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2019-21 WISCONSIN STATE TREASURER TAXPAYER REPORT



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LETTER FROM THE STATE TREASURER

Dear Wisconsinites,

As your State Treasurer, I take great pride in my role serving as Wisconsin's fiscal watchdog. When I took office, it was clear the state did not have an outline of our state budget in an easy-to-understand way. Budget documents are available to the public, but they are hundreds of pages long and full of government jargon and confusing calculations.

Our 2019-21 Taxpayer Report is a clear and digestible summary of the state budget, which is passed every two years by the Wisconsin State Legislature and Governor. Transparency and accountability are crucial in public finance, and citizens have the right to know how their tax dollars are being spent without having an accounting degree or sifting through thousands of pages.

I strongly believe the budget is a reflection of our values as a state. In this report, you will see how Wisconsin supports its families, farmers, students, industries, environment, and most importantly, you. I hope the 2019-21 Taxpayer Report provides you with greater clarity as to where your money goes and how it shapes the policies and programs that make our communities thrive.

Given the scope of the state budget, this is by no means an exhaustive report. Instead, it is a starter-guide for you to learn more about some of the things our state government funds. Our report features ten sections of the budget and highlights a few programs under each.

As you read this report, the Governor and Legislature are working on the 2021-23 Biennial Budget, which will be finalized in the Summer 2021. Although the dollar amounts change with every budget, the majority of programs remain the same. We hope this report serves as a document to facilitate a deeper understanding of the process and programs your tax dollars go to fund.

As always, my office is open and here to serve you. If you have any questions, give my office a call at (608) 266-1714 or email treasurer@wisconsin.gov.

Sincerely,

Sarah Godlewski

Sarah Godlewski
Wisconsin State Treasurer



INTRODUCTION

The State of Wisconsin's 2019-21 Biennial Budget went into effect on July 5th, 2019 as 2019 Wisconsin Act 9. When the budget is passed, each state department or agency is given an appropriation (or provision of funds). These appropriations are made up of:

- (1) General purpose revenue (GPR) - money raised by the state primarily through tax dollars
- (2) Federal revenue (FED) - money received from the federal government
- (3) Program revenue (PR) - money generated by state programs and user fees
- (4) Segregated revenue (SEG) - money kept separate from GPR for specific purposes

