

RESERVE FUNDS

Oregon currently has two reserve funds - The Education Stability Fund (ESF) and the Oregon Rainy Day Fund (RDF). The Education Stability Fund was created in 2002 as a constitutional amendment with House Joint Resolution 80 during the third special session of 2002 and subsequent passage by voters. The Oregon Rainy Day Fund was created in 2007 with the passage of HB 2707.

Education Stability Fund

The Legislature referred HJR 80 to the voters at a special election held in September 2002. Voters approved the resolution, thereby converting the former Education Endowment Fund into the Education Stability Fund. Since July 1, 2003, the fund has received 18% of lottery net proceeds. The size of the fund is limited to 5% of General Fund revenue in the prior biennium. If the fund exceeds this limit, the lottery deposits stop until its size is drawn down to below the limit.

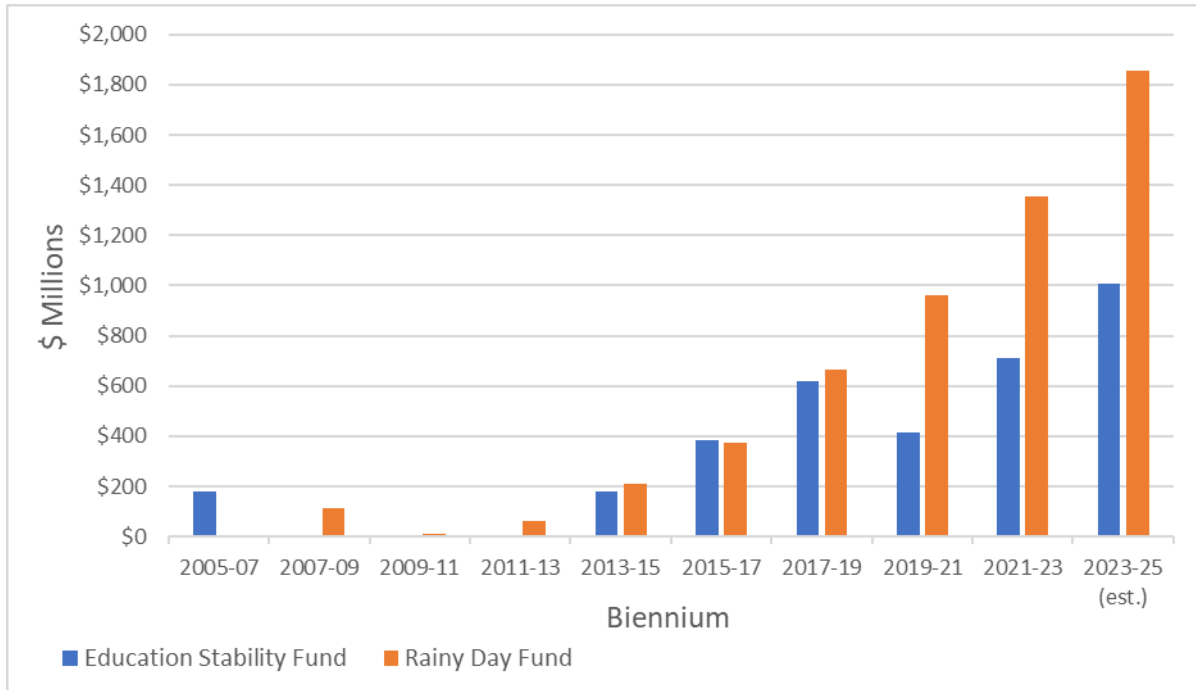
To access the fund, there are three different types of triggers: economic, budgetary, and political. The economic trigger is that there must be two or more consecutive quarters with a decline in seasonally adjusted non-farm payroll employment within the prior 12 months. The first budgetary trigger is that the final quarterly forecast of the biennium indicates that the General Fund revenue in the following biennium will be at least 3% less than the appropriations in the current biennium. The second is that the quarterly General Fund forecast for the current biennium projects revenue to be at least 2% below the forecast used for the legislatively adopted budget. The first political trigger is that a 3/5 vote in each house is required to access the funds; this is an additional requirement that must be met after at least one of the economic or budgetary triggers have been met. In the absence of those triggers, the funds can still be accessed if the Governor declares an emergency and 3/5 of each chamber approves. Use of the funds is restricted to expenditures on public education, which is broadly defined to include all levels from pre-Kindergarten through higher education as well as continuing education and workforce training.

Rainy Day Fund

The 2007 Legislature, by a 2/3 vote in each chamber, implemented a constitutional one-time exception to suspend the \$344 million corporate kicker credit and used the funds to create the Oregon Rainy Day Fund. As for ongoing contributions, the legislation required the deposit of the General Fund ending balance up to 1% of General Fund appropriations, beginning with the 2007-2009 biennium. The 2009 Legislature added another continuing source of deposits into the fund. As part of the corporation income tax increase

passed -- and subsequently approved by voters -- a portion of that increase has been dedicated to this fund. At the time, any corporation income tax collections due to a tax rate above 6.6% was deposited into the fund. That threshold has changed over the years and currently sits at 7.2%. The fund is capped at 7.5% of General Fund revenue in the prior biennium. If the cap is reached, the dedicated revenues revert to the General Fund until the fund falls back below the cap. To access the funds, the triggers are the same as those described above for the Education Stability Fund, except for an emergency declaration by the Governor. Withdrawals are not allowed to exceed 2/3 of the beginning balance for any biennium.

At the end of the 2021-23 biennium, the ESF had a balance of \$711 million and the RDF had a balance of \$1,354 million. The chart below shows the balances at the end of each biennium since 2005-07. For 2023-25, the projection as of the December 2023 forecast is that the ESF will have \$1,008 million and the RDF will have roughly \$1,866 million.



² From the Legislative Fiscal Office's report [2023-25 Budget Highlights](#).