
Office of the Tenant Advocate

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Table CQ0-1

Description	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	% Change
	Actual	Actual	Approved	Approved	from FY 2023
OPERATING BUDGET	\$3,323,283	\$3,672,895	\$4,685,256	\$4,158,298	-11.2
FTEs	22.5	31.8	29.3	24.3	-17.1
CAPITAL BUDGET	\$637,000	\$457,066	\$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 2024 approved budget is presented in the following tables:

FY 2024 Approved Gross Funds Operating Budget and FTEs, by Revenue Type

Table CQ0-2 contains the approved FY 2024 budget by revenue type compared to the FY 2023 approved budget. It also provides FY 2021 and FY 2022 actual data.

Table CQ0-2

(dollars in thousands)

Appropriated Fund	Dollars in Thousands							Full-Time Equivalents					
	Actual	Actual	Approved	Approved	Change	%	Actual	Actual	Approved	Approved	Change	%	
	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2023	Change*	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2023	Change	
GENERAL FUND													
Local Funds	2,872	3,125	3,530	3,341	-189	-5.4	19.5	20.2	19.0	19.0	0.0	0.0	
Special Purpose Revenue Funds	452	409	644	818	174	27.0	3.0	3.1	5.3	5.3	0.0	0.0	
TOTAL FOR GENERAL FUND	3,323	3,534	4,174	4,158	-15	-0.4	22.5	23.3	24.3	24.3	0.0	0.0	
FEDERAL RESOURCES													
Federal Payments	0	139	512	0	-512	-100.0	0.0	8.6	5.0	0.0	-5.0	-100.0	
TOTAL FOR FEDERAL RESOURCES	0	139	512	0	-512	-100.0	0.0	8.6	5.0	0.0	-5.0	-100.0	
GROSS FUNDS	3,323	3,673	4,685	4,158	-527	-11.2	22.5	31.8	29.3	24.3	-5.0	-17.1	

*Percent change is based on whole dollars.

Note: If applicable, for a breakdown of each Grant (Federal and Private) and Special Purpose Revenue type, please refer to **Schedule 80 Agency Summary by Revenue Source** in the **FY 2024 Operating Appendices** located on the Office of the Chief Financial Officer's website.

FY 2024 Approved Operating Budget, by Comptroller Source Group

Table CQ0-3 contains the approved FY 2024 budget at the Comptroller Source Group (object class) level compared to the FY 2023 approved budget. It also provides FY 2021 and FY 2022 actual expenditures.

Table CQ0-3

(dollars in thousands)

Comptroller Source Group	Actual FY 2021	Actual FY 2022	Approved FY 2023	Approved FY 2024	Change from FY 2023	Percentage Change*
11 - Regular Pay - Continuing Full Time	1,666	1,655	1,936	1,925	-11	-0.6
12 - Regular Pay - Other	407	627	892	654	-237	-26.6
13 - Additional Gross Pay	1	78	0	0	0	N/A
14 - Fringe Benefits - Current Personnel	484	540	692	631	-61	-8.8
15 - Overtime Pay	9	9	12	12	0	0.0
SUBTOTAL PERSONAL SERVICES (PS)	2,569	2,908	3,532	3,222	-309	-8.8
20 - Supplies and Materials	8	18	19	19	0	0.0
31 - Telecommunications	0	0	0	0	0	N/A
40 - Other Services and Charges	573	746	759	806	46	6.1
41 - Contractual Services - Other	150	0	365	101	-264	-72.3
70 - Equipment and Equipment Rental	24	0	10	10	0	0.0

*Percent change is based on whole dollars.