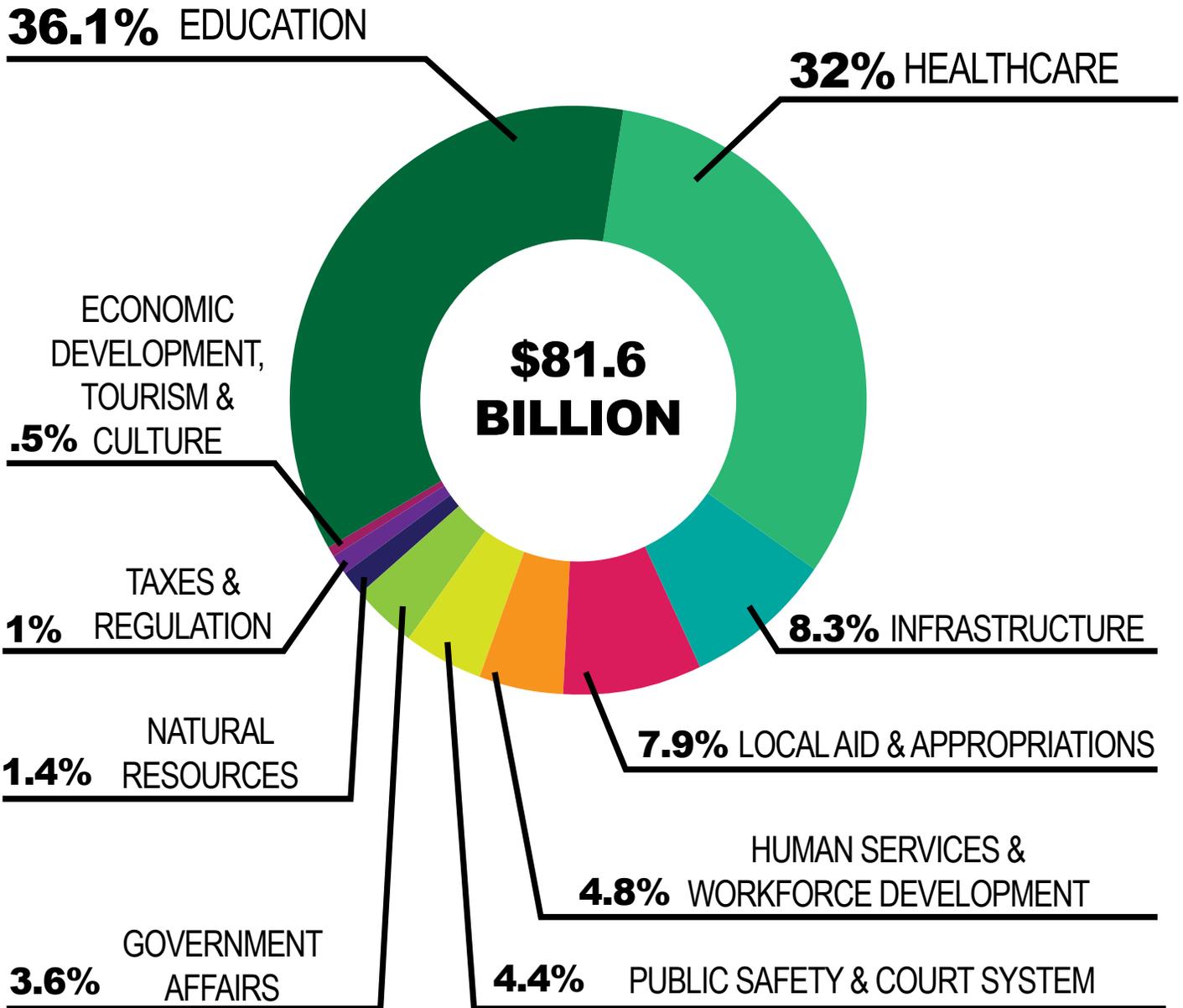
In drafting the 2019-21 Taxpayer Report, the Office of the State Treasurer classified state agencies and departments by their missions. We have called these groupings Sectors. For example, the Department of Health Services, Board on Aging and Long Term Care, and the Board for People with Disabilities are grouped together based on their overarching healthcare mission into the Healthcare Sector. Under each Sector, the report provides an overview of the appropriated funds, their total in comparison to the overall budget, and a narrative section highlighting key programs or new proposals.

It is important to note the State Treasurer's Taxpayer Report does not include bond revenue in its summary. Without bond revenue, the 2019-21 Wisconsin Biennial Budget totalled \$81,588,508,200.00. A breakdown by revenue type, including bond revenue can be found below.

Summary of 2019-21 Appropriations and Authorizations

| <u>Fund Source</u> | <u>2019-20</u> | <u>2020-21</u> | <u>Total</u> | <u>Percent of Total</u> |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| General Purpose Revenue | \$18,400,308,600 | \$19,296,363,400 | \$37,696,672,000 | 45.1% |
| Appropriations | 18,386,956,800 | 19,201,818,000 | 37,588,774,800 | |
| Compensation Reserves | 13,351,800 | 94,545,400 | 107,897,200 | |
| Federal Revenue | 11,414,533,600 | 11,772,481,100 | 23,187,014,700 | 27.8 |
| Appropriations | 11,410,456,500 | 11,740,564,500 | 23,151,021,000 | |
| Compensation Reserves | 4,077,100 | 31,916,600 | 35,993,700 | |
| Program Revenue | 6,318,492,100 | 6,434,616,000 | 12,753,108,100 | 15.3 |
| Appropriations | 6,310,642,000 | 6,367,571,900 | 12,678,213,900 | |
| Compensation Reserves | 7,850,100 | 67,044,100 | 74,894,200 | |
| Segregated Revenue | 3,975,650,000 | 3,976,063,400 | 7,951,713,400 | 9.5 |
| Appropriations | 3,972,434,400 | 3,958,071,400 | 7,930,505,800 | |
| Compensation Reserves | <u>3,215,600</u> | <u>17,992,000</u> | <u>21,207,600</u> | |
| Subtotal | \$40,108,984,300 | \$41,479,523,900 | \$81,588,508,200 | 97.7% |
| Appropriations | 40,080,489,700 | 41,268,025,800 | 81,348,515,500 | |
| Compensation Reserves | 28,494,600 | 211,498,100 | 239,992,700 | |
| Bond Revenue | | | 1,915,879,795 | 2.3 |
| General Obligation Bonding | | | 1,773,625,195 | |
| Revenue Bonding | | | <u>142,254,600</u> | |
| TOTAL | | | \$83,504,387,995 | 100.0% |

