

Office of the Tenant Advocate

www.ota.dc.gov

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Table CQ0-1

	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	% Change from
Description	Actual	Actual	Approved	Approved	FY 2021
OPERATING BUDGET	\$5,236,944	\$3,086,079	\$4,010,396	\$4,136,582	3.1
FTEs	20.9	20.6	24.0	33.0	37.5
CAPITAL BUDGET	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	N/A
FTEs	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	N/A

The mission of the Office of the Tenant Advocate (OTA) is to provide technical advice and other legal services to tenants regarding disputes with landlords; to educate and inform the tenant community about tenant rights and rental housing matters; to advocate for the rights and interests of District renters in the legislative, regulatory, and judicial contexts; and to provide financial assistance to displaced tenants for certain emergency housing and tenant relocation expenses.

Summary of Services

OTA provides a range of services to the tenant community to further each aspect of its mission. The agency:

- Advises tenants on resolving disputes with landlords, identifies legal issues and the rights and responsibilities of tenants and landlords, and provides legal and technical assistance for further action such as filing tenant petitions;
- Provides in-house representation for tenants in certain cases and refers other cases to pro bono or contracted legal service providers and attorneys;
- Works with other governmental and non-governmental officials and entities, including the Council, the Mayor's office, executive agencies, the courts, tenant stakeholders, advocates, and others, to promote better tenant protection laws and policies in the District;
- Conducts educational seminars in a variety of contexts to inform tenants about their rights and other rental housing concerns; and
- Provides short-term housing assistance (usually hotel stays) for certain emergency housing and relocation expenses to tenants displaced by fires, floods, and governmental property closures.

The agency's FY 2022 approved budget is presented in the following tables:

FY 2022 Approved Gross Funds Operating Budget and FTEs, by Revenue Type

Table CQ0-2 contains the approved FY 2022 budget by revenue type compared to the FY 2021 approved budget. It also provides FY 2019 and FY 2020 actual data.

Table CQ0-2

(dollars in thousands)

Appropriated Fund	Dollars in Thousands						Full-Time Equivalents					
	Actual FY 2019	Actual FY 2020	Approved FY 2021	Approved FY 2022	Change from FY 2021	% Change*	Actual FY 2019	Actual FY 2020	Approved FY 2021	Approved FY 2022	Change from FY 2021	% Change
GENERAL FUND												
Local Funds	4,963	2,941	3,467	3,258	-209	-6.0	18.4	19.3	20.6	20.6	0.0	0.0
Special Purpose Revenue Funds	274	145	543	468	-75	-13.9	2.5	1.3	3.4	3.4	0.0	0.0
TOTAL FOR GENERAL FUND	5,237	3,086	4,010	3,726	-284	-7.1	20.9	20.6	24.0	24.0	0.0	0.0
FEDERAL RESOURCES												
Federal Payments	0	0	0	410	410	N/A	0.0	0.0	0.0	9.0	9.0	N/A
TOTAL FOR FEDERAL RESOURCES	0	0	0	410	410	N/A	0.0	0.0	0.0	9.0	9.0	N/A
GROSS FUNDS	5,237	3,086	4,010	4,137	126	3.1	20.9	20.6	24.0	33.0	9.0	37.5

*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 2022 Operating Appendices** located on the Office of the Chief Financial Officer's website.

FY 2022 Approved Operating Budget, by Comptroller Source Group

Table CQ0-3 contains the approved FY 2022 budget at the Comptroller Source Group (object class) level compared to the FY 2021 approved budget. It also provides FY 2019 and FY 2020 actual expenditures.