FY 2024 Approved Operating Budget and FTEs, by Division/Program and Activity

Table CQ0-4 contains the approved FY 2024 budget by division/program and activity compared to the FY 2023 approved budget. It also provides FY 2021 and FY 2022 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 2021	Actual FY 2022	Approved FY 2023	Approved FY 2024	Change from FY 2023	Actual FY 2021	Actual FY 2022	Approved FY 2023	Approved FY 2024	Change from FY 2023
(1000) ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES										
(1040) Information Technology	2	-2	132	116	-16	0.9	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.0
(1050) Financial Management	0	26	50	50	0	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.3	0.0
(1087) Language Access	0	0	26	26	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
(1090) Performance Management	492	560	631	705	74	4.7	4.8	4.0	4.0	0.0
SUBTOTAL (1000)	494	584	838	897	59	5.6	5.8	5.3	5.3	0.0
(3000) LEGAL REPRESENTATION										
(3015) In-House Legal Representation	1,179	1,293	1,523	1,324	-199	9.3	15.4	12.0	9.0	-3.0
(3020) Legal Hotline	121	171	171	193	22	1.9	2.0	2.0	2.0	0.0
(3030) Legal Service Provider	0	0	1	1	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
SUBTOTAL (3000) LEGAL REPRESENTATION	1,300	1,464	1,695	1,518	-178	11.2	17.4	14.0	11.0	-3.0
(4000) POLICY ADVOCACY PROGRAM										
(4010) Policy Advocacy Program	386	423	415	439	24	1.9	2.9	3.0	3.0	0.0
SUBTOTAL (4000) POLICY ADVOCACY PROGRAM	386	423	415	439	24	1.9	2.9	3.0	3.0	0.0
(5000) OTA EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE										
(5010) OTA Educational Institute	176	380	511	404	-107	1.9	2.9	4.0	3.0	-1.0
SUBTOTAL (5000) OTA EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE	176	380	511	404	-107	1.9	2.9	4.0	3.0	-1.0
(6000) EMERGENCY HOUSING										
(6010) Emergency Housing	524	550	550	580	30	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
SUBTOTAL (6000) EMERGENCY HOUSING	524	550	550	580	30	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
(8000) CASE MANAGEMENT ADM AND COMM OUTREACH										
(8010) Case Management Administration	293	271	306	214	-91	1.9	2.9	3.0	2.0	-1.0
(8020) Community Outreach	0	0	106	106	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
SUBTOTAL (8000) CASE MANAGEMENT ADM AND COMM OUTREACH	293	271	412	321	-91	1.9	2.9	3.0	2.0	-1.0
(9000) RENT CONTROL HOUSING CLEARINGHOUSE										
(9010) Rent Control Housing Clearinghouse	150	0	264	0	-264	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
SUBTOTAL (9000) RENT CONTROL HOUSING CLEARINGHOUSE	150	0	264	0	-264	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
TOTAL APPROVED OPERATING BUDGET	3,323	3,673	4,685	4,158	-527	22.5	31.9	29.3	24.3	-5.0

(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 2024 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 2024 approved budget.

FY 2023 Approved Budget to FY 2024 Approved Budget, by Revenue Type

Table CQ0-5 itemizes the changes by revenue type between the FY 2023 approved budget and the FY 2024 approved budget. For a more comprehensive explanation of changes, please see the FY 2024 Approved Budget Changes section, which follows the table.

Table CQ0-5

(dollars in thousands)

DESCRIPTION	DIVISION/PROGRAM	BUDGET	FTE
LOCAL FUNDS: FY 2023 Approved Budget and FTE		3,530	19.0
Removal of One-Time Costs	Rent Control Housing Clearinghouse	-264	0.0
LOCAL FUNDS: FY 2024 Recurring Budget		3,266	19.0
Increase: To align personal services and Fringe Benefits with projected costs	Multiple Programs	126	0.0
Decrease: To align resources with operational spending goals	Multiple Programs	-113	0.0
Reduce: To recognize savings from a reduction in FTE(s)	Multiple Programs	-215	-2.0
LOCAL FUNDS: FY 2024 Mayor’s Proposed Budget		3,064	17.0
Enhance: To restore OTA staff positions	Multiple Programs	247	2.0
Enhance: To support the Emergency Housing Assistance Program	Emergency Housing	30	0.0
LOCAL FUNDS: FY 2024 District’s Approved Budget		3,341	19.0
FEDERAL PAYMENTS: FY 2023 Approved Budget and FTE		512	5.0
Decrease: ARPA Funding	Multiple Programs	-512	-5.0
FEDERAL PAYMENTS: FY 2024 Mayor’s Proposed Budget		0	0.0
No Change		0	0.0
FEDERAL PAYMENTS: FY 2024 District’s Approved Budget		0	0.0

