

D60A10 State Archives

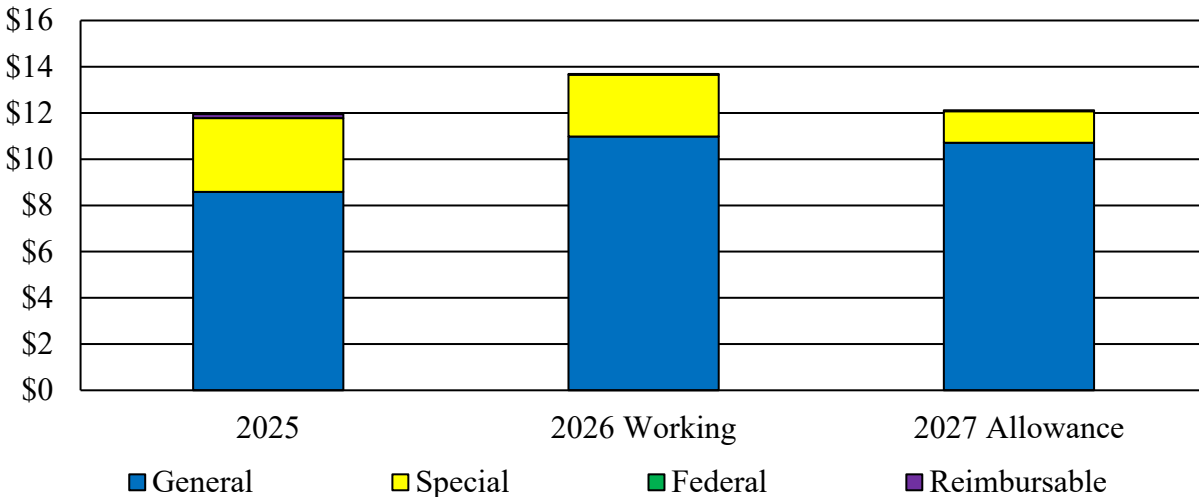
Program Description

The State Archives is Maryland’s central depository for government records of permanent value. The State Archives retains information from all three branches of government, and it is one of the largest state archival organizations in the nation. Holdings kept in the State Archives date from the State’s founding in 1634 and include key documents such as Maryland’s executive, legislative, and judicial records from both the colonial and State eras. Other items include State and county publications; reports; and probate, land, and court records. Additionally, the State Archives contain business and church records as well as collections of maps, newspapers, and photographs, along with the private papers of select individuals.

The State Archives also maintains custodianship over more than 3,500 paintings of value and other works of art owned by or loaned to the State. The State Archives also provides for the acquisition, preservation, and proper care of these items. These endeavors cover more than 400,000 cubic feet of materials. Additionally, the State Archives provides access to key public records online and in person at its headquarters in Annapolis.

Operating Budget Summary

Fiscal 2027 Budget Decreases \$1.6 Million, or 11.5%, to \$12.1 Million (\$ in Millions)



Note: The fiscal 2026 working appropriation accounts for deficiencies. The fiscal 2027 statewide salary adjustments are centrally budgeted in the Department of Budget and Management and are not included in this agency’s budget.

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Fiscal 2025

When the fiscal 2026 budget was enacted, it assumed a planned reversion of \$3 million in general funds in fiscal 2025 associated with plans to implement a new fee schedule to access the MDLandRec website. As discussed further in Key Observation 1, the new fee schedule was not introduced, and the reversion did not take place. The agency’s special fund closed fiscal 2025 with a negative balance of \$1.9 million due to the suspension of the new fee schedule and unanticipated costs associated with replacing 10 computer servers. The budget as introduced includes a \$1.4 million general fund deficiency appropriation to address the fiscal 2025 shortfall.