Table CQ0-3

(dollars in thousands)

Comptroller Source Group	Actual FY 2019	Actual FY 2020	Approved FY 2021	Approved FY 2022	Change from FY 2021	Percentage Change*
11 - Regular Pay - Continuing Full Time	1,564	1,714	2,209	1,989	-220	-10.0
12 - Regular Pay - Other	36	189	39	625	586	1,493.8
13 - Additional Gross Pay	0	3	0	0	0	N/A
14 - Fringe Benefits - Current Personnel	366	454	546	648	102	18.7
15 - Overtime Pay	15	6	12	12	0	0.0
SUBTOTAL PERSONAL SERVICES (PS)	1,981	2,365	2,807	3,275	468	16.7
20 - Supplies and Materials	42	9	18	18	0	0.0
31 - Telecommunications	0	5	0	0	0	N/A
40 - Other Services and Charges	3,105	656	851	831	-20	-2.4
41 - Contractual Services - Other	104	50	309	3	-307	-99.2
70 - Equipment and Equipment Rental	5	0	25	10	-15	-60.0
SUBTOTAL NONPERSONAL SERVICES (NPS)	3,256	721	1,203	861	-342	-28.4
GROSS FUNDS	5,237	3,086	4,010	4,137	126	3.1

*Percent change is based on whole dollars.

FY 2022 Approved Operating Budget and FTEs, by Division/Program and Activity

Table CQ0-4 contains the approved FY 2022 budget by division/program and activity compared to the FY 2021 approved budget. It also provides FY 2019 and FY 2020 actual data. For a more comprehensive explanation of divisions/programs and activities, please see the Division/Program Description section, which follows the table.

Table CQ0-4

(dollars in thousands)

Division/Program and Activity	Dollars in Thousands					Full-Time Equivalents				
	Actual FY 2019	Actual FY 2020	Approved FY 2021	Approved FY 2022	Change from FY 2021	Actual FY 2019	Actual FY 2020	Approved FY 2021	Approved FY 2022	Change from FY 2021
(1000) ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES										
(1040) Information Technology	0	0	129	129	1	0.9	0.7	1.0	1.0	0.0
(1050) Financial Management	0	0	0	50	50	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
(1087) Language Access	8	0	8	8	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
(1090) Performance Management	527	527	643	684	41	5.2	4.1	5.0	5.0	0.0
SUBTOTAL (1000) ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES	535	527	780	872	92	6.1	4.8	6.0	6.0	0.0
(3000) LEGAL REPRESENTATION										
(3015) In-House Legal Representation	988	1,095	1,386	1,491	105	8.9	8.2	10.0	16.0	6.0
(3020) Legal Hotline	111	117	207	167	-40	1.0	1.9	2.0	2.0	0.0
(3030) Legal Service Provider	0	0	0	1	1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
SUBTOTAL (3000) LEGAL REPRESENTATION	1,099	1,213	1,593	1,659	66	9.9	10.1	12.0	18.0	6.0
(4000) POLICY ADVOCACY PROGRAM										
(4010) Policy Advocacy Program	157	311	270	405	135	2.0	1.9	2.0	3.0	1.0
SUBTOTAL (4000) POLICY ADVOCACY PROGRAM	157	311	270	405	135	2.0	1.9	2.0	3.0	1.0
(5000) OTA EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE										
(5010) OTA Educational Institute	162	183	301	341	40	1.0	1.9	2.0	3.0	1.0
SUBTOTAL (5000) OTA EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE	162	183	301	341	40	1.0	1.9	2.0	3.0	1.0
(6000) EMERGENCY HOUSING										
(6010) Emergency Housing	2,990	550	550	550	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
SUBTOTAL (6000) EMERGENCY HOUSING	2,990	550	550	550	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
(8000) CASE MGMT ADMIN AND COMM OUTREACH										
(8010) Case Management Administration	183	253	191	292	101	2.0	1.9	2.0	3.0	1.0
(8020) Community Outreach	93	50	18	18	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
SUBTOTAL (8000) CASE MGMT ADMIN AND COMM OUTREACH	276	303	209	310	101	2.0	1.9	2.0	3.0	1.0
(9000) RENT CONTROL HOUSING CLEARINGHOUSE										
(9010) Rent Control Housing Clearinghouse	18	0	308	0	-308	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
SUBTOTAL (9000) RENT CONTROL HOUSING CLEARINGHOUSE	18	0	308	0	-308	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
TOTAL APPROVED OPERATING BUDGET	5,237	3,086	4,010	4,137	126	20.9	20.6	24.0	33.0	9.0

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

Note: For more detailed information regarding the approved funding for the activities within this agency's programs, please see **Schedule 30-PBB Program Summary by Activity** in the **FY 2022 Operating Appendices** located on the Office of the Chief Financial Officer's website. "No Activity Assigned" indicates budget or actuals that are recorded at the division/program level.