BUDGET BREAKDOWN



EDUCATION

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Agencies | Department of Public Instruction University of Wisconsin System WI Technical College System Higher Education Aids Board Educational Communications Board Medical College of Wisconsin |
| Total Appropriation | \$29,421,445,200 |
| Percent of Budget | 36.1% |



Wisconsin has a long legacy of investing in public education. Even prior to becoming a state, the earliest known example of a community-supported school was in Kaukauna in 1828, where the community voluntarily pooled their funds.¹ The State of Wisconsin provides funding for public schools, state universities, technical colleges, and other educational services. Of the entire 19-21 Biennial Budget, about 36% was allocated to fund education, totaling over \$29 billion.

The majority of education funding goes to the Department of Public Instruction (DPI). DPI is the state agency that advances K-12 public education and libraries. Their goal is to ensure every child graduates ready for further education and the workplace. One key provision impacting education in DPI's budget was an increase in Per Pupil Aid, which increased the amount by \$88 per student for every school district in Wisconsin.² Additionally, the budget made the first increase in a decade for Special Education Categorical Aid.³ The increase was for \$15.5 million in FY20 and \$81.3 million in FY21.

The state also funds higher education through the University of Wisconsin System and the Wisconsin Technical College System. Act 9, the state budget, allocated an estimated \$12.6 billion and \$1.1 billion respectively to these two agencies. A recent report from the Wisconsin Policy Forum explains that state taxes (GPR) are now the third largest source of funding for the UW System as of 2019, when as recently as 2010 state tax revenue was the largest source of funding. (see Figure 2).⁴

Figure 2: State Taxes (GPR) Now Number Three Source of UW Funding
2019 University of Wisconsin System Revenues by source



Source: Legislative Fiscal Bureau; *Includes federal indirect cost reimbursements and fees for certain programs (operational receipts).

Also part of this section, the Higher Education Aids Board (HEAB) is a state agency that administers student financial aid, including grant, scholarship, and loan programs for education beyond K-12. An example is the Primary Care and Psychiatry Shortage Grant program, which was created to encourage physicians and psychiatrists to practice in underserved areas of Wisconsin.⁵ In the 19-21 Budget, HEAB's overall budget decreased by \$5.4 million.⁶

HEALTHCARE



| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Agencies | Department of Health Services Board of Aging and Long Term Care Board for People with Disabilities |
| Total Appropriation | \$26,105,986,800 |
| Percent of Budget | 32% |

Wisconsin has historically ranked among the top states in the country for healthcare quality.⁷ With the outbreak of the COVID-19 virus, the role of public health and access to health care is even more crucial. When passed on July 5th, 2019, the state budget provided 32% of the entire state budget to agencies related to healthcare, totaling over \$26 billion dollars over the course of the biennium.

With an annual budget of \$11.5 billion and more than 6,100 employees, the Department of Health Services (DHS) promotes the health and safety of the people of Wisconsin. The agency oversees health and social service programs, working with local counties, health care providers, community partners, and others. Alcohol and drug abuse prevention, mental health, public health, long-term care implementation, disability, regulation of state nursing homes are all examples of health and social service programs DHS manages. DHS also oversees Medicaid, which is the single largest program in the state budget.⁸

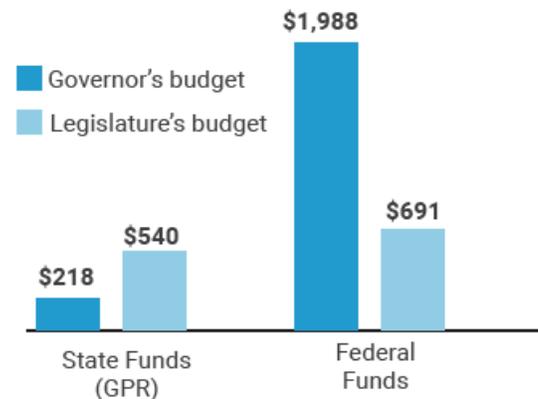
The 19-21 Biennial Budget made a number of investments in healthcare, including:

- \$91 million increase in funding for personal care services to help seniors and people with disabilities to live independently and stay in their homes.
- \$74 million increase in funding for nursing homes. 21 nursing homes had closed in the last three years.
- \$2 million increase to the Oral Health Program to serve more children. Access to dental care for children enrolled in Wisconsin Medicaid ranks 45th in the nation.
- \$250,000 increase per year for Minority Health Grant Program which supports the work of organizations serving communities of color, especially those organizations that are located in areas where health disparities are high.