Fiscal 2026

Proposed Deficiencies

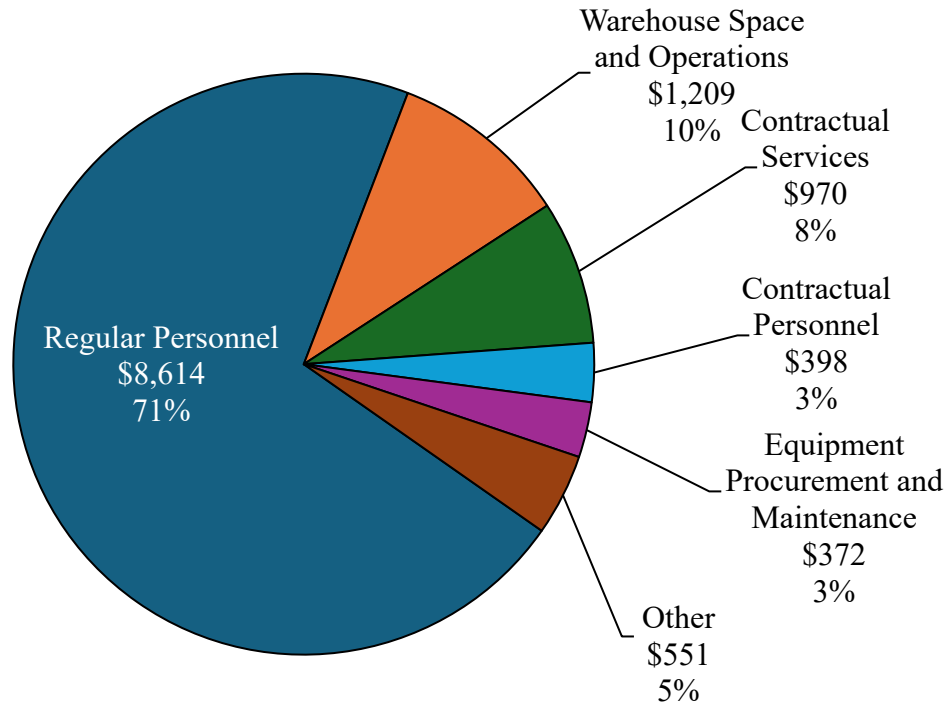
The fiscal 2027 Budget Bill includes proposed deficiencies effectuating a fund swap to replace \$8.2 million in special funds with general funds in fiscal 2026 to make up for lower-than-expected special fund income. This is in addition to the \$1.4 million proposed deficiency appropriation for the fiscal 2025 shortfall. The fiscal 2026 operating budget as enacted funded almost all of the State Archives’ activities with special funds. The agency has consistently received about \$2 million in special funds annually, and it was expected that the new fee schedule would bring in enough revenue in fiscal 2026 to cover most of the agency’s costs. Since plans for the fee schedule have been suspended, however, general funds are needed to cover the agency’s expenses.

The budget also includes proposed deficiency appropriations of about \$1.4 million in general funds for information technology needs (\$600,000) and equipment and staffing for digitization services (\$777,860).

Fiscal 2027 Overview of Agency Spending

The State Archives receives \$12.1 million in the fiscal 2027 allowance, with \$8.6 million (71%) going to regular personnel costs, as shown in **Exhibit 1**. In addition to its main building in Annapolis, the agency rents a 134,000-square-foot warehouse in Baltimore City to house parts of its collections. Rental costs and operations of the off-site warehouse account for \$1.2 million (10%) of the fiscal 2027 allowance.

Exhibit 1
Overview of Agency Spending
Fiscal 2027 Allowance
(\$ in Thousands)



Source: Governor’s Fiscal 2027 Budget Books

Note: The fiscal 2027 statewide salary adjustments are centrally budgeted in the Department of Budget and Management and are not included in this agency’s budget.

Proposed Budget Change

The fiscal 2027 allowance decreases by \$1.6 million from the fiscal 2026 working appropriation, due in part to fiscal 2026 deficiency appropriations. Approximately \$1.9 million in fiscal 2026 deficiencies do not continue, and this reduction is partially offset by a just over \$555,000 increase in regular personnel costs, as shown in **Exhibit 2**.

