



MARYLAND STATE PROSECUTOR

2025 Report

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Motto of the Office of the State Prosecutor

The agency motto is “Quis Custodiet Ipsos Custodes?” The Latin phrase, roughly translated as “Who Will Guard the Guardians?”, is found in the work of the Roman poet Juvenal and is frequently quoted to highlight the challenging efforts of a society to hold accountable those who wield public power.

Mission and Vision

The Office of the State Prosecutor combats political corruption, official misconduct, election law violations, and other crimes throughout Maryland by conducting independent, professional, and timely investigations and prosecutions of alleged criminal offenses, partnering where appropriate with federal, state, and local partners, and leveraging the best available technical, legal, and human resources.



I. Foreward

The Maryland Office of the State Prosecutor (OSP) was formed by constitutional amendment and legislation in 1976 and began operation in January 1977. Responding to several contemporary political scandals, OSP was intended to restore public confidence in the integrity of state and local government institutions and the electoral process in Maryland by establishing an independent, politically neutral, law enforcement agency to investigate and prosecute allegations of corruption and misconduct involving public officials and employees, and potential violations of Maryland election, ethics, and campaign finance laws.

In 2025, OSP successfully targeted political corruption, official misconduct, and criminal threats to the electoral process throughout the State, proceeding independently or in concert with local, state, and federal partners. Pursuant to our charter, OSP operated in a politically neutral, independent modality, while striving to be as transparent as possible to individual complainants, other law enforcement stakeholders, and the public at large. At the same time, OSP has continued to refine its operating protocols, policies, and organizational structure, resulting in an improved capability to respond to complex financial crimes, highly sensitive special victim offenses, and the challenges posed by evolving technology, such as Artificial Intelligence (AI). OSP has also supported legislative and policy initiatives regarding necessary legal reforms to enhance its ability to successfully investigate and prosecute instances of corruption and official misconduct. Details of many of these efforts can be found below.

OSP's success is due in large part to our superb team of prosecutors and investigators. I am extremely proud of their accomplishments during this past year and anticipate even greater achievements in the years to come.

Charlton T. Howard III
Maryland State Prosecutor

II. Statutory Authority

The OSP was established by constitutional amendment and legislation in 1976 (Chapter 612, Acts of 1976, ratified Nov. 1976), and began operation in January 1977.

The State Prosecutor may investigate on his/her/their own initiative, or at the request of the Governor, the Attorney General, the General Assembly, the State Ethics Commission, or a State's Attorney, certain criminal offenses. These offenses include:

- State election law violations
- State public ethics law violations
- State bribery law violations involving public officials or employees
- Misconduct in office by public officials or employees
- Extortion, perjury, or obstruction of justice related to any of the above.

At the request of the Governor, Attorney General, General Assembly, or a State's Attorney, the State Prosecutor may also investigate alleged crimes conducted partly in Maryland and partly in another jurisdiction, or in more than one political subdivision of the State.

If a violation of the criminal law has occurred and the State Prosecutor recommends prosecution, the Office makes a confidential report of its findings and recommendations to the Attorney General or the State's Attorney having jurisdiction to prosecute the matter. Such a report need not be made to the State's Attorney, however, if the State Prosecutor's findings and recommendations contain allegations of offenses committed by the State's Attorney. If the State's Attorney to whom the report is rendered fails to file charges within 45 days in accordance with the State Prosecutor's recommendations, the State Prosecutor may prosecute such offenses. The State Prosecutor may immediately prosecute offenses set forth in the report and recommendations if they are alleged to have been committed by a State's Attorney.

Where no violation of the criminal law has occurred or prosecution is not recommended, the State Prosecutor reports the Office's findings to the agency that requested the investigation. The report is made available to the public if the subject of the investigation so requests.

In investigating and prosecuting cases within OSP's jurisdiction, the State Prosecutor has all the powers and duties of a State's Attorney.