Program Description

The Office of the Tenant Advocate operates through the following 6 programs:

Legal Representation – implements the agency’s statutory duty to represent tenants, at its discretion and as it determines to be in the public interest, in federal or District judicial or administrative proceedings.

This program contains the following 3 activities:

- **In-House Legal Representation** – provides agency clients with in-house legal representation in certain “high-impact” cases, and refers others to pro bono or contracted legal service providers and attorneys, or helps them find other representation;
- **Legal Hotline** – provides general advice regarding tenant rights in response to informal inquiries; provides a web-based “Ask the Director” forum and responds to Mayoral, Council, inter-agency, and community inquiries about tenant rights and rental housing law; and
- **Legal Service Provider** – provides funding to contracted non-profit legal service providers and attorneys; who qualify through the agency’s RFQ process, to enhance their capacity to provide tenants with appropriate legal assistance.

Policy Advocacy – implements the agency’s statutory duty to represent the interests of tenants and tenant organizations in legislative, executive, and judicial issues by advocating for changes in laws and rules. This division also tracks developments in rental housing legislation and regulations at both the local and federal levels, and keeps agency stakeholders apprised; develops legislative, rulemaking, and other policy recommendations, and coordinates policy discussions with governmental and community colleagues, including regular discussions with agency stakeholders; advises tenants, advocates, attorneys, governmental colleagues, and others regarding rental housing laws, and serves as the agency’s in-house statutory and regulatory expert; and provides support to community-based programs that inform tenants regarding their legislative and regulatory legal protections.

OTA Educational Institute – implements the agency’s statutory duty to provide education and outreach to tenants and the community about laws, rules, and other policy matters involving rental housing, including tenant rights under the petition process and formation of tenant organizations. This program also conducts informational presentations in various settings throughout the community; provides a formal series of educational and outreach forums; and develops educational material regarding rental housing laws, rules, and policies.

Emergency Housing – implements the agency’s statutory duty to provide emergency housing assistance to qualified tenants in certain situations by:

- Providing short-term housing assistance (usually hotel stays) to temporarily house tenants displaced by fires, floods, and government closures, and in other appropriate circumstances;
- Providing assistance to tenants regarding the packing, moving, and storing of personal possessions; and
- Coordinating with other District agencies and community-based organizations to ensure that displaced tenants receive appropriate services.

Case Management Administration and Community Outreach – implements, in consultation with OTA attorney advisors, the agency’s statutory duty to advise tenants and tenant organizations on filing complaints and petitions, including petitions in response to disputes with landlords.

This program contains the following 2 activities:

- **Case Management Administration** – provides legal and technical assistance to tenants regarding rental housing disputes with landlords, including identifying legal issues and the tenant’s and the landlord’s

respective rights and responsibilities, and assisting with follow-up action items, such as completing and filing tenant petitions and monitoring rental housing case hearings; and

- **Community Outreach** – provides outreach and educational programs regarding tenant rights and rental housing matters and sends “rapid response” letters to tenants affected by certain administrative actions to apprise them of their rights and of OTA’s availability to provide further assistance.

Administrative 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.

Program Structure Change

The Office of the Tenant Advocate has no program structure changes in the FY 2022 approved budget.

FY 2021 Approved Budget to FY 2022 Approved Budget, by Revenue Type

Table CQ0-5 itemizes the changes by revenue type between the FY 2021 approved budget and the FY 2022 approved budget. For a more comprehensive explanation of changes, please see the FY 2022 Approved Budget Changes section, which follows the table.