**Exhibit 2
Proposed Budget
State Archives
(\$ in Thousands)**

How Much It Grows:	<u>General Fund</u>	<u>Special Fund</u>	<u>Federal Fund</u>	<u>Reimb. Fund</u>	<u>Total</u>
Fiscal 2025 Actual	\$8,588	\$3,191	\$0	\$167	\$11,946
Fiscal 2026 Working	10,980	2,670	40	0	13,690
Fiscal 2027 Allowance	10,708	1,366	40	0	12,114
Fiscal 2026-2027 \$ Change	-\$272	-\$1,304	\$0	\$0	-\$1,576
Fiscal 2026-2027 % Change	-2.5%	-48.8%	0.0%	n/a	-11.5%
Where It Goes:					<u>Change</u>
Personnel Expenses					
Employee and retiree health insurance					\$321
Salary and associated fringe benefits.....					209
Deferred compensation match due to statewide change in budgeting.....					23
Workers' compensation premium assessment.....					2
Other Changes					
Warehouse space and operations					85
Cost allocations.....					-92
Contractual personnel costs decrease due to \$224,900 in fiscal 2026 deficiency, partially offset by some costs continuing in fiscal 2027					-186
Fiscal 2026 deficiency appropriations that do not continue in fiscal 2027					-1,932
Other					-6
Total					-\$1,576

Note: Numbers may not sum to total due to rounding. The fiscal 2026 working appropriation accounts for deficiencies. The fiscal 2027 statewide salary adjustments are centrally budgeted in the Department of Budget and Management and are not included in this agency's budget.

Personnel Data

	FY 25	FY 26	FY 27	FY 26-27
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Working</u>	<u>Allowance</u>	<u>Change</u>
Regular Positions	62.00	64.00	64.00	0.00
Contractual FTEs	<u>16.30</u>	<u>7.30</u>	<u>7.30</u>	<u>0.00</u>
Total Personnel	78.30	71.30	71.30	0.00

Vacancy Data: Regular Positions

Turnover and Necessary Vacancies, Excluding New Positions	0.25	0.39%
Positions and Percentage Vacant as of 12/31/25	3.00	4.69%
Vacancies Above Turnover	2.75	

- State Archives had 3 vacant positions at the end of December 2025, 2 of which have since been filled. The other vacant position has been submitted for reclassification, and the agency plans to fill it with a current contractual employee.

Key Observations

1. Plans for Land Records Fee Schedule Suspended

The State Archives maintains MDLandRec.net, an online database of legal documents concerning real property, such as deeds, mortgages, and liens, from all 24 circuit courts in the State. The site currently offers free searches for individual records and subscriptions for companies that wanted to download large numbers of records in bulk. Decreasing subscription revenue and increasing maintenance costs led the State Archives to develop a plan to implement a paywall and charge \$0.20 per page to access and download records. The agency projected that the fee schedule could bring in \$1 million in special fund revenue per month. The fiscal 2026 budget as enacted planned for these fees to cover the bulk of the agency’s fiscal 2026 operating expenses, in addition to a portion of fiscal 2025 expenses.

Following feedback from website users, however, the agency has suspended its plans to implement the fee schedule. Users of the site, especially those whose business requires them to routinely access land records, raised concerns about increased business expenses due to the fees. Some also questioned the fairness of implementing fees that would generate more revenue than needed to maintain the site, effectively subsidizing other agency operations. The State Archives

proposed several rounds of changes to the plan, such as adding subscription tiers for regular users of the site, but ultimately suspended its plans to introduce MDLandRec fees in the near future.

Since the State Archives will not be collecting MDLandRec fees, the agency will need general funds for its operations. The fiscal 2027 allowance is comprised of about 88% general funds; the 11% of revenues generated by special funds comes from other fees and services that the agency provides. The fiscal 2027 Budget Bill as introduced also includes proposed fiscal 2026 deficiencies to replace approximately \$8.2 million in planned special fund spending with general funds in addition to \$1.4 million in general funds to cover fiscal 2025 shortfalls.