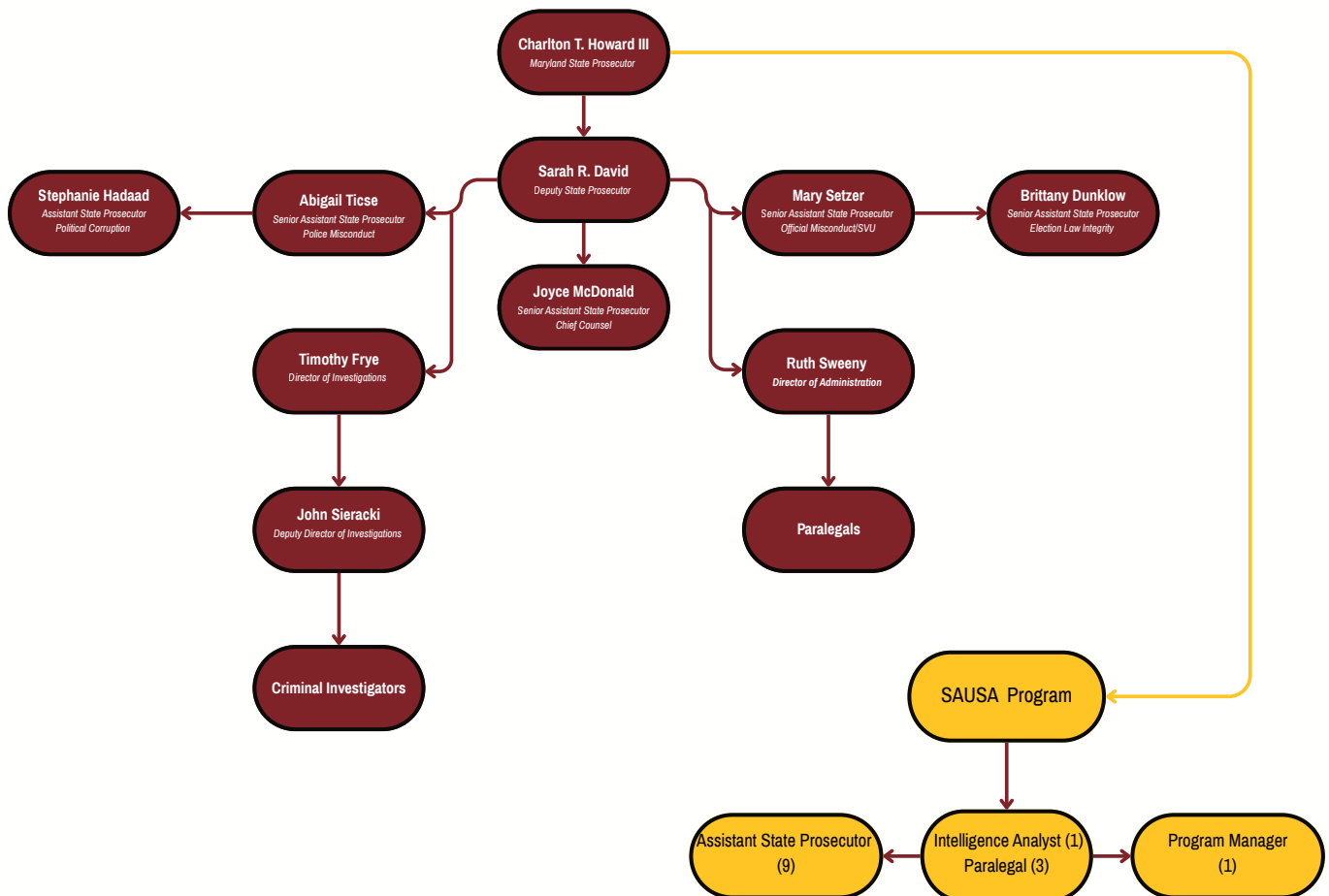
The State Prosecutor is nominated by the State Prosecutor Selection and Disabilities Commission and appointed by the Governor for a term of six (6) years and until his/her/their successor is appointed and qualifies. The State Prosecutor may be removed only for misconduct in office, persistent failure to perform the duties of the office, or conduct prejudicial to the proper administration of justice (Criminal Procedure Article, Md. Code, Sections 14-101 through 14-114).

III. Agency Leadership and Current Organization

At the conclusion of 2025, OSP had eighteen permanent personnel: six attorneys (including the State Prosecutor), nine special agents/criminal investigators, and one administrative manager. OSP also employed one contractual part-time attorney, one contractual part-time paralegal, as well as a small number of law student interns on a periodic, part-time basis. OSP also administers a grant funded special assistant US attorney program (SAUSA) providing 9 prosecutors, 3 paralegals, 1 data analyst and 1 program manager to the US Attorney's Office in the District of Maryland, exclusively focused on violent crime.

All personnel are primarily assigned to the OSP office at 40 W. Chesapeake Ave, Suite 300, Towson, MD 21204, though liberal telework is often employed to ensure flexibility of operational response. As the Office has state-wide jurisdiction, and consequently investigates and prosecutes cases throughout the state, OSP personnel often engage in extensive travel, and frequently expend significant resources to remain on site during the pendency of a case or court hearing. All SAUSA program personnel are assigned to the US Attorney's Offices in Greenbelt or Baltimore.

The office is organized as indicated in the chart below:



OSP Leadership

Full biographies of OSP senior leadership can be found in the Appendix.

State Prosecutor

Charlton T. Howard III was appointed as the Maryland State Prosecutor by Governor Larry Hogan on November 7, 2019, charged with directing the investigation and prosecution of public corruption, official misconduct, election law violations, and other crimes throughout Maryland

Deputy State Prosecutor

Sarah David joined the Maryland Office of the State Prosecutor in 2018 as a Senior Assistant State Prosecutor. She was promoted to Deputy State Prosecutor in January 2020. Ms. David oversees the Office's strategic partnerships, legislative agenda, and budget, as well as a caseload of corruption and police misconduct cases.

Senior Assistant State Prosecutor, Police Misconduct

Abigail Ticse joined the Office of the State Prosecutor in 2022 and was promoted to the position of Senior Assistant State Prosecutor – Police Misconduct in February 2023. She is responsible for leading the Office's efforts targeting law enforcement misconduct and corruption throughout the State.

Senior Assistant State Prosecutor, Official Misconduct & Special Victims

Mary Setzer joined the Maryland Office of the State Prosecutor in 2023 and is responsible for the investigation and litigation of political corruption and public official misconduct matters throughout the State, specializing in those cases involving special victims.

Assistant State Prosecutor, Political Corruption

Stephanie Haddad joined the Office of the State Prosecutor in 2024 and is responsible for litigating corruption and other official misconduct matters throughout the State.

Director of Investigations

Timothy Frye joined OSP in 2013 and was appointed as the Director of Investigations in 2017, responsible for overseeing all agency investigations, and coordinating joint efforts with counterpart local, state, and federal law enforcement organizations.

Deputy Director of Investigations

John Sieracki joined OSP in 2020 after a 28-year career as a criminal investigator with local, state, and federal law enforcement experience. He was promoted to Deputy Director of Investigations in 2023, responsible for leading criminal investigations, and providing investigative support and guidance to ongoing OSP prosecutions.

Director of Administration

Ruth Sweeney joined the Office of the State Prosecutor in 2019 and currently serves as the Director of Administration where she is responsible for managing the daily administrative operations of the office.



IV. Agency Operations

During 2025, OSP continued to pursue an ever-increasing caseload of public corruption, official misconduct, and election/campaign finance law offenses with diligence and success. Several technical enhancements and operational improvements –including the employment of an electronic case management system and sophisticated forensic accounting software, as well as the growing utilization by the public of an automated complaint portal on the OSP agency website – continued to result in an increase in both the quantity and relevance of complaints and consequent investigations, as well as a greater rate of successful closures. In addition, sustained engagement with key law enforcement partners, particularly the Maryland State Police (MSP)), the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the United States Attorney’s Office, and local State’s Attorney’s Offices, allowed OSP to leverage necessary investigative and legal resources.

