

BUDGET AND FINANCIAL POLICIES

Miami-Dade County follows the policies required by the Miami-Dade County Home Rule Amendment and Charter, the Miami-Dade County Code of Ordinances, Florida Statutes Chapter 129 (County Annual Budget) and Chapter 200 (Determination of Millage) and the Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) for state and local governments as set forth by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB). State and local laws and legislation generally outline the budget development process. Reporting of financial activity is regulated by GASB. Both the [Budget](#) and the [Comprehensive Annual Financial Report](#) (CAFR) provide our County's financial plans and statements following these policies.

LOCAL LEGISLATION

The [Miami-Dade County Home Rule Amendment and Charter](#) is the constitution for Miami-Dade County and governs all activity:

- The Citizens' Bill of Rights of the Miami-Dade County Home Rule Amendment and Charter states that in addition to any budget required by state statute, the Mayor prepares a budget showing the cost of each program for each budget year. Also, before the first public hearing on the Proposed Budget required by state law, the Mayor makes public a budget summary setting forth the proposed cost of each individual program and reflecting all major proposed increases and decreases in funds and personnel for each program, the purposes for those adjustments, the estimated millage cost of each program and the amount of any contingency and carryover funds for each program.
- The Charter also says that the Mayor prepares and delivers a budgetary address annually to the people of the county in March to set forth the recommended funding priorities for the County and that between June 1 and July 15, the Mayor releases a Proposed Budget containing a complete financial plan, including capital and operating budgets, for the next fiscal year. Pursuant to the Charter, the budget is presented to the Commission before the BCC adopts tentative millage rates for the next fiscal year.
- The Finance Director, appointed jointly by the Mayor and the Clerk of the Circuit and County Courts, has charge of the financial affairs of the County. While not delineated in the Charter, currently the Budget Director is the designated Budget Officer. At the end of each fiscal year an audit is performed by an independent certified public accountant designated by the BCC of the accounts and finances of the County for the fiscal year just completed.

The Miami-Dade Code of Ordinances also contains financial policies codified by the Board of County Commissioners:

- [Article CXVIII.5 of the Code of Ordinances](#) is entitled "Governing for Results" and codifies our results-oriented governing management concepts. Section 2-1795 lays out policies for the allocation of resources and requires the Mayor or his/her designee to include them in the annual Budget Address which takes place during the month of March of each year. It also requires the submission of a five-year financial forecast. Section 2-1795 of the Code outlines

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- the resource allocation and reserve procedures for the preparation and adoption of the County's annual budget requiring budget format to provide clear basis for which to hold management accountable for operating within the Budget. In addition, the Section places restrictions on the re-appropriation of line items within funds.
- The annual budget establishes the appropriations, or the approved expenditure levels, for the fiscal year and expenditures above the adopted levels cannot be incurred. There are some kinds of funds – working capital, revolving, pension or trust funds – that may be accessed without approved expenditure authority. The BCC, by ordinance, may transfer any unencumbered appropriation balance, or any portion thereof, from one department, fund or agency to another, subject to the provisions of ordinance. Any portion of the earnings or balance in any fund, other than sinking funds for obligations not yet retired, may be transferred to the general funds of the County by the BCC. The adopted budget may be amended at any time during the year, by BCC action. Re-appropriations within a fund without increasing the total fund may be approved by motion or resolution. Increasing the total appropriations for a fund requires an ordinance, with two readings and a public hearing.
 - Miami-Dade County [Resolution No. R-31-09](#) establishes the current investment policy for Miami-Dade County which states in summary that the County's investment strategy is an adherence to buy and hold thereby eliminating the potential for risky trading.
 - Miami-Dade County [Ordinance No. 14-02](#) requires separate votes of the Board for each millage rate, including voter approved debt. A separate vote is required to set the tentative millage rates in July, as well as at each public budget hearing in September.
 - As prescribed by [Ordinance No. 15-58](#), no later than April 1st of each year, the Commission Auditor provides to the Commission a written report detailing, for each department, office, division or other unit of County government the services provided to the community, the resources allocated for the delivery of services and the achievement of performance measures with respect to the delivery of services. The report includes the Commission Auditor's recommendations regarding adjustments to resource allocations to yield desired service delivery results. Each commission committee then meets no later than May 1st of each year to review and discuss the Commission Auditor's report, identify new service delivery priorities for the next fiscal year for those services under the commission committee's jurisdiction, approve by motion new service delivery priorities for the next fiscal year and forward its recommended priorities to the Commission. No later than June 1st of each year, the committee with jurisdiction over budgetary matters meets to review and discuss the commission committees' recommended new service delivery priorities for the next fiscal year, identify revenues and resources necessary to fund such priorities, and no later than June 15th, forward its findings to the Commission for its consideration at its regularly scheduled meeting immediately following June 15th or a special meeting called to discuss priorities. At that meeting, the Commission, by motion, approves those new service delivery priorities it wishes to implement in the ensuing fiscal year's County budget.