Paywall Possible in the Future

The State Archives is continuing to explore options for a regular source of support for MDLandRec, including the possibility of implementing a paywall with a different fee structure than previously proposed. The time required to develop a plan, solicit public feedback, and make changes to the website means that a paywall would not be implemented before at least fiscal 2028. The agency notes that a potential future fee schedule would probably generate less special fund revenue than was projected for the prior proposal, meaning the agency will continue to need general funds.

Accessibility Deadline Approaching

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires online content created after April 24, 2026, to meet certain accessibility standards. This means that the State Archives must provide text descriptions or transcripts of PDFs and images, including those uploaded to MDLandRec, so that they can be read by people using screen readers.

Land records, as the State Archives currently receives them from the Judiciary, do not meet ADA accessibility standards. State Archives is exploring ways to make them accessible and estimates that the tools and staff needed would cost \$1 million per year, which is not included in the agency's working budget or fiscal 2027 allowance. The agency is working with the Department of Information Technology to identify solutions and with the Judiciary to improve accessibility as documents are created and reduce the amount of remediation that State Archives needs to do before uploading them to MDLandRec. The agency is also pursuing an extension to the compliance deadline that would provide additional time to identify and test accessibility tools.

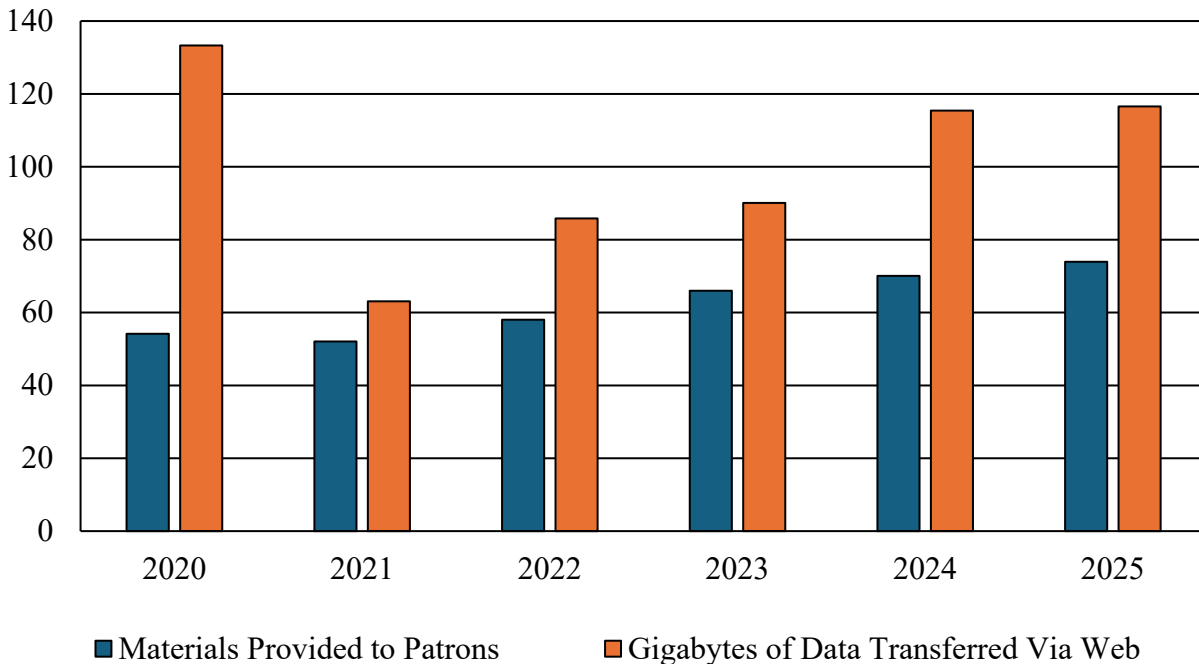
2. Collections and Programming Highlights

