

Click on the Introduction to the CBO (Congressional Budget Office).

1. What does the CBO do? (pg 1) The CBO provides the Congress with budget projections. They conduct analysis and produce dozens of reports and hundreds of cost estimates for proposed legislation. The projections focus on the upcoming 30 years and shows the effects of demographic trends, economic developments, and rising health care costs on federal spending, revenues and deficits.
2. What are the baseline budget projections? (pg1) They are regularly published projections of the economic outcomes on the assumption that laws are the same and federal spending and revenues are static as well.
3. How far out do the cost estimates project? (pg1) They are produced several times a year but the projections go over a 10 year period. They are focused on the upcoming 30 years. They are issued each January and updated in August or March.
4. What do analytic reports look at? (pg2) They look at specific federal spending programs, aspects of the tax code, and budgetary and economic difficulties. The reports cover health care, economic growth, social insurance, income security, taxes, energy, the environment, national security, financial issues, education, infrastructure, and much more. They propose solutions and options for possible changes.
5. Who requests most CBO Reports? (pg2) They are requested by the Chairman or Ranking member of a committee or subcommittee. They can also be requested by the leadership of either political party in the House of Senate.
6. What are budget options? (pg2) They are the options that the CBO creates in order to ensure the best transition and smooth out edges to ensure the stability of the plan.
7. What are working papers? (pg3) They include papers that provide technical descriptions of CBO analysis and appear. The papers are used to clear the work and advocates for the review of the work. These working papers are not subject to the CBO's regular review and edits.
8. What kind of methods does the CBO use in its analyses? (pg3) They use a detailed understanding of the federal programs and tax code. They carefully read relevant research, and the produce and report extensive analysis of data collected by the

government statistical agencies and by private organizations. The data can include national income, product accounts, surveys of labor market conditions, the Statistics of Income database, and more. They also consult a plethora of outside reports and experts, including professors, analysts, representatives of industry, and other private-sector experts.

9. Who reviews the CBO's work? (pg4) They are reviewed internally inside the CBO. This process includes more than 1 person as the work travels through levels of the organization. The agency can also obtain a review from the Panel of Economic Advisors and the Panel of Health Advisors.
10. What are CBO's economic forecasts based on? (pg4) Their forecasts factor in many variables such as the gross domestic product, unemployment rate, inflation, and interest rates. They draw these information for their forecasts from analysis of current economic events. They are also based on current laws governing federal taxes and spending.
11. What did the Budget Resolution of May 2015 do? (pg5) The House and Senate would pass a budget resolution that would make the CBO also incorporate macroeconomics into the estimates for major legislation. Macroeconomics required complex modeling and a lot of time, so they can only be produced for major proposals if time is plentiful.
12. What steps does the CBO take to ensure the objectivity of its analysis? (pg7 and 8) They take a number of steps to ensure their work is unbiased and objective. The first is the careful analysis by the analysts of research and data collected. Next, the CBO goes to consult with many other experts and professionals such as professors, experts, and representatives from intellectual groups. After that, they go into an intense review process to look at the analysis. They go through a hierarchy at the CBO and each level reviews it. Fourth, the CBO doesn't make any policy recommendations because it can become biased or value judgement which the CBO isn't allowed to do. Lastly, the CBO enacts stricts rules to ensure the nonpartisan and unbiased nature of their employees. They don't want any corruption going on as it is possible that some may let their financial interests get in the way.

13. How many people on the CBO staff? (pg 10) There are about 235 staff members and most of these members are economists or public policy analysts with advanced degrees. However, the agency also employs lawyers, information specialists, editors, and other professionals.