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STATE LAW

The Florida legislature enacts laws that govern the budget development and approval processes <http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/>:

- [Chapter 129.01\(2\) \(a\), Florida Statutes](#) establishes that the budget will be prepared, summarized and approved by the BCC of each county, (b) and that it will be balanced. That is, the estimated revenues, including balances brought forward, equals the total of the appropriations and reserves. The budget must conform to the uniform classification of accounts prescribed by the appropriate state agency. Revenues must be budgeted at 95 percent of all receipts reasonably to be anticipated from all sources, including taxes to be levied.
- [Chapter 129.01\(2\) \(c\) \(1\), Florida Statutes](#) provides that a reserve for contingencies may be provided in a sum not to exceed ten percent of the total budget.
- [Chapter 129.025, Florida Statutes](#) allows for the designation of a county budget officer that may carry out the duties set forth in this chapter.
- During the 2019-20 Session of the Florida Legislature, [Chapter 129.03 Preparation and adoption of budget](#) - Subsection (3) was amended to include paragraph (d) requiring counties to include and report the following information as part of the jurisdictions budget documents:
 1. Government spending per resident, including, at a minimum, the spending per resident for the previous five fiscal years ([Budget-in-Brief, Volume 1](#));
 2. Debt per resident, including, at a minimum, the debt per resident for the previous five fiscal years ([Appendix S, Volume 1](#));
 3. Median income within the County ([Our County, Volume 1](#));
 4. The average county employee salary ([Budget-in-Brief, Volume 1](#));
 5. Percent of budget spent on salaries and benefits for county employees ([Appendix C, Volume 1](#)); and
 6. Number of special taxing districts, wholly or partially, within the County ([Volume 2, Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces, Special Assessment District Division, page 209](#))
- [Chapter 129.06\(1\), Florida Statutes](#) requires that adopted budgets regulate the expenditures of the county and each special district included within the county budget and the itemized estimates of expenditures are fixed appropriations and cannot be amended, altered or exceeded except by action of the governing body.
- [Chapter 129.06\(2\), Florida Statutes](#) allows that the BCC at any time within a fiscal year may amend a budget for that year and may, within the first 60 days of a fiscal year, amend the budget for the prior fiscal year. The amendments can be made by motion or resolution when expenditure appropriations in any fund are decreased and other appropriations in the same correspondingly increased provided that the total of the appropriation in the fund may not be changed. Otherwise, the amendment will require an ordinance of the BCC for its authorization.
- [Chapter 129.07, Florida Statutes](#) states that it is unlawful for the BCC to expend or contract for the expenditure in any fiscal year more than the amount appropriated in each fund's budget.
- [Chapter 200.011, Florida Statutes](#) states that the BCC determines the amount to be raised for all county purposes, except for county school purposes, and the millage rates to be levied for each

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fund respectively. The BCC also determines the rates for use by the county, including special taxing district, board, agency or other taxing unit within the county for which the BCC is required by law to levy taxes.

- [Chapter 200.065, Florida Statutes](#) establishes a rolled-back millage rate, a maximum millage rate and advertising and voting requirements for taxing jurisdictions, requiring an extraordinary vote of the local governing body to exceed the maximum millage rate for taxing purposes. Each year, the Proposed Budget is developed with millage rates necessary to fund the property tax-supported portion of the budget. At its second meeting in July, the BCC considers the millage rates that will be used for the tax notices that will be mailed to all property owners in August. The tax notices are also referred to as TRIM notices; TRIM stands for Truth in Millage. The tax rates that are on the notices property owners receive in August represent the ceiling of the rates that can be approved by the BCC at the September budget hearings, unless additional notices are sent to all property taxpayers. Because re-noticing all taxpayers is difficult and expensive, the tax rates included in the TRIM notices are considered the ceiling.
- [Chapter 200.065, Florida Statutes](#) outlines the rolled-back millage rate, known as the “no tax increase” rate because it allows the entity to generate the same property tax revenue from year to year, adjusted only by any new properties that may have been placed on the property tax roll. Because it does not take into account value adjustments for properties already on the property tax roll, the rolled-back rate does not take into account growth in the County. Another state-defined measure, the aggregate rolled-back millage rate, is the sum of the rolled-back millage rates for each of the taxing jurisdictions, in the case of Miami-Dade County we have four, weighted by the proportion of its respective roll to the countywide tax roll. The table below shows the calculation of the rolled-back rates for FY 2020-21.