Complaints are received via referral from the Governor, the Attorney General, the General Assembly, local State’s Attorneys, the State Board of Elections, the State Ethics Commission, other state or local agencies, or by the general public via personal contact or by the aforementioned complaint portal located on the OSP website. Complaints can also be initiated by OSP on its own initiative. All complaints are reviewed, assessed, and assigned by the Office’s leadership intake team.

OSP employs a vertical prosecution model, where prosecutors and investigators partner from the very beginning of an investigation through any eventual prosecution or other resolution. All cases are tracked and documented in accordance with OSP policy utilizing an electronic case management system.

Cases are investigated either unilaterally by OSP personnel, or jointly by OSP personnel and other agencies, most often the MSP or the FBI. At the conclusion of an investigation eliciting evidence of a crime, a charging decision is made after appropriate coordination with the local State’s Attorney. OSP attorneys then charge and prosecute the case in the appropriate state court. In addition, OSP prosecutors handle all subsequent appeals and post-conviction matters. If a joint OSP-FBI case is also prosecuted in federal court by the U.S. Attorney’s Office, OSP attorneys will often support the prosecution as designated Special Assistant United States Attorneys.



Election Law

OSP is responsible for the investigation and enforcement of numerous election laws, including allegations of failure to file required reports or pay required fees, authority line violations, double voting, voting by non-citizens, and over-contributions, among many others. Many referrals come to OSP from the State Board of Elections. These two agencies work closely together to ensure the election laws of Maryland are upheld.

Since OSP's inception, the number of referrals involving election law violations has increased significantly during periods of heavy election activity (tracking the federal and state election cycles). While most cases involving sustained violations are resolved with compliance agreements and administrative penalties, some matters involving significant violations or recalcitrant defendants require criminal prosecution.

Election law violations that do not meet the threshold for criminal liability are handled administratively by OSP with the issuance of civil citations, which if contested, are adjudicated in the District Court of Maryland.

Special Victims Unit

In 2025, OSP received 77 SVU-related official misconduct complaints. As illustrated, OSP regularly receives complaints about sexual misconduct committed by public officials in a variety of roles. While OSP collaborates with local, state, and federal partners on specific cases, particularly to help ensure the safety of victims, the inherent conflicts and challenges confronting our partners with many of these allegations underlines the importance of our role as an independent agency with specialized expertise in the often-nuanced law regarding public official misconduct. Additionally, the nature and sensitivity of the Office's investigations means that much of the investigative tasks must be handled internally within OSP.

Throughout the last year, OSP SVU has conducted outreach with local and global prosecutors, educating them on our unit specializing in misconduct involving sexual violence or exploitation. OSP SVU has also conducted outreach with various non-profit partners serving victims of sexual abuse throughout the State, to ensure they are aware of our unit, should they ever serve a client who is the victim of misconduct by a public official.

Anti-Corruption Policy Initiatives

OSP couples its investigative and prosecutorial mission with efforts to enhance the government's ability to comprehensively address issues related to public corruption and fair elections. OSP works with the Maryland State's Attorney's Association and the Maryland State Board of Elections along with other partners to promote legislation to address corruption and election law issues.

OSP successfully advocated for legislation to stay internal police investigations until any related criminal investigation is completed. This will ensure that the Office can bring the strongest criminal cases and address the most serious corruption crimes brought against police officers.

In addition, OSP has worked with other prosecutors and the State Board of Elections to address challenges presented by Artificial Intelligence (AI). The Office worked on several pieces of legislation to help protect elections and victims from AI's influence. We look forward to engaging in this important work next session and in the future.

OSP also partnered with the Domestic Violence Workgroup of the Maryland State's Attorney's Association to pass legislation to make wiretap evidence admissible in court with certain requirements.

OSP representatives serve on the Domestic Violence Workgroup of the Maryland States Attorneys Association, the Maryland State Bar Association's Criminal Law Section Council, the Family Violence Workgroup's Stalking Task Force, and several other organizations that address policy concerns in criminal law. We are proud to extend our efforts to ensure compliance and create laws that enhance transparency and accountability in Maryland.



OSP Criminal Investigation Statistics					
Fiscal Years	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025
Number of Complaints Received	192	439	710	1,022	1,721*
Number of Investigations Opened	93	63	109	138	222*
Number of Cases Closed	120	171	263	570	1,468*
Number of Cases Referred	34	64	148	387	527
Number of Cases Charged	13	5	5	5	2
Post Conviction & Appellate Litigation	12	12	8	7	11
Number of SVU Complaints Received	n/a	n/a	n/a	58	77
Number of SVU Investigations Opened	n/a	n/a	n/a	8	11
Number of SVU Cases Charged	n/a	n/a	n/a	3	0

****In FY25, OSP updated its criminal statistics metrics to include election law related complaints, rather than only corruption cases, to better reflect the full scope of OSP complaints reviewed.***

Election Law and Campaign Finance Complaints

OSP Election Law Enforcement					
Fiscal Years	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025
SBE Referrals to OSP	506	197	1,128	711	979
Enforcement Action Taken	49	68	631	186	314
Civil Penalties	\$128,391	\$133,405	\$201,090	\$282,306	\$328,748

The rate of election law and campaign finance referrals, the majority of which originate from the State Board of Elections, tracks the federal and state election cycles. Delays in reporting are often caused by the challenges of collecting information from local boards of election and garnering essential financial data from different institutions. Given the past trends following hotly contested elections, and the technical and process improvements discussed above, OSP expects ever-increasing numbers of both referrals and enforcement actions during periods of heavy election activity in the upcoming fiscal years.

