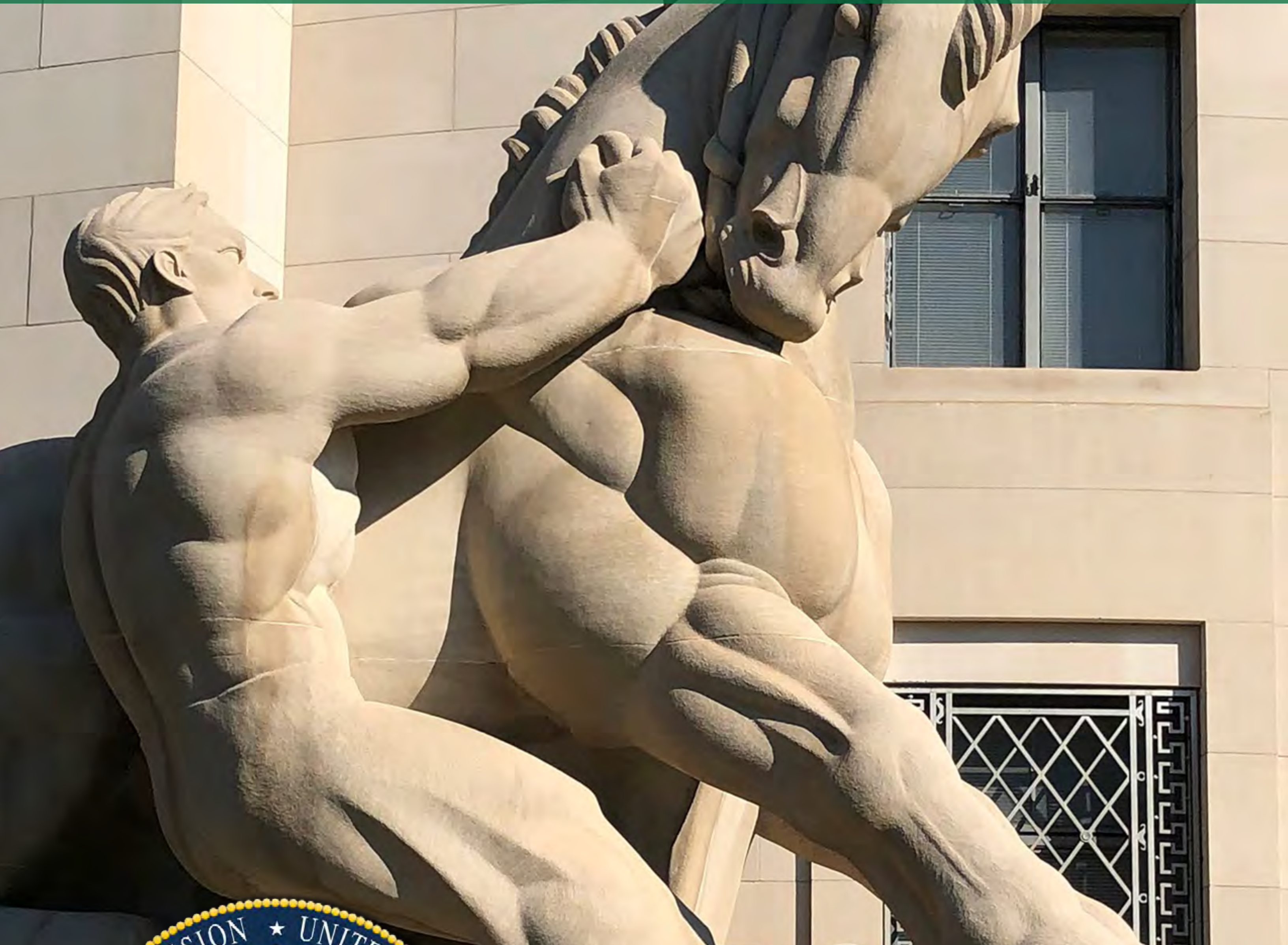
Federal Trade Commission



Congressional Budget Justification

Fiscal Year 2026

FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION ★ UNITED STATES OF AMERICA ★ MCMXV

Table of Contents

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
Federal Trade Commission
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20580

Office of the Chairman

May 30, 2025

The Honorable Dave Joyce
Chairman
Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Bill Hagerty
Chairman
Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairmen Joyce and Hagerty:

This letter transmits the budget justification for the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) in support of the President's fiscal year (FY) 2026 budget request.

The FTC's FY 2026 budget requests a program level of $383,600,000 and 1,100 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions. This is a decrease of $42,100,000 from the FY 2025 enacted appropriations level. As the justification materials describe, this budget will permit the FTC to continue to meet the ongoing challenges of its mission to protect consumers and promote competition.

This budget justification includes the FTC's Annual Performance Report and Plan. More information on the performance metrics, whose results are reported here, can be found in the agency's Data Quality Appendix, available here: https://www.ftc.gov/about-ftc/budget-strategy/budget-performance-financial-reporting.

By direction of the Commission.

Andrew N. Ferguson
Chairman, Federal Trade Commission

Budget Request

Budget Request Summary
($ in thousands)

	Fiscal Year 2025		Fiscal Year 2026		Change	
Budget by Goal:	**FTE**	**Dollars**	**FTE**	**Dollars**	**FTE**	**Dollars**
Protecting Consumers	583	$213,172	551	$194,582	(32)	-$18,590
Promoting Competition	600	$212,528	549	189,018	(51)	-23,510
Total	**1,183**	**$425,700**	**1,100**	**$383,600**	**(83)**	**-$42,100**
Budget by Funding Source:						
Offsetting Collections						
HSR Filing Fees		$271,000		$300,954		$29,954
Do Not Call Fees		14,000		15,000		1,000
Subtotal Offsetting Collections		$285,000		$315,954		$30,954
General Fund		140,700		$67,646		-$73,054
Total		**$425,700**		**$383,600**		**-$42,100**

Needed Resources for FY 2026

The FTC has a unique dual mission to protect the public from unfair or deceptive business practices and from unfair methods of competition through law enforcement, advocacy, research, and education. The FTC is dedicated to advancing the interests of consumers, workers, and honest businesses while encouraging innovation and promoting a fair economy and widespread prosperity. To maintain its high level of performance in FY 2026, the FTC requests $383.6 million and 1,100 FTE. This request would constitute a $42.1 million decrease from its FY 2025 funding level, and a 15% reduction from its January 20 onboard staffing level.

This request assumes $15 million in offsetting collections from Do Not Call fees and $301 million from Hart Scott Rodino (HSR) filing fees under the current fee structure, thereby reducing FTC reliance on the general fund appropriation by $316 million (82%), bringing the FTC's annual appropriations from the general fund to approximately $67.6 million. The FTC returned $368 million last year alone directly to consumers and the Treasury, of which $34 million went directly to the Treasury and nearly $334 million to consumers. Moreover, the FTC reduced anticompetitive merger activity, saving substantial amounts for consumers on everyday cost of goods, for example in a recent retail supermarket merger, the FTC saved shoppers $1.9 billion annually. More specifically this request consists of the following:

- The request includes $257.3 million to fund 1,100 FTE. This includes pay and benefits and annual mandatory adjustments for promotions and within grades increases. This level assumes no pay raise in FY 2026.
- The request includes $126.3 million for non-compensation costs including rent, security, utilities, operations and maintenance, and service contracts.
- Also included in the above amounts are the following:
    - **Take it Down Act:** FTC requests $10 million to enforce this new statute; the FTC will need to invest in both systems and staff for this new function, which is dissimilar to other FTC enforcement areas, and creates a need to access, store and protect graphic and sensitive data. The FTC estimates that enforcement would require $10 million in the first year to staff these new functions ($4 million for 19 FTE) and to develop and deploy systems to house sensitive evidence ($6 million). The FTC requests the first-year costs of $10 million to support this new enforcement.
    - **Big Data Investments:** The request includes $3.2 million for technological investments related to big data capabilities. The FTC has limited on-premises capacity which is insufficient to meet the needs of current law enforcement investigations and litigation efforts, which increasingly require big-data storage capabilities as well as compute functions to analyze this data. These functions are critical to protect consumers from market harms and will allow migration to cloud-based big data storage essential for scalability and efficiency. Cloud solutions offer virtually unlimited storage and compute scalability and elasticity, ensuring we can handle growing data volumes without the need for costly physical infrastructure. The cases the FTC pursues will increasingly turn on our ability to manage and interrogate complex data sets. With an observed year-over-year increase in data of 15% annually, this migration becomes even more critical to accommodate our expanding data needs. The FTC is building its capabilities but will need to scale further to meet the growing need.

Consumer Protection Mission

As the nation's consumer protection agency, the FTC has been given a broad law enforcement mandate to protect the American people from unfair or deceptive acts or practices. Leveraging the resources provided by Congress—and the tools those resources sustain—the FTC is committed to executing its statutory authorities in numerous important areas, such as addressing robocalls or protecting children online.

As just one example, the FTC is working to protect consumers from unlawful telemarketing. Over the years, the FTC has filed numerous enforcement actions against entities responsible for placing billions of unlawful calls. A number of law enforcement tools support the FTC's efforts against unlawful telemarketing, and against other types of law violations. The National Do Not Call Registry protects consumers from receiving unwanted telemarketing and helps the FTC fight robocalls. The Consumer Response Center collects report information from consumers, and complaint information is stored in the FTC's Consumer Sentinel Network. These tools help jumpstart many of the FTC's law enforcement investigations. They also benefit other enforcers nationwide. The FTC will remain focused on maintaining and using these tools effectively relative to unlawful telemarketing and other priority areas.

Protecting children online is also of great importance, and a place where the FTC is focusing its consumer protection tools and resources. Congress has authorized the FTC's law enforcement role in this area through the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA), which forbids covered website operators from collecting, using, or disclosing the personal data of any user under the age of thirteen without parental consent. Some of the FTC's most valuable work occurs in its ongoing efforts to enforce COPPA against miscreant companies that fail to follow its requirements. The FTC is also dedicated to exploring other ways the FTC can protect children and support families. For example, on June 4, the FTC is hosting a workshop entitled "The Attention Economy: How Big Tech Firms Exploit Children and Hurt Families." The event will convene parents, child safety experts, and government leaders to discuss how Big Tech companies impose addictive design features, erode parental authority, and fail to protect children.

Competition Mission

The FTC uses the resources provided by Congress to faithfully discharge its statutory duties and maximize the agency's effectiveness in protecting the American public from anticompetitive mergers and conduct. Vigorous antitrust enforcement is critical to a dynamic economy, as well as to our shared prosperity and liberty. When markets become more consolidated and less competitive, prices rise, wages fall, innovation suffers, and our markets become more fragile and less resilient.

The FTC will continue to prioritize merger enforcement, especially premerger review of proposed transactions reported to the antitrust agencies pursuant to the Hart-Scott-Rodino Act, 15 U.S.C. 18a. The HSR Form was recently updated as the result of a three-year bipartisan effort to make premerger review more effective and efficient, and the revised form became effective in February. This important tool enables FTC staff to quickly and confidently identify proposed acquisitions that warrant an in-depth investigation and streamlines staff's initial review of proposed transactions. The Commission has also resumed granting early termination for deals that are determined to pose little to no antitrust risk. To promote stability and provide clear guidance to the market, the Commission announced that the 2023 Merger Guidelines remain in effect.

The Commission must ensure that we are protecting all stakeholders who benefit from strong, competitive markets, including workers. Anticompetitive mergers and conduct can harm labor markets and deprive individuals of opportunities to flourish, instead of enabling them to maximize their talent and profit from their skills and hard work. In response, the Commission formed a Joint Labor Task Force comprising the Bureaus of Competition, Consumer Protection, and Economics, along with the Office of Policy Planning. The Task Force will prioritize investigation and prosecution of anticompetitive labor market conduct; create an information-sharing protocol across the FTC to exchange best practices for investigations; promote research on labor markets and disseminate those findings throughout the FTC and to the public; and engage in public outreach informing workers of the state of the law and encouraging workers to report anticompetitive labor market conduct to the FTC.

Appropriations Language Provisions

Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation Improvement Act: The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation Improvement Act of 1991 (FDICIA) amended the Federal Deposit Insurance Act. As originally enacted, the FDICIA imposed various statutory responsibilities on the FTC that the agency did not have the resources or expertise to perform effectively. Accordingly, since 1992, Congress, with Administration support, has prohibited the FTC from spending funds on some or all of the responsibilities assigned to it under section 151 of the Act.

The requested appropriations language for FY 2026 continues the spending restriction, reflecting legislation enacted in October 2006, which maintains an appropriately narrow role for the FTC under section 151. This role enables the FTC to continue to enforce the provisions requiring non-federally insured depository institutions to disclose that they do not have federal insurance, and that the federal government does not guarantee the depositor will get back his or her money, and retains the implementation ban with respect to “look-alike” provisions.

Other Provisions: The requested appropriations language continues in effect provisions in prior-year appropriation acts that: (1) allow for the purchase of uniforms and hire of motor vehicles; (2) allow for services as authorized by 5 U.S.C. 3109; (3) limit to $300,000 the amount available for contracts for collection services in accordance with 31 U.S.C. 3718; (4) allow up to $2,000 for official reception and representation expenses; (5) allow for the collection of offsetting fees; (6) allow for the gross sum appropriated to be reduced as offsetting fees are collected; and (7) allow all funding to be available until expended.

Offsetting Fee Collections

This submission assumes that total offsetting collections from HSR filing fees and Do-Not-Call (DNC) fees will provide the FTC with $316,000,000 in FY 2026. The FTC assumes the $67,600,000 difference between offsetting collections and the $383,600,000 request will be funded from the Treasury General Fund.

HSR Premerger Filing Fees. This submission assumes offsetting HSR fee collections will provide the FTC with $301,000,000. The HSR fee collections are based on the filing fee structure implemented through the Merger Fees Filing Act of 2022. These fees are authorized by section 605 of Public Law 101-162, as amended effective February 1, 2001, in the FY 2001 Commerce-Justice-State Appropriations Act (Section 630, Public Law 106-553). The HSR Act requires that fees be split 50-50 between the FTC and the Antitrust Division of the U.S. Department of Justice.

Do Not Call Fees. This submission assumes offsetting collections of $15,000,000 from DNC fees. These fees, first collected in FY 2003, will be used to maintain and enforce a national database of telephone numbers of consumers who choose not to receive telephone solicitations from telemarketers and to carry out other Telemarketing Sales Rule activities.

Overview

Consumer Protection: Highlights of FY 2024 Accomplishments

This fiscal year, the FTC continued to enforce the law against a wide variety of unfair or deceptive practices and help educate consumers and businesses throughout the country about how to protect themselves and their communities against deception and other illegal conduct.

Among other outcomes, the FTC's efforts helped to protect children, consumers, and businesses from harm; hold scammers and fraudsters accountable; and protect consumers' ability to know whether the products they purchase were "Made in the USA."

In FY 2024, the FTC filed 43 complaints in federal district court and obtained 71 permanent injunctions and orders requiring defendants to pay more than $559.2 million in consumer redress or disgorgement of ill-gotten gains. Defendants were also required to pay over $161.8 million under two civil contempt orders. In addition, cases seeking civil penalties, including cases referred to the Department of Justice (DOJ), resulted in 22 court judgments imposing more than $69.6 million in civil penalties. The FTC issued 12 new administrative complaints and entered eight final administrative orders requiring defendants to pay over $16.6 million. The agency also reviewed over 380 matters to ensure compliance with the applicable orders, including nearly 2,000 defendants, issued 14 reports on consumer protection, and released 206 new and revised consumer and business education publications.

The FTC is committed to using the full extent of its authority to return money to Americans harmed by financial scams and fraud. In AMG Capital Management, LLC v. FTC, the Supreme Court ruled that Section 13(b) of the FTC Act does not authorize monetary remedies, condemning the agency's prior approach for obtaining court orders requiring wrongdoers to provide refunds to harmed consumers. In the wake of AMG, the FTC has focused on other remedial powers—such as Section 19 of the FTC Act—to partially compensate for the inability to pursue monetary relief under Section 13(b). The FTC also has partnered with states and, in some instances, undertaken rulemakings that could serve as the basis for future enforcement actions that could provide monetary relief to harmed consumers under Section 19. The FTC finalized two new consumer protection rules in FY 2024, barring impersonation of businesses and government and combating deceptive consumer reviews and testimonials. While not a replacement for the FTC's ability to provide relief to consumers through a tool like Section 13(b), these efforts allow the Commission to continue obtaining court orders requiring violators to pay redress to consumers harmed by wrongful conduct. The FTC also has aggressively enforced its orders against repeat offenders, referring cases to criminal authorities as appropriate.

Consumer Protection Law Enforcement and Policy Initiatives

The FTC Protects Americans from False and Deceptive Advertising, Marketing, and Fees

- **Telemarketing Robocalls Enforcement:** Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) provider XCast Labs, Inc., agreed to settle FTC charges that it funneled hundreds of millions of illegal robocalls through its network, even after receiving multiple warnings about the unlawful conduct. The court order requires XCast Labs to implement a screening process and end its relationships with firms that are not complying with telemarketing-related laws. The order also requires XCast Labs to pay a $10 million civil penalty, which will be suspended based on its inability to pay. DOJ litigated the case and filed the proposed order on the FTC's behalf.

  On behalf of the FTC, DOJ filed a complaint in federal court against California-based lead generator Response Tree LLC for allegedly selling the personal information of hundreds of thousands of consumers as leads to telemarketers who used them to make millions of illegal telemarketing calls, including robocalls, to consumers nationwide. The order settling the complaint bans the defendants from initiating or helping anyone else initiate telemarketing robocalls. It also bans them from calling, or assisting anyone else in calling, phone numbers on the DNC Registry and from selling, transferring, or disclosing consumer information in connection with lead generation activities. The order imposes a $7 million judgment against the defendants, which will be suspended based on their inability to pay.

The FTC continues to work on Project Point of No Entry (PoNE) to disrupt foreign-based scammers and imposters responsible for blasting U.S. consumers with unwanted calls. Through Project PoNE, the Commission: (1) identifies point of entry VoIP service providers that are routing or transmitting illegal call traffic, (2) demands they stop doing so and warns their conduct may violate the Telemarketing Sales Rule, and then (3) monitors them to pursue recalcitrant providers, including by opening law enforcement investigations and filing lawsuits when appropriate. The FTC can seek civil penalties and court injunctions to stop Telemarketing Sales Rule violations. It also can seek money to refund to consumers who were defrauded via illegal telemarketing calls. The FTC coordinates directly with the agency's federal and state partners, which support the program and pursue their own actions to fight illegal telemarketing robocalls. Through the FTC's enforcement efforts and its collaboration with partners such as the Industry Traceback Group, FCC, and state attorneys general, Project PoNE uncovered 24 target point of entry VoIP service providers responsible for routing and transmitting illegal robocalls between 2021 and 2023, in connection with approximately 307 telemarketing campaigns.