Medicaid expansion, which means the expanding of eligibility to cover more low-income families, was not included in the final 19-21 state budget. By foregoing Medicaid expansion, Wisconsin did not qualify for \$1.6 billion in federal funding for coverage for 82,000 residents. This also results in the need to use an additional \$324.5 million dollars in state tax dollars.⁹

The Medicaid Budget Passed by Wisconsin Legislature Spends More State Dollars and Brings in Far Less Federal Funding

Increased funding in millions of \$



* For a more accurate comparison, the amounts for the Governor's Budget reflect the current cost estimates of Medicaid, BadgerCare, and SeniorCare
WISCONSIN BUDGET PROJECT

Source: [Wisconsin Budget Project, Summary of the 2019-21 Budget for Health Care](#)

INFRASTRUCTURE

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Agencies | Department of Transportation Public Service Commission Building Commission Fox River Navigational System Authority |
| Total Appropriation | \$6,806,938,700 |
| Percent of Budget | 8.3% |



Wisconsin is a large state and our roads, railroads, ports, and utilities keep our citizens connected. Our state budget specifically funds the Department of Transportation (DOT), Public Service Commission (PSC), Building Commission, and Fox River Navigational System Authority, which manage and oversee programs and projects to meet our state's infrastructure and energy needs. The 19-21 Budget provided over 8% of the state budget to infrastructure and energy. This is the third largest sector in the Wisconsin state budget, nearly \$7 billion.

The majority of state funding for the 2019-21 biennium under the Infrastructure sector was allocated to the Department of Transportation (DOT), over \$6.6 billion. Officially established in 1967, DOT supports all forms of transportation and is responsible for planning, building, and maintaining Wisconsin's network of state highways and Interstate highway system. The DOT's highway improvement program covers 11,745 miles of state highways, representing 10.2% of all public road mileage and carries over 38 billion vehicle miles of travel a year, which is about 57.3% of the total annual statewide public road travel.¹⁰

Other roads are maintained and improved by cities, towns, counties, and villages. As part of the 19-21 biennial budget, the Department of Transportation will provide more than \$160 million in transportation aid for local governments. Payments to Wisconsin's 1,850 villages, towns, and cities include:¹¹

- \$157 million in General Transportation Aids, which help to cover the cost of constructing, maintaining, and operating roads and streets under local jurisdiction.
- \$3 million to municipalities eligible to receive Connecting Highway Aids, which are reimbursements for maintenance and traffic control.
- \$226,000 to Milwaukee County for Expressway Policing Aids.

Another key component of our state's infrastructure is utilities. The Public Service Commission's mission is to oversee and facilitate the efficient and fair provision of utilities in Wisconsin, including access to broadband. Broadband access has been an important issue in Wisconsin for many years, and the COVID-19 public health emergency has only amplified the need for expanded access to reliable high-speed internet. The 19-21 Biennium Budget passed a 76% increase from the 2018-19 base budget.¹² Through 72 broadband expansion grants, \$24 million dollars has been made available to expand broadband internet to underserved parts of Wisconsin.¹³

LOCAL AID & APPROPRIATIONS

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Agencies | Shared Revenue & Tax Relief Miscellaneous Appropriations Program Supplements |
| Total Appropriation | \$6,435,283,500 |
| Percent of Budget | 7.9% |

The 2019-21 state budget allocated nearly 8% of funds to Local Aid and Appropriations, which amounts to nearly \$6.5 billion dollars.

Local governments, such as counties and municipalities, provide key services to their communities, including but not limited to fire and safety, public utilities, education, and mental health. Dating back to 1911, the State of Wisconsin has provided these local

governments with tax revenues for use at their discretion through shared revenue programs.¹⁴ These funds are not directed to any specific local government function and used to address revenue shortfalls.

Additionally, the Shared Revenue Program also provides tax relief to citizens in the form of the Homestead Tax Credit, Earned Income Tax Credit, and other tax credits. For example, the lottery tax credit, which provides property tax relief to homeowners, received an appropriation of \$101.5 million, a nearly 25% increase from the existing base budget.

