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# Office of the People's Counsel

[www.opc-dc.gov](http://www.opc-dc.gov)

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Description	FY 2012 Actual	FY 2013 Approved	FY 2014 Proposed	% Change from FY 2013
Operating Budget	\$4,985,582	\$6,115,878	\$6,565,523	7.4
FTEs	29.5	36.4	38.4	5.5

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The mission of the Office of the People's Counsel ("OPC" or "Office") is to advocate for the provision of safe and reliable quality utility service and equitable treatment at rates that are just, reasonable, and nondiscriminatory; assist individual consumers in disputes with utility providers; provide technical assistance, education and outreach to consumers and ratepayers, community groups, associations and the Consumer Utility Board; and provide legislative analysis and information to the Council of the District of Columbia on matters relating to utilities. The Office's mission further includes consideration of the District's economy and promotion of the environmental sustainability of the District. Specifically, OPC's mission includes:

- Advocating on behalf of District consumers in adjudicatory and regulatory proceedings before the D.C. Public Service Commission, federal agencies and courts;
- Representing District consumers in individual disputes involving gas, electric and telephone companies providing residential service in the District of Columbia;
- Educating consumers about ongoing and emerging utility issues;
- Collaborating and forming alliances with District agencies and other stakeholders involved in the utility regulatory process;
- Informing and advising District policy makers, including the Executive Office of the Mayor and the District Council, of emerging utility issues affecting their constituents;
- Advising the District Council on the need for legislative action to address consumer-based utility issues;
- Serving as a statutory member on the Sustainable Energy Utility Advisory Board to assist in the development of a city-wide sustainable energy policy; and
- Providing consultative services and technical assistance to utility consumers to facilitate their participation in utility proceedings and to ensure that their interests are adequately represented in these proceedings.

## Summary of Services

OPC is a party to all utility-related proceedings before the D.C. Public Service Commission and represents the interests of District ratepayers before local and federal regulatory agencies and courts. The Office assists individual consumers in disputes with utility companies about billing or services and provides consumer education and outreach to community groups and associations on emerging issues impacting the quality, reliability and affordability of their utility services and associated environmental issues. The Office provides technical assistance to consumers, the Consumer Utility Board (CUB), as well as other District community groups. OPC also provides legislative analysis for, assistance to, and testimony before, the District Council on utility matters.

The agency's FY 2014 proposed budget is presented in the following tables:

### FY 2014 Proposed Gross Funds Operating Budget, by Revenue Type

Table DJ0-1 contains the proposed FY 2014 agency budget compared to the FY 2013 approved budget. It also provides FY 2011 and FY 2012 actual expenditures.

**Table DJ0-1**

(dollars in thousands)

Appropriated Fund	Actual FY 2011	Actual FY 2012	Approved FY 2013	Proposed FY 2014	Change from FY 2013	Percent Change*
<b>General Fund</b>						
Special Purpose Revenue Funds	4,960	4,986	6,116	6,566	450	7.4
<b>Total for General Fund</b>	<b>4,960</b>	<b>4,986</b>	<b>6,116</b>	<b>6,566</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>7.4</b>
<b>Gross Funds</b>	<b>4,960</b>	<b>4,986</b>	<b>6,116</b>	<b>6,566</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>7.4</b>

\*Percent change is based on whole dollars.

Note: If applicable, for a breakdown of each Grant (Federal and Private), Special Purpose Revenue type and Intra-District agreement, please refer to Schedule 80 Agency Summary by Revenue Source in the FY 2014 Operating Appendices located on the Office of the Chief Financial Officer's website.

### FY 2014 Proposed Full-Time Equivalents, by Revenue Type

Table DJ0-2 contains the proposed FY 2014 FTE level compared to the FY 2013 approved FTE level by revenue type. It also provides FY 2011 and FY 2012 actual data.

**Table DJ0-2**

Appropriated Fund	Actual FY 2011	Actual FY 2012	Approved FY 2013	Proposed FY 2014	Change from FY 2013	Percent Change
<b>General Fund</b>						
Special Purpose Revenue Funds	32.4	29.5	36.4	38.4	2.0	5.5
<b>Total for General Fund</b>	<b>32.4</b>	<b>29.5</b>	<b>36.4</b>	<b>38.4</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>5.5</b>
<b>Total Proposed FTEs</b>	<b>32.4</b>	<b>29.5</b>	<b>36.4</b>	<b>38.4</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>5.5</b>

## FY 2014 Proposed Operating Budget, by Comptroller Source Group

Table DJ0-3 contains the proposed FY 2014 budget at the Comptroller Source Group (object class) level compared to the FY 2013 approved budget. It also provides FY 2011 and FY 2012 actual expenditures.