- **Illegal Telemarketing Orders:** As a result of an FTC lawsuit, a federal court granted summary judgment in favor of the FTC, finding that the corporate defendants, Day Pacer, LLC and EduTrek, LLC, bought consumers' contact information primarily from websites claiming to help people find jobs, and instead illegally called those consumers to market unsolicited vocational or post-secondary education services. The court also found that the defendants assisted and facilitated other telemarketing companies by paying them to make approximately 40 million calls to consumers on the Do Not Call Registry. Finally, the court found that the individual defendants knowingly violated the Telemarketing Sales Rule, citing evidence that they had ignored repeated complaints from consumers and warnings from business partners. The court entered final orders requiring the defendants to pay $28.7 million in civil penalties and permanently banning them from participating in telemarketing or assisting and facilitating others engaged in telemarketing to consumers.
- **Telemarketing Sales Rule:** The FTC announced a final rule extending telemarketing fraud protections to businesses and updating the rule's record-keeping requirements to address market and technological developments.
- **Mobile Cramming:** The FTC obtained orders with the four remaining individual defendants and their affiliated companies in the MDK Media mobile cramming scheme that the agency says bilked consumers out of more than $100 million through unauthorized charges added to their mobile phone bills. The settlements prohibit the individual defendants and their related companies from placing charges on any telephone bills, from making any misrepresentations about any product or service, and from engaging in any unfair billing practices. In addition, they are prohibited from using or benefiting from the customer data they collected through this scheme and are required to destroy any remaining customer data.
- **Deceptive Use of New Technologies:** As part of a recent law enforcement sweep, the FTC took action against several companies that engaged in deceptive conduct using new technologies that harmed consumers.
  - The FTC took action against DoNotPay, a company that claimed to offer an AI service that was "the world's first robot lawyer," for failing to live up to its claims that the service could substitute for the expertise of a human lawyer. DoNotPay agreed to a Commission order requiring it to pay $193,000 and provide a notice to consumers who subscribed to the service between 2021 and 2023 warning them

about the limitations of law-related features on the service. The order also prohibits the company from making claims about its ability to substitute for any professional service without evidence to back it up.

- The FTC sued Ascend Ecom, an online business opportunity scheme, for allegedly falsely claiming its "cutting edge" AI-powered tools would help consumers quickly earn thousands of dollars a month in passive income by opening online storefronts. According to the complaint, the scheme has defrauded consumers of at least $25 million. As a result of the FTC's complaint, a federal court issued an order temporarily halting the scheme and putting it under the control of a receiver.
- The FTC charged Ecommerce Empire Builders, a business opportunity scheme, with falsely claiming to help consumers build an "AI-powered Ecommerce Empire" by participating in its training programs that can cost almost $2,000 or by buying a "done for you" online storefront for tens of thousands of dollars. The scheme claims consumers can potentially make millions of dollars, but the FTC's complaint alleges that those profits fail to materialize. As a result of the FTC's complaint, a federal court issued an order temporarily halting the scheme and putting it under the control of a receiver.
- The FTC sued FBA Machine, a business opportunity scheme that allegedly falsely promised consumers that they would make guaranteed income through online storefronts that utilized AI-powered software. According to the FTC, the scheme, which has operated under the names Passive Scaling and FBA Machine, cost consumers more than $15.9 million based on deceptive earnings claims that rarely, if ever, materialize. As a result of the FTC's complaint, a federal court issued an order temporarily halting the scheme and putting it under the control of a receiver.

- **Protecting Consumers in Rental Housing Markets:** The FTC took action against Invitation Homes, the country's largest landlord of single-family homes, for an array of unlawful practices, including deceiving renters about rental prices; saddling renters with fees; and deceptively and unfairly withholding tenants' security deposits. Invitation Homes agreed to a settlement order requiring the company to turn over $48 million to refund harmed consumers. The corporate landlord is also required to clearly disclose its leasing prices, establish policies and procedures to handle security deposit refunds fairly, and stop other unlawful behavior.
- **Right to Repair Testimony:** In February 2024, the FTC testified before the Colorado General Assembly's Committee on Business Affairs and Labor in support of proposed legislation that would expand the state's right-to-repair laws to digital electronic equipment and address a particular type of repair restriction known as parts pairing. Manufacturers engage in parts pairing when they require owners and independent repair providers to obtain the manufacturer's approval before replacement parts can be fully integrated into a device.
- **Deceptive Advertising Orders:** The FTC and state of New Jersey filed separate complaints against Sollers College and its parent company, Sollers Inc., alleging the companies lured prospective students to enroll by falsely touting their job-placement rates and that their relationships with prominent companies would lead to jobs after students graduate. The FTC also alleged that Sollers encouraged students to pay for their education using income-share agreements that were illegal, as none included certain disclosures mandated by law. As a result of the FTC and state of New Jersey settlements, Sollers College and its parent company, Sollers Inc., are ordered to cancel $3.4 million in student debt and are prohibited from falsely advertising any educational product or service.

  Online career-training company Career Step, LLC agreed to pay $43.5 million in debt cancellation and cash to resolve charges brought by the FTC that alleged the company lured military consumers, specifically servicemembers and their families, with deceptive ads that falsely touted inflated employment outcomes, job placement, and partnerships with prominent companies. The complaint also alleged that Career Step representatives falsely promised to find jobs for consumers. In reality, Career Step did not provide any job placement. Career Step's job search assistance was limited to help with resume-drafting or emailing links to job postings generally available on the internet.

Personal finance app provider Brigit agreed to pay $18 million to settle FTC charges that its promises of "instant" cash advances of up to $250 were deceptive and that the company locked consumers into a $9.99 monthly membership they could not cancel. In its complaint, the FTC alleged that consumers were rarely able to get an advance for the promised $250 and that, in many cases, consumers were not able to receive a cash advance at all. Despite Brigit's promises that advances would be available with "free instant transfers," the complaint notes that the company began charging consumers a 99-cent fee for an instant transfer. Consumers who did not pay the fee had to wait up to three business days for their advances. The order also required Brigit to stop its deceptive marketing practices and end tactics that prevented consumers from canceling.

NRRM, LLC, d/b/a CarShield, and American Auto Shield, LLC (AAS), the administrator of its vehicle service contracts (VSCs), agreed to pay $10 million to settle FTC charges that the advertisements and telemarketing for VSCs were deceptive and misleading, and that many purchasers found that many repairs were not "covered," despite making payments of up to $120 per month. The FTC also alleged CarShield's celebrity and consumer endorsers made false statements in its ads. The order bars CarShield and AAS from making deceptive and misleading statements in the future and requires them to ensure their endorsers' testimonials are truthful, accurate, and not deceptive.

- **Combating Fake Online Reviews:** The FTC finalized its rule to combat fake and false online reviews and testimonials. The rule prohibits businesses from a number of practices, including writing or selling fake reviews and testimonials, buying positive reviews, and suppressing negative reviews. The rule will allow the agency to strengthen enforcement, seek civil penalties against violators, and deter fake reviews.
- **Negative Option Marketing:** F9 Advertising LLC and its owner agreed to a lifetime ban from negative option marketing, a partially suspended monetary judgment of $34.1 million, and to turn over assets, which will be used by the FTC to provide refunds to consumers harmed by their deceptive trial offers. The FTC alleged that Pai and his companies charged consumers tens of millions of dollars in fees they did not consent to, noting that the supposed disclosure of these fees was hidden behind a small link on the sales websites, and that consumers' attempts to cancel were often unsuccessful, even when they returned the products unopened. The FTC also alleged that Pai created hundreds of shell companies to facilitate payment processing for the scam.
- **Hidden Subscription Fees:** The FTC took action against software maker Adobe and two of its executives for allegedly deceiving consumers by hiding the early termination fee for its most popular subscription plan and making it difficult for consumers to cancel their subscriptions. On behalf of the FTC, DOJ alleges Adobe pushed consumers toward the "annual paid monthly" subscription without adequately disclosing that canceling the plan in the first year could cost hundreds of dollars. According to the complaint, when consumers purchase a subscription through the company's website, Adobe pushes consumers to its "annual paid monthly" subscription plan, pre-selecting it as a default. Adobe prominently shows the plan's "monthly" cost during enrollment, but it buries the early termination fee and its amount, which is 50 percent of the remaining monthly payments when a consumer cancels in their first year.
- **Business Opportunity Enforcement:** The defendants who operated a sprawling business opportunity scheme known as Blueprint to Wealth, in addition to a number of other names, agreed to settlement orders. Two of the defendants who helped operate the scheme agreed to partially suspended monetary judgments totaling more than $7.5 million. The orders also include lifetime bans from pitching money-making and investment opportunities. In addition, two other defendants agreed to separate settlement orders that permanently ban them from the telemarketing industry and include a partially suspended

monetary judgment of $567,000. The FTC alleged that Blueprint to Wealth took in millions of dollars by targeting consumers looking to build their own businesses with a program that offered essentially no value, other than commissions that come from encouraging others to join the scheme.

In the Automators AI case, the owners of the e-commerce money-making scheme agreed to a partially suspended monetary judgment of $21.8 million. The settlement orders require the defendants to surrender millions in assets that will be used to refund consumers. In addition, all the businesses and two of their owners face a lifetime ban on selling business opportunities or coaching programs involving ecommerce stores. The FTC charged that the defendants deceived consumers with unfounded promises of "passive investment income" in online storefronts supposedly powered by AI.

Gig work company Arise Virtual Solutions, Inc. agreed to a settlement requiring them to pay $7 million, which will be refunded to consumers harmed by its misconduct, and must be able to back up any earnings claims it makes in the future. The FTC charged them with misleading consumers about the money they could make on Arise's platform and marketing its business opportunity without complying with the FTC's Business Opportunity Rule, including the requirement to truthfully disclose the basis for earnings claims to consumers.

As the result of a lawsuit filed by the FTC and the State of Florida, a federal court ordered so-called "trucking automation" company RivX to cease its operations over allegations the firm has scammed consumers out of millions of dollars with deceptive promises of trucking industry investment opportunities. According to the complaint, RivX offered business opportunities in the trucking industry, claiming that after a consumer pays $75,000 or more, RivX would purchase a semi-truck in the consumer's name and operate it on their behalf, securing loads, drivers, and managing all the logistics for the consumer. In its advertising and marketing, RivX makes numerous claims about how much money consumers can supposedly earn from the scheme, but according to the complaint, very few consumers have ever received trucks, and none have been able to recoup their investment, much less make any profit.

- **Deceptive Earnings Claims Orders:** The FTC obtained orders against Traffic and Funnels, LLC, the operators of a wide-ranging scheme known as "The Sales Mentor," to settle allegations that the defendants falsely promised consumers that they could make big money from telemarketing sales. The FTC charged the Tennessee-based group of companies, their owners, their officers, and a former sales director with deceiving consumers to pay hundreds or even thousands of dollars for supposed telemarketing training programs that rarely, if ever, delivered on what was promised. The orders require two of the defendants to pay $1 million to the FTC that will be used to provide refunds to consumers harmed by the scheme. The orders also prohibit the defendants from making earnings claims that are misleading or unsubstantiated and from making any misrepresentation in selling any goods or services. The orders also contain a total monetary judgment of $16.4 million against all the defendants except Ashton Shanks, which is largely suspended.

  Care.com agreed to a settlement requiring it to pay $8.5 million to refund harmed consumers, as well as requiring the company to back up any future worker earnings claims it makes and not misrepresent the number of jobs available on its site. The FTC alleged that the child and older adult care gig platform systematically deceived caregivers who were looking for jobs while failing to give families seeking care a simple way to cancel their paid memberships. In the complaint, the FTC alleged that Care's marketing messages about both the number of jobs available on their site and the amount workers could expect to be paid were deceptive.

- **Report on Multi-Level Marketing Income Disclosures Statements:** The FTC issued a report that details the findings from a review of income disclosure statements from 70 different multi-level marketers (MLMs). Staff reviewed income disclosure statements in February 2023 that were publicly available on the websites of a wide array of MLMs, from large household names to smaller, less well-known companies. These statements are sometimes provided to consumers who are considering joining MLMs, and often purport to show information about income that recruits could expect to receive. According to the report, FTC staff found a number of issues with the statements they reviewed, including that most omit key information when calculating the earnings amounts they present.

- **Sweepstakes Scam:** As the result of an FTC case, the operators of Mail Tree Inc, a sweepstakes scam that cost consumers millions, have agreed to settlements that permanently ban them from operating sweepstakes or making claims to consumers about prizes they have won or may win. The FTC's complaint charged that the defendants mailed personalized letters falsely telling consumers that they had won large cash prizes, typically more than $2 million. To collect the "guaranteed" money, consumers had to mail the defendants a $20-$30 fee by cash, check, or money order, typically within 10 days, and the letters warned consumers they would forfeit their winnings if they didn't pay on time. In reality, consumers had not won anything. The defendants had no connection to any sweepstakes and could not award or pay anyone the promised prizes.
- **Protecting Consumers Against Sham Health Insurance Plans:** The FTC obtained a $195 million judgment against Simple Health Plans LLC and its CEO over charges that they tricked consumers into signing up for sham health care plans. These health plans did not deliver the coverage or benefits they promised, and effectively left consumers uninsured and exposed to limitless medical expenses. The order banned Simple Health, five related entities, and the CEO from telemarketing and from marketing, promoting, selling, or offering any healthcare products.
- **Sham Cancer Charity:** The FTC and 10 states sued sham charity Cancer Recovery Foundation International, also known as Women's Cancer Fund, and its operator for deceiving generous donors who sought to offer financial support to women battling cancer and their families. The FTC and the states allege that, from 2017 to 2022, Women's Cancer Fund collected more than $18 million from donors. The sham charity claimed that it would use the donated funds to help women who were undergoing treatment for cancer and their families pay for basic needs. Instead, according to the complaint, only about a penny of every dollar donated went to provide such support, while the overwhelming majority went to pay for-profit fundraisers and the operator.
- **Used Car Rule Violations:** The FTC obtained a $1 million settlement against online used car dealer Vroom, Inc. for allegedly misrepresenting that it thoroughly examined all vehicles before listing them for sale and failing to obtain consumers' consent to shipment delays or provide prompt refunds when cars were not delivered in the time Vroom promised. The settlement also prohibits the company from making misleading claims to consumers about inspections or shipping, and the order requires Vroom to document all claims about promises it makes about shipping times to consumers, as well as requiring Vroom to follow the requirements of the Mail, Internet, or Telephone Order Merchandise Rule (MITOR), the Used Car Rule, and the Pre-Sale Availability Rule.
- **Eyeglass Rule:** Concluding a comprehensive multi-year review, the FTC announced final updates to its Ophthalmic Practice Rules, known as the Eyeglass Rule, aimed at promoting competition and consumer choice. The updates are designed to increase compliance with the rule's longstanding requirement that eye doctors (ophthalmologists and optometrists) provide patients with a free copy of their prescription immediately following a refractive eye exam. The revised rule requires that, in certain circumstances, prescribers must request a patient's signature confirming they received their prescription, and prescribers must keep a record of that confirmation for at least three years.
- **Amplifier Rule:** The FTC issued final amendments to its Amplifier Rule to help consumers make direct comparisons of home entertainment amplifiers. The Amplifier Rule regulates power output related claims for home entertainment amplifiers so consumers can more easily compare products before purchasing. The

final rule requires uniform test conditions for amplifiers if sellers make certain claims about power output; improves differentiation between power output disclosures that comply with the rule's test conditions and those that do not; and modernizes and clarifies language in the rule related to these modifications.

The FTC Protects Americans from Fraud and Deception in Consumer Finance Markets

- **Protecting Small Businesses:** As the result of an FTC lawsuit, a federal court entered a judgment requiring merchant cash advance operator Jonathan Braun to pay $20.3 million in monetary relief and civil penalties. This is the first trial by jury that the FTC has ever conducted. The judgment follows a January 2024 trial in which a jury found that Braun, in his role with small-business funding company RCG Advances, which formerly did business as Richmond Capital Group, knowingly deceived small businesses about the amount of funding that the defendants would provide to and collect from them. The court entered a judgment of $3.4 million to redress the harm that Braun's misconduct caused to small businesses. In addition, the court imposed over $16.9 million in civil penalties for Braun's law violations.
- **Payment Processors Order:** The FTC acted to stop BlueSnap, Inc., a payment processing company, along with its former CEO and vice president, from knowingly processing payments for deceptive and fraudulent companies. The FTC charged that BlueSnap and its officers processed millions of dollars in credit card payments for ACRO Services despite substantial evidence that the company was fraudulent. The FTC sued ACRO Services in November 2022. The defendants agreed to a settlement requiring them to turn over $10 million to the FTC to provide refunds to consumers and stop processing payments for certain high-risk clients.
- **Unauthorized Charges:** The FTC took action against bill payment company Doxo, Inc. and two of its co-founders for allegedly using misleading search ads to impersonate consumers' billers and deceptive design practices to mislead consumers about millions of dollars in fees they tacked on to consumers' bills. Tens of thousands of consumers complained about Doxo's deceptive practices, according to the complaint, with many pointing to the fact that they paid more than their actual bill amount, even when the actual billers did not charge for online payments.
- **Unauthorized Billing Scams:** A group of defendants known as Legion Media LLC agreed to settlements requiring the forfeiture of assets valued at about $40 million for allegedly defrauding consumers nationwide by enrolling them, without their knowledge, into continuity plans for products that they did not agree to buy. The orders also permanently ban the defendants from the alleged illegal conduct, as well as from debiting money from consumers' accounts without prior authorization and from credit card laundering. According to the FTC's complaint, the Legion Media defendants operated two types of unauthorized billing scams and participated in business impersonation scams, facilitating them by securing merchant accounts using shell entities to process unauthorized online charges.
- **Credit Repair Pyramid Scheme:** The owners and operators of a sprawling credit repair operation known as Financial Education Services (FES) agreed to a settlement requiring them to turn over assets of more than $12 million and to end the practices that the FTC alleged created a pyramid scheme and also violated the Credit Repair Organizations Act. The FTC alleged that the company preyed on consumers with low credit scores by luring them in with the false promise of an easy fix and then recruiting them to join a pyramid scheme selling the credit repair services to others, costing them millions of dollars.
- **Deceptive Financing Terms:** As the result of an FTC lawsuit, household water treatment funding company Aqua Finance, Inc. agreed to a settlement that will provide $20 million in refunds and an additional $23.6 million in debt forgiveness for consumers harmed by its dealers' deceptive sales tactics. The FTC alleged that the company's nationwide network of dealers went door–to-door, deceiving consumers about the financing terms for water filtering and softening products. According to the complaint, the company's

claims left consumers with thousands of dollars in unexpected debt and huge interest payments, while its financing terms impaired some consumers' ability to sell their homes.