The Local Government Services Bureau of the Department of Revenue illustrates the Shared Revenue Program for 2021:

From the Local Government Services Bureau

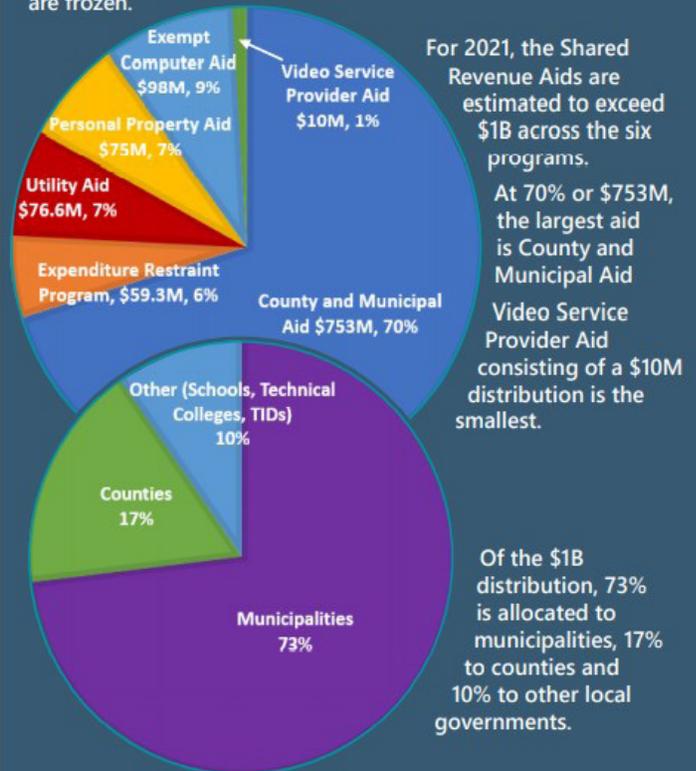
Shared Revenue Programs

The **Local Government Services Bureau (LGS)** administers six Shared Revenue programs under state law (Wis. ch. 79). LGS sent 2021 Shared Revenue estimates to local governments for these programs from August 15 through October 1, 2020.

- **County and Municipal Aid** – base aid provided to every Wisconsin municipality and county
- **Utility Aid** – helps counties and municipalities pay for services provided to utility property that is exempt from property taxes and subject to the license fee under sec. 76.28 or 76.29, Wis. Stats.
- **Expenditure Restraint Program Aid** – paid only to qualifying municipalities if their local tax rate exceeds five mills and they limit their general fund budget increase to no more than inflation plus a growth factor
- **Exempt Computer Aid** – distributed to taxing jurisdictions to compensate for computers, cash registers and fax machines that are exempt from property taxes under sec. 70.11 (39) and (39m), Wis. Stats.
- **Personal Property Aid** – for each taxing jurisdiction to compensate for locally assessed machinery, tools and patterns personal property that is exempt from property taxes under sec. 70.111(27)(b), Wis. Stats.
- **Video Service Provider Aid** – first distribution was July 2020 – to municipalities that impose a video service (cable) provider fee on cable companies under sec. 66.0420(7), Wis. Stats.

2021 Shared Revenue Aids Estimates

Absent a law change, there likely will not be much variation to this distribution breakdown, as annual reporting is required for the Utility Aid and Expenditure Restraint Programs, while the other aids are frozen.



Source: Wisconsin Dept of Revenue State & Local Finance Newsletter December 2020

HUMAN SERVICES & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Agencies | Department of Children & Families Department of Workforce Development Department of Veterans Affairs Department of Safety & Professional Services Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Board Labor and Industry Review Commission Employment Relations Commission |
| Total Appropriation | \$3,885,208,000 |
| Percent of Budget | 4.8% |

Wisconsin provides funding for human services and workforce development, involving a multitude of different departments and agencies. These include, Department of Children and Families (DCF), Department of Workforce Development (DWD), Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA), Department of Safety and Professional Services (DSPA), Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Board, Labor and Industry Review Commission,

and Employment Relations Commission.

The 19-21 Budget provided nearly \$3.9 billion dollars to the Human Services and Workforce Development sector. This makes up 4.76% of the state budget.