OSP works closely with the State Board of Elections to coordinate the processing and assessment of complaints to ensure OSP's limited investigative and prosecutorial resources are employed in an optimum manner to enforce the laws safeguarding the integrity of state and local elections. OSP enforcement actions include both civil and criminal remedies, and in the first instance are most often geared to bring errant parties into compliance with the regulatory requirements, while at the same time identifying individual instances of criminal culpability meriting further investigation and litigation. Despite the cyclical reduction in referrals, OSP's focused engagement and coordination with the State Board of Elections, and the Office's technical and process improvements discussed above, have resulted in a greater quantity and quality of OSP enforcement actions over the past two years, a trend which is expected to continue.

V. Significant Case Examples

State of Maryland V. Esther Dikongue-Bayighomog

On January 22, 2025, Esther Dikongue, a former legislative aide in the Maryland State Senate, was charged with felony theft scheme, felony theft, and unauthorized access to a computer system for stealing funds allocated for legislative scholarships. Members of the Maryland Legislature are allocated funds to award legislative scholarships to students attending Maryland colleges or for Maryland students attending colleges outside of Maryland that offer programs unavailable at any Maryland institution.

Ms. Dikongue worked for a Maryland State Senator and used her position to steal \$20,000 of scholarship funds from the Senator's Office to her own educational institution without the knowledge or consent of the Senator. She continued to access the Senator's email address after she no longer worked in the Senator's Office to ensure she continued to receive the scholarship funds.

Ms. Dikongue accepted a plea agreement on March 25, 2025, and was sentenced on July 16, 2025 for committing a felony Theft Scheme of \$1,500 to \$25,000. The Honorable Stacy W. McCormack of the Circuit Court for Anne Arundel County sentenced Ms. Dikongue to four consecutive weekends of incarceration, and a probation before judgment upon serving the period of incarceration. The Court also ordered Ms. Dikongue receive two years of supervised probation and pay restitution in the amount of \$20,000, which Ms. Dikongue paid in full the day of the sentencing hearing.

State of Maryland V. Dontae Odom

On August 20, 2025, former Cecil County Sheriff's Deputy Dontae Odom was charged with 28 counts of Misconduct in Office, 16 counts of Unauthorized Access to a Computer, and one count of Unlawful Interception of Communications. Deputy Odom used law enforcement databases to find information about seven different individuals, including his wife, romantic partners, relatives of his romantic partners, a hotel employee, and a woman who worked in his office building.

Deputy Odom, who served as a sworn law enforcement officer with the Cecil County Sheriff's Office beginning in 2019, had access to confidential law enforcement databases. Law enforcement officers' access to the confidential databases is limited to records required for the performance of officers' official duties, and users are prohibited from searching information for personal use or associated with family or friends.

None of the searches conducted by Deputy Odom related to the seven victims were for a legitimate law enforcement reason. Deputy Odom admitted that in December 2024, he was ordered by the Cecil County Sheriff's Office not to have any contact with one of the victims. Nonetheless, in March 2025, Deputy Odom met with the victim and despite telling her that he was not recording, Deputy Odom audio recorded the meeting without the victim without her knowledge or consent.

On October 22, 2025 Odom pleaded guilty to four counts of Misconduct in Office and three counts of Unauthorized Access to a Computer. Odom was sentenced to a total of eight years of incarceration with all but six months suspended, followed by three years of supervised probation by the Honorable Paul M. Bowman.

State of Maryland V. Astarte Hunt

On September 15, 2025, former Maryland Department of Health Police ("MDHP") Captain Astarte Hunt was charged with two counts of Misconduct in Office and one count of Theft Scheme of \$1,500 to \$25,000. From January to May 2025, Hunt attended college courses at the University of Maryland Baltimore County ("UMBC") during her scheduled shifts with the MDHP, without authorization or approval. Hunt submitted time sheets indicating that she was working with MDHP, while she was attending college courses or completing related schoolwork.

Hunt was permitted to utilize a State-owned vehicle for work-related purposes, however, was not permitted to take the vehicle home after her shifts, nor was she permitted to utilize the vehicle for personal reasons or while off duty. Nonetheless, Hunt drove her State-owned vehicle to college courses, on weekends, and while off duty. Hunt submitted a Mileage Log to MDHP, indicating that the odometer reading on her work vehicle did not change on Saturdays and Sundays, despite using the vehicle for personal reasons on those days. Hunt included the odometer change into the following Monday's odometer reading to appear as if she drove those miles during her scheduled shift.

On November 5, 2025, Captain Astarte Hunt pleaded guilty to two counts of Misconduct in Office. On December 18, 2025, Captain Astarte Hunt was sentenced to one year of incarceration, with all but 30 days suspended, followed by one year of supervised probation by the Honorable Garret P. Glennon, Jr.

State of Maryland V. Michael Perry

On September 8, 2025, Michael Perry, a former co-owner of Groundswell MMA LLC, in Frederick, Maryland, was charged with embezzlement, felony theft scheme, felony theft, several counts of identity fraud, and failure to file a Maryland tax return. Mr. Perry embezzled over \$66,000 in company funds by converting them for his personal benefit in breach of his fiduciary duty. Mr. Perry also committed identity fraud by using the personal identifying information of his former business partner to obtain a credit card and obtain financing and additional funds in his former partner's name.

Michael Perry pleaded guilty after the State presented witnesses in a trial in front of the Honorable Richard J. Sandy on January 12, 2026. During the State's presentation of witnesses, testimony was elicited from several witnesses about how Mr. Perry promoted himself as a wealthy individual with investment experience despite evidence demonstrating the contrary. Witnesses also testified about the discovery of Mr. Perry's personal spending including steak dinners, vehicle treatments, etc. During Mr. Perry's guilty plea, the State read facts read into the record regarding Mr. Perry's theft of Groundswell MMA funds and illegal use of his business partner's identity to obtain over \$25,000 financing from multiple financing companies without consent.

At the sentencing hearing on March 31, 2026, Mr. Perry brought \$71,791.83 of restitution to the victims. Mr. Perry was sentenced to 15 years suspended all but 60 days and 5 years of supervised probation. The Court noted that while the restitution had been paid, it was "important that the Defendant see the inside of a jail cell" for exploiting a position of trust.



