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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 2013 Actual	FY 2014 Approved	FY 2015 Proposed	% Change from FY 2014
Operating Budget	\$5,168,748	\$6,565,523	\$6,911,031	5.3
FTEs	32.8	38.4	40.4	5.2

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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 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 2015 proposed budget is presented in the following tables:

### FY 2015 Proposed Gross Funds Operating Budget, by Revenue Type

Table DJ0-1 contains the proposed FY 2015 agency budget compared to the FY 2014 approved budget. It also provides FY 2012 and FY 2013 actual expenditures.

**Table DJ0-1**  
(dollars in thousands)

Appropriated Fund	Actual FY 2012	Actual FY 2013	Approved FY 2014	Proposed FY 2015	Change from FY 2014	Percent Change*
<b>General Fund</b>						
Special Purpose Revenue Funds	4,986	5,169	6,566	6,911	346	5.3
<b>Total for General Fund</b>	<b>4,986</b>	<b>5,169</b>	<b>6,566</b>	<b>6,911</b>	<b>346</b>	<b>5.3</b>
<b>Gross Funds</b>	<b>4,986</b>	<b>5,169</b>	<b>6,566</b>	<b>6,911</b>	<b>346</b>	<b>5.3</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 2015 Operating Appendices** located on the Office of the Chief Financial Officer's website.

### FY 2015 Proposed Full-Time Equivalents, by Revenue Type

Table DJ0-2 contains the proposed FY 2015 FTE level compared to the FY 2014 approved FTE level by revenue type. It also provides FY 2012 and FY 2013 actual data.

**Table DJ0-2**

Appropriated Fund	Actual FY 2012	Actual FY 2013	Approved FY 2014	Proposed FY 2015	Change from FY 2014	Percent Change
<b>General Fund</b>						
Special Purpose Revenue Funds	29.5	32.8	38.4	40.4	2.0	5.2
<b>Total for General Fund</b>	<b>29.5</b>	<b>32.8</b>	<b>38.4</b>	<b>40.4</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>5.2</b>
<b>Total Proposed FTEs</b>	<b>29.5</b>	<b>32.8</b>	<b>38.4</b>	<b>40.4</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>5.2</b>

## FY 2015 Proposed Operating Budget, by Comptroller Source Group

Table DJ0-3 contains the proposed FY 2015 budget at the Comptroller Source Group (object class) level compared to the FY 2014 approved budget. It also provides FY 2012 and FY 2013 actual expenditures.

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

Comptroller Source Group	Actual FY 2012	Actual FY 2013	Approved FY 2014	Proposed FY 2015	Change from FY 2014	Percent Change*
11 - Regular Pay - Continuing Full Time	2,834	3,090	3,658	4,004	346	9.5
12 - Regular Pay - Other	27	1	0	0	0	N/A
13 - Additional Gross Pay	12	2	0	0	0	N/A
14 - Fringe Benefits - Current Personnel	483	548	695	689	-6	-0.9
15 - Overtime Pay	0	1	0	0	0	N/A
<b>Subtotal Personal Services (PS)</b>	<b>3,355</b>	<b>3,641</b>	<b>4,353</b>	<b>4,693</b>	<b>340</b>	<b>7.8</b>
20 - Supplies and Materials	46	33	40	40	0	0.0
30 - Energy, Comm. and Building Rentals	0	1	1	1	0	-13.2
31 - Telephone, Telegraph, Telegram, Etc.	32	24	30	32	1	3.9
32 - Rentals - Land and Structures	712	308	944	1,038	94	10.0
35 - Occupancy Fixed Costs	6	0	62	23	-39	-62.7
40 - Other Services and Charges	511	535	475	456	-19	-4.0
41 - Contractual Services - Other	236	530	472	472	0	0.0
70 - Equipment and Equipment Rental	87	97	189	157	-32	-17.0
<b>Subtotal Nonpersonal Services (NPS)</b>	<b>1,631</b>	<b>1,527</b>	<b>2,213</b>	<b>2,218</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0.2</b>
<b>Gross Funds</b>	<b>4,986</b>	<b>5,169</b>	<b>6,566</b>	<b>6,911</b>	<b>346</b>	<b>5.3</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 2015 proposed budget.

**FY 2015 Proposed Operating Budget and FTEs, by Program and Activity**

Table DJ0-4 contains the proposed FY 2015 budget by program and activity compared to the FY 2014 approved budget. It also provides the FY 2013 actual data.

**Table DJ0-4**

(dollars in thousands)