- **Mortgage Relief Scam:** The FTC and the California Department of Financial Protection and Innovation sued the operators of the Home Matters USA mortgage relief scam for allegedly taking millions of dollars from thousands of struggling homeowners seeking mortgage relief. The court found that the defendants falsely promised to reduce homeowners' mortgage payments and prevent foreclosures, defrauding distressed homeowners out of millions of dollars. The scheme harmed more than 3,000 people nationwide, particularly elders and veterans. The court order bans the operators of the Home Matters USA mortgage relief scam from the telemarketing and debt relief businesses and requires them to turn over $19 million.
- **Government and Business Impersonation Rule (Impersonation Rule):** The FTC finalized the Impersonation Rule, which gives the agency stronger tools to combat scammers who impersonate businesses or government agencies or their officials, enabling the FTC to directly file federal court cases aimed at forcing scammers to return the money they made from government or business impersonation scams.
- **Impersonation Rule Order:** In its first case under the Impersonation Rule, the FTC took action against Panda Benefit Services, LLC, a student loan debt relief scheme, for taking more than $20.3 million from consumers by pretending to be affiliated with the Department of Education. The FTC charged that the company and its operators also falsely claimed that they would take over consumers' student loans to provide loan forgiveness that did not exist.
- **Student Loan Debt Relief:** As the result of an FTC lawsuit, SL Finance LLC and its owners, and BCO Consulting and its owners, are permanently banned from the debt relief industry. The SL Finance order contains a total monetary judgment of $5.8 million, which is partially suspended. The owners are required to surrender assets worth approximately $312,685. The BCO Consulting orders contain a total monetary judgment of $5.8 million, which is also partially suspended. The owners are required to relinquish assets worth approximately $565,594. The FTC alleged the defendants pretended to be affiliated with the Department of Education, charged illegal fees, and lured students with fake loan forgiveness promises.

  To settle an FTC law enforcement action, Apex Processing Center, a group of student loan debt relief scammers, agreed to court orders that would permanently ban them from the debt relief industry. The orders contain a total monetary judgment of $7.4 million, which is largely suspended due to the inability to pay. Separately, the ringleader of this student loan debt relief scam agreed to a court order permanently banning him from the debt relief industry and is required to turn over assets. The FTC alleged the defendants pretended to be affiliated with the U.S. Department of Education, used deceptive loan forgiveness promises, and falsely claimed they were offering relief under a purportedly government-affiliated loan forgiveness plan to lure students and collect millions in illegal upfront fees. Litigation continues against the remaining defendant in the case.

The FTC Safeguards Americans' Privacy and Data Security

- **Protecting Kids' Privacy Online:** Following the FTC's investigation, the Department of Justice, on the FTC's referral, sued video-sharing platform TikTok, its parent company ByteDance, as well as its affiliated companies, for allegedly flagrantly violating the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA). The complaint notes that ByteDance and its related companies were aware of the need to comply with the COPPA Rule and the FTC's 2019 consent order against TikTok and knew about TikTok's compliance failures that put children's data and privacy at risk. According to the complaint, instead of complying, ByteDance and TikTok spent years knowingly allowing millions of children under 13 on their platform designated for users 13 years and older in violation of COPPA.

NGL Labs, LLC and two of its co-founders agreed to an order requiring them to pay $5 million and to a ban from offering their "NGL: ask me anything" app to anyone under the age of 18. The FTC and Los Angeles District Attorney's Office alleged that NGL and its co-founders not only actively marketed their service to children and teens, but that they also falsely claimed that its AI content moderation program filtered out cyberbullying and other harmful messages. In addition, the complaint alleged that the defendants sent fake messages that appeared to come from real people and tricked users into signing up for their paid subscription by falsely promising that doing so would reveal the identity of the senders of messages.

- **Voice Cloning Challenge:** The FTC held a Voice Cloning Challenge to help promote the development of ideas to protect consumers from the misuse of artificial intelligence–enabled voice cloning for fraud and other harms. The FTC announced four winning submissions that demonstrate the potential for cutting edge technology to help mitigate risks of voice cloning in the marketplace. They promote innovative approaches on which key consumer protections can be built. This is the sixth challenge the FTC has launched under the America COMPETES Act aimed at spurring the development of innovative solutions to complex consumer protection issues.
- **Roundtable to Explore New Technologies and Content Creation:** The FTC hosted a virtual roundtable discussion to better understand the impact of generative artificial intelligence on creative fields. The roundtable discussion, which was composed of members from a variety of creative fields, explored the ways that these emerging tools are reshaping each of the participants' respective industries and how they are responding to these changes.
- **Data Security Order:** The FTC finalized an order with security camera firm Verkada Inc. that requires it to develop and implement a comprehensive information security program. The order settles a complaint filed by DOJ on behalf of the FTC, alleging that the company failed to use appropriate information security practices, allowing a hacker to access customers' security cameras located in places such as psychiatric hospitals. The settlement also requires payment of a $2.95 million monetary penalty to settle allegations the company inundated prospective customers with commercial emails in violation of the CAN-SPAM Act.
- **Fair Credit Reporting Act Violations Order:** The FTC and the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) obtained a settlement that will require credit reporting agency Trans Union LLC and a subsidiary to pay a total of $15 million to settle charges they failed to ensure the accuracy of tenant screening reports by including inaccurate and incomplete eviction records about consumers, hampering their ability to obtain housing. Of the $15 million, $11 million will be used to compensate consumers, and $4 million is a civil penalty, which will go to the CFPB's civil penalty fund. This is the largest amount ever recovered in an FTC tenant screening matter.

Additional Work to Protect Consumers

- **Combating Made in the USA Fraud:** Home products company Williams-Sonoma agreed to pay a record civil penalty of $3.17 million for violating a 2020 FTC order requiring the retailer to tell the truth about whether the products it sells are made in the United States. On behalf of the FTC, DOJ filed a complaint against Williams-Sonoma for listing multiple products as being "Made in USA," when in fact they were made in China and other countries. In addition to the civil penalty, the federal court settlement also requires Williams-Sonoma to submit annual compliance certifications and imposes several requirements on the claims the company makes, reinforcing provisions of the 2020 FTC order.

  Tractor maker Kubota North America Corporation agreed to pay a $2 million civil penalty as a result of an FTC action against the company for falsely labeling some of its replacement parts as being "Made in USA." The court order also prohibits Kubota from making deceptive claims. The complaint was filed by DOJ on behalf of the FTC.

The FTC finalized a consent order against Florida-based EXOTOUSA LLC (doing business as Old Southern Brass) for falsely claiming that certain company products were manufactured in the United States and that the company was veteran-operated and donated 10 percent of its sales to military service charities. The final order requires the company to pay $150,000 to the FTC, to stop making false claims, and to comply with specific requirements relating to future country-of-origin claims. The order also includes a partially suspended monetary judgment of $4.6 million.

- **Scams Targeting or Disproportionately Impacting Older Adults:** FTC data show that consumers older than 60 are more likely to lose money to tech support scams. As the result of an FTC lawsuit, two tech support companies, Restoro Cyprus Limited and Reimage Cyprus Limited, will pay $26 million to settle FTC charges that they bilked tens of millions of dollars from consumers, particularly older consumers, by duping them into buying computer repair services in violation of the FTC Act and the Telemarketing Sales Rule. The order also prohibits Restoro and Reimage from misrepresenting security or performance issues or any other material issues related to the sale, marketing, or distribution of any product or service and from engaging in deceptive telemarketing.
- **Scams Against Older Adults Advisory Group Meeting:** The FTC hosted the second Scams Against Older Adults Advisory Group meeting. The meeting included reports from the committees formed at the group's inaugural meeting and addressed the following areas: expanding consumer education and outreach efforts; improving industry training on scam prevention; identifying innovative or high-tech methods to detect and stop scams; and reviewing research on effective consumer messaging to prevent scams.

Consumer Protection Law Enforcement Collaboration and Advocacy

- **Key Law Enforcement Tools:** In FY 2024, more than 9 million fraud, identity theft, financial, and DNC reports were added to the FTC's Consumer Sentinel Network (CSN) database. Nearly 3,000 law enforcement users worldwide have access to CSN. In FY 2024, over 252 million telephone numbers were on the National Do-Not-Call Registry. In FY 2024, the Consumer Response Center handled more than 53,000 inquiries and reports from consumers and businesses each week, for a total of more than two million reports and inquiries. The FTC also maintains the federal government's central repository for identity theft reports. The one-stop website, identitytheft.gov, is integrated with the FTC's consumer report system, allowing consumers who are victims of identity theft to rapidly file a report with the FTC and create the documents they need to alert police, the nationwide consumer reporting agencies, and the Internal Revenue Service.
- **Criminal Referrals:** The FTC continues to refer law violators to criminal law enforcement agencies for prosecution. In FY 2024, FTC staff actively worked on 72 new formal requests for cooperation from our criminal law enforcement partners, including 63 federal and nine local requests. In FY 2024, prosecutors relied on FTC information and support to charge 10 new defendants and obtain 21 new convictions. Eleven defendants were sentenced during this period, and those sentences included prison terms totaling 663 months. Of these defendants, William White pleaded guilty to obstruction of justice for, among other things, erasing information from a computer laptop before producing the laptop in response to an FTC subpoena. Another defendant, Steven Dorfman, was sentenced to 25 years in prison for his leading role in orchestrating the selling of sham insurance products as comprehensive, health-law-compliant, health insurance. Additionally, two defendants in a wire fraud conspiracy case related to a timeshare resale scam were sentenced to a combined 130 months: 84 months for Jess Kinmont and 46 months for John Wenz.
- **Collaboration with State Attorneys General:** The FTC continues to partner with state Attorneys General to protect consumers from unfair and deceptive practices across the marketplace.
- **SAFE WEB:** In early FY 2024, the FTC submitted its SAFE WEB Report to Congress, detailing the agency's efforts to combat cross-border fraud through the U.S. SAFE WEB Act. The FTC also submitted a report pursuant to the RANSOMWARE Act on its work contributing to the fight against ransomware and other

cyber-attacks that originate outside the United States. The agency also continued using the SAFE WEB Act's enforcement tools to share information and provide investigative assistance to foreign law enforcement agencies.

- **International Cooperation on Fighting Fraud:** In FY 2024, the FTC continued its efforts to protect Americans and fight fraud across borders through its work in several international enforcement networks, including the Global Anti-Fraud Enforcement Network, which includes the Department of Justice, as well as international counterparts in Australia, Canada, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom; and the Unsolicited Communications Enforcement Network, which includes the FCC as well as international counterparts in Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Korea, and the UK. In addition, the FTC assumed the presidency of the International Consumer Protection and Enforcement Network (ICPEN), a network of more than 65 consumer protection authorities from around the world that seeks to protect consumers across borders through enforcement cooperation.

Consumer Protection Research, Outreach, and Education

- **Outreach to Military Service Members:** The FTC developed and manages the Military Consumer campaign in collaboration with the Department of Defense's (DoD's) Office of Financial Readiness and the CFPB's Office of Servicemember Affairs. With a large network of other military partners at the federal, state, and local levels, the campaign addresses unique challenges of military life that often make military personnel and families targets for scammers. Servicemembers, veterans, and their families, along with the DoD's personal financial managers who serve them, use the campaign website (MilitaryConsumer.gov) as a tool for financial readiness. Through extensive outreach, including virtual events, media interviews, and social media, the Military Consumer campaign amplifies advice to protect those who have served. Work is year-round, but two highlights of the campaign include Military Consumer Month in July and Veterans Day in November. Since the launch of the campaign in 2017, the Commission has distributed more than 1.3 million Military Consumer bookmarks to the military community, guiding servicemembers, veterans, and their families.
- **Outreach to Small Businesses:** The FTC continues its focus on educating small business owners about issues such as scams and deceptive practices targeting small businesses. Providing information and guidance to small businesses in every community is a priority for the agency. Outreach efforts are ongoing to reach businesses located in rural communities, for example. Agency staff regularly engage chambers of commerce that represent a range of business communities and provide advice to the Small Business Administration's (SBA) District Offices on cybersecurity scams that target small business owners and their business networks. The FTC continues to promote free resources for small business owners to help train their employees on cybersecurity threats. The FTC participated in the SBA's four-day 2024 National Small Business Virtual Summit, a webinar on cybersecurity for small business, and, among other efforts, continues to expand the reach of its campaign materials on cybersecurity and the scams that target small businesses, in collaboration with the SBA, the SBA's Small Business Development Corporations (SBDCs), the Better Business Bureau (BBB), and local Chambers of Commerce.
- **Outreach to Older Adults:** The FTC's Pass It On campaign (ftc.gov/PassItOn), tailored to people aged 60 and older, shares information about fraud and encourages readers to share it with someone they know. The agency promotes these resources through webinars and presentations in collaboration with other federal agencies such as the CFPB, SEC, FEMA, local government offices on aging, legal services providers, and non-profit organizations including AARP and the Senior Medicare Patrol. Nearly 22 million pieces of Pass It On educational material have been distributed since the campaign launched in July 2014. The agency has continued to build on this success through its work under the Stop Senior Scams Act—for example, offering Pass It On-based train-the-trainer sessions to a variety of "Fraud Fighters" to enhance results for participants and groups that use the materials to reach older audiences. The agency also produced, in

collaboration with partners, guiding principles on effective employee training that can be adapted for any industry segment and on research-based effective messaging and methods to reach older adults themselves with information on scams.

- **Protecting Older Consumers Report:** In October 2024, the Commission issued "Protecting Older Consumers 2023-2024: A Report of the Federal Trade Commission." The report highlights key trends based on fraud reports by older adults, and the FTC's efforts to combat the pressing problems through law enforcement actions, rulemaking, outreach and education programs, and stakeholder collaborations such as those under the Stop Senior Scams Act. In addition, the report calls on Congress to update the FTC Act to enhance the FTC's ability to recover money that older adults and other consumers lose to scammers following the Supreme Court's 2021 ruling in the AMG Capital Management case.
- **Reaching all Communities:** Because fraud affects every community, the FTC continues its commitment to ensuring it is responsive to the needs of all consumers. The agency has provided these communities with practical and user-friendly educational resources and information to help them spot, avoid, and report scams. To further engage with these communities, a key piece of the agency's strategy is engaging with community media, both at in-person local roundtables and virtual national, regional, or state telebriefings. These events bring together government officials, state and local law enforcement, legal services, consumer advocates, and journalists to discuss consumer protection issues affecting the community. Resulting coverage in multiple hyper-local media outlets develops greater trust in the FTC and its messages, and the exchange of information has even resulted in FTC law enforcement actions. The agency has also conducted paid media campaigns, for example, to encourage people to report fraud to the FTC at ReportFraud.ftc.gov, leading to millions of impressions through print, radio, and digital media in hard-to-reach communities.

Promoting Fair Competition: Highlights of FY 2024 Accomplishments

The FTC enforces America's antitrust laws to promote free and competitive markets, reducing the cost of living for all Americans and benefiting American consumers, workers, innovators, and honest businesses. The Commission's enforcement efforts encompass critically important markets, including healthcare, technology, energy, defense, consumer goods and services, labor, and manufacturing.

In FY 2024, the agency brought 21 enforcement actions under the antitrust laws, initiating federal court or administrative litigation in seven matters, and issuing a consent order to remedy prospective or ongoing harm to competition in two matters. In an additional 12 matters, the parties abandoned or restructured their proposed acquisitions to address Commission concerns that the original transaction likely would have harmed competition. The FTC also continued to monitor and enforce compliance with existing consent orders, including prior approval provisions, as well as merger and acquisition reporting obligations under the Hart-Scott-Rodino (HSR) Act.

Competition Law Enforcement and Policy Initiatives

Promoting Fair Competition in the Healthcare and Pharmaceutical Industries

- **Insulin:** In September 2024, the Commission issued an administrative complaint charging the three largest pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs)—Caremark Rx, Express Scripts, and OptumRx—and their affiliated group purchasing organizations (GPOs) with engaging in anticompetitive rebating practices that artificially inflated the list price of insulin drugs, impairing patients' access to lower list price products, and shifting the cost of high insulin list prices to vulnerable patients. According to the Commission's complaint, these PBMs collectively administer approximately 80 percent of all prescriptions in the United States and have abused their economic power by rigging pharmaceutical supply chain competition in their favor, forcing patients to pay more for life-saving medication. This matter is pending in the agency's administrative court.

- **PBM Industry Study:** Pursuant to its authority under Section 6(b) of the FTC Act, the FTC ordered the six largest PBMs to provide information and records regarding their business practices. The study focuses on the impact of vertically integrated PBMs on the access and affordability of prescription drugs. In FY 2023, as part of its ongoing inquiry into PBMs, the FTC issued compulsory orders to three GPOs that negotiate drug rebates on behalf of other PBMs.

  On July 9, 2024, the Commission published an interim report detailing how vertical integration and concentration has enabled the six largest PBMs to manage nearly 95 percent of all prescriptions filled in the United States. The report finds that PBMs wield enormous power over patients' ability to access and afford their prescription drugs, and that PBMs hold substantial influence over independent pharmacies.

- **Hospital Mergers:** In January 2024, the Commission sued to block Novant Health from acquiring two North Carolina hospitals from Community Health Systems for $320 million, alleging that the deal would have led to higher prices and reduced quality and innovation in the Eastern Lake Norman area. Following a district court decision denying the FTC's request for a preliminary injunction, the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals granted an injunction, pending appeal. Shortly thereafter, the parties abandoned their transaction. Novant, one of the largest hospital systems in the southeastern United States and the most expensive in North Carolina, operates Huntersville Medical Center and serves more patients than any other hospital in the area. Under the proposed deal, Novant would have acquired Lake Norman Regional Medical Center, a behavioral health hospital, and a physician group, as well as other assets. The proposed deal would have given Novant a 65 percent controlling share of the market for general acute care services in the relevant area, to the detriment of patients.