Examples of Civil Election Law Enforcement

State of Maryland V. Gillian Miller

On March 19, 2025, citations were issued to Gillian Miller, chairperson of the Gillian Miller Campaign Committee. Six of the citations were for failing to timely and accurately file campaign finance reports, violating Maryland Annotated Code, Election Law §13-327. On April 2, 2024, Gillian Miller was referred to Maryland Central Collections Unit for a total of \$6,000.00.

State of Maryland V. Gary Lee Falls

On March 25, 2025, three citations were issued to Gary Lee Falls, the candidate and chairperson of the campaign finance entity, PGC Support Committee (Gary) Falls. Citations were issued for violating Maryland Annotated Code, Election Law §13-220 failure to timely and accurately file campaign finance reports and pay the associate late fees, §13-220 failure to designate one or more campaign bank accounts, and §13-218 failure to have campaign funds pass through the hands of the treasurer. Gary Falls, as the candidate and Chairperson, made all disbursements in violation of campaign finance laws. On June 6, 2025, Gary Falls paid \$2,685.00 to the District Court of Maryland to satisfy the citation fees.

State of Maryland V. Noel Smith

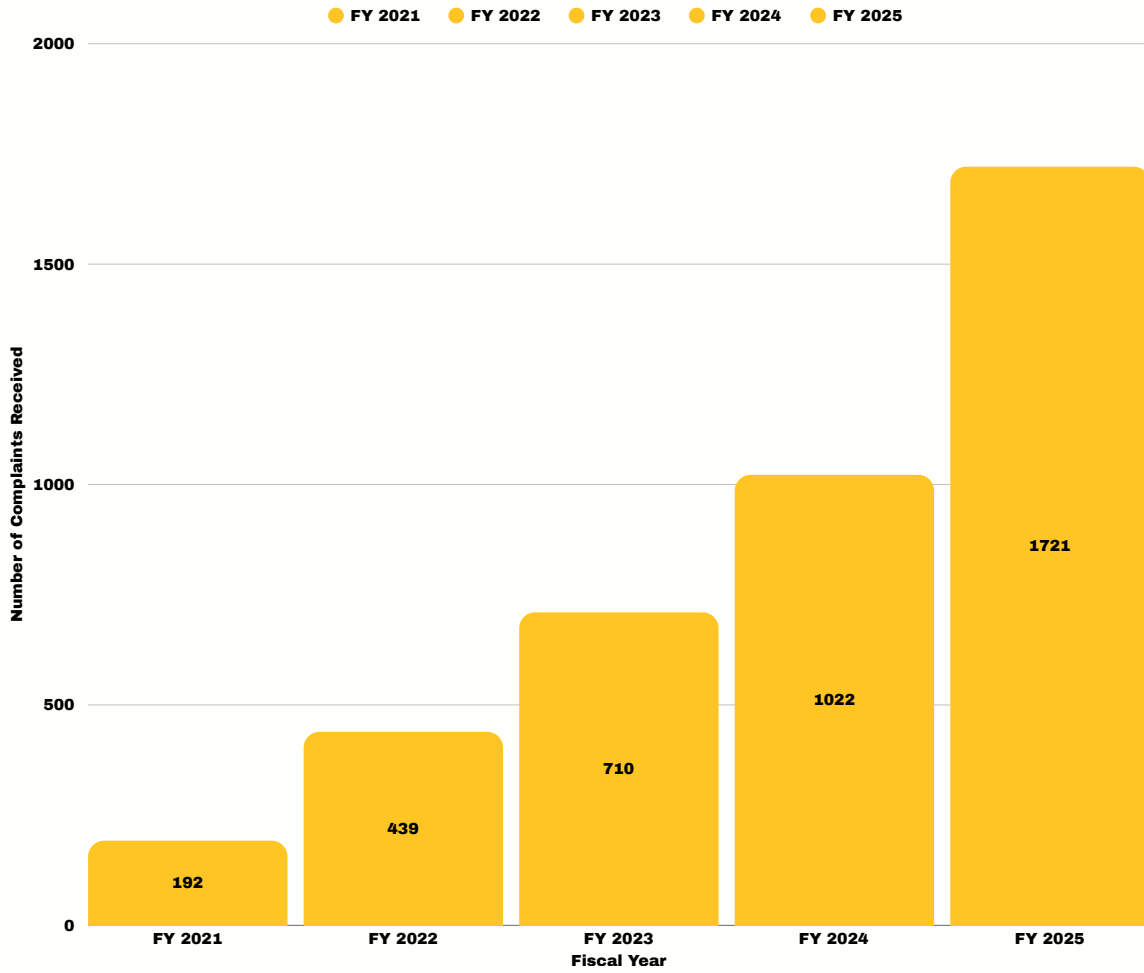
On May 5, 2025, two citations were issued to Noel Smith for violations of Maryland Annotated Code, Election Law §13-220 failure of a Campaign Finance Entity to designate one or more campaign accounts and §13-218 failure to have campaign funds pass through the hands of the treasurer. Noel Smith was the candidate and chairperson of Friends of Noel Smith and on October 9, 2025, Smith paid \$10,000 to the District Court of Maryland.