The physical and electronic collections maintained by the State Archives continue to grow. At the end of fiscal 2025, the agency was responsible for more than 421,000 cubic feet of collections material and almost 195,000 gigabytes of electronic data. Prior to the demolition of the Pimlico Race Course, the State Archives identified and removed artifacts from the property for preservation, including administrative records, newspaper clippings, photographs, artworks, and jockeys' silks. Staff are preserving and cataloging the items collected and expect that some items

will be displayed at the new Pimlico facility when it opens. These items will be included in the agency’s collections metrics for fiscal 2026.

Patrons can access many materials online, but the State Archives also provides access to materials at its Annapolis facility and via email, mail, and phone. As shown in **Exhibit 3**, the number of materials provided and the amount of data transferred online increased slightly in fiscal 2025 from the prior year, as the agency provided access to almost 75,000 records (including in-person, phone, email, mail, and interagency requests) and more than 116,000 gigabytes of online data.

Exhibit 3
Materials Provided to Patrons
Fiscal 2020-2025
(in Thousands)

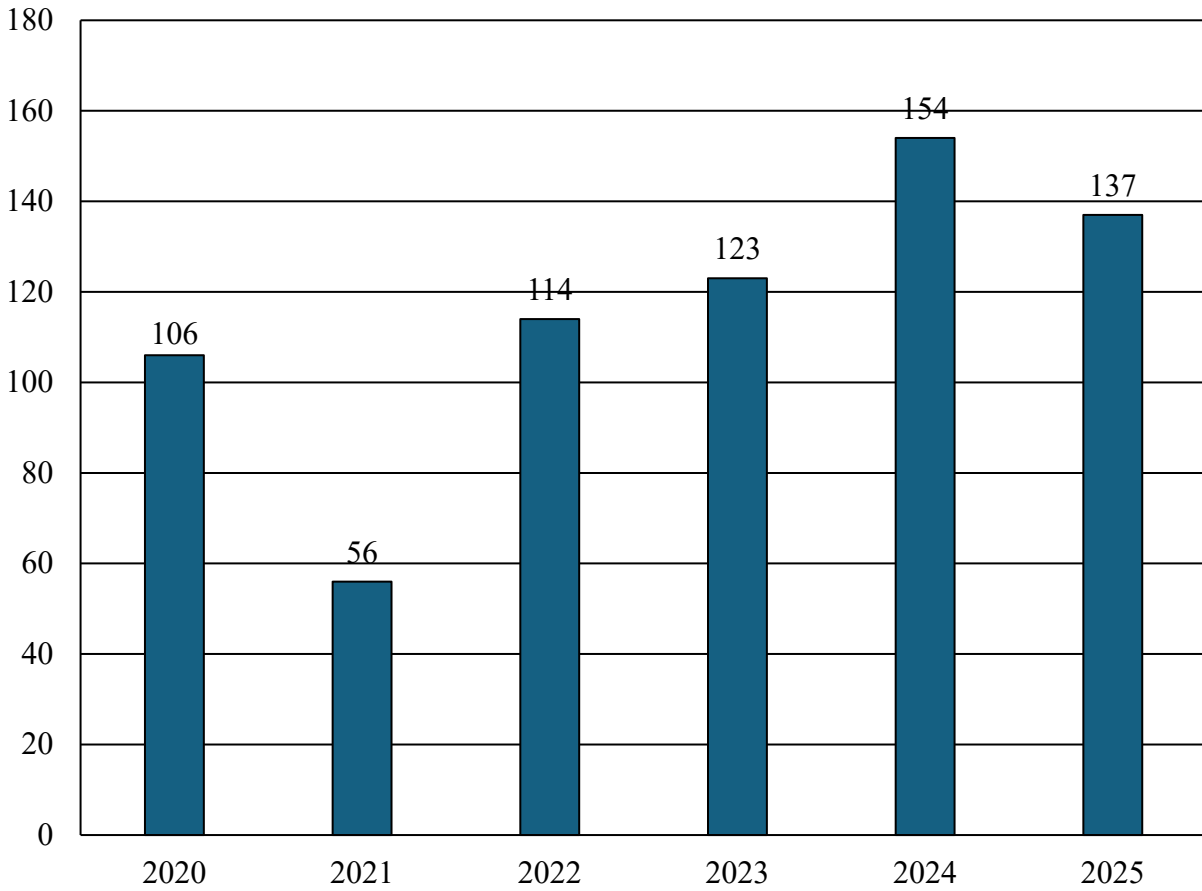


Source: Managing for Results

Public Programming

The State Archives hosts various programs throughout the year for the general public. These programs include tours, lectures, and online events, many of which are available to replay online at the State Archives website and YouTube page. As shown in **Exhibit 4**, the agency offered 137 public programs and events in fiscal 2025 that reached 6,216 attendees.

Exhibit 4
Public Programs Offered
Fiscal 2020-2025



Source: Managing for Results

Operating Budget Recommended Actions

1. Concur with Governor's allowance.

Updates