Program/Activity	Dollars in Thousands				Full-Time Equivalents			
	Actual FY 2013	Approved FY 2014	Proposed FY 2015	Change from FY 2014	Actual FY 2013	Approved FY 2014	Proposed FY 2015	Change from FY 2014
<b>(1000) Agency Management</b>								
(1010) Personnel	81	90	88	-2	1.1	1.0	1.0	0.0
(1015) Training and Employee Development	0	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
(1020) Contracting and Procurement	179	195	199	4	1.3	2.0	2.0	0.0
(1030) Property Management	516	1,297	1,352	55	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
(1040) Information Technology	217	228	236	8	2.7	2.0	2.0	0.0
(1050) Financial Management	49	124	79	-45	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
(1070) Fleet Management	3	13	13	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
(1085) Customer Service	36	43	49	6	0.9	1.0	1.0	0.0
<b>Subtotal (1000) Agency Management</b>	<b>1,081</b>	<b>1,989</b>	<b>2,016</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>6.0</b>	<b>6.0</b>	<b>6.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>
<b>(100F) Agency Financial Operations</b>								
(110F) Budget Operations	267	285	289	5	2.2	2.4	2.4	0.0
<b>Subtotal (100F) Agency Financial Operations</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>285</b>	<b>289</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2.2</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	2,520	2,819	2,977	158	14.4	16.2	17.4	1.2
(2020) Public Information Dissemination	1,301	1,473	1,628	155	10.2	13.8	14.6	0.8
<b>Subtotal (2000) Office of People’s Counsel</b>	<b>3,821</b>	<b>4,292</b>	<b>4,605</b>	<b>313</b>	<b>24.6</b>	<b>30.0</b>	<b>32.0</b>	<b>2.0</b>
<b>Total Proposed Operating Budget</b>	<b>5,169</b>	<b>6,566</b>	<b>6,911</b>	<b>346</b>	<b>32.8</b>	<b>38.4</b>	<b>40.4</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 2015 Operating Appendices** located on the Office of the Chief Financial Officer’s website.

## FY 2015 Proposed Budget Changes

The Office of the People’s Counsel’s (OPC) proposed FY 2015 gross budget is \$6,911,031, which represents a 5.3 percent increase over its FY 2014 approved gross budget of \$6,565,523. The budget is comprised entirely of Special Purpose Revenue funds.

### Agency Budget Submission

**Increase:** OPC’s Special Purpose Revenue budget increased by \$339,977 and 2.0 FTEs in personal services to reflect projected changes in salary steps and Fringe Benefit costs. This adjustment is comprised of \$319,172 in the Office of People’s Counsel program, \$15,835 in the Agency Management program, and \$4,969 in the Agency Financial Operations program. In addition, OPC’s budget includes an increase of \$95,183 in the Agency Management program to account for the new lease agreement and telecommunication costs.

**Decrease:** OPC reduced funding allocations for occupancy and automotive fuel in the Agency Management program by \$38,782 to comply with projections from the Department of General Services. The budget proposal also reflects a reduction of \$50,869 to partially offset the personal services increase. This adjustment includes \$44,869 in the Agency Management program and \$6,000 in the Office of People’s Counsel program, primarily from projected equipment cost savings, but also to account for various anticipated administrative cost savings.

### Mayor’s Proposed Budget

**No Change:** The Office of the People’s Counsel’s budget proposal reflects no change from the agency budget submission to the Mayor’s proposed budget.

### District’s Proposed Budget

**No Change:** The Office of the People’s Counsel’s budget proposal reflects no change from Mayor’s proposed budget to the District’s proposed budget.

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## FY 2014 Approved Budget to FY 2015 Proposed Budget, by Revenue Type

Table DJ0-5 itemizes the changes by revenue type between the FY 2014 approved budget and the FY 2015 proposed budget.

**Table DJ0-5**  
(dollars in thousands)

DESCRIPTION	PROGRAM	BUDGET	FTE
<b>SPECIAL PURPOSE REVENUE FUNDS: FY 2014 Approved Budget and FTE</b>		<b>6,566</b>	<b>38.4</b>
Increase: To adjust personal services	Multiple Programs	340	2.0
Increase: To align Fixed Costs with proposed estimates	Agency Management	95	0.0
Decrease: To align Fixed Costs with proposed estimates	Agency Management	-39	0.0
Decrease: To offset projected increases in personal services	Multiple Programs	-51	0.0
<b>SPECIAL PURPOSE REVENUE FUNDS: FY 2015 Agency Budget Submission</b>		<b>6,911</b>	<b>40.4</b>
No Change		0	0.0
<b>SPECIAL PURPOSE REVENUE FUNDS: FY 2015 Mayor’s Proposed Budget</b>		<b>6,911</b>	<b>40.4</b>
No Change		0	0.0
<b>SPECIAL PURPOSE REVENUE FUNDS: FY 2015 District’s Proposed Budget</b>		<b>6,911</b>	<b>40.4</b>
<b>Gross for DJ0 - Office of the People's Counsel</b>		<b>6,911</b>	<b>40.4</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 2015:

**Objective 1:** Ensure effective advocacy on behalf of consumers and ratepayers of natural gas, electric, and telephone service 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

Measure	FY 2012 Actual	FY 2013 Target	FY 2013 Actual	FY 2014 Projection	FY 2015 Projection	FY 2016 Projection
Number of consumer education and outreach meetings/encounters attended	192	160	160	175	175	175
Percent of consumer complaints closed	100%	90%	94%	90%	90%	90%
Number of limited and non-English speaking persons served by the agency	2,841	2,200	2,100	2,200	2,400	2,450

Note: The OPC is an independent agency. For the purposes of the FY 2015 Performance Plan, OPC elected to organize the Plan at the agency level instead of by budget division. In addition, the OPC budget divisions do not match the functional divisions of the agency, which are: Directorate Division, Litigation Services Division, Consumer Services Division, and the Operations Division.