

Federal Budget Process: Phases, Timeline and Activities

- Preparing the budget for any fiscal year takes approximately 18-24 months.
- The Federal Budget Process consists of Executive Actions (HHS request, President's Budget-OMB, President's signature) and Legislative Actions (budget committee allocation, subcommittees, House and Senate mark-ups, and Conference)
- There are four major phases in the federal budget process: planning, formulation, presentation, and execution.
- The Public Health Policy Team is most involved with the presentation phase of the process.
- Phases overlap depending on the budget year and the corresponding phase

Planning Phase:

- **February and March** – FMO/Budget Formulation and the Office of Strategy and Innovation (OSI) discuss strategies for initiatives for the coming budget submission to HHS (this past February, discussions for FY 2007 began). Discussions are general, including information about the process, potential focus areas, and a suggested timeline for decision-making.
- **April and May** – FMO/Budget Formulation and OSI develop a joint strategy for addressing priority areas and funding issues to present to the Executive Leadership Board (ELB).
- **May** – ELB is engaged to consider strategies for initiatives and any other issues, such as reductions and redirections.

Formulation Phase:

- **Early June** – The budget request to HHS is due, which lays out CDC's priority areas and strategies for the coming budget process.
- **July** – The Secretary's Budget Council at HHS meets with CDC leadership to review the budget request, discuss strategy, and address management and performance areas of interest to HHS leadership (i.e., GPRA and PART).

- **August** – CDC receives decisions from HHS on FY 2007 initiatives to send forward in the Office of Management & Budget (OMB) submission. CDC may appeal HHS decisions in an informal manner. Based on final decisions, FMO develops the budget request for submission to OMB.
- **Early September** – The budget request to OMB is due, which includes CDC and HHS priorities.
- **October** – OMB may request a briefing with CDC to discuss the budget request.
- **November** – OMB makes decisions regarding budget initiatives and strategies to be laid out in the president's budget during a formal meeting called "Pass back." CDC/HHS may formally appeal decisions and propose alternatives.
- **December** – Final decisions by OMB are made, and the President's Budget is decided.
- **January** – FMO develops the President's Budget (Congressional Justification or CJ) for submission to Congress.

Presentation Phase:

- **Early February** – The President releases his budget request to Congress. PHPT works closely with Appropriations Subcommittee Staff responding to requests for information on CDC programs and budget requirements.
- **March and April** – The Public Health Policy collaborates with CIOs, CDC executive staff and the Budget Formulation team to prepare the CDC Director to testify before Congress on the President's Budget. The CDC Director testifies before the House Appropriations subcommittee for Labor/HHS/Education on the President's Budget sometime in late March or early April. Other hearings may take place with the same or other committees on specific priority areas of interest to committee members (e.g., global health, terrorism, influenza).

Questions for the Record are received from HHS. These are inquiries from subcommittee members who have additional questions for the CDC Director as a follow-up from the hearing. PHPT takes the lead on organizing and collecting the responses but does so in close collaborate with CIOs and the Budget Formulation Team.

- **May through September** – The House and Senate review the President's Budget, make recommendations on funding levels, and approve their appropriations bills in a "report" format. Once the Reports are released, the

Public Health Policy Team summarizes significant language impacting programs and the Budget Formulation team creates an All-Purpose Table (APT) highlighting recommended funding. The summaries for both House and Senate Reports are then shared with CDC executive staff and CIOs.

The House and Senate appropriations bills are then discussed in Conference where House and Senate budget discrepancies are negotiated, and final decisions are made on funding allocations for the coming fiscal year. Once the Conference Report is released, the PHPT creates a side-by-side table comparing House, Senate and Conference language.

Execution Phase:

- **October 1 (ideally)** – The fiscal year begins with the new appropriation passed by Congress and signed by the President. If no appropriation is passed, a Continuing Resolution allows government to continue operations at minimal levels. At this point in the budget process, the Budget Execution Branch of FMO becomes more involved by managing CDC's appropriations.