  In December 2023, in the face of the Commission's and California's challenge to John Muir Health's proposed $142.5 million deal to acquire San Ramon Regional Medical Center, the parties terminated the deal and the Commission and California moved to dismiss their case. According to the complaint, the deal would have eliminated vital head-to-head competition between John Muir and San Ramon Regional Medical Center, driving up healthcare costs.

- **Healthcare Advertising Platform Merger:** Following an evidentiary hearing in late November and December 2023, the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York granted the FTC's motion for a preliminary injunction to prevent IQVIA Holdings Inc. from acquiring Propel Media, Inc. According to the complaint, the proposed acquisition would have given IQVIA a leading position in the market for programmatic advertising for healthcare products (namely prescription drugs) to doctors and other healthcare professionals. IQVIA and Propel Media are both vertically integrated companies with large healthcare datasets. According to the complaint, post-merger, IQVIA's ownership of both datasets would have raised the incentive to withhold key information to prevent rival companies and potential entrants from effectively competing. IQVIA and Propel Media are two of the top three providers of these services, and the complaint alleged that the transaction would have eliminated head-to-head competition between the two firms, increasing prices and reducing quality and choices—potentially harming patients by inhibiting knowledge of new products, affecting the prescribing behavior by healthcare providers, and increasing prices if inflated marketing costs were passed on to patients. Following the court's decision, IQVIA terminated its acquisition agreement with Propel Media.

- **Anesthesia Providers Monopolization Case:** In September 2023, the Commission filed a complaint in federal court alleging that U.S. Anesthesia Partners, Inc. (USAP), the dominant provider of anesthesia services in Texas, and Welsh, Carson, Anderson & Stowe executed a multi-year anticompetitive scheme to consolidate anesthesiology practices in Texas, driving up the prices of anesthesia services for Texas patients to increase profits. According to the complaint, USAP and Welsh Carson acquired nearly every large anesthesia practice in Texas and created a single dominant provider with the power to demand higher prices. The firms drove up prices through price-setting agreements with the remaining independent practices. The firms further reduced competition by striking a deal to sideline a significant competitor by keeping it out of USAP's territory. According to the complaint, this anticompetitive strategy has cost Texans an estimated tens of millions of dollars each year. In May 2024, the federal district court denied USAP's motion to dismiss but granted Welsh Carson's motion to dismiss. In January 2025, the Commission issued a proposed consent order containing a settlement with Welsh Carson to limit its involvement with USAP and notify the Commission of future acquisitions and investments in anesthesia and other hospital-based physician practices. The proposed consent order will prevent Welsch Carson from reaping benefits from USAP's monopoly position in Texas and protect consumers from similar future anticompetitive conduct that would harm consumers. The litigation against USAP is pending in federal court.

- **Pharmaceutical Mergers:** In December 2023, in the face of the Commission's challenge to Sanofi's proposed acquisition of an exclusive license to Maze Therapeutics Inc.'s therapy in development for the treatment of Pompe disease, a debilitating and potentially fatal genetic disorder, Sanofi terminated its proposed acquisition and the Commission dismissed its federal court and administrative challenge. According to the FTC's complaint, Maze's Phase-2-ready developmental drug threatened to undermine Sanofi's monopoly for the treatment of this condition by providing patients with a far less costly and less burdensome oral course of treatment, as compared to Sanofi's biweekly intravenous infusions, allowing Sanofi to continue charging patients over $750,000 for an annual course of treatment. Since then, Maze has been acquired by a different company for similar financial terms and without the competitive concerns of the terminated Sanofi acquisition.

  In December 2023, the Commission finalized a consent order to resolve potential competitive harm stemming from Amgen Inc.'s acquisition of Horizon Therapeutics plc. Among other things, the order prohibits Amgen from bundling any of its products with Tepezza or Krystexxa, Horizon's medications used to treat thyroid eye disease and chronic refractory gout, respectively. As part of the nationwide settlement, the FTC and attorneys general from six states—California, Illinois, Minnesota, New York, Washington, and Wisconsin—dismissed their related federal court lawsuit. This case was the FTC's first litigated challenge to a pharmaceutical merger in more than a decade.

- **Orange Book Patent Listing Challenges:** In September 2023, the FTC released a policy statement, supported by the FDA, which explained that improper patent listings in the FDA's publication of "Approved Drug Products with Therapeutic Equivalence Evaluations," commonly known as the "Orange Book," can delay cheaper generic alternatives from entering the market, keeping brand name drug prices artificially high. In November 2023, the FTC challenged more than 100 patents held by manufacturers of brand-name asthma inhalers, epinephrine autoinjectors, and other drug products as improperly or inaccurately listed in the Orange Book. The FTC notified FDA that it disputes the accuracy or relevance of the listed information for these patents, which may require that the manufacturers remove the listing or certify under penalty of perjury that the listings comply with applicable statutory and regulatory requirements. FTC staff also sent notice letters to 10 companies, including AbbVie, AstraZeneca, Boehringer Ingelheim Pharmaceuticals, Impax Laboratories, Kaleo, Mylan Specialty, and subsidiaries of Glaxo-Smith Kline and Teva. Shortly thereafter, several companies delisted their patents, and three of the four top asthma inhaler companies announced plans to lower costs so that the maximum amount that any American will have to pay for an asthma inhaler is $35. In April 2024, FTC staff issued warning letters to another 10 pharmaceutical companies related to over 300 Orange Book listings for an additional 20 brand-name treatments for diabetes, weight loss, asthma, and COPD drugs.

- **Certificates of Public Advantage State Advocacy:** In September 2024, the FTC submitted a comment urging the Indiana Department of Health to deny an application that seeks to combine two hospitals that proposed to merge under a proposed certificate of public advantage (COPAs). The COPA could shield the proposed merger from antitrust scrutiny, leading to a deal that would likely impose higher costs and could lead to worse healthcare outcomes for Indiana patients, as well as lower wage growth for hospital workers, the comment states.

- **Certificates of Public Advantage Section 6(b) Industry Study:** The FTC continues its Section 6(b) study on the effects of COPAs on prices, quality, access, and innovation of healthcare services as well as on the impact of hospital consolidation on employee wages.
- **Physician Group and Healthcare Facility Mergers Section 6 Study:** The FTC continues its 6(b) study based on orders issued to six health insurance companies to provide data that will allow the agency to study the effects of physician consolidation and healthcare facility consolidation that occurred from 2015 through 2020.

Promoting Fair Competition in Digital Markets

- **Meta Monopolization Case:** The Commission's landmark monopolization case against Facebook (now Meta), which was filed in December 2020, commenced trial in federal court in April 2025. The complaint alleged the company unlawfully maintained its monopoly in personal social networking by acquiring nascent competitors, thereby allowing Meta to suppress the growth of rivals and decrease product quality, innovation, and choice. The Commission filed an amended complaint in August 2021, and in January 2022 the judge denied Meta's motion to dismiss. In November 2024, the court denied in full Meta's motion for summary judgment.
- **Amazon Monopolization Case:** In September 2023, the FTC and 17 state attorneys general filed a complaint in federal court alleging that Amazon.com, Inc. is a monopolist that leverages anticompetitive and unfair strategies to illegally maintain its monopoly power. According to the complaint, Amazon's actions allow it to stop rivals and sellers from lowering prices, degrade quality for shoppers, overcharge sellers, stifle innovation, and prevent rivals from meaningfully competing. Importantly, the complaint makes clear that Amazon violates the law, not because it is big, but because it engages in exclusionary conduct that inhibits the growth of existing competitors and entry by new competitors. The complaint focuses on two sets of anticompetitive tactics employed by the firm. These anticompetitive tactics include anti-discounting measures that punish sellers and deter other online retailers from offering prices lower than Amazon's, and conditioning sellers' ability to obtain "Prime" eligibility for their products on the use of Amazon's costly fulfillment services, thus raising sellers' costs. According to the complaint, these exclusionary tactics make it impossible for competitors to gain a foothold in the online superstore and online marketplace services markets. On September 30, 2024, the judge denied Amazon's motion to dismiss the complaint on the federal charges. This matter is pending in federal court.
- **Cloud Computing Request for Information:** The FTC issued a Request for Information seeking information from the public and industry participants on the business practices of cloud computing providers, including issues related to the market power of these companies, impact on competition, and potential security risks. The FTC also hosted a virtual panel discussion with a diverse set of experts to discuss the business practices of cloud computing providers including issues related to security, competition, and emerging technology issues associated with cloud computing. In November 2024, FTC staff issued a read-out of key themes from the RFI responses and the panel.
- **Generative AI Section 6(b) Industry Study:** In January 2024, the Commission launched an inquiry into generative AI investments and partnerships, issuing orders to five companies requiring them to provide information regarding recent investments and partnerships involving generative AI companies and major cloud service providers. The agency's Section 6(b) inquiry analyzed corporate partnerships and investments with AI providers to build a better understanding of these relationships and their impact on the competitive landscape.

Promoting Fair Competition in Agriculture Markets

- **Pesticides Anticompetitive Conduct Case:** The Commission continued to litigate its ongoing federal court matter alleging leading pesticide manufacturers Syngenta Crop Protection and Corteva, Inc. blocked competitors from selling cheaper generic products to farmers. According to the complaint filed by the Commission and a bipartisan coalition of 10 state attorneys general, the two pesticide manufacturers leveraged so-called "loyalty programs" in which distributors receive payments in exchange for limiting business with competing manufacturers, allowing the firms to inflate their prices, and forcing American farmers to spend millions of dollars more for these critical products. The complaint seeks to end these harmful practices. In 2024, the court denied Defendants' motion to dismiss. This matter is pending in federal court.

Promoting Fair Competition in Energy Markets

- **Retail Fuel:** In December 2023, the FTC sued 7-Eleven, Inc., alleging the convenience store chain violated the terms of a 2018 FTC consent order by acquiring a retail fuel outlet in St. Petersburg, Florida without providing the Commission prior notice. The Commission's federal complaint charges that the subsequent St. Petersburg acquisition was anticompetitive and likely allowed 7-Eleven to charge higher fuel prices at locations near the St. Petersburg outlet. In March 2025, the court denied 7-Eleven's motion to dismiss. The matter is pending in federal court.

Promoting Fair Competition in Consumer Goods and Services

- **Retail Supermarkets:** In December 2024, the FTC, along with a bipartisan coalition of nine state attorneys general, won a preliminary injunction to block the largest proposed supermarket merger in U.S. history—Kroger Company's $24.6 billion acquisition of Albertsons Companies, Inc. Kroger operates thousands of grocery stores and retail pharmacies in 36 states under various regional banners including Fred Meyer, Fry's, Harris Teeter, Kroger, and QFC. Albertsons also operates thousands of stores in 35 states under regional names including Albertsons, Safeway, and Vons, among others. The Commission's complaint charged that the proposed deal would eliminate fierce competition between Kroger and Albertsons, leading to higher prices for groceries and other essential household items for millions of Americans, who have already seen the cost of groceries rise steadily over the past few years.

  In addition to raising grocery prices, the FTC also alleged the deal would diminish the firms' incentives to compete on quality and for workers. Direct competition between the chains encourages improved quality through fresher produce, broader or improved product or service offerings, and more flexible hours. Kroger and Albertsons are also the two largest employers of union grocery labor in the United States. The combined firm would have gained increased leverage over workers, paving the way for subpar employment terms for grocery workers, slowing wage growth and improvement in benefits offerings, and potentially degrading working conditions. Kroger and Albertsons abandoned their deal shortly after the Commission prevailed in federal court.

- **Grocery Supply Chain Disruptions Section 6(b) Study:** In March 2024, the FTC issued a report on the causes behind the grocery supply chain disruptions resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. The report revealed that large market participants accelerated and distorted the negative effects associated with supply chain disruptions. The report's findings stem from document requests the FTC issued in 2021 to Walmart Inc., Amazon.com, Inc., Kroger Co., C&S Wholesale Grocers, Inc., Associated Wholesale Grocers, Inc., McLane Co, Inc. Procter & Gamble Co., Tyson Foods, Inc., and Kraft Heinz Co. The findings also draw from publicly available data on industry costs and revenues.

- **Infant Formula Supply Disruptions Report:** In March 2024, the Commission issued a report on market factors relevant to infant formula disruptions, which details aspects of the U.S. infant formula market that rendered it vulnerable to supply disruptions in 2022. The report also outlines considerations for policymakers to help create a more resilient infant formula market going forward.

- **Handbags:** Following an evidentiary hearing in October 2024, the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York granted the FTC's motion for a preliminary injunction to prevent Tapestry, Inc.'s $8.5 billion proposed acquisition of Capri Holdings Limited. The parties subsequently announced the termination of the merger agreement in November 2024. The transaction would have combined Tapestry's Coach and Kate Spade with Capri's Michael Kors, and given Tapestry a dominant share of the "accessible luxury" handbag market. According to the complaint, millions of American customers would have lost the benefit of Tapestry and Capri's head-to-head competition on price, discounts and promotions, innovation, design, and marketing. Additionally, employees would have lost the benefit of head-to-head competition on wages and workplace benefits.

- **Mattresses:** In July 2024, the FTC issued an administrative complaint and authorized a lawsuit in federal court to block Tempur Sealy International, Inc.'s proposed $4 billion acquisition of Mattress Firm Group Inc. The complaint alleged that Tempur Sealy, the world's largest mattress supplier and manufacturer under brand names such as Stearns & Foster and Tempur-Pedic, would have the ability and incentive to suppress competition and raise prices for mattresses for millions of consumers once it acquired Mattress Firm, the nation's largest mattress retailer and most important channel for retail mattress sales. As alleged in the complaint, deal documents uncovered during the Commission's investigation show that Tempur Sealy planned to limit rivals' access to Mattress Firm's nationwide network of stores, impairing their ability to compete and potentially leading competing suppliers to reduce output, close factories, and lay off workers. In January 2025, the federal district court denied the FTC's motion for a preliminary injunction, and the Commission subsequently declined to appeal the district court's order.

Promoting Fair Competition in Labor Markets

- **Joint Labor Task Force:** The FTC remains committed to protecting labor markets through vigorous enforcement against unfair or anticompetitive labor-market agreements that lower wages and reduce opportunity for American workers. Chairman Ferguson established a Joint Labor Task Force in February 2025, aiming to harmonize the FTC's labor-market enforcement efforts across the entire agency. On the competition side, the Task Force will focus on enforcement actions against no-poach, non-solicitation, and no-hire agreements; wage-fixing agreements; labor market monopsonies; and collusion or unlawful coordination on DEI metrics. Noncompete agreements will remain a focus of enforcement when they constitute unfair methods of competition. The FTC will continue to initiate noncompete enforcement actions regardless of the fate of the last administration's sweeping, nationwide rule that purported to ban all such agreements as a matter of law.

- **Anticompetitive No-Hire Agreements:** In January 2025, the Commission finalized a consent order requiring Planned Building Services, Inc. and its affiliated companies to cease and desist from: (1) enforcing no-hire agreements; (2) communicating to customers that a Planned employee is subject to a no-hire agreement; and (3) including no-hire agreements in future customer contracts. Through the existence and enforcement of no-hire agreements, residential and commercial building owners were limiting their employees' ability to negotiate for higher wages, better benefits, and improved working conditions. Affected employees range from concierge personnel to janitors and maintenance technicians.

  In January 2025, the Commission finalized a consent order requiring Guardian Service Industries, Inc. to cease and desist from: (1) enforcing a no-hire agreement directly or indirectly; and (2) communicating to any prospective or current customer that a Guardian employee is subject to a no-hire agreement. For Guardian's employees, which include concierge personnel, custodians, and maintenance technicians, these no-hire agreements limited their ability to negotiate for better terms, including higher wages, better benefits, and superior working conditions.

Providing Clarity to Market Participants

- **Updated Merger Guidelines:** In July 2023, the FTC and DOJ proposed updated Merger Guidelines detailing how U.S. enforcers assess whether transactions may lessen competition or tend to create a monopoly. Informed by thousands of comments from consumers, workers, academics, attorneys, enforcers, business owners, and many others from across the economy, the updated guidelines capture the tangible effects that mergers have on people's lives and reflect modern market realities, advances in economic analysis, legal precedents, and the experiences of a diverse array of market participants. The updated Merger Guidelines were finalized and issued in December 2023.
- **Updated HSR Form:** In October 2024, the FTC and DOJ finalized changes to the HSR Form and Instructions, marking the first time in 45 years that the agencies have undertaken a top-to-bottom review of the information required in the Form. The revised Form will require parties to provide additional information on their proposed transaction, the structure of entities involved, and the markets where they compete, enabling the agencies to more quickly and effectively screen transactions for potential competition issues within the initial waiting period, which is typically 30 days. The updated Form went into effect on February 10, 2025.

Competition Law Enforcement Collaboration and Advocacy

- **Collaboration with State Attorneys General:** During FY 2024, the FTC maintained its record of strong collaboration with state attorneys general. For example, in February 2024, a bipartisan coalition of nine state attorneys general joined the Commission's federal court lawsuit challenging Kroger's proposed acquisition of Albertsons, a deal that would have led to higher prices for groceries for millions of Americans and lower wages for thousands of workers. The FTC and 17 state partners continued their federal court challenge alleging that Amazon illegally maintained its monopoly power and raised prices for sellers and shoppers. The FTC continued to work with its state coalitions on the pesticides manufacturers Syngenta and Corteva. The FTC also worked closely with the California Attorney General's office throughout the investigation into (and subsequent filing of a federal court complaint) of John Muir Health's acquisition of San Ramon Medical Center.
- **Advocacy with our Federal Partners:**
    - In September 2024, the FTC submitted a comment supporting a U.S. Department of Agriculture proposed rule to protect against unfair practices by dominant meat processors that can harm farmers, growers, ranchers, and consumers.
    - In August 2024, the FTC submitted a comment supporting proposed FDA draft guidance regarding interchangeable biosimilar drugs that can be substituted for brand-name biologic products, stating that the FDA's guidance would increase patient access to lower-cost prescription medications.
    - In July 2024, the FTC submitted a comment supporting a proposed U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) rule regarding new requirements associated with patent terminal disclaimer practice to address practices that can lead to patent system abuse.
    - In June 2024, the FTC submitted a comment supporting a proposed USPTO rule involving the disclosure of patent settlement agreements. One of the proposed rule changes, which the FTC supports in its comment, would require parties to file with the USPTO all pre-institution patent settlement agreements, including collateral agreements.

