non-Departmental	2
	Total	18
Other	Department of County Human Services	1
	Total	1

Primary issue	Department of incident	Total reports from employees
Policy violation	Department of Community Justice	5
	Department of Community Services	1
	Department of County Human Services	5
	Department of County Management	2
	Health Department	8
	Homeless Services Department	1
	Multnomah County Sheriff's Office	1
	Non-Departmental	4
	Unknown*	1
	Total	28
Total reports from employees		63

*Report was clearly about the county, but did not include enough information to determine the department.

2025 non-employee reports to the Good Government Hotline, by primary report issue and department

Primary issue	Department of incident	Total reports from non-employees
Complaint about services of operations	Department of Community Services	1
	Department of County Assets	1
	Department of County Human Services	1
	Health Department	1
	Multnomah County District Attorney	1
	Total	5
Fraud, waste, abuse of position, or inefficiency	Department of County Assets	1
	Department of County Human Services	3
	Department of County Management	1
	Health Department	1
	Homeless Services Department	3
	Multnomah County Sheriff's Office	2
	Non-Departmental	2
	Total	13
Other	Health Department	1
	Total	1
Policy violation	Department of County Assets	1
	Health Department	3
	Multnomah County Sheriff's Office	1
	Total	5
Total reports from non-employees		24