OSP Budget					
Fiscal Years	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025
FUNDS					
General	\$1,717,166	\$1,829,050	\$2,209,614	\$2,757,371	\$3,476,685.00
Special	
Total Funds	\$1,717,166	\$1,829,050	\$2,209,614	\$2,757,371	\$4,036,970
Reimbursable		.	.	.	\$560,285.00*
STAFF					
Authorized	13	13	13	17	17
Contractual (FTE)	-	1.5	3	3	14.5
Total Staff	13	14.5	16	20	31.5

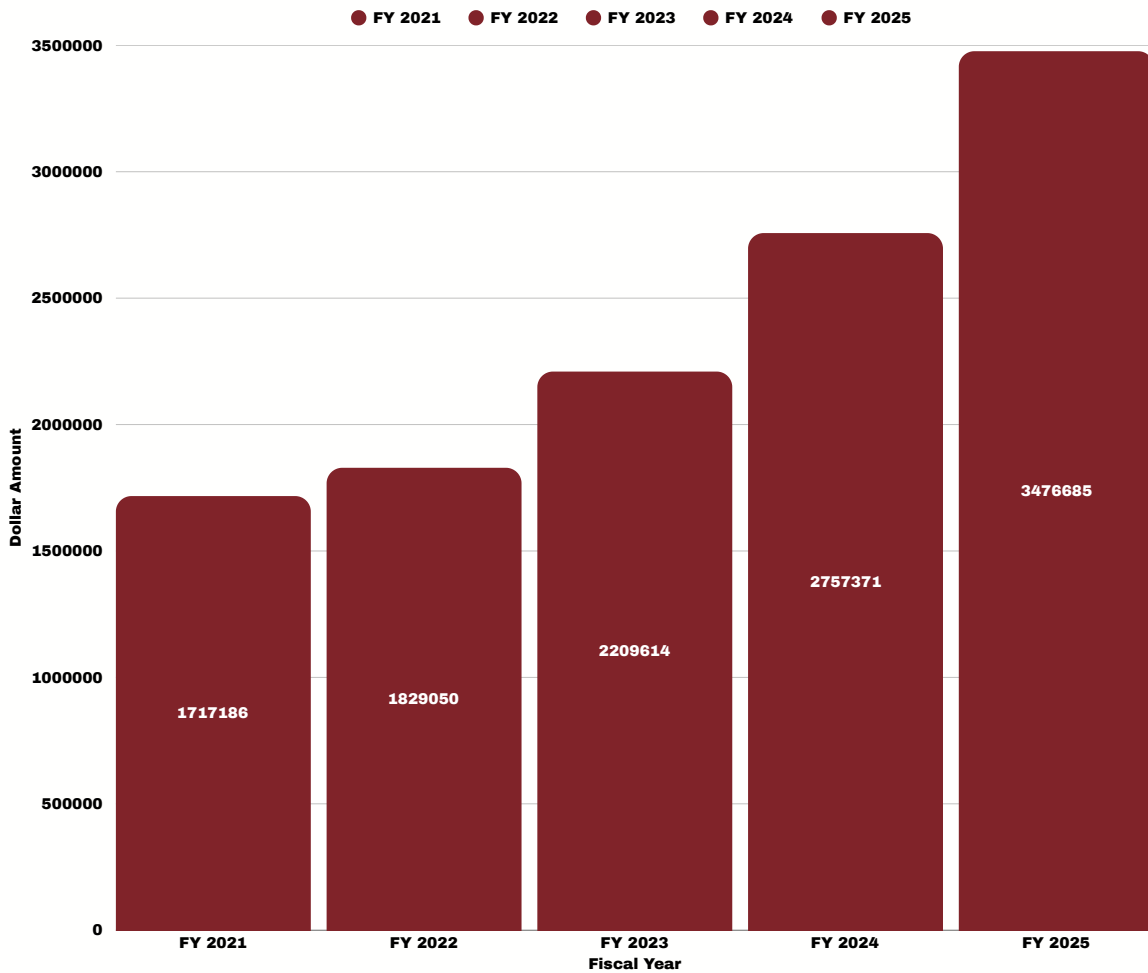
The charts above reflect the OSP budget during the reporting period and immediately preceding periods. The subsequent charts display the rise in complaints received by the Office compared to the budget allocation over the same reporting period, demonstrating that the increase in the Office’s budget is directly related to the rising number of cases. OSP anticipates future requests for additional resources if the growth in mission requirements continue

**The reimbursable funds are allocated to the SAUSA program and contains the contractual employees associated with the program.*

OSP Complaints Received



OSP General Funds Appropriation



Contacting the State Prosecutor

Office of the State Prosecutor
40 West Chesapeake Ave.
Suite 300
Towson, Maryland 21204

Phone: 410.321.4067

Fax: 410.321.3851

Email: info.osp@maryland.gov



Social Media

OSP shares information through its various social media outlets, to include X, formerly known as Twitter (@OSP_MD), LinkedIn (Office of the Maryland State Prosecutor), Facebook (@OSPMD), and Instagram (osp_md).

How to File a Complaint

OSP has jurisdiction to investigate and prosecute violations of state law related to: 1) election law violations; 2) public ethics law violations; 3) bribery law violations involving public officials or employees; 4) misconduct in office by public officials or employees; and 5) extortion, perjury, or obstruction of justice related to any of the above.

Anyone may file a complaint with OSP. The OSP online complaint form on OSP's website (osp.maryland.gov/file-a-complaint/) is the most efficient way to file a complaint. Information about the complainant can be provided, or complaints can be filed anonymously.

The information provided by complainants is handled according to OSP's internal policies and guidelines, and appropriate action is taken. It is OSP's general policy not to comment on the status or existence of any investigation unless and until it is charged criminally.

VII Appendix - Executive Biographies

Charlton T. Howard III, Maryland State Prosecutor

Mr. Howard was appointed as the Maryland State Prosecutor by Governor Larry Hogan on November 7, 2019.

A Maryland native, Mr. Howard was born in Baltimore and raised in Dundalk. He graduated with merit from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1980 and served for five years as an intelligence officer in the U.S. Marine Corps. After leaving active duty, Mr. Howard attended the University of Maryland School of Law, where he was Editor in Chief of the Maryland Law Review, graduating with honors in 1988. He subsequently clerked for the Honorable Francis D. Murnaghan, Jr., U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit. In 1989, Mr. Howard was appointed as an Assistant State's Attorney (ASA) in Baltimore, prosecuting misdemeanor and felony crimes.