- In February 2024, the FTC issued a comment in response to the National Institute of Standards and Technology's request for information on its Draft Interagency Guidance Framework for Considering the Exercise of March-In Rights under the Bayh-Dole Act.
- In November 2023, the FTC submitted a comment to the U.S. Copyright Office in which the FTC identified issues raised by the development and deployment of artificial intelligence (AI) that implicate competition and consumer protection policy, noting the Commission's role in monitoring the impact of generative AI and enforcing the law as appropriate to promote competition, foster innovation, and protect consumers.

- **Convening Competition Enforcement Partners:** In April 2024, the FTC and DOJ Antitrust Division hosted the third annual Enforcers Summit, bringing together state, federal, and international antitrust enforcement agencies to discuss competition law enforcement and share insights on today's market realities.
- **Advocacy in the Courts:** In FY 2024, the FTC filed several competition amicus briefs in federal court.
    - The Commission submitted an amicus brief in *Teva Pharmaceuticals USA, Inc. v. Amneal Pharmaceuticals, Inc.*, explaining that pharmaceutical maker Teva has improperly listed patents in the FDA's Orange Book, and urged the court to order those listings removed. In its brief, the FTC explained that improper Orange Book listings can harm competition by delaying the entry of cheaper generic products, reducing patient access to more affordable prescription drugs and increasing healthcare costs. The district court agreed with the FTC's position, and the Federal Circuit affirmed that decision.
    - The FTC also addressed improper Orange Book listings in an amicus brief filed in *Mylan Pharmaceuticals v. Sanofi-Aventis*, explaining that improper listings, such as those in Mylan's case, can cause significant harm to competition and lead to higher drug prices for consumers. The Commission did not take a position on the merits of Mylan's allegations that Sanofi abused the Orange Book listing process.
    - The Commission filed an amicus brief in *United States Soccer Federation, Inc. v. Relevent Sports, LLC*, to urge the Supreme Court to deny a petition for certiorari concerning the concerted action requirement of Section 1 of the Sherman Act. The brief argued that the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit properly applied Supreme Court precedent in holding that allegations that an association adopted a binding anticompetitive rule governing its members' separate businesses are sufficient to plead concerted action. The Supreme Court agreed and denied the petition for certiorari.
    - The Commission submitted a statement of interest in *Duffy v. Yardi Systems, Inc.,* arguing that the landlords' joint use of a pricing algorithm could constitute price fixing in violation of the Sherman Act. The court agreed with the Commission's position and denied the defendants' motion to dismiss in December 2024.
    - The Commission submitted a statement of interest in *Karen Cornish-Adebiyi v. Caesars Entertainment*, in a private case to reiterate the appropriate legal standards governing allegations that competitors engaged in per se illegal price fixing by using a common algorithm. Reiterating points made in two previous statements on this topic, the Commission further emphasized that per se illegal price fixing (1) does not require direct communications among conspirators, and (2) can involve agreements around non-binding pricing recommendations. Despite the Commission's statement of interest, the district court dismissed the amended complaint regarding the allegations of per se illegal price fixing through use of a common algorithm.
    - The Commission filed an amicus brief in *CoStar Group v. Commercial Real Estate Exchange*, stating its concern that the district court committed three fundamental legal errors that, unless corrected, could

shield harmful monopolistic conduct from antitrust review and impair both public and private antitrust enforcement of meritorious cases. The Commission took no position on the merits of the parties' claims or factual allegations in this matter.

  - The Commission filed an amicus brief in *Epic Games Inc. v. Google LLC*, arguing that injunctive relief should also restore lost competition in a forward-looking way and ensure a monopolist is not continuing to reap the advantages and benefits through the antitrust violation. In digital platform cases, this often requires an accounting of network effects and other key features of digital markets. The Commission's brief argued for how to remedy Google's violations of the antitrust laws after a jury found Google liable for multiple antitrust violations related to the Google App Store.
  - The Commission submitted an amicus brief in *United Healthcare Services v. Gilead Sciences*, explaining the legal standards that govern reverse-payment claims in patent litigation under *Activas* arising from the Hatch Waxman Act. The Commission's amicus brief, filed in the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, was not in support of either party and addressed particular legal errors committed by the district court when analyzing reverse-payment issues.

- **Other Collaboration Across Government:** The Commission in May 2024 jointly launched a public inquiry with the DOJ Antitrust Division to identify serial acquisitions and roll-up strategies throughout the economy that have led to consolidation that may have harmed competition.

  The FTC and HHS jointly issued an RFI in February 2024 to understand how the practices of two types of pharmaceutical drug middlemen—GPOs and drug wholesalers—may be contributing to generic drug shortages.

  The FTC and DOJ Antitrust Division jointly submitted a public comment to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission in April 2024, urging it to consider the competitive risks of common ownership when assessing acquisitions involving less than a controlling interest in competing firms.

- **Strengthening International Engagement:** The FTC continues its longstanding cooperation with international enforcement partners both bilaterally and in multilateral organizations to promote the FTC's priorities and enhance American prosperity. In enforcement, while agencies independently conduct investigations based on the laws and facts in their jurisdictions, the FTC seeks to ensure appropriate cooperation on investigations under parallel review by the FTC and international competition agencies. This cooperation promotes effective and efficient enforcement of the antitrust laws that benefits the FTC, businesses, and American consumers. In FY 2024, the FTC cooperated on 37 different matters with 13 different authorities. In multilateral expert fora, such as the International Competition Network (ICN) and the Competition Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the FTC continues to promote the agency's priorities, including by focusing on projects that ensure agencies are best able to address the realities of the modern economy. For example, the FTC hosted the inaugural ICN Technology Forum in March 2024, bringing together agency technologists from around the globe, and resulting in a joint statement highlighting the importance of agencies integrating technological expertise into enforcement work. In OECD, the FTC is currently working to update the 2005 OECD Merger Recommendation. In many FTC matters, obtaining key evidence located outside the U.S. is crucial. Consistent with that goal, the FTC continues to engage with key counterparts to develop enhanced cooperation tools, including the development of an agreement with the Canadian Competition Bureau based on the 2020 Multilateral Mutual Assistance in Competition Framework that would improve the FTC's ability to secure evidence located in Canada.

Competition Research, Outreach, and Public Education

- **Workshops:** In November 2023, the Bureau of Economics hosted its Sixteenth Annual Microeconomics Conference, which brought together scholars working in areas related to the FTC's antitrust, consumer protection, and public policy missions. In October and November 2023, the FTC and DOJ hosted in-person and livestreamed workshops to facilitate public dialogue on the 2023 Draft Merger Guidelines.
- **Merger Portal:** The Commission expanded its web-based complaint portal to make it easier for anyone to provide information about potential deals that might harm consumers or workers.

Annual Performance Report For Fiscal Year 2024 and Annual Performance Plan For Fiscal Years 2025 to 2026

About This Report

This is the Annual Performance Report for fiscal year (FY) 2024 and the Annual Performance Plan for FY 2025 and 2026 for the Federal Trade Commission ("FTC" or "Commission"). The report is structured around three strategic goals and their supporting objectives as established in the FTC Strategic Plan for FY 2022-2026.

- **Strategic Goal 1:** Protect the public from unfair or deceptive acts or practices in the marketplace.
- **Strategic Goal 2:** Protect the public from unfair methods of competition in the marketplace and promote fair competition.
- **Strategic Goal 3:** Advance the FTC's effectiveness and performance.

The strategic goals, objectives, and performance metrics articulate what the Commission intends to accomplish to meet its mandated mission (Goals 1 and 2), and support management functions vital to core mission success while demonstrating the highest standards of stewardship (Goal 3).

The Commission ensures the performance information is complete, reliable, and accurate by maintaining a central internal repository for performance data entry, reporting, and review. The electronic data tool reduces human error, increases transparency, and facilitates review of the FTC's performance information. Bureau and Office representatives serving as Performance Measure Reporting Officials (PMROs) are responsible for reporting data on a quarterly or annual basis through the internal reporting tool. PMROs update the data quality appendix, which describes the source and collection method, and how metrics are calculated, at least once per year. The Chief Financial Officer serves as Performance Improvement Officer, and the Office of the Chief Financial Officer leads periodic performance metric reviews in coordination with budget execution reviews.

Please visit the agency's website at ftc.gov to see more of the FTC's performance and budget documents.

Mission

- **The FTC's Mission:** Protecting the public from deceptive or unfair business practices and from unfair methods of competition through law enforcement, advocacy, research, and education.
- **The FTC's Vision:** A vibrant economy fueled by fair competition and an empowered, informed public.

The FTC enforces the nation's antitrust laws to promote competition in fair and open markets, providing consumers with lower prices, better quality, greater choice, and innovation, and businesses with the opportunity to compete on a level playing field without anticompetitive restraints. The FTC also enforces consumer protection laws to protect consumers from fraud, deception, and unfair business practices and empower access to accurate information. The Commission is the only federal agency that deals with consumer protection and competition issues affecting broad sectors of the economy, and it has enforcement or administrative mandates under more than 70 laws, including the Federal Trade Commission Act (FTC Act), Telemarketing Sales Rule, Identity Theft Act, Fair Credit Reporting Act, and Clayton Act. While primarily a law enforcement agency, the FTC also uses a variety of other tools to fulfill its dual mission, including advocacy, rulemaking, research, and consumer and business education.

Organizational Structure

Established in 1914 by the FTC Act, the FTC is headed by a five-member Commission nominated by the President and confirmed by the Senate, each serving a staggered seven-year term. The President chooses one commissioner to serve as Chair. No more than three commissioners may be from the same political party.

The Commission's workforce is its greatest asset and the key to accomplishing its mission. The FTC's Bureau of Competition, Bureau of Consumer Protection, and Bureau of Economics are supported by the Office of the General Counsel, the Office of International Affairs, the Office of Technology, the Office of Policy Planning, the

Office of the Secretary, the Office of the Executive Director, the Office of the Chief Financial Officer, the Office of the Chief Information Officer, the Office of Congressional Relations, the Office of Public Affairs, the Office of Administrative Law Judges, the Office of the Inspector General, and the Office of the Chief Privacy Officer.

The Commission's headquarters are located in Washington, D.C., and eight regional offices are located across the United States. At the end of FY 2024, the FTC's estimated full-time equivalent utilization was 1,292. The budget authority for FY 2024 was $425.7 million.

Strategic Goal 1: Protect the Public From Unfair or Deceptive Acts or Practices In The Marketplace

Four objectives guide work in this area:

- **Objective 1.1:** Identify, investigate, take actions against, and deter unfair or deceptive acts or practices that harm the public.
- **Objective 1.2:** Connect with individuals, communities, and businesses to provide practical knowledge, guidance, and tools, and to learn about key challenges and opportunities for future FTC engagement.
- **Objective 1.3:** Collaborate with domestic and international partners to enhance consumer protection.
- **Objective 1.4:** Take special interest in unfair or deceptive acts or practices that target especially vulnerable populations.

Goal Leaders: Director, Bureau of Consumer Protection; Director, Bureau of Economics; Chief Technology Officer, Office of Technology; Director, Office of Public Affairs; Director, Office of International Affairs

Objective 1.1: Identify, investigate, take actions against, and deter unfair or deceptive acts or practices that harm the public.

For more information on data sources, data collection, and metric calculations, see the FTC Data Quality Appendix, linked on the FTC's Budget, Performance, and Financial Reporting page.

Performance Metrics

Metric 1.1.1: Amount of money returned to the public or forwarded to the U.S. Treasury resulting from FTC enforcement actions.

FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2024 Target	FY 2024 Status	FY 2025 Target	FY 2026 Target
$5,650.2 million	$562.1 million	$639.8 million	$623.6 million	$340.8 million	$65.0 million	Exceeded	$65.0 million	$65.0 million

Note on FY23 Result: The amount reported for FY 2023 Actual has been corrected to $623.6 million from $616.8 million in the FY23 APR. In July 2024, an outside party reported redress they had completed during FY23. This additional $6.8 million in redress has been added to the FY23 result.

Note on Trends: The amount of money returned to consumers and the U.S. Treasury has declined in recent years after the Supreme Court's 2021 decision in *AMG Capital Management v. FTC*, which held that the FTC does not have the ability to obtain monetary relief pursuant to Section 13(b) of the FTC Act.

FY 2024 Highlights: In FY 2024, the FTC returned $261.9 million to consumers and forwarded $18.4 million to the U.S. Treasury. The FTC returned money to more than 1.6 million consumers in dozens of cases, including *Vonage*, *Benefytt*, *Zurixx*, and *Opendoor*. The money returned to the U.S. Treasury included civil penalties obtained in settlements with Williams Sonoma, Cerebral, Inc., and Verkada, Inc. In addition, some FTC orders required defendants to self-administer refund programs worth more than $57.1 million in refunds to consumers, including the *Career Step, LLC, Aqua Finance Inc, On Point Global,* and *BetterHelp, Inc.* cases.

Metric 1.1.2: Total consumer savings compared to the amount of FTC resources allocated to consumer protection law enforcement.

FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2024 Target	FY 2024 Status	FY 2025 Target	FY 2026 Target
$12.70 in consumer savings per $1 spent	$12.90 in consumer savings per $1 spent	$9.40 in consumer savings per $1 spent	$7.10 in consumer savings per $1 spent	$6.80 in consumer savings per $1 spent	$5.00 in consumer savings per $1 spent	Exceeded	$5.00 in consumer savings per $1 spent	$5.00 in consumer savings per $1 spent

Note on Trends: The amount of money returned to consumers and the U.S. Treasury has declined in recent years after the Supreme Court's 2021 decision in *AMG Capital Management v. FTC*, which held that the FTC does not have the ability to obtain monetary relief pursuant to Section 13(b) of the FTC Act.

FY 2024 Highlights: In FY 2024, the agency saved consumers on average over 6.8 times the amount of resources devoted to the consumer protection program. In FY 2024, the estimate of consumer harm prevented was $582 million. Settlements obtained in the *Lurn, Simple Health Plans LLC,* and *Financial Education Services* case comprised a significant portion of this amount.

Metric 1.1.3: Percentage of matters following up on Commission market-wide policy initiatives.

FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2024 Target	FY 2024 Status	FY 2025 Target	FY 2026 Target
N/A	N/A	25.5%	48.1%	68.5%	20.0%	Exceeded	20.0%	20.0%

FY 2024 Highlights: In FY 2024, 37 of 54 enforcement matters followed up on Commission market-wide policy initiatives.

Metric 1.1.4: Percentage of matters seeking significant remedial, precedential, or deterrent effects across the marketplace.

FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2024 Target	FY 2024 Status	FY 2025 Target	FY 2026 Target
N/A	N/A	72.3%	74.1%	74.1%	65.0%	Exceeded	65.0%	65.0%

FY 2024 Highlights: In FY 2024, 40 of 54 enforcement matters sought significant remedial, precedential, or deterrent effects across the marketplace.

Metric 1.1.5: Percentage of cases involving collaboration across organizational units, e.g., regional offices and divisions, BC and BCP, Bureaus and OPP.

FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2024 Target	FY 2024 Status	FY 2025 Target	FY 2026 Target
N/A	N/A	39.2%	47.7%	50.0%	35.0%	Exceeded	35.0%	35.0%

FY 2024 Highlights: In FY 2024, 33 of 66 completed cases involved collaboration across organizational units.

Metric 1.1.6: Percentage of the FTC's consumer protection law enforcement actions that targeted the subject of consumer reports in the FTC's Consumer Sentinel Network.

FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2024 Target	FY 2024 Status	FY 2025 Target	FY 2026 Target
90.5%	85.2%	93.9%	97.7%	95.3%	80.0%	Exceeded	80.0%	80.0%

FY 2024 Highlights: In FY 2024, 41 of 43 of BCP's law enforcement actions targeted the subject of consumer reports to the FTC. Because BCP augments identification of targets from its databases with other strategies for generating enforcement leads—such as monitoring compliance with FTC orders, ad monitoring, internet surfs, mobile application surveys, and direct referrals from government and private-sector partners—the results vary from year to year.

Metric 1.1.7: User satisfaction with the FTC's Consumer Response Center call center.

FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2024 Target	FY 2024 Status	FY 2025 Target	FY 2026 Target
84	84	84	85	83	Average government satisfaction rate (65)	Exceeded	Average government satisfaction rate	Average government satisfaction rate

FY 2024 Highlights: The FTC's Consumer Response Center call center continues to perform above the private and public industry benchmarks.

Metric 1.1.8: User satisfaction with the FTC Consumer Response Center website.

(a) Mobile
(b) Desktop
(c) Mobile/Desktop Combined Score

FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2024 Target	FY 2024 Status	FY 2025 Target	FY 2026 Target
(a) 83.3 (b) 82.0	(a) 83.5 (b) 83.2	(a) 81.7 (b) 80.8	(a) 81.8 (b) 80.9	(c) 80.1	Average government satisfaction rate (65)	Exceeded	Average government satisfaction rate	Average government satisfaction rate

FY 2024 Highlights: The FTC's Consumer Response Center website continues to perform above the private and public industry benchmarks.

Secondary Metric 1.1.9: Number of reports collected and entered into the Consumer Sentinel Network (CSN) database.

FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual
8.3 million	11.0 million	8.0 million	7.8 million	9.0 million

Secondary Metric 1.1.10: The percentage of redress cases in which money designated for distribution is mailed to consumers within 6 months.

FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual
93.1%	100%	85.2%	100%	91.7%

FY 2025 Next Steps and Future Actions to Meet Objective 1.1

- Evaluate whether enforcement activities are tracking the areas where the public suffers the most harm and whether new practices or technologies require additional law enforcement focus, education, and advocacy.
- Evaluate economic and other concrete harms to consumers as cases and programs are developed.
- Continue to evaluate the efficacy of promulgated rules and regulations and other policy documents.
- Continue to evaluate and implement options for continuing to secure relief for consumers post-*AMG Capital Mgmt., LLC v. FTC* .

Objective 1.2: Connect with individuals, communities, and businesses to provide practical knowledge, guidance, and tools, and to learn about key challenges and opportunities for future FTC engagement.