**Table DJ0-3**  
(dollars in thousands)

Comptroller Source Group	Actual FY 2011	Actual FY 2012	Approved FY 2013	Proposed FY 2014	Change from FY 2013	Percent Change*
11 - Regular Pay - Continuing Full Time	2,768	2,834	3,435	3,658	223	6.5
12 - Regular Pay - Other	0	27	0	0	0	N/A
13 - Additional Gross Pay	59	12	0	0	0	N/A
14 - Fringe Benefits - Current Personnel	477	483	629	695	66	10.5
15 - Overtime Pay	0	0	0	0	0	N/A
<b>Subtotal Personal Services (PS)</b>	<b>3,304</b>	<b>3,355</b>	<b>4,064</b>	<b>4,353</b>	<b>289</b>	<b>7.1</b>
20 - Supplies and Materials	31	46	40	40	0	0.0
30 - Energy, Comm. and Building Rentals	0	0	1	1	0	2.2
31 - Telephone, Telegraph, Telegram, Etc.	32	32	29	30	1	5.0
32 - Rentals - Land and Structures	836	712	1,031	944	-87	-8.5
35 - Occupancy Fixed Costs	0	6	6	62	55	888.2
40 - Other Services and Charges	373	511	484	475	-9	-1.8
41 - Contractual Services - Other	254	236	272	472	200	73.5
70 - Equipment and Equipment Rental	130	87	189	189	0	0.0
<b>Subtotal Nonpersonal Services (NPS)</b>	<b>1,656</b>	<b>1,631</b>	<b>2,052</b>	<b>2,213</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>7.8</b>
<b>Gross Funds</b>	<b>4,960</b>	<b>4,986</b>	<b>6,116</b>	<b>6,566</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>7.4</b>

\*Percent change is based on whole dollars.

### Program Description

The Office of the People's Counsel operates through the following 3 programs:

**Office of People's Counsel** – provides consumer advocacy for utility consumers in the District so that they can receive quality utility service and equitable treatment at rates that are just, reasonable, and nondiscriminatory.

This program contains the following 2 activities:

- **Consumer Advocacy and Representation** – provides legal and technical analysis and consumer advocacy services for District consumers to ensure safe, reliable services at rates that are just, reasonable, and consistent with new statutory mandates; and advocates for the conservation of natural resources of the District, consideration of the economy, and the preservation of environmental quality; and
- **Public Information Dissemination** – provides consumer education and outreach and technical assistance to District consumers so that they can understand their rights as ratepayers and make informed decisions about their utility services.

**Agency Management** – provides for administrative support and the required tools to achieve operational and programmatic results. This program is standard for all agencies using performance-based budgeting.

**Agency Financial Operations** – provides comprehensive and efficient financial management services to, and on behalf of, District agencies so that the financial integrity of the District of Columbia is maintained. This program is standard for all agencies using performance-based budgeting.

### Program Structure Change

The Office of the People’s Counsel has no program structure changes in the FY 2014 proposed budget.

## FY 2014 Proposed Operating Budget and FTEs, by Program and Activity

Table DJ0-4 contains the proposed FY 2014 budget by program and activity compared to the FY 2013 approved budget. It also provides the FY 2012 actual data.

**Table DJ0-4**

(dollars in thousands)

Program/Activity	Dollars in Thousands				Full-Time Equivalents			
	Actual FY 2012	Approved FY 2013	Proposed FY 2014	Change from FY 2013	Actual FY 2012	Approved FY 2013	Proposed FY 2014	Change from FY 2013
<b>(1000) Agency Management</b>								
(1010) Personnel	86	116	90	-26	1.1	1.2	1.0	-0.2
(1020) Contracting and Procurement	142	170	195	25	1.7	1.4	2.0	0.6
(1030) Property Management	967	1,329	1,297	-32	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
(1040) Information Technology	198	356	228	-128	2.6	3.0	2.0	-1.0
(1050) Financial Management	116	125	124	-1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
(1070) Fleet Management	0	10	13	3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
(1085) Customer Service	42	48	43	-6	0.9	1.0	1.0	0.0
<b>Subtotal (1000) Agency Management</b>	<b>1,551</b>	<b>2,154</b>	<b>1,989</b>	<b>-165</b>	<b>6.3</b>	<b>6.6</b>	<b>6.0</b>	<b>-0.6</b>
<b>(100F) Agency Financial Operations</b>								
(110F) Budget Operations	180	267	285	17	1.2	2.4	2.4	0.0
<b>Subtotal (100F) Agency Financial Operations</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>285</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>0.0</b>
<b>(2000) Office of People’s Counsel</b>								
(2010) Consumer Advocacy and Representation	2,081	2,456	2,819	362	12.2	16.0	16.2	0.1
(2020) Public Information Dissemination	1,174	1,239	1,473	234	9.7	11.3	13.8	2.5
<b>Subtotal (2000) Office of People’s Counsel</b>	<b>3,254</b>	<b>3,695</b>	<b>4,292</b>	<b>597</b>	<b>21.9</b>	<b>27.4</b>	<b>30.0</b>	<b>2.6</b>
<b>Total Proposed Operating Budget</b>	<b>4,986</b>	<b>6,116</b>	<b>6,566</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>29.5</b>	<b>36.4</b>	<b>38.4</b>	<b>2.0</b>

(Change is calculated by whole numbers and numbers may not add up due to rounding)

**Note:** For more detailed information regarding the proposed funding for the activities within this agency’s programs, please see **Schedule 30-PBB Program Summary by Activity** in the **FY 2014 Operating Appendices** located on the Office of the Chief Financial Officer’s website.