The Department of Children & Families (DCF) is the largest department within this sector with a budget of \$2.7 billion. DCF administers employment, youth justice, child support, and child care programs for Wisconsin. Notably, DCF partners with our counties to administer child welfare. In response to an over 40% increase in referrals to child protective services since 2009, largely due to the impact of the opioid epidemic, the 19-21 budget provided an additional \$30.5 million in amounts paid to counties.¹⁵

Also captured under the Human Services & Workforce Development sector, the Department of Veterans Affairs was allocated \$278 million under Act 9. The department obtained long-term funding for the Veterans Outreach & Recovery Program (VORP). Now established as a permanent state program, the budget allocated \$1.4 million for the 19-21 biennium. This program has 11 state coordinators who reach out to veterans, particularly homeless veterans, and connects them with community services and support. The program has a proven track record of assisting veterans and has prevented suicide.¹⁶



Wisconsin Department of Children and Families

PUBLIC SAFETY & COURT SYSTEM

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Agencies | Department of Corrections Department of Justice Circuit Courts Public Defenders District Attorneys Supreme Court Court of Appeals Judicial Commission |
| Total Appropriation | \$3,583,096,600 |
| Percent of Budget | 4.4% |

The State of Wisconsin funds public safety and our state justice system through different agencies, listed on the left. These agencies were allocated \$3.5 billion, and represent over 4% of the total 19-21 state budget.

The Department of Corrections oversees state prisons and community supervision. Their mission is to protect the public, provide opportunities for positive change, educate others about the programs provided, and collaborate with the community. This department represents the largest portion of funding from the Public Safety and Court System at a total of \$2.7 billion.

One program facilitated by the Department of Corrections is the Windows to Work program, a pre- and post-release program that provides individuals with programming for cognitive intervention, general work skills, financial literacy, community resources, and job searching. Budgeted at nearly \$1.5 million previously, the program had 507 newly enrolled participants, and an average daily population of 450 participants in 2017-18. The 2019-21 biennial budget provided for a \$200,000 annual increase to the program.¹⁷

Led by Attorney General Josh Kaul, the Department of Justice (DOJ) received a biennial allocation of \$289 million. This budget funds the DOJ's divisions that support protection and treatment alternatives including but not limited to the Treatment Alternatives and Diversion programs, the Nonviolent Offender Treatment Diversion Pilot Program, and the Internet Crimes against Children Task Force.

Other key allocations of the Public Safety & Court System Sector are:

- \$209 million for Circuit Courts, which are the state's trial courts that handle civil and criminal matters including probate, juvenile, traffic matters as well as civil and criminal jury trials. Wisconsin has 249 circuit court judges.
- \$209 million for the State Public Defender's Office to provide legal representation to clients, protect constitutional rights, and advocate for a fair and just criminal justice system.
- \$108 million for District Attorneys to prosecute criminal matters, forfeiture actions, state and county traffic code and ordinance violations.
- \$65 million for the Supreme Court, the highest court in the state, which has jurisdiction over original actions, appeals from lower courts, and regulation or administration of the practice of law in Wisconsin.
- \$23 million for the Court of Appeals, whose primary function is to provide review of circuit court decisions. The opinions of the Court of Appeals are binding unless overruled by the Wisconsin Supreme Court.
- \$632,200 for the Judicial Commission with the primary objective to investigate and prosecute allegations of misconduct on behalf of Wisconsin judges and court commissioners.



GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS



The Government Affairs sector captures the departments and agencies that cover the operations of our state government. It includes both executive branch offices such as the Office of the Governor and Lieutenant Governor, as well as the legislative branch under the Wisconsin State Legislature. The 19-21 Budget provided nearly \$3 billion dollars to the Government Affairs sector. This amounts to 3.6% of the entire state budget.

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| <p>Agencies</p> | <p>Department of Administration Appropriations Obligations Bonds Department of Military Affairs State Legislature State of Wisconsin Investment Board Department of Employee Trust Funds Elections Commission Office of the Governor Budget Management & Conservation Resources Ethics Commission Office of the Lieutenant Governor Office of the State Treasurer Office of the Secretary of State Board of Commissioners of Public Lands</p> |
| <p>Total Appropriation</p> | <p>\$2,897,213,600</p> |
| <p>Percent of Budget</p> | <p>3.6%</p> |

The largest department of

this sector is the Department of Administration, also known as DOA. DOA oversees a number of programs including facilities, IT services, budgeting, human resources, gaming, and Capitol Police. The Division of Energy, Housing, and Community Resources (DEHCR) develops housing policy and offers a range of assistance and funds to affordable housing, public infrastructure, and economic development opportunities. Specifically, the energy assistance and weatherization programs received \$6 million per fiscal year to support struggling families during our cold Wisconsin winters.