Table CQ0-5

(dollars in thousands)

DESCRIPTION	DIVISION/PROGRAM	BUDGET	FTE
SPECIAL PURPOSE REVENUE FUNDS: FY 2023 Approved Budget and FTE		644	5.3
Increase: To align resources with operational spending goals	Multiple Programs	130	0.0
Increase: To align personal services and Fringe Benefits with projected costs	Multiple Programs	44	0.0
SPECIAL PURPOSE REVENUE FUNDS: FY 2024 Mayor's Proposed Budget		818	5.3
No Change		0	0.0
SPECIAL PURPOSE REVENUE FUNDS: FY 2024 District's Approved Budget		818	5.3
GROSS FOR CQ0 - OFFICE OF THE TENANT ADVOCATE		4,158	24.3

(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 interagency projects funded within this agency, please see Appendix J, FY 2024 Interagency Budgets, in the Executive Summary budget volume.

FY 2024 Approved Operating Budget Changes

Table CQ0-6 contains the approved FY 2024 budget by fund compared to the FY 2023 approved budget.

Table CQ0-6

Appropriated Fund	FY 2023 Approved	FY 2024 Approved	% Change from FY 2023
Local Funds	\$3,529,841	\$3,340,616	-5.4
Federal Payments	\$511,680	\$0	-100.0
Special Purpose Revenue Funds	\$643,736	\$817,682	27.0
GROSS FUNDS	\$4,685,256	\$4,158,298	-11.2

Recurring Budget

The FY 2024 budget for OTA includes a reduction of \$264,000 to account for the removal of one-time funding appropriated in FY 2023 that supported the Rent Control Clearinghouse Database.

Mayor's Proposed Budget

Increase: In Local funds, OTA proposes an increase of \$126,046 across multiple programs to align personal services and Fringe Benefits with projected costs.

In Special Purpose Revenue (SPR) funds, the proposed budget reflects an increase of \$44,105 across multiple programs to align personal services and Fringe Benefits with projected costs. Also, an increase of \$129,841 across multiple programs to support the Emergency Housing services and the Annual Tenant Summit.

Decrease: In Local funds, OTA proposes a decrease of \$113,458 across multiple programs to align resources with operational spending goals.

In Federal Payments, OTA budget proposes a decrease of \$511,680 and 5.0 Full Time Equivalents (FTEs) in ARPA funding across multiple programs. The decrease in spending supported the Coronavirus Relief Funds from the American Rescue Plan Act.

Reduce: In Local Funds, OTA proposes a decrease of \$214,680 and reduction of 2.0 FTEs across multiple programs to recognize savings.

District's Approved Budget

Enhance: In Local funds, OTA's approved budget includes an increase of \$246,867 and 2 FTEs to restore staff positions, Attorney Advisor and Program Analyst, across multiple programs. Also, an increase of \$30,000 enhances support for professional services in the Emergency Housing program.

FY 2024 Approved Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs)

Table CQ0-7 contains the summary of FY 2024 Approved Budgeted Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs).

Table CQ0-7

Total FY 2024 Approved Budgeted FTEs	24.3
Less: Interagency FTEs budgeted in this agency but employed by other agencies:	
AT0-Office of the Chief Financial Officer	(0.3)
Total Interagency FTEs budgeted in this agency, employed by other agencies	(0.3)
Total FTEs employed by this agency	24.0

Note: Table CQ0-7 displays the impact of the buyer agencies budgets funding the seller agencies FTEs in the FY 2024 budget, compared to how FTEs were budgeted in FY 2023.

-It starts with the FY 2024 budgeted FTE figure, 24.3 FTEs.

-It subtracts 0.3 FTEs budgeted in CQ0 in FY 2024 who are employed by another agency.

-It adds 0.0 FTEs budgeted in other agencies in FY 2024 who are employed by CQ0.

-It ends with 24.0 FTEs, the number of FTEs employed by CQ0, which is the FTE figure comparable to the FY 2023 budget.