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ROLLED-BACK MILLAGE AND AGGREGATE MILLAGE CALCULATION (Dollars in Thousands)										
Taxing Unit	2019-20	2019-20	2019-20	2020-21		2020-21	2020-21	2020-21	2020-21	Millage Percent Change
	Est. Value of One Mill	Adopted Millage	Levy, net of TIF Payment	Roll without CRA and New Construction	Rolled- Back Millage	Maximum Millage	Value of One Mill	Adopted Millages	2020-21 Levy	
Countywide	\$303,546.169	4.6669	\$1,360,506	301,724,471	4.5091	4.3320	\$324,362.997	4.6669	\$1,513,770	3.50%
Fire District	170,660.963	2.4207	413,119	177,951,774	2.3215	2.2243	181,615.345	2.4207	439,636	4.27%
Library District	276,380.137	0.2840	78,492	287,255,335	0.2732	0.3292	291,615.522	0.2840	82,819	3.93%
Millage Total		7.3716			7.1039			7.3716		3.77%
Unincorporated Area	81,530.168	1.9283	\$155,685	85,105,884	1.8293	1.9717	87,269.294	1.9283	168,281	5.41%
Total Levy			\$2,007,802						\$2,204,506	
Aggregate Millage					6.6544			6.7964		2.13%

Notes:

1. In accordance with State law, property tax revenue is budgeted at 95 percent of the levy.
2. All tax roll values are current estimates as of tax rolls of July 1, 2020
3. Tax Increment Financing (TIF) payments are contributions made by the County to Community Redevelopment Areas; these payments apply to the Countywide and Unincorporated portions of the levy.
4. A Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) is a geographic area created by Board action to revitalize areas designated as slum and blight through a finding of necessity that require the creation of a trust fund and redevelopment plan. Funds are used to implement the redevelopment plan of these areas.
5. At individual rolled-back millage rates, the tax supported budget would be reduced by \$76.939 million
6. The millage rates utilized for the Adopted Budget are below the maximum millage rate and above the rolled-back rate with the exception of the Countywide and Fire District millage that is above the maximum millage rate.

- The State has defined the highest millage rate that may be levied with a simple majority vote of the governing body known as the maximum millage rate. This rate is the rolled-back rate, adjusted for the growth in per capital personal income in Florida. Beginning in FY 2009-10, the maximum millage rate is based on the rolled-back rate (the rate that generates the same property tax revenue) assuming the maximum millage rate had been adopted for the prior year and then adjusted for growth in per capita Florida personal income, whether or not the maximum millage rate had been adopted in the prior year. In other words, if the millage rate that was adopted was higher than the calculated maximum millage rate, that rate is the cap. If a millage rate below the maximum millage rate is adopted, an adjustment is made to credit the revenue that was lost because a rate below the maximum millage rate was adopted. The formulas used to calculate the various millage rates are defined by the Florida Department of Revenue.
- The BCC may adopt a rate that is higher than the state defined maximum millage rate. State law provides that a millage rate of up to 110 percent of the calculated maximum millage rate may be adopted if approved by a two-thirds vote of the governing body of the county, municipality or independent district. A millage rate higher than 110 percent may be adopted by three-fourths vote if the governing body has nine or more members (Miami-Dade County has 13 Commissioners) or if approved by a referendum of the voters. The penalty for violating these standards is the loss of state revenue from the local government half-cent sales tax for a period of twelve months.

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- [Chapter 200.071, Florida Statutes](#) mandates that no ad valorem tax millage shall be levied against real property and tangible personal property by counties in excess of ten mills, except for voted levies. Any county which, through a municipal service taxing unit, provides services or facilities of the kind or type commonly provided by municipalities, may levy, in addition to the millage rates otherwise provided in this section, an ad valorem tax millage not in excess of ten mills against real property and tangible personal property within each such municipal service taxing unit to pay for such services or facilities provided with the funds obtained through such levy within such municipal service taxing unit.
- The [State Constitution](#) allows an exemption of up to \$50,000 for homesteaded properties and \$25,000 tangible personal property (TPP) for business equipment. In addition, in November 2012, State of Florida voters approved a referendum that amended the State Constitution, which provides a local option to allow an additional exemption for senior citizens, who meet income and ownership criteria, equal to the assessed value of the property with a just value less than \$250,000.

GAAP and GASB

- The General Fund, Fire Rescue District, Library District and debt service funds are prepared on a modified accrual basis of accounting. Under the modified accrual basis of accounting, revenues are recognized when they are both measurable and available or collectible within the current period to pay for expenditures or liabilities of the current period. Expenditures are recorded when a liability is incurred. Debt service payments, as well as expenditures related to claims and judgments, are recorded only when payment is due. Encumbrances (transactions that reserve funding for expected purchases) lapse at year-end and are re-appropriated as part of the subsequent year's budget in a reserve for encumbrances. The notes section of the [CAFR](#) describes the County's policies for assets, liabilities and net assets or fund balances.
- The budgets for the Proprietary and Internal Service Funds are prepared on the economic resource measurement focus and the full accrual basis of accounting. These funds include Aviation, Seaport, Water and Sewer, Public Health Trust, Transportation and Public Works, Solid Waste Management, Mixed Income Properties, Section 8 Allocation Properties and the Self-Insurance Fund. Under the full accrual basis, revenues are recorded when earned and expenses are recorded when liability is incurred, regardless of the timing of related cash flows. The differences between the modified-accrual and accrual basis of accounting include budgeting the full amount of capital expenditures rather than depreciating expense over time, and budgeting the principal payments of outstanding debt, as well as the recognition of the issuance of debt since it does increase the government's current financial resources. The fund balance is defined as the excess of assets over the liabilities in any given fund.