The Board of Commissioner of Public Lands (BCPL) is also housed under the Government Affairs sector. This is the only agency created within the State Constitution, and is outlined in statute that proceeds from the sale of certain Federal lands reside in a trust where the interest earned benefits Wisconsin public schools. Today, there is almost \$1.2 billion in Trust Assets and 77,000 acres of public school lands. The Board is currently



chaired by the State Treasurer, and the commissioners have a fiduciary responsibility to ensure sound investments. The most recent distribution was a record-setting \$39 million and is the sole source of funding for over 90% of public schools books and technology needs. Further, the BCPL runs a community financing program called the State Trust Fund loan program that provides financing for critical projects ranging from infrastructure to economic development. This past year the BCPL financed 170 projects for communities across the state.

Completed in 2010, the Grand River Station in the City of La Crosse was financed by the Board of Commissioners of Public Lands.

NATURAL RESOURCES

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Agencies | Department of Natural Resources Environmental Improvement Fund Kickapoo Reserve Management Board Lower State Riverway Board |
| Total Appropriation | \$1,166,191,200 |
| Percent of Budget | 1.4% |

The State of Wisconsin allocates funds that protect our state’s natural resources and public lands which include parks, forests, wildlife, natural areas, trails, etc. This sector is made up of the Department of Natural Resources, Environmental Improvement Fund, Kickapoo Reserve Management Board, and Lower Wisconsin State Riverway Board. The 19-21 Budget provided the Natural Resources sector with 1.4% of the entire

state budget. This sector amounts to nearly \$1.2 billion dollars.

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is allocated the majority of funding within the Natural Resources and Public Lands budget, at \$1.1 billion. The DNR manages fish, wildlife, forests, parks, air and water resources while promoting a healthy, sustainable environment and a full range of outdoor opportunities. This department offers a variety of stewardship programs to assist in the preservation of natural state areas, water quality, and outdoor recreation. Specifically, the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program was created to preserve wildlife habitat, support environmental efforts throughout Wisconsin’s 72 counties, and assist in the purchasing of land with the DNR.¹⁸

The Environmental Improvement Fund (EIF) works to provide financial assistance to municipalities in the form of subsidized loans for drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure projects. Managed jointly by the Department of Natural Resources and the Department of Administration, the EIF received \$40.2 million in the 2019-21 biennial budget.¹⁹ Two major programs offered by the EIF include the Clean Water Fund Program and the Safe Drinking Water Loan Program. The Clean Water Fund provides low interest loans to municipalities for planning, designing, constructing or replacing a wastewater treatment facility, or for nonpoint source pollution abatement or urban storm water runoff control projects. The Safe Drinking Water Loan Program strives to provide financial assistance to municipalities for the planning, design, construction, or modification of public water systems.²⁰

The Kickapoo Reserve Management Board is a recipient of \$1.9 million in allocated funding. Published under Wisconsin State Statute 35.93, the Kickapoo Reserve Management Board is designed to “govern the conduct of visitors to the reserve and to provide for the protection of natural and cultural resources in the reserve. This chapter applies to all lands, structures, and property owned, under easement, leased or administered by the

state of Wisconsin and under the management of the board.”²¹ The board is represented by twelve individuals from different communities across the watershed and Ho-Chunk nation.



The last recipient of funding in our Natural Resources sector is the Lower Wisconsin State Riverway Board (LWSRB). This board received \$494,600. The LWSRB was founded in 1989 and comprises 9 members from Columbia, Crawford, Dane, Grant, Iowa, Richland, and Sauk. The board enforces permits for a variety of structures, harvesting, timber usage, and a variety of other sources.²²

TAXES & REGULATION

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Agencies | Department of Revenue Office of the Commissioner of Insurance Department of Financial Institutions |
| Total Appropriation | \$847,558,600 |
| Percent of Budget | 1% |

Wisconsin provides state funding for the Department of Revenue, Office of the Commissioner of Insurance, and Department of Financial Institutions to organize taxation and financial regulation. These institutions were allocated \$847.6 million in the 19-21 budget and they provide vital services to taxpayers to ensure robust and fair tax collections and regulation of the financial sector.

The Department of Revenue (DOR) receives the majority of funding in this sector with an allocation of nearly \$446 million.²³ DOR administers Wisconsin’s tax system and is responsible for collecting taxes necessary to fund state and local government services. DOR also administers the Wisconsin Lottery, depositing the proceeds into a separate segregated fund which provides property tax relief to qualifying taxpayers on their property tax bills.