For more information on data sources, data collection, and metric calculations, see the FTC Data Quality Appendix, linked on the FTC's Budget, Performance, and Financial Reporting page.

Performance Metrics

Metric 1.2.1: Rate of consumer satisfaction with FTC consumer education websites.

(a) Mobile
(b) Desktop

FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2024 Target	FY 2024 Status	FY 2025 Target	FY 2026 Target
(b) 76.2	(b) 72.9	(a) 73.5 (b) 73.4	(a) 73.4 (b) 74.9	(a) 69.6 (b) 74.2	Average government satisfaction rate (65.0)	Exceeded	Average government satisfaction rate	Average government satisfaction rate

FY 2024 Highlights: The FTC's consumer education websites performed above the average citizen satisfaction score for participating federal government websites. The Division of Consumer and Business Education websites offer timely and relevant content that answers users' questions and helps them complete their desired task, like learning if something is a scam and how to report it. Desktop satisfaction for consumer education websites exceeded the federal government benchmark by more than nine points.

Metric 1.2.2: Rate of customer satisfaction with the ftc.gov website.

(a) Mobile
(b) Desktop

FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2024 Target	FY 2024 Status	FY 2025 Target	FY 2026 Target
(a) 74.6 (b) 74.7	(a) 73.5 (b) 70.9	(a) 70.5 (b) 69.1	(a) 70.0 (b) 64.7	(a) 64.1 (b) 68.6	Average government satisfaction rate (64.0)	Exceeded	Average government satisfaction rate	Average government satisfaction rate

FY 2024 Highlights: Adjustments to the FTC.gov feedback survey, including a more detailed description of the survey and its purpose, helped to increase desktop users' customer satisfaction rates. Mobile customer satisfaction rates decreased, possibly due to mobile users expecting to find FTC's transactional websites quickly on their mobile devices. Satisfaction survey results determined that any reports related to FTC's other websites negatively impacted the outcome of satisfaction rates specific to FTC.gov.

Metric 1.2.3: Number of outreach events.

FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2024 Target	FY 2024 Status	FY 2025 Target	FY 2026 Target
N/A	N/A	316	603	638	300	Exceeded	300	300

FY 2024 Highlights: In FY 2024, the FTC participated in more than 630 outreach events that reached thousands of community leaders and advocates, business owners, librarians, and others in communities across the nation. These events were both in-person and virtual, in English and Spanish, and many focused on hard-to-reach communities. For example, the FTC spoke about holiday scams in a Veterans Administration video, reaching 10,000 veterans; worked with community banks to distribute print materials to rural Virginia communities on avoiding scams; reached 700 key AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers on how to communicate with older adults about scams; and shared advice through presentations and media on scams that target Latinos.

Metric 1.2.4: Number of page views for consumer and business education digital articles and blog posts.

FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Target	FY 2024 Target	FY 2024 Status	FY 2025 Target	FY 2026 Target
N/A	N/A	39.1 million	37.3 million	44.9 million	35.0 million	Exceeded	35.0 million	35.0 million

Note on FY24 Count: The results for FY22 and FY23 reflected "unique" pageviews. The GSA's Digital Analytics Program migrated all agencies to the new Google Analytics 4 in July 2024. Data on "unique pageviews" are not available in Google Analytics 4, so the results for FY24 reflect total page views.

FY 2024 Highlights: The consumer and business websites operated by the Bureau of Consumer Protection's Division of Consumer and Business Education (DCBE) exceeded the target of 35 million unique page views in FY 2024. DCBE consumer and business websites draw visitors from a variety of sources. The sites are optimized to attract visitors searching for specific information. Many external websites and search engines link to DCBE consumer and business education websites. DCBE actively promotes new consumer and business blog posts through email marketing and the FTC's Office of Public Affairs regularly distributes them through the FTC's social media channels.

Secondary Metric 1.2.5: Number of consumer protection reports the FTC issued.

FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual
23	13	12	11	14

FY 2025 Next Steps and Future Actions to Meet Objective 1.2

- Review the focus and performance of FTC education efforts; determine whether the agency needs to reach new audiences on new topics in light of changes in demographics, emerging digital advertising issues, deceptive marketing practices, and emerging technologies; identify strategies or partnerships that will allow the FTC to affordably reach those audiences; engage in user testing and human-centered testing, as appropriate; and apply learnings from analytics to improve education efforts and products.
- Research and apply analytics data, customer satisfaction feedback, and website standards and best practices to continue improving the user experience, performance, and features of the FTC.gov websites.
- Review and apply guidance from OMB M-23-22 to deliver digital-first experiences on FTC websites.

- Continue to build the agency's capacity to target and engage Spanish-speaking media to better reach the growing Spanish-speaking population.
- With a change in survey vendor at the start of FY 2025, the OPA Web and Digital Strategy team will update the FTC.gov customer satisfaction survey to better align with Performance.gov's government-wide customer satisfaction goal to improve the public's trust in interacting with government. The OPA Web and Digital Strategy team will review website analytics, customer experience data, and now users' trust in FTC.gov's content and performance to determine the best ways users can find and execute important tasks on the agency's primary website.

Objective 1.3: Collaborate with domestic and international partners to enhance consumer protection.

For more information on data sources, data collection, and metric calculations, see the FTC Data Quality Appendix, linked on the FTC's Budget, Performance, and Financial Reporting page.

Performance Metrics

Metric 1.3.1: Number of investigations or cases in which the FTC and other U.S. federal, state, and local government agencies shared evidence or information that contributed to FTC law enforcement actions or enhanced consumer protection.

FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2024 Target	FY 2024 Status	FY 2025 Target	FY 2026 Target
551	505	541	292	423	375	Exceeded	375	375

FY 2024 Highlights: In FY 2024, BCP shared information with other U.S. federal, state, and local agencies in 243 investigations or cases. In FY 2024, BCP received information from other U.S. federal, state, and local government agencies in 180 investigations or cases.

Metric 1.3.2: Number of investigations or cases in which the FTC obtained foreign-based evidence or information or engaged in other mutual assistance that contributed to FTC law enforcement actions or in which the FTC cooperated with foreign agencies and/or multilateral organizations on enforcement matters.

FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2024 Target	FY 2024 Status	FY 2025 Target	FY 2026 Target
42	39	32	23	40	26	Exceeded	26	26

FY 2024 Highlights: In FY 2024, the FTC cooperated in 40 instances on various matters to obtain or share evidence or engage in other enforcement cooperation in investigations, cases, and enforcement related projects. The FTC also hosted a September meeting of ICPEN as the network's president.

FY 2025 Next Steps and Future Actions to Meet Objective 1.3

- Continue to work with other U.S. government agencies as appropriate to address global issues of mutual concern where such work would benefit American interests, including by engaging with agencies that are developing legislation on consumer issues, by participating in the negotiation of consumer protection provisions of trade agreements, and to develop mechanisms for transatlantic data flows consistent with American interests.
- Develop new initiatives with foreign counterparts on consumer fraud and other unlawful conduct that harms the American people.
- Work with international partners to fight cross-border fraud and deception, bilaterally and through multilateral organizations such as the International Consumer Protection and Enforcement Network (ICPEN), Unsolicited Communications Enforcement Network (UCENet), and Global Anti-Fraud Enforcement Network (GAEN). Encourage coordinated enforcement actions that protect U.S. consumers. Enhanced cooperation may include new and expanded initiatives with foreign criminal authorities and private sector partners, particularly in countries that are increasingly the source of fraud directed at American consumers.
- Continue to highlight the importance of strong enforcement as a key component of consumer protection, including on messaging abuses such as robocalls and spam, within various multilateral enforcement and policy organizations as appropriate to advance American interests.

- Work with foreign data protection authorities and through influence and leadership in multilateral organizations to advance American interests, including by advocating for sound approaches that protect American consumers and businesses.
- Facilitate cross-border data flows through work with the Department of Commerce to further U.S. interests. Seek permanent reauthorization of the U.S. SAFE WEB Act, which provides the FTC with tools for cross-border enforcement and cooperation that help protect the American people. On October 20, 2020, the Act was reauthorized with a seven-year sunset provision, expiring in 2027.

Objective 1.4: Take special interest in unfair or deceptive business practices that target especially vulnerable populations.

For more information on data sources, data collection, and metric calculations, see the FTC Data Quality Appendix, linked on the FTC's Budget, Performance, and Financial Reporting page.

Performance Metrics

Note: As of the February 2025 Update to the FTC Strategic Plan, the performance metrics in Objective 1.4 have been rescinded.

FY 2025 Next Steps and Future Actions to Meet Objective 1.4

- Evaluate whether enforcement is addressing practices that harm especially vulnerable populations, such as children. As necessary, focus law enforcement efforts on addressing such practices.
- Review the focus and reach of FTC education efforts to serve especially vulnerable populations in appropriate ways, using Consumer Sentinel reports as an input; determine whether and how the agency needs to reach new audiences on new topics, in light of changes in demographics, emerging digital issues, technologies, and deceptive marketing practices; identify strategies or partnerships that will allow the FTC to reach those audiences; engage in user and human-centered testing, as appropriate, and apply learnings from analytics to improve education efforts and products.

Strategic Goal 2: Protect the Public From Unfair Methods of Competition in the Marketplace and Promote Fair Competition

Four objectives guide work in this area:

- **Objective 2.1:** Identify, investigate, and take actions against anticompetitive mergers and business practices.
- **Objective 2.2:** Engage in research, advocacy, and outreach to promote public awareness and understanding of fair competition and its benefits.
- **Objective 2.3:** Collaborate with domestic and international partners to check unfair methods of competition.
- **Objective 2.4:** Protect especially vulnerable populations through the FTC's competition mission.

Goal Leaders: Director, Bureau of Competition; Director, Bureau of Economics; Chief Technology Officer, Office of Technology; Director, Office of Policy Planning; Director, Office of International Affairs

Objective 2.1: Identify, investigate, and take actions against anticompetitive mergers and business practices.

For more information on data sources, data collection, and metric calculations, see the FTC Data Quality Appendix, linked on the FTC's Budget, Performance, and Financial Reporting page.

Performance Metrics

Metric 2.1.1: Total consumer savings and other measurable benefits generated by antitrust enforcement.

FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2024 Target	FY 2024 Status	FY 2025 Target	FY 2026 Target
$2.22 billion	$2.38 billion	$2.28 billion	$2.39 billion	$4.36 billion	$2.4 billion	Exceeded	$2.4 billion	$2.4 billion

Note on past results: During review of the FTC's performance results, several errors were found in the data reported for individual cases from past years. Correcting those errors has changed the results previously reported for FY20, FY21, FY22, and FY23. While there were not errors in each of those years, because we use a rolling average on this metric, individual errors affect multiple years of results.

FY 2024 Highlights: The FTC concluded 15 full-phase investigations with actions in FY 2024. Five of the concluded matters involved successful federal court litigation or post-complaint abandonments by the relevant parties. In two additional matters, the FTC resolved its competitive concerns via Commission consent order, and eight additional matters were resolved when the parties abandoned or restructured their transactions in anticipation of an FTC challenge.

Metric 2.1.2: Total consumer savings and other measurable benefits generated by antitrust enforcement compared to resources spent.

FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2024 Target	FY 2024 Status	FY 2025 Target	FY 2026 Target
$28.50 in consumer savings per $1 spent	$29.70 in consumer savings per $1 spent	$27.40 in consumer savings per $1 spent	$25.90 in consumer savings per $1 spent	$41.50 in consumer savings per $1 spent	$25.00 in consumer savings per $1 spent	Exceeded	$25.00 in consumer savings per $1 spent	$25.00 in consumer savings per $1 spent

Note on past results: During review of the FTC's performance results, several errors were found in the data reported for individual cases from past years. Correcting those errors has changed the results previously reported for FY20, FY21, FY22, and FY23. While there were not errors in each of those years, because we use a rolling average on this metric, individual errors affect multiple years of results.

FY 2024 Highlights: The agency has again exceeded its efficiency goals, saving the public an estimated $41.50 for every dollar spent on its enforcement programs. These savings estimates demonstrate a strong return on taxpayers' investments, and benefit American consumers, workers, and honest business across many sectors of the economy.

Metric 2.1.3: Percentage of cases and investigations involving collaboration with BCP.

FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2024 Target	FY 2024 Status	FY 2025 Target	FY 2026 Target
N/A	N/A	5.0%	4.2%	13.0%	5.0%	Exceeded	5.0%	5.0%

FY 2024 Highlights: The Commission continues to streamline the investigative process and identify synergies between the agency's dual competition and consumer protection mission. In so doing, the Commission has reinvigorated its efforts to expand information sharing and cross-functional investigations to make more efficient use of limited Commission resources, while simultaneously reducing redundancy. This year, the Bureau has exceeded its target, collaborating substantively with the Bureau of Consumer Protection in 13 percent of the full-phase matters concluded during the fiscal year.

Metric 2.1.4: Percentage of antitrust matters seeking significant remedial, precedential, or deterrent effects across the marketplace.

FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2024 Target	FY 2024 Status	FY 2025 Target	FY 2026 Target
N/A	N/A	58%	44%	33%	50%	Not Met	30%	30%

FY 2024 Highlights: The Commission continues to adapt its investigative and litigation tools and strategies so that we can protect competition in a way that reflects modern market realities. Accordingly, the agency is prioritizing matters that seek significant remedies, identify precedential theories of harm, or promote significant deterrence of future anticompetitive behavior in the marketplace. In FY 2024, the Commission concluded 46 full-phase antitrust matters. Of those concluded matters, 15 sought or achieved significant remedial, precedential, or deterrent effects.

Metric 2.1.5: Percentage of full-phase antitrust investigations that (1) proceeded to litigation that ultimately halted or deterred lawbreaking or resulted in greater clarification of the law or (2) ended when a merger was abandoned in anticipation of an FTC challenge.

FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2024 Target	FY 2024 Status	FY 2025 Target	FY 2026 Target
N/A	N/A	38%	27%	28%	30%	Not Met	30%	30%

FY 2024 Highlights: Federal court and administrative litigation are the two most powerful enforcement tools at the Commission's disposal, and they are also the most resource intensive. This metric assesses the outcomes of matters in federal court litigation or administrative adjudication, or where parties abandon or restructure their transactions due to an impending challenge. Of the 46 full-phase matters concluded in FY 2024, five matters progressed to litigation, including two litigated victories, and three instances where the parties abandoned their transactions post-complaint. In seven additional matters, the parties abandoned or restructured their proposed transactions in anticipation of a Commission challenge.

Secondary Metric 2.1.6: Total sales in the affected markets in which the Commission took antitrust enforcement actions.

FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual
$95.1 billion	$93.3 billion	$68.7 billion	$68.5 billion	$283.6 billion

Note on past results: During review of the FTC's performance results, several errors were found in the data reported for individual cases from past years. Correcting those errors has changed the results previously reported for FY20, FY21, FY22, and FY23. While there were not errors in each of those years, because we use a rolling average on this metric, individual errors affect multiple years of results.

FY 2025 Next Steps and Future Actions to Meet Objective 2.1

- Work with Congress to advocate for additional resources to effectively enforce the antitrust laws to ensure that the public benefits from the lower prices, higher quality, increased innovation, and expanded choices that competition brings.
- Implement revised HSR reporting requirements designed to better enable the Bureau to identify mergers and acquisitions most likely to harm competition to the detriment of consumers, workers, and honest businesses.
- Expand employee development programs to increase the antitrust expertise and investigative, negotiation, and litigation skills of legal staff through continuous learning and retrospective analysis.
- Utilize BC's Training Council to identify staff development opportunities and provide targeted training programs to meet those needs.
- Enhance the investigative process using improved technological tools and the identification of "best practices" to streamline and standardize management of investigations and litigation. This includes efforts to optimize handling of big data to facilitate more efficient and cost-effective investigations.
- Continue to pursue updates to premerger notification filing requirements and screening methods to maximize efficiency and effectiveness.

Objective 2.2: Engage in research, advocacy, and outreach to promote public awareness of fair competition and its benefits.

For more information on data sources, data collection, and metric calculations, see the FTC Data Quality Appendix, linked on the FTC's Budget, Performance, and Financial Reporting page.

Performance Metrics

Metric 2.2.1: Number of reports and studies the FTC issued on competition related topics.

FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2024 Target	FY 2024 Status	FY 2025 Target	FY 2026 Target
7	8	6	8	14	6	Exceeded	6	6

FY 2024 Highlights: The Commission issued 14 reports, studies, or policy statements in FY 2024, including reports on pharmacy benefit managers, the grocery supply chain, the final DOJ/FTC Merger Guidelines, and a number of reports on artificial intelligence.

Metric 2.2.2: Number of cases for which BE economists prepared to testify as expert witnesses in FTC antitrust enforcement actions.

FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2024 Target	FY 2024 Status	FY 2025 Target	FY 2026 Target
N/A	N/A	5	5	5	3	Exceeded	3	3

Metric 2.2.3: Percentage of competition advocacy matters filed with entities, including federal and state legislatures, agencies, or courts that were successful.

Note on Metric 2.2.3: Data for this metric is no longer being collected.

FY 2025 Next Steps and Future Actions to Meet Objective 2.2

- To expand our staff's skillsets, the FTC will invest in more training and educational resources for existing and incoming talent.
- The FTC will invest more time to develop its relationships with small businesses as well as state and federal government policymakers. This will inform the FTC about changing issues that are relevant to small businesses and will provide a resource to state and federal government policymakers.

Objective 2.3 Collaborate with domestic and international partners to check unfair methods of competition.

For more information on data sources, data collection, and metric calculations, see the FTC Data Quality Appendix, linked on the FTC's Budget, Performance, and Financial Reporting page.

Performance Metrics

Metric 2.3.1: Percentage of FTC cases involving at least one substantive contact with a foreign antitrust authority in which the agencies followed consistent analytical approaches and reached compatible outcomes.

FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2024 Target	FY 2024 Status	FY 2025 Target	FY 2026 Target
100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	85%	Exceeded	85%	85%

FY 2024 Highlights: In FY 2024, the FTC cooperated on 25 enforcement matters with competition authorities abroad. FTC staff engaged in substantive case cooperation with 17 agencies, including those of Australia, Brazil, Canada, the European Union, Germany, Israel, Japan, and the United Kingdom. While the FTC will continue to strive for 100 percent success, the target reflects the possibility of inconsistent outcomes as each reviewing agency independently assesses the transaction or conduct in accordance with the laws and competitive realities in its jurisdiction.