Continuing to serve as a reserve officer, Mr. Howard transferred from the Marine Corps to the Navy Reserve. In 1991, he was recalled to active duty for the Persian Gulf War and assigned as a counterintelligence agent with the Naval Criminal Investigative Service (NCIS). At the conclusion of the war, he accepted a civilian position as an NCIS Special Agent, conducting and managing criminal, counterintelligence, and terrorism investigations for the next 22 years in various locations throughout the world, including the Americas, Asia, Europe, and the Middle East. His assignments included case agent for award-winning narcotics operations and homicide investigations in Southeast Asia; lead counterintelligence agent for the International Force East Timor; lead supervisor for the USS Cole Task Force; Assistant Special Agent in Charge, Central and South America; Chief, Overseas Counter-Terrorism Division; Chief of the Department of the Navy Multiple Threat Alert Center (MTAC); Special Agent in Charge, Washington Field Office; and Assistant Director, Intelligence and Information Sharing. In 2006, he served as the Director of the Multi-National Force Iraq Strategic Counterintelligence Directorate, leading joint counterespionage and counter-terrorism efforts in Iraq during the height of the insurgency. In 2010, Mr. Howard was named NCIS Executive Assistant Director and concurrently head of all Navy Human Intelligence Operations. He ultimately retired from NCIS in 2013.

Mr. Howard then returned to the Baltimore City State's Attorney's Office as an ASA in the Major Investigations Unit, prosecuting criminal gang members and violent repeat offenders. In 2015, he joined the Maryland Attorney General's Office, serving as a Supervisory Assistant Attorney General overseeing the statewide child support enforcement program, until appointed to his current position.

Mr. Howard was named the NCIS Special Agent of the Year in 2000. His other awards include the Navy Superior Civilian Service Award, two Navy Meritorious Civilian Service Awards, the NCIS National Security Career Achievement Award, the Department of Defense Counterintelligence Award, the International Narcotics Enforcement Officers Association International Award of Honor, the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Joint Civilian Service Commendation Award, and numerous other law enforcement, intelligence community, and military commendations and service awards. Mr. Howard retired from the Naval Reserve in 2007 as a Navy Captain

In 2025, Mr. Howard was awarded the Daily Record and Maryland State Bar Association Leaders in Law Lifetime Achievement Award.

Sarah R. David, Deputy State Prosecutor

Ms. David joined the Maryland Office of the State Prosecutor in 2018 as a Senior Assistant State Prosecutor. She was promoted to Deputy State Prosecutor in January 2020. Ms. David oversees the Office's strategic partnerships, legislative agenda, and budget, as well as a caseload of corruption and police misconduct cases.

Ms. David graduated *Phi Beta Kappa* from Johns Hopkins University in 2003 where she studied Political Science and Arabic. A 2006 Truman Scholar and a 2008 George J. Mitchell Scholar, Ms. David obtained a Master's Degree in Comparative Ethnic Conflict from Queens University in Belfast, Northern Ireland.

Ms. David studied Arabic language in both Egypt and Morocco before working as an Intelligence Research Specialist in the New York City Police Department's (NYPD) Counterterrorism Division. During her time at the NYPD, Ms. David served as primary briefer to the Deputy Commissioner for Counterterrorism, a regional specialist in the Levant and Iraq, and was tasked to the Joint Terrorism Task Force for special case assignments.

Ms. David attended the Francis King Carey University of Maryland School of Law as a Leadership Scholar and graduated *cum laude* in 2013. After graduating from law school, Ms. David clerked for the Maryland Court of Special Appeals before serving as an Assistant State's Attorney in the Baltimore City State's Attorney's Office where in addition to her general caseload she was specially assigned to high-profile, complex prosecutions. Ms. David left the State's Attorney's Office to serve as Chief of Staff to the Chairman of the Judicial Proceedings Committee in the Maryland State Senate, where she worked on legislation related to criminal, civil, family, and many other areas of law.

Ms. David has been recognized in the community for her work in non-profits and professional organizations by the Maryland Bar Foundation as a Maryland Bar Fellow, as a graduate of the Maryland State Bar Association Leadership Academy, by the Associated Jewish Charities as a Fred Walpert Community Award Recipient, and by the Maryland Daily Record's Leading Women.

Ms. David, one of the 2025 Daily Record's Top Leader in Law honorees, was subsequently announced as the 2026 Top Leader in the Law winner during The Daily Record's Leaders in Law event April 20, 2026.

Abigail Ticse, Senior Assistant State Prosecutor, Police Misconduct

Ms. Ticse joined the Office of the State Prosecutor in 2022 and was promoted to the position of Senior Assistant State Prosecutor – Police Misconduct in February 2023. She is responsible for leading the office's efforts targeting law enforcement misconduct and corruption throughout the state.

Ms. Ticse graduated magna cum laude and Order of the Coif from the University of Maryland School of Law, where she served as an Associate Editor of the Maryland Law Review. During law school, Ms. Ticse interned for the Organized Crime Unit of the Maryland Attorney General's Office, and the Honorable Marcus Z. Shar of the Circuit Court of Baltimore City. She also participated in the Consumer Protection Clinic representing underserved members of the community.

After law school, Ms. Ticse clerked for the Honorable Michael A. DiPietro of the Circuit Court for Baltimore City. She then worked as an Associate at Silverman Thompson, practicing civil litigation and criminal defense. Prior to joining the Office of the State Prosecutor, Ms. Ticse was an Assistant United States Attorney for the District of Maryland in the Major Crimes Unit, where she investigated and prosecuted federal crimes throughout the State.

Ms. Ticse has been recognized by Maryland Super Lawyer as a "Rising Star" and by Best Lawyers as "One to Watch."

Mary Setzer, Senior Assistant State Prosecutor, Official Misconduct & Special Victims

Ms. Setzer joined the Maryland Office of the State Prosecutor in 2023, and is responsible for the investigation and litigation of political corruption and public official misconduct matters throughout the state, specializing in those cases involving special victims matters.