## FY 2014 Proposed Budget Changes

The Office of the People's Counsel's (OPC) proposed FY 2014 gross budget is \$6,565,523, which represents a 7.4 percent increase over its FY 2013 approved gross budget of \$6,115,878. The budget is comprised entirely of Special Purpose Revenue funds.

### Agency Budget Submission

**Increase:** The Office of the People's Counsel is mandated to attend and record formal cases regarding disputes between utility companies and District consumers. This obligation will require \$200,000 in additional funding in FY 2014. The fixed cost estimates for Occupancy, Telephone, and Energy will increase by \$55,462, \$1,450, and \$20, respectively, for a total of \$56,932, and Fringe Benefits will increase by \$14,223.

**Decrease:** According to the Department of General Services, the Rent cost estimate should be reduced by \$87,138. The agency will downgrade several vacant positions and rely less on printing and advertising, saving \$48,976, and \$8,945, respectively.

### Mayor's Proposed Budget

**Cost-of-Living Adjustment:** This agency received a proposed cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) in non-Local funds. This adjustment includes \$122,700 in Special Purpose Revenue funds.

**Increase:** OPC will receive 2.0 FTEs and \$200,848 in funding for engineers that will support the District's task force on undergrounding power lines.

### District's Proposed Budget

The Office of the People's Counsel has no changes from the FY 2014 Mayor's proposed budget to the FY 2014 District's proposed budget.

## FY 2013 Approved Budget to FY 2014 Proposed Budget, by Revenue Type

Table DJ0-5 itemizes the changes by revenue type between the FY 2013 approved budget and the FY 2014 proposed budget.

**Table DJ0-5**

(dollars in thousands)

	PROGRAM	BUDGET	FTE
<b>SPECIAL PURPOSE REVENUE FUNDS: FY 2013 Approved Budget and FTE</b>		<b>6,116</b>	<b>36.4</b>
Increase: Mandatory case hearings	Office of People's Counsel	200	0.0
Increase: Fixed cost estimates for majority Occupancy, Telephone, and Energy	Agency Management	57	0.0
Increase: Fringe Benefits	Multiple Programs	14	0.0
Decrease: Fixed cost estimate for Rent from the Department of General Services	Agency Management	-87	0.0
Decrease: Downgrading of vacant positions	Multiple Programs	-49	0.0
Decrease: Printing and advertising	Multiple Programs	-9	0.0
<b>SPECIAL PURPOSE REVENUE FUNDS: FY 2014 Agency Budget Submission</b>		<b>6,242</b>	<b>36.4</b>
Cost-of-Living Adjustment: FY 2014 proposed adjustment	Multiple Programs	123	0.0
Increase: Undergrounding task force	Office of People's Counsel	201	2.0
<b>SPECIAL PURPOSE REVENUE FUNDS: FY 2014 Mayor's Proposed Budget</b>		<b>6,566</b>	<b>38.4</b>
No Changes		0	0.0
<b>SPECIAL PURPOSE REVENUE FUNDS: FY 2014 District's Proposed Budget</b>		<b>6,566</b>	<b>38.4</b>
<b>Gross for DJ0 - Office of the People's Counsel</b>		<b>6,566</b>	<b>38.4</b>

(Change is calculated by whole numbers and numbers may not add up due to rounding)

## Agency Performance Plan

The agency's performance plan has the following objectives for FY 2014:

**Objective 1:** Ensure effective advocacy on behalf of consumers and ratepayers of natural gas, electric, and telephone services in the District.

**Objective 2:** Provide community education outreach and technical assistance to District ratepayers and consumers on matters relating to utilities.

**Objective 3:** Provide assistance to individual consumers regarding their billing and service complaints against the utilities.

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### KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

<b>Measure</b>	<b>FY 2011 Actual</b>	<b>FY 2012 Target</b>	<b>FY 2012 Actual</b>	<b>FY 2013 Projection</b>	<b>FY 2014 Projection</b>	<b>FY 2015 Projection</b>
Number of consumer education and outreach meetings/encounters attended	135	160	222	160	165	167
Percentage of consumer complaints closed	100%	90%	94%	90%	90%	90%
Number of limited and non-English speaking persons served by the agency	1,744	Not Available <sup>1</sup>	2,052	2,200	2,400	2,450

**Performance Plan Endnotes:**

<sup>1</sup>This is a new measurement for FY 2014; however, there is historical data on record.