Secondary Metric 2.3.2: Percentage of full investigations in which the FTC and other U.S. federal, state, and local government agencies shared evidence or information that contributed to FTC law enforcement.

FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual
22.2%	52.0%	58.0%	47.0%	45.7%

FY 2024 Highlights: In FY 2024, the Commission engaged in information sharing and collaboration in nearly half of the full-phase investigations it concluded, demonstrating a continued commitment to working with a broad array of enforcement partners in furtherance of the competition mission.

FY 2025 Next Steps and Future Actions to Meet Objective 2.3

- Support BC's enforcement by assisting with the international aspects of its investigations and litigation, including obtaining important evidence located outside the U.S.
- Pursue opportunities to promote FTC priorities bilaterally and multilaterally, e.g., through the ICN, OECD, and the Multilateral Mutual Assistance and Cooperation Framework.
- Continue the FTC's leadership role in the ICN by guiding the ICN's strategic direction through Steering Group participation and leading the network's implementation work to promote FTC priorities and benefit American consumers and businesses.
- Continue to work with other U.S. agencies bilaterally and in interagency and intergovernmental fora on competition-related issues and in the development of trade arrangements that address competition-related issues.

Objective 2.4 Protect especially vulnerable populations through the FTC's competition mission.

For more information on data sources, data collection, and metric calculations, see the FTC Data Quality Appendix, linked on the FTC's Budget, Performance, and Financial Reporting page.

Performance Metrics

Note: As of the February 2025 Update to the FTC Strategic Plan, the performance metrics in Objective 2.4 have been rescinded.

FY 2025 Next Steps and Future Actions to Meet Objective 2.4

- Pursuant to Chairman Ferguson's directive to form a Joint Labor Task Force, BC will work together with BCP, BE, and OPP to prioritize rooting out and prosecuting deceptive, unfair, and anticompetitive labor-market practices that harm American workers. BC's Task Force responsibilities include:
    - Prioritizing investigations and prosecutions of anticompetitive labor market conduct;
    - Harmonizing the methods and procedures for uncovering and investigating anticompetitive labor market conduct;
    - Creating an information-sharing protocol to exchange best practices for uncovering and investigating anticompetitive labor market conduct, to ensure that the Bureaus are acting as effectively as possible in relying on the full, combined knowledge of the entire FTC;
    - Promoting research on anticompetitive labor market conduct and disseminating those findings throughout the FTC and to the public;
    - Identifying opportunities for advocacy on legislative or regulatory changes that would remove barriers to labor market participation, mobility, and competition;
    - Engaging in public outreach informing workers of the state of the law and to encourage workers to report anticompetitive labor market conduct to the FTC; and
    - Coordinating, to the fullest extent possible, all conduct investigations and enforcement actions brought by either the Bureau of Competition or the Bureau of Consumer Protection, with support from the Bureau of Economics, such that deceptive, unfair, or anticompetitive labor market conduct is fully prosecuted as a matter of consumer protection and competition law.
- BC will update its case selection and evaluation process by systematically collecting available information regarding the impact of proposed mergers and alleged anticompetitive conduct on especially vulnerable populations.
- BC will ensure that merger analysis includes effects on workers and restrictive covenants.
- BC staff will continue ongoing efforts to develop and refine information requests (via voluntary access letters, second requests, and civil investigative demands) in merger and anticompetitive conduct cases to solicit information about the impact of transactions on especially vulnerable populations.

Strategic Goal 3: Advance the FTC's Effectiveness and Performance

The FTC's continued focus on advancing organizational effectiveness and performance at all levels creates a strong foundation for overall mission success. The agency's work in Strategic Goal 3 encompasses all of the agency's key management areas: human capital; infrastructure and security; information technology; and financial management. The ongoing efforts in these areas enhance the Commission's ability to focus on protecting consumers and promoting competition.

In FY 2024, the FTC made progress in a number of areas:

Security / Emergency Preparedness

- The FTC completed Active Shooter and Eagle Horizon Continuity of Operations exercises and developed after-action reports to address identified improvement areas during the training.
- The FTC developed training videos to support greater awareness for and use of the FTC's emergency notification system. This new engagement approach is designed to improve system use and awareness by all staff.

Facilities

- The FTC completed renovations in the library space to provide modern workspace suitable for teaming.
- The FTC completed gathering requirements for its Micro Program of Requirements and submitted them to the General Services Administration as the next step in the process to procure new space to replace the FTC's satellite building in Washington D.C.
- The FTC developed an approach to measuring the use of its buildings to support planning for FTC space needs for all facilities.
- The FTC successfully transferred new furniture from another agency that was decommissioning space. This transfer represents a $220k savings for the agency.

Enterprise Risk Management

- The FTC's Enterprise Risk Management program continues to ensure that internal controls are achieving their intended objectives of supporting effective and efficient programmatic operations, reliable financial reporting, and compliance with applicable laws and regulations. OCFO identified, assessed, and monitored risks related to mission performance and updated the agency risk profile. The risk-management efforts helped agency leadership determine where to apply resources to address the FTC's highest priorities and risks.

Cross-Agency Engagement Initiatives

The FTC developed and executed several cross-agency initiatives to support employee engagement.

- The FTC offered the Cross-Agency Mentoring Program, the first formal mentoring program open to all agency staff. The program provided participants with a valuable opportunity to increase their understanding of the FTC's culture and broaden their skills, knowledge, and perspective so they could be better prepared to meet career opportunities and challenges.
- The FTC continued to refine the FTC Annual Awards event based on staff feedback. The October 2023 ceremony featured the entire Commission and leadership team and was widely attended in-person and virtually.
- The FTC hosted an all-staff spring gathering to emphasize our shared mission.

Training and Employee Development

The FTC continues to support employees' professional development and meet training requirements.

- Federal Trade Commission University (FTCU), the agency's annual orientation and networking program for new employees, has continued to evolve and adapt to the changing work environment. In FY24, FTCU was offered to employees as a hybrid model for the first time, balancing the efficiencies of virtual content delivery with an in-person component that allowed participants to feel more connected to their colleagues, leaders, and mission.
- The FTC developed a refined Supervisory Refresher course, which is a mandatory program designed to reinforce and update the skills of experienced supervisors within the FTC, in alignment with 5 C.F.R. 412.202. This modernized course streamlines and enhances content, meeting the C.F.R. mandate while reducing training time by approximately 80%, focusing on the specific needs of experienced supervisors, lowering costs, and improving analytical capabilities.

Information Technology

- The FTC continued to advance toward a zero-trust network architecture, focusing on projects and investments to improve the agency's identity, credential, and access management program by integrating applications into the FTC's chosen identity management and single-sign-on solution and integrating network security protocols. These actions will streamline user management, improve security, and enhance user experience, providing unified authentication and authorization across the infrastructure.
- The FTC further enhanced the security of user endpoints by implementation of cloud-based endpoint security platforms through the CISA Continuous Diagnostics and Mitigation (CDM) program. These platforms enhance the FTC's ability to detect and respond to vulnerabilities and other cyber threats such as ransomware and malware across endpoint devices. These solutions improve our data integration into the OMB Federal Dashboard and facilitate improved data sharing with CISA while removing dependencies for cyber security operations on the FTC data center.
- The FTC established an ongoing authorization (OA) program, which monitors and reports on compliance system security controls monthly rather than annually. All FISMA and FedRAMP systems in the FTC inventory, which includes the FTC's on-premises General Support and Litigation Support Systems, and major mission-critical cloud services, have been migrated to OA, and the FTC continues to work toward migrating all other systems to OA.
- The FTC completed major upgrades to the on-site wireless network across all FTC locations. The agency upgraded the wireless equipment in all Regional Offices with high capacity, high performance access points that are managed in a cloud-based network management platform. This upgrade also included the installation of 100% wireless access in the new Atlanta Regional Office location. The FTC also simplified its guest wireless network by consolidating several guest networks into a single network with greater security controls and a more user-friendly interface. These upgrades enhance the security of the wireless network while also improving user experience for the FTC's workforce.
- The FTC completed a network optimization initiative that yielded a 93% reduction in subpar user experiences for major web conferencing applications, a 100% increase in external network connectivity, and a 50% decrease in web conferencing audio spikes, translating to smoother collaboration, enhanced accessibility, and clearer communication.
- The FTC migrated the operational components of our Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) to the cloud, which continues our reduction of on-premises HQ data center dependencies and will support a future initiative to allow FTC mobile devices to connect directly to the FTC wireless network.

- The FTC continued to modernize and digitize business processes through cloud-based application development. The FTC developed and delivered several applications to support direct mission business processes, including tracking of different types of evidence and chain of custody for the Bureau of Consumer Protection, tracking the status of economic research projects for the Bureau of Economics, and automating system data privacy compliance for the Office of the Chief Privacy Officer.

Records Management

- The FTC developed a role-based email records schedule for NARA review. The schedule was approved by NARA in August 2023 and was fully implemented on April 29, 2024.

Three objectives guide work in this area:

- **Objective 3.1:** Optimize resource management, space, and administrative programs.
- **Objective 3.2:** Cultivate a high performing and engaged workforce.
- **Objective 3.3:** Optimize information management.

Goal Leaders: Executive Director, Office of the Executive Director; Chief Financial Officer, Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO); Director, Bureau of Consumer Protection; Director, Bureau of Competition; Director, Bureau of Economics; General Counsel, Office of the General Counsel; Chief Information Officer, Office of the Chief Information Officer; Secretary, Office of the Secretary

Objective 3.1: Optimize resource management, space, and administrative programs.

For more information on data sources, data collection, and metric calculations, see the FTC Data Quality Appendix, linked on the FTC's Budget, Performance, and Financial Reporting page.

Performance Metrics

Metric 3.1.1: Audit opinion from the agency's independent financial statement auditors.

FY97 – FY20 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2024 Target	FY 2024 Status	FY 2025 Target	FY 2026 Target
Unmodified Opinion	Unmodified Opinion	Unmodified opinion	Unmodified Opinion	Unmodified Opinion	Unmodified Opinion	Met	Unmodified opinion	Unmodified opinion

FY 2024 Highlights: The FTC takes very seriously its commitment of responsible stewardship of the public resources entrusted to us by the American taxpayers and Congress. The agency's FY 2024 independent financial audit yielded its 28th consecutive unmodified opinion, the highest audit opinion available. The independent auditors did not identify any material weaknesses, or instances of non-compliance with internal controls, financial systems, or laws and regulations.

Metric 3.1.2: Percentage of contract actions awarded within FTC's established Procurement Action Lead Time (PALT).

FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2024 Target	FY 2024 Status	FY 2025 Target	FY 2026 Target
91.1%	94.5%	90.6%	90.1%	87.5%	90.0%	Not met	90.0%	90.0%

FY 2024 Highlights: The FTC awarded 140 of 160 new contracts within established time frames, just missing its PALT target. OCFO continues to focus on ways to improve procurement processes, especially for expert witness contracts, which have the shortest PALT of 15 days. 17 of the 20 contracts awarded that missed their PALT were expert witness contracts. The PALT rate for expert witness contracts, which are a subset of the contracts included here, was 66.7% (34 of 51 new contracts).

Metric 3.1.3: Percentage of contract dollars awarded to small businesses.

FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2024 Target	FY 2024 Status	FY 2025 Target	FY 2026 Target
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	25.3%	Baseline	N/A	20.0%	20.0%

Note on Metric: As part of the February 2025 Update to the FTC Strategic Plan for FY 2022 to FY 2026, the small disadvantaged business metric was replaced with this small business metric.

Secondary Metric 3.1.5: Number of FOIA Requests Received, Processed, and the Cost of FOIA Litigation

	FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual
Number of FOIA Requests Received	1177	1385	1619	1818	1989
Number of FOIA Requests Processed	1298	1375	1579	1811	1989
Cost of FOIA Litigation	$102,489	$166,155	$348,178	$787,889	$617,293

FY 2024 Highlights: The results for this year's data are consistent with the fact that the agency resolved two FOIA litigations and concluded substantial work on multiple other FOIA litigations, thus lessening the litigation burden and allowing costs to decrease compared to last year.

FY 2025 Next Steps and Future Actions to Meet Objective 3.1

- Pursue a contract to develop a master plan for the Headquarters building to evaluate space use improvements.
- Explore options for improving security of the Headquarters entrances.
- Update egress and wayfinding signage in the Headquarters building.
- Evaluate electronic subscriptions to ensure they have mission justification and align with the FTC Strategic Plan.
- Pursue certification to the new FAC-C-IT standard for contracting officers required to sign future IT contracts.
- Pursue greater use of OBI financial dashboards, particularly to assist acquisitions in tracking Procurement Action Lead Time (PALT) and other contracting metrics.
- Continue to support efforts to monitor and update the agency risk profile and risk registers to highlight and help agency leadership manage the most significant risks and analyze areas of concern that may elevate to a significant risk in the future.

Objective 3.2: Cultivate a high-performing and engaged workforce.

For more information on data sources, data collection, and metric calculations, see the FTC Data Quality Appendix, linked on the FTC's Budget, Performance, and Financial Reporting page.

Performance Metrics

Metric 3.2.1: Annual score on the FEVS Employee Engagement Index

FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2024 Target	FY 2024 Status
87%	74%	74%	79%	80%	Exceed govern-ment-wide average (73%)	Exceeded

FY 2024 Highlights: The FTC's Employee Engagement Index score rose 1 point to 80%, which is above the government-wide average of 73% and the medium-size agency average of 76%.

Metric 3.2.2: Annual score on the FEVS Global Satisfaction Index

FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2024 Target	FY 2024 Status
89%	60%	62%	68%	69%	Exceed govern-ment-wide average (65%)	Exceeded

FY 2024 Highlights: The FTC's Global Satisfaction Index score rose 1 point to 69%, which is above the government-wide average of 65%, but below the medium-size agency average of 70%. FTC employee satisfaction with their pay is the principal cause for the FTC's overall Global Satisfaction being 1% lower than it is compared to other mid-sized agencies. The FTC is not statutorily permitted to compensate employees on the same pay-scale as other regulatory agencies (e.g. CFPB, SEC, FDIC).

Metric 3.2.4: Percentage of people with disabilities in the FTC workforce.

FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2024 Target	FY 2024 Status
8.0%	8.8%	8.6%	9.3%	10.3%	Equal or greater than previous FY	Exceeded

Metric 3.2.5: Percentage of people with targeted disabilities in the FTC workforce.

FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2024 Target	FY 2024 Status
1.3%	1.4%	1.4%	1.2%	1.2%	Equal or greater than previous FY	Met

Secondary Metric 3.2.6: Average number of days from job vacancy closing to making a tentative offer for new hires.

FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual
47.8 days	51.1 days	64.6 days	55.2 days	48.1 days

FY 2025 Next Steps and Future Actions to Meet Objective 3.2

- Initiate efforts to establish an agency-wide workforce plan that supports a reduced workforce or agency-wide streamlining.
- Integrate a Human Capital Service Center within the existing FTC Service Now platform to enable FTC staff to initiate human capital service requests and research answers to frequently asked questions on the same platform used for technical support requests and queries.
- Use Microsoft Power Business Intelligence and other data analysis tools to create dynamic reports to inform the agency's workforce planning and decision-making processes.
- Improve the integrity of human capital data through periodic reviews to provide reliable, accurate, data-driven insights to the FTC's leadership team.
- Provide new managers with the training, skills, and resources to process reasonable accommodation requests correctly.
- Update internal Standard Operating Procedures to ensure the standardization and consistency of HCMO's operating processes and procedures.

Objective 3.3 Optimize information management.

For more information on data sources, data collection, and metric calculations, see the FTC Data Quality Appendix, linked on the FTC's Budget, Performance, and Financial Reporting page.

Performance Metrics

Metric 3.3.1: Percentage of FTC IT systems hosted outside of the FTC's data center.

FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2024 Target	FY 2024 Status	FY 2025 Target	FY 2026 Target
N/A	N/A	90.0%	91.4%	92.0%	90.0%	Exceeded	90.0%	90.0%

FY 2024 Highlights: During FY 2024, FTC added three new FedRAMP authorized cloud services to its system inventory, including the addition of a cloud-based voice and communications platform and cloud-based infrastructure and security management tools. As new requirements emerge, FTC will continue to prioritize the use of cloud services to meet technology needs. In FY 2025 and FY 2026, FTC does not anticipate any major increase in the number of cloud systems in use as the agency is focusing on utilizing available capabilities in existing cloud service to meet changing business needs.

Metric 3.3.2: Availability of information technology systems.

FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2024 Target	FY 2024 Status	FY 2025 Target	FY 2026 Target
99.97%	99.94%	99.67%	99.52%	99.83%	99.50%	Exceeded	99.50%	99.50%

FY 2024 Highlights: The FTC exceeded its availability target, reaching an actual availability of 99.83%. This improvement over FY 2023 stemmed mostly from the stabilization of the FTC network after multiple major outages in 2023. During 2024, FTC continued to migrate critical infrastructure components such as file storage and user authentication to cloud-based environments, further improving availability of FTC user-facing systems.

Metric 3.3.3: Annual score on the FTC Cybersecurity Index.

FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2024 Target	FY 2024 Status	FY 2025 Target	FY 2026 Target
7 of 8	6 of 8	7 of 8	7 of 8	8 of 8	7 of 8	Exceeded	7 of 8	7 of 8

FY 2024 Highlights: The FTC continues to review and improve its IRM Cybersecurity metric collection process. This fiscal year, the FTC focused on improving asset inventory consolidation. This involved minimizing discrepancies between active state IT security tool asset information and desired state configuration management asset information.

Metric 3.3.4: Meet milestones for developing an agency email records schedule and associated email capture and management process.

FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2024 Target	FY 2024 Status	FY 2025 Target	FY 2026 Target
N/A	N/A	Email records schedule and policy drafted	Submitted email records schedule	Implemented Capstone email records schedule	Implement Capstone email records schedule	Met	Complete evaluation of FTC email manage-ment practices	Update agency policies and procedures based on findings

FY 2024 Highlights: The FTC developed a role-based email records retention schedule and submitted it to NARA for approval. The schedule was approved by NARA in August 2023 and was fully implemented on April 29, 2024.

Metric 3.3.5: Meet project milestones for developing and implementing an agency wide approach for managing Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI).

FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2024 Target	FY 2024 Status	FY 2025 Target	FY 2026 Target
N/A	N/A	Finalized CUI processes	Implemented CUI mark-ing and launched training	CUI evaluation rescheduled for June 2025	Conduct CUI program evaluation for DC offices	Not met	Update agency-wide training	Conduct CUI program evaluation for regional offices

FY 2024 Highlights: For FY 2024, the FTC was unable to conduct the CUI program evaluation for the DC offices because it took longer than expected to finalize guidance relating to CUI marking and safeguarding of litigation-related documents. This guidance was critical to the successful implementation of the CUI program. The Office of the Secretary issued this new guidance in September 2024 and updated agency-wide training. This completed their targeted milestone for FY 2025 early, but the FY 2024 target of conducting a CUI program evaluation has been rescheduled for June 2025.

FY 2025 Next Steps and Future Actions to Meet Objective 3.3

- Continue the move toward a Zero Trust Network Architecture, in accordance with the OMB Memorandum 22-09 (Federal Zero Trust Strategy), including the optimization of the FTC's remote access and identity management platforms and strengthening of privileged access management and vulnerability management practices.
- Upgrade the network backbone at the Commission's Headquarters building. The HQ building has not had any major network or infrastructure modernization in almost 10 years and no longer meets the needs of the agency's workforce and increasing bandwidth usage due to the use of cloud computing.
- Rebuild the TextileRN application in a secure cloud environment. This project will not only improve FTC's cloud adoption but will also enhance FTC's security posture by allowing the agency to shut off inbound external traffic to the FTC data center, eliminating a major security vulnerability.
- Migrate the FTC's Intranet site and voice services to cloud-based architectures to enhance the user experience, improve availability and performance, and eliminate multiple end-of-life and unsupported technology components.

- Roll out agency-wide training on best practices for email records management, including separate training for Commissioners and other senior officials.
- IT Security Program will focus on further automating the overall IRM Cybersecurity metric collection process.

Descriptions

FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION ★ UNITED STATES OF AMERICA ★ MCMXV

The FTC's mission is carried out by three bureaus:

The Bureau of Competition (BC) seeks to prevent anticompetitive mergers and other anticompetitive business practices in the marketplace. By enforcing the antitrust laws, the Bureau promotes competition and protects consumers' freedom to choose goods and services in an open marketplace at a price and quality that fit their needs.

The Bureau of Consumer Protection's (BCP) mandate is to protect consumers against unfair, deceptive or fraudulent practices. The Bureau enforces a variety of consumer protection laws enacted by Congress, as well as trade regulation rules issued by the Commission. Its actions include individual company and industry-wide investigations, administrative and federal court litigation, rulemaking proceedings, and consumer and business education. In addition, the Bureau contributes to the Commission's ongoing efforts to inform Congress and other government entities of the impact that proposed actions could have on consumers.

The Bureau of Economics helps the FTC evaluate the economic impact of its actions. To do so, the Bureau provides economic analysis and support to antitrust and consumer protection investigations and rulemakings. It also analyzes the impact of government regulation on competition and consumers and provides Congress, the Executive Branch, and the public with economic analysis of market processes as they relate to antitrust, consumer protection, and regulation.

The work of the bureaus is aided by several additional offices:

The Regional Offices work with the Bureaus of Competition and Consumer Protection to conduct investigations and litigation, provide advice to state and local officials on the competitive implications of proposed actions, recommend cases, provide local outreach services to consumers and businesspersons, and coordinate activities with local, state, and regional authorities.

The Office of Congressional Relations works closely with members of Congress and their staffs. The office informs Commissioners and FTC staff of Capitol Hill issues and policies and helps provide information on legislation of interest to the Commission. It also coordinates the preparation of both Congressional testimony and responses to Congressional inquiries concerning FTC policies and programs.

The Office of Public Affairs mission is to reach, inform, educate, and engage consumers and businesses through media and digital technologies and in collaboration with our internal partners to advance consumer protection and competition. The office is the primary point of contact for all news media inquiries.

The Office of the Chief Privacy Officer manages the FTC's internal privacy program and is responsible for ensuring that the Commission complies with all applicable privacy laws and guidance. The Office of the Chief Privacy Officer identifies the privacy risks, controls, and mitigating solutions when making decisions involving the collection, use, sharing, retention, disclosure, and destruction of personally identifiable information. It is also responsible for investigating and mitigating privacy incidents, supporting the FTC mission with an evolving privacy program, and promoting a culture of privacy among FTC staff, contractors, and third parties.

The Office of Policy Planning assists the Commission to develop and implement long-range competition and consumer protection policy initiatives and advises staff on cases raising new or complex policy and legal issues. One of the Office of Policy Planning's primary roles involves advocacy, submitting filings supporting competition and consumer protection principles to state legislatures, regulatory boards, and officials; state and federal courts; other federal agencies; and professional organizations. The Office also organizes public workshops and issues reports on cutting edge competition and consumer protection topics, addressing questions of substantive antitrust law, industry-specific practices, and significant national and international policy debates.

The Office of International Affairs leads and coordinates the FTC's work in international antitrust, consumer protection, and technical assistance projects. The FTC works with competition and consumer protection agencies around the world to promote cooperation and convergence toward best practices.

The Office of the Secretary oversees prompt processing of all matters presented to the Commission, supports the Commission decision making process, and ensures it operates efficiently. The office also responds to most Congressional and White House correspondence raising constituent issues.

The Office of Technology assists the Commission by strengthening and supporting law enforcement investigations and actions, advising and engaging with FTC staff and the Commission on policy and research initiatives, and engaging with the public and relevant experts to understand trends and to advance the Commission's work.

The Office of the General Counsel is the Commission's chief legal officer and adviser. The office represents the Commission in court and provides legal counsel to the Commission, the three bureaus, and other offices.

The Office of the Executive Director is responsible for the administration and management of the Commission through the Commission's human capital and administrative services organizations.

The Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO) is responsible for agency-wide budget, financial accounting, and acquisition policies and services, as well as program performance reporting, compliance with federal financial management regulations and statutes, and management audit reviews.

The Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) manages and services the FTC's Information Technology (IT) assets. The office ensures IT enables the mission, goals, and objectives of the FTC and promotes the use of technology to improve productivity, efficiency, and effectiveness of operations.

The Office of Administrative Law Judges performs the initial adjudicative fact-finding in Commission administrative complaint proceedings, guided by the FTC Act, the Administrative Procedure Act, relevant case law interpreting these statutes, and the FTC's Rules of Practice. Administrative Law Judges are independent decision makers, appointed under the authority of the Office of Personnel Management.

The Office of Inspector General is an independent and objective organization within the FTC, established in compliance with the Inspector General Act Amendments of 1988. Under the Inspector General Act, the office conducts audits and investigations relating to the programs and operations of the FTC.

For more information about the agency's components, visit the FTC's Bureaus and Offices webpage.

Appendix

FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION · UNITED STATES OF AMERICA · MCMXV

Protecting Consumers: Budget by Activity

($ in thousands)

	FY 2025 FTE	FY 2025 Dollars	FY 2026 FTE	FY 2026 Dollars
Privacy and Identity Protection	71	$17,710	63	$15,412
Financial Practices	74	18,461	70	17,132
Marketing Practices	75	18,726	70	17,156
Advertising Practices	69	17,209	66	16,149
Enforcement	59	14,719	55	13,457
Consumer Response and Operations	25	19,861	23	19,733
Litigation Technology and Analysis	38	9,516	36	8,848
Consumer and Business Education	20	7,892	16	6,900
Economic and Consumer Policy Analysis	3	709	3	701
Management	4	974	4	959
Subtotal Direct	**438**	**$125,777**	**406**	**$116,447**
Support	145	$87,395	145	$78,135
Total	**583**	**$213,172**	**551**	**$194,582**

Promoting Competition: Budget by Activity

($ in thousands)

	FY 2025 FTE	FY 2025 Dollars	FY 2026 FTE	FY 2026 Dollars
Premerger Notification	17	$4,699	15	$4,191
Merger and Joint Venture Enforcement	224	60,107	201	54,428
Merger and Joint Venture Compliance	9	2,487	8	2,236
Nonmerger Enforcement	172	46,617	155	42,443
Nonmerger Compliance	1	276	1	279
Antitrust Policy Analysis	8	1,971	7	1,728
Other Direct	20	5,367	18	4,893
Subtotal	**451**	**$121,524**	**405**	**$110,198**
Support	149	$91,004	144	$78,820
Total	**600**	**$212,528**	**549**	**$189,018**

Proposed Appropriations Language

Salaries and Expenses

For necessary expenses of the Federal Trade Commission, including uniforms or allowances therefor, as authorized by 5 U.S.C. 5901-5902; services as authorized by 5 U.S.C. 3109; hire of passenger motor vehicles; and not to exceed $2,000 for official reception and representation expenses, $383,600,000, to remain available until expended, of which not less than $2,700,000 shall be for necessary expenses of the Office of Inspector General: Provided, That not to exceed $300,000 shall be available for use to contract with a person or persons for collection services in accordance with the terms of 31 U.S.C. 3718: Provided further, That, notwithstanding any other provision of law, not to exceed $300,954,000 of offsetting collections derived from fees collected for premerger notification filings under the Hart-Scott-Rodino Antitrust Improvements Act of 1976 (15 U.S.C. 18a), regardless of the year of collection, shall be retained and used for necessary expenses in this appropriation: Provided further, That, notwithstanding any other provision of law, not to exceed $15,000,000 in offsetting collections derived from fees to implement and enforce the Telemarketing Sales Rule, promulgated under the Telemarketing and Consumer Fraud and Abuse Prevention Act (15 U.S.C. 6101 et seq.), shall be credited to this account, and be retained and used for necessary expenses in this appropriation: Provided further, That the sum herein appropriated from the general fund shall be reduced as such offsetting collections are received during fiscal year 2026 so as to result in a final fiscal year 2026 appropriation from the general fund estimated at no more than $67,646,000: Provided further, That none of the funds made available to the Federal Trade Commission may be used to implement subsection (e)(2)(B) of section 43 of the Federal Deposit Insurance Act (12 U.S.C. 1831t).

Program and Financing

($ in millions)

Identification Code: 29-0100-0-1-376		FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Estimate	FY 2026 Estimate
Obligations by Program Activity:				
0001	Protecting Consumers	225	213	195
0002	Promoting Competition	228	213	189
0192	Subtotal, direct program	453	426	384
0799	Total direct obligations	453	426	384
0803	Reimbursable program	1	2	1
0900	Total new obligations, unexpired accounts	454	428	385
Budgetary Resources:				
	Unobligated Balance:			
1000	Unobligated balance brought forward, Oct 1	67	53	57
1011	Unobligated balance transfer from other acct [047-0616]	3	---	---
1021	Recoveries of prior year unpaid obligations	11	4	5
1070	Unobligated balance (total)	81	57	62
	Budget Authority:			
	Appropriations, discretionary:			
1100	Appropriation	167	141	68
1130	Appropriations permanently reduced	---	---	---
1160	Appropriation, discretionary (total)	167	141	68
	Appropriations, mandatory:			
1200	Appropriation	---	---	---
1230	Appropriations permanently reduced	---	---	---
1260	Appropriation, mandatory (total)	---	---	---
	Spending authority from offsetting collections, discretionary:			
1700	Offsetting collections (cash) - HSR	245	271	301
1700	Offsetting collections (cash) - Do Not Call	16	14	15
1700	Offsetting collections (cash) - Reimb	1	2	1
1701	Change in uncollected payments, Federal sources	-1	---	---
1702	Offsetting collections (previously unavailable)	---	---	---
1724	Spending authority from offsetting collections precluded from obligation (limitation on obligations)	-2	---	---
1750	Spending authority from offsetting collections, discretionary (total)	259	287	317
1900	Budget authority (total)	426	428	385
1930	Total budgetary resources available	507	485	447
Memorandum (non-add) entries:				
1941	Unexpired unobligated balance, end of year	53	57	62
Change in Obligated Balances:				
	Unpaid Obligations:			
3000	Unpaid obligations, brought forward, Oct 1	97	86	173
3010	New obligations, unexpired accounts	454	428	385
3020	Outlays (gross)	-454	-337	-361
3040	Recoveries of prior year unpaid obligations, unexpired	-11	-4	-5
3050	Unpaid obligations, end of year	86	173	192
	Uncollected payments:			
3060	Uncollected pymts, Fed sources, brought forward, Oct 1	-2	-1	-1
3070	Change in uncollected paymts, Federal sources, unexpired	1	---	---
3090	Uncollected pymts, Fed sources, end of year	-1	-1	-1
	Memorandum (non-add) entries:			
3100	Obligated balance, start of year	95	85	172
3200	Obligated balance, end of year	85	172	191

Identification Code: 29-0100-0-1-376		FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Estimate	FY 2026 Estimate
Budget Authority and Outlays (net):				
	Discretionary:			
4000	Budget authority, gross	426	428	385
	Outlays, gross:			
4010	Outlays from new discretionary authority	380	198	131
4011	Outlays from discretionary balances	73	138	230
4020	Outlays, gross (total)	453	336	361
	Offsets against gross budget authority and outlays:			
	Offsetting collections (collected) from:			
4030	Federal sources	-1	-2	-1
4033	Non-Federal sources	---	---	---
4034	Offsetting governmental collections	-261	-285	-316
4040	Offsets against gross budget authority and outlays (total)	-262	-287	-317
	Additional offsets against gross budget authority only:			
4050	Change in uncollected pymts, Fed sources, unexpired	1	---	---
4070	Budget authority, net (discretionary)	165	141	68
4080	Outlays, net (discretionary)	191	49	44
	Mandatory:			
4090	Budget authority, gross	---	---	---
	Outlays, gross:			
4100	Outlays from new mandatory authority	---	---	---
4101	Outlays from mandatory balances	1	1	---
4110	Outlays, gross (total)	1	1	---
4160	Budget authority, net (mandatory)	---	---	---
4170	Outlays, net (mandatory)	1	1	---
4180	Budget authority, net (total)	165	141	68
4190	Outlays, net (total)	192	50	44
	Memorandum (non-add) entries:			
5090	Unexpired unavailable balance, SOY: Offsetting collections	---	2	2
5092	Unexpired unavailable balance, EOY: Offsetting collections	2	2	2
	Unexpended balance memorandum entries:			
5311	Direct unobligated balance, start of year	65	51	---
5312	Reimbursable unobligated balance, start of year	2	1	---
5313	Discretionary unobligated balance, start of year	67	51	---
5314	Mandatory unobligated balance, start of year	---	1	---
5321	Direct unobligated balance, end of year	51	---	---
5322	Reimbursable unobligated balance, end of year	1	---	---
5323	Discretionary unobligated balance, end of year	51	---	---
5324	Mandatory unobligated balance, end of year	1	---	---
5331	Direct obligated balance, start of year	96	86	---
5332	Reimbursable obligated balance, start of year	-2	-1	---
5333	Discretionary obligated balance, start of year	92	85	---
5334	Mandatory obligated balance, start of year	3	---	---
5341	Direct obligated balance, end of year	86	---	---
5342	Reimbursable obligated balance, end of year	-1	---	---
5343	Discretionary obligated balance, end of year	85	---	---
5344	Mandatory obligated balance, end of year	---	---	---

Object Classification
($ in millions)

Identification Code: 29-0100-0-1-376	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Estimate	FY 2026 Estimate
Direct Obligations			
Personnel Compensation:			
11.1 Full-time permanent	200	200	187
11.3 Other than full-time permanent	11	---	---
11.5 Other personnel compensation	7	5	4
11.8 Special personal services payments	1	---	---
11.9 Total, Personnel Compensation	**219**	**205**	**191**
12.1 Civilian personnel benefits	74	72	67
13.0 Benefits for former personnel	1	---	---
21.0 Travel and transportation of persons	2	3	2
22.0 Transportation of things	---	---	---
23.1 Rental payments to GSA	26	26	12
23.2 Rental payments to others	---	---	---
23.3 Communications, utilities, and miscellaneous charges	5	5	5
24.0 Printing and reproduction	3	3	3
25.1 Advisory and assistance services	92	82	74
25.2 Other services from non-Federal sources	6	5	5
25.3 Other goods and services from Federal sources	---	---	---
25.4 Operation and maintenance of facilities	2	2	2
25.7 Operation and maintenance of equipment	19	21	21
26.0 Supplies and materials	---	---	---
31.0 Equipment	3	1	1
32.0 Land and structures	1	1	1
42.0 Insurance claims and indemnities	---	---	---
44.0 Refunds	---	---	---
99.0 Subtotal, Direct Obligations	**453**	**426**	**384**
Reimbursable Obligations			
Personnel Compensation:			
22.1 Travel and transportation of persons	1	2	1
99.0 Subtotal, Reimbursable Obligations	**1**	**2**	**1**
99.9 Total, New Obligations	**454**	**428**	**385**

Personnel Summary

Identification Code: 29-0100-0-1-376	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Estimate[1]	FY 2026 Estimate
Direct			
1001 Full-time equivalent employment	1,292	1,235	1,100
Reimbursable			
2001 Full-time equivalent employment [2]	2	1	1

[1] This represents the FTC's projected FTE utilization for FY 2025. The FY 2025 column of the Budget Request Summary table (found on page 8) indicates 1,183 FTE. This represents the FTE level the agency can afford with new funding authority. The remaining 52 FTE (1,235 – 1,183 = 52) will be funded with carryover.

[2] Includes 1 FTE reimbursed by other federal agencies

Inspector General's Request

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
Federal Trade Commission
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20580

Office of Inspector General

May 29, 2025

In accordance with the requirements of Section 6(g)(1) of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (as amended), the Federal Trade Commission's Office of the Inspector General (OIG) submits the following information related to its requested budget for FY 2026:

- OIG requests aggregate funding of $2,751,700 for FY 2026.
- OIG requests $36,300 for all training needs. The requested amount satisfies all training requirements for the OIG in FY 2026.
- OIG requests $11,007 for support of the Council of Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency (CIGIE). The requested amount satisfies all requirements for the OIG's CIGIE contribution in FY 2026.

FY 2025 Budget $ in thousands		FY 2026 Estimate $ in thousands		Change $ in thousands	
Full Time Equivalents	Amount	Full Time Equivalents	Amount	Full Time Equivalents	Amount
10	$2,751.7	10	$2,751.7	0	$0

MARISSA GOULD Digitally signed by MARISSA GOULD Date: 2025.05.29 10:03:05 -04'00'

Marissa Gould
Inspector General
Federal Trade Commission