Ms. Setzer graduated magna cum laude from the University of Baltimore School of Law in 2012, where she served as the Comments Editor for the University of Baltimore Law Review and was a member of the Heusler Honor Society.

Immediately after graduating from law school, Ms. Setzer clerked for the Honorable Paul A. Hackner in the Circuit Court for Anne Arundel County. She then served as an Assistant State's Attorney in the Anne Arundel County State's Attorney's Office, handling a variety of high-profile cases including sexual assaults and homicides, and serving as the Chief of the Domestic Violence Division of the Special Victims Unit.

Prior to joining the Office of the State Prosecutor, Ms. Setzer served as an Assistant United States Attorney for the District of Maryland for four years, where she led the office's investigative efforts in human trafficking cases, investigating and litigating highly complicated and high-profile human trafficking cases throughout the State. Ms. Setzer also served as the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) Coordinator for the United States Attorney's Office and prosecuted numerous federal child exploitation and sex crimes cases.

Ms. Setzer was selected as the 2022 recipient of the "Top Prosecutor" Award by Women in Federal Law Enforcement (WIFLE), a national award presented to a federal prosecutor who has demonstrated exemplary achievements in the prosecution of crimes involving trafficking of women and children. She was also selected as the 2022 recipient of the "Investigation of the Year" Award by Homeland Security Investigations, for her multi-year investigation of a human trafficker who victimized dozens of women and children throughout Maryland.

Ms. Setzer has presented as a guest lecturer on numerous occasions on topics relating to Violence Against Women, including presentations to large audiences comprised of health care professionals, law enforcement officials, attorneys, and victim service professionals.

Brittany Dunlow, Senior Assistant State Prosecutor, Election Integrity

Brittany Gause Dunklow joined the Office of the State Prosecutor in January 2025. She is a Senior Assistant State Prosecutor, responsible for leading the office's Election Integrity efforts, addressing election law and campaign finance violations, and misconduct by public officials related to the electoral process.

Ms. Dunklow was formerly a Senior Trial Attorney with the Allstate Insurance Company. She defended Allstate and its insureds against bodily injury and property damage lawsuits and has tried hundreds of cases throughout the State of Maryland at the District and Circuit Court level.

Ms. Dunklow is a graduate of Indiana University and Howard University School of Law. Following law school, she clerked for the Honorable DaNeeka Varner Cotton in the Circuit Court for Prince George's County where she discovered her passion for litigation. Following her clerkship, she developed her trial skills with the Maryland Office of the Public Defender in Baltimore City where she represented individuals charged with traffic and misdemeanor criminal offenses.

Ms. Dunklow devotes many hours to the legal community. She is a member of the Alliance of Black Women Attorneys of Maryland, the Bar Association of Baltimore City, the Monumental City Bar Association, and the Maryland State Bar Association, where she serves on the Judicial Appointments Committee

Stephanie Haddad, Assistant State Prosecutor, Political Corruption

Ms. Haddad joined the Office of the State Prosecutor in 2024 and is responsible for the investigation and litigation of public corruption matters throughout the state.

Ms. Haddad graduated from the University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law in May 2021, where she received The Order of Barristers, Maryland Law Scholars Award, and earned an Intellectual Property Law Certificate. Ms. Haddad also served as the Judges Committee Captain for the National Trial Team, President of the Christian Legal Society, Justice for Phi Alpha Delta, and as a Student Note Taker. During her time in law school, Ms. Haddad worked for various small and boutique law firms, at a financial planning firm, and served as a law clerk for the Howard County Office of Law.

After law school, Ms. Haddad clerked for the Honorable Harry C. Storm of the Circuit Court for Montgomery County. Prior to joining the Office of the State Prosecutor, Ms. Haddad served as an Assistant State's Attorney at the Baltimore City State's Attorney's Office, where she prosecuted both misdemeanors and felonies in the Baltimore City District and Circuit Courts.

Ms. Haddad currently serves as a coach for the University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law's National Trial Team, and her Quinnipiac Team finished as National Finalists in 2024 and received several awards during the competition.



Timothy Frye, Director of Investigations

Mr. Frye has been with OSP since 2013 and is a career criminal investigator with 40 years of state-wide law enforcement experience. Amongst other duties, Mr. Frye is responsible for directing a staff of OSP special agents conducting criminal investigations of suspected public corruption, misconduct by public officials, violations of the election laws, and other crimes, as well as overseeing the review and processing of all complaints and referrals to the Office and providing investigative support to ongoing OSP prosecutions. He also serves as the OSP liaison to the Maryland law enforcement community and leads the Office's information sharing and data collection efforts.

Prior to joining OSP, Mr. Frye served with the Maryland State Police for 27 years, including 20 years in the Criminal Investigation Division, where he had multiple roles as an investigator, supervisor, and commander. Mr. Frye's assignments included 13 years supporting the Maryland Attorney General's Criminal Investigation Division, eight years with the State's gun violence reduction/firearms efforts, and three years in the Homicide Unit. Mr. Frye is a native Marylander and a graduate of the University of Maryland.

Ruth Sweeney, Director of Administration

Ms. Sweeney joined the Office of the State Prosecutor in 2019 and currently serves as the Director of Administration where she is responsible for managing the daily administrative operations for the office.

Ms. Sweeney graduated from Roanoke College with a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science. She retired as a paralegal from the Baltimore County State's Attorney's Office (SAO) in 2018. During her tenure at the SAO, she received a Governor's Citation and a Baltimore County Police Department Chief's Award for her work as the SAO paralegal working with the Baltimore City/Baltimore County Police Departments' Regional Auto Theft Taskforce.

Ms. Sweeney received a second Chief's Award from the Baltimore County Police Department for her work in implementing the SAO Body Worn Camera Unit.

Ms. Sweeney is honored to have served the citizens of Maryland at both the Baltimore County State's Attorney's Office and the Office of the State Prosecutor for over thirty years.