Table CQ0-5

(dollars in thousands)

DESCRIPTION	DIVISION/PROGRAM	BUDGET	FTE
LOCAL FUNDS: FY 2021 Approved Budget and FTE		3,467	20.6
Removal of One-Time Costs	Rent Control Housing Clearinghouse	-116	0.0
LOCAL FUNDS: FY 2022 Recurring Budget		3,351	20.6
Increase: To align personal services and Fringe Benefits with projected costs	Multiple Programs	55	0.0
Decrease: To align resources with operational spending goals	Multiple Programs	-148	0.0
LOCAL FUNDS: FY 2022 Mayor’s Proposed Budget		3,258	20.6
No Change		0	0.0
LOCAL FUNDS: FY 2022 District’s Approved Budget		3,258	20.6
FEDERAL PAYMENTS: FY 2021 Approved Budget and FTE		0	0.0
Enhance: ARPA – Municipal Funding to support personal services	Legal Representation	336	4.0
FEDERAL PAYMENTS: FY 2022 Mayor’s Proposed Budget		336	4.0
Enhance: ARPA-Municipal Funding to support additional FTE(s)	OTA Educational Institute	150	2.0
Reduce: ARPA - Municipal Funding to recognize savings from position reclassification	Legal Representation	-75	3.0
FEDERAL PAYMENTS: FY 2022 District’s Approved Budget		410	9.0
SPECIAL PURPOSE REVENUE FUNDS: FY 2021 Approved Budget and FTE		543	3.4
Decrease: To align budget with projected revenues	Multiple Programs	-75	0.0
SPECIAL PURPOSE REVENUE FUNDS: FY 2022 Mayor’s Proposed Budget		468	3.4
No Change		0	0.0
SPECIAL PURPOSE REVENUE FUNDS: FY 2022 District’s Approved Budget		468	3.4
GROSS FOR CQ0 - OFFICE OF THE TENANT ADVOCATE		4,137	33.0

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

FY 2022 Approved Operating Budget Changes

Table CQ0-6 contains the approved FY 2022 budget by fund compared to the FY 2021 approved budget.

Table CQ0-6

Appropriated Fund	FY 2021 Approved	FY 2022 Approved	% Change from FY 2021
Local Funds	\$3,467,119	\$3,258,266	-6.0
Federal Payments	\$0	\$410,490	N/A
Special Purpose Revenue Funds	\$543,277	\$467,826	-13.9
GROSS FUNDS	\$4,010,396	\$4,136,582	3.1

Recurring Budget

The FY 2022 budget for OTA includes a reduction of \$116,000 to account for the removal of one-time funding appropriated in FY 2021 to support the Rent Control Clearinghouse database.

Mayor's Proposed Budget

Increase: OTA's Local funds budget proposal includes a net increase of \$55,421 across multiple programs to align the budget projected salary steps and Fringe Benefits costs.

Decrease: In Local funds, the proposed budget reflects a reduction of \$148,274 across multiple programs to align resources with operational spending goals. In Special Purpose Revenue funds, the proposed budget reflects an decrease of \$75,451 across multiple programs to align the budget with projected revenues.

Enhance: OTA's proposed Federal payment funds budget includes an increase of \$335,610 and 4.0 FTEs in Legal Representation program to support the agency's response to an anticipated increase in eviction cases. This increase in spending is supported by Coronavirus Relief funds from the American Rescue Plan Act.

District's Approved Budget

Enhance: OTA's approved Federal Payment budget includes an increase of \$149,760 to support 2.0 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Outreach Specialist positions in the OTA Educational Institution program. This adjustment also includes an additional 4.0 Term-Limited FTEs consists of two Attorney Advisors and two Paralegals to the Impact Litigation team. This increase in spending is supported by Coronavirus Relief funds from the American Rescue Plan Act.

Reduce: OTA's Federal Payment budget also includes a reduction of \$74,880 and 1.0 FTE to recognize savings from the reclassification of an Attorney position to an Outreach Specialist position. This reduction is part of a reallocation of American Rescue Plan Act funding.