Another important role of the DOR is the administration of the state’s Unclaimed Property Program. This program works to connect lost financial assets with its rightful owner. The 19-21 Budget provided the Department with \$197,200 to expand the Unclaimed Property Program. This program is funded by Program Revenue, meaning it operates at zero cost to the taxpayer and is funded entirely by revenue generated from the Unclaimed Property fund.

To search for Unclaimed Property, visit www.revenue.wi.gov/ucp and click on the Unclaimed Property Section. You might have money waiting for you!

Also under this sector, the Office of the Commissioner of Insurance (OCI) works to ensure that the insurance industry responsibly and adequately meets the insurance needs of Wisconsin residents. This Office was allocated \$361.9 million in the 19-21 budget, which is a 61.5% increase from the previous budget. One key provision impacting OCI’s budget was a \$200 million allocation for the Wisconsin Healthcare Stability Plan, a program intended to reduce premiums paid by individuals who purchase insurance from the healthcare marketplace.²⁴ The COVID-19 pandemic has clearly demonstrated the need for affordable health insurance

and it is the goal of the OCI to ensure health insurance agencies and other insurers meet the needs of Wisconsin residents.



Unclaimed Property Section Supervisor Anne Eudaly returns lost property to Appleton resident.

The remaining \$39.7 million in the Taxation and Regulation sector was allocated to the Department of Financial Institutions (DFI). This agency regulates state-chartered banks, savings and loan associations, savings banks and credit unions, as well as various operations of the securities industry.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TOURISM & CULTURE

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Agencies | Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection Economic Development Corporation Historical Society State Fair Park Board Department of Tourism |
| Total Appropriation | \$439,586,000 |
| Percent of Budget | 0.5% |

The Economic Development, Tourism, and Culture sector is unique as it represents diverse entities that are reflective of our heritage as a state.

Wisconsin is one of the most diverse agricultural states in the nation, and based on 2017 data, agriculture generated \$104.8 billion in economic activity and 437,700 jobs.²⁵ The Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection, known as "Dat-Cap" by its acronym DATCP, received \$210.3 million in the 19-21 budget. Among the many provisions in support of farmers and consumers, the 19-21 budget contained:²⁶

- \$48 million increase to expand broadband service to underserved areas
- \$8.8 million allocation for a Dairy Innovation Hub in the University of Wisconsin System to encourage research and innovation in our dairy industry
- \$200,000 increase to Wisconsin's Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin grant program

The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) is a public-private agency that received \$83.1 million in the 19-21 budget to support business development, industry innovation, and workforce development in Wisconsin. Among the many programs WEDC administers is the Office of Rural Property. Created in Spring of 2020, this new office provides a one-stop shop for rural development resources.

Travel and tourism also plays an important role in Wisconsin's economic prosperity. A study from Tourism Economic found that in 2019, tourism in Wisconsin generated \$22.2 billion in economic impact. Although COVID-19 has severely affected travel in Wisconsin, the tourism industry remains a large source of employment for Wisconsin workers. Together, the Historical Society, State Fair Park Board, and the Department of Tourism were allocated \$146.1 million in state funding in the 19-21 budget.

Wisconsin's Department of Tourism encourages people to experience all of the best of Wisconsin. These experiences span from arts and culture, outdoor recreation, and family activities to supper clubs and quaint bars. The 19-21 Budget allocated \$34.7 million to the Department of Tourism, which included the creation of the Office of Outdoor Recreation.

In total, the 19-21 Budget provided the Economic Development, Tourism, and Culture sector with 0.54% of the entire state budget which amounts to nearly \$440 million.



RESOURCES

- [State of Wisconsin Department of Administration Current Biennial Budget Webpage](#)
- [2019-21 Enacted Budget \(2019 Wisconsin Act 9\)](#)
- [2020 State of Wisconsin Annual Fiscal Report](#)
- [Legislative Fiscal Bureau Documents - 2019-20 Biennial Budget](#)

ENDNOTES

- 1 [“Development of a Public Education System in Wisconsin.” 2012. Wisconsin Historical Society. August 3, 2012. <https://www.wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Article/CS2522>.](#)
- 2 [Memo from Deputy State Superintendent Michael Thompson to School District Administrators - Summary of Changes Included in 2019 Act 9 \(July 26, 2019\).](#)
- 3 [Summary of 2019 Act 9 \(2019-21 Biennial Budget\) for K-12 Education/Public Libraries - PDF of Power Point Presentation \(September 6, 2019\).](#)
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