- ***Procurement Exemption Report:*** Statute exempts the State Archives from certain aspects of State procurement law for procurements related to the restoration and preservation of works of art in its custody. In November 2025, the Office of Legislative Audits published a *Review of State Units Exempt from State Procurement Laws and Regulations*, which found that the State Archives does not have a written policy governing exempt procurements as required by State law. The agency reports that it has a working process it can formally document.

Appendix 1
Object/Fund Difference Report
State Archives

<u>Object/Fund</u>	<u>FY 25</u> <u>Actual</u>	<u>FY 26</u> <u>Wrk Approp</u>	<u>FY 27</u> <u>Allowance</u>	<u>FY 26 - 27</u> <u>\$ Change</u>	<u>% Change</u>
Positions					
01 Regular	62.00	64.00	64.00	0.00	0.0%
02 Contractual	16.30	7.30	7.30	0.00	0.0%
Total Positions	78.30	71.30	71.30	0.00	0.0%
Objects					
01 Salaries, Wages, and Fringe Benefits	\$7,940,821	\$8,059,007	\$8,614,218	\$555,211	6.9%
02 Technical and Special Fees	703,160	583,615	397,505	-186,110	-31.9%
03 Communications	52,376	53,800	51,800	-2,000	-3.7%
04 Travel	4,044	10,500	2,000	-8,500	-81.0%
06 Fuel and Utilities	213,449	193,000	218,000	25,000	13.0%
07 Motor Vehicle Operation and Maintenance	3,968	9,340	7,170	-2,170	-23.2%
08 Contractual Services	1,646,013	2,352,476	1,456,687	-895,789	-38.1%
09 Supplies and Materials	37,984	85,100	58,500	-26,600	-31.3%
10 Equipment – Replacement	337,241	560,845	224,105	-336,740	-60.0%
11 Equipment – Additional	1,547	710,000	75,000	-635,000	-89.4%
13 Fixed Charges	1,005,801	1,071,964	1,008,874	-63,090	-5.9%
Total Objects	\$11,946,404	\$13,689,647	\$12,113,859	-\$1,575,788	-11.5%
Funds					
01 General Funds	\$8,588,266	\$10,979,647	\$10,707,533	-\$272,114	-2.5%
03 Special Funds	3,190,891	2,670,000	1,366,326	-1,303,674	-48.8%
05 Federal Funds	0	40,000	40,000	0	0.0%
09 Reimbursable Funds	167,247	0	0	0	n/a
Total Funds	\$11,946,404	\$13,689,647	\$12,113,859	-\$1,575,788	-11.5%

Note: The fiscal 2026 appropriation includes proposed deficiency appropriations. The fiscal 2027 allowance does not include statewide salary adjustments budgeted within the Department of Budget and Management.