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# Office of the People's Counsel

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

Telephone: 202-727-3071

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**Table DJ0-1**

Description	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	% Change
	Actual	Actual	Approved	Approved	from FY 2019
OPERATING BUDGET	\$7,900,848	\$8,007,384	\$9,745,655	\$10,003,994	2.7
FTEs	41.2	39.0	53.4	53.4	0.0

The mission of the Office of the People’s Counsel (“OPC” or “The 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 rate-payers, community groups, and associations, 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, water, 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 and District community groups. OPC also provides legislative analysis for, assistance to, and testimony before, the District Council on utility matters.

The agency's FY 2020 approved budget is presented in the following tables:

## FY 2020 Approved Gross Funds Operating Budget and FTEs, by Revenue Type

Table DJ0-2 contains the approved FY 2020 budget by revenue type compared to the FY 2019 approved budget. It also provides FY 2017 and FY 2018 actual data.

**Table DJ0-2**

(dollars in thousands)

	Dollars in Thousands						Full-Time Equivalents					
	Actual FY 2017	Actual FY 2018	Approved FY 2019	Approved FY 2020	Change from FY 2019	% Change*	Actual FY 2017	Actual FY 2018	Approved FY 2019	Approved FY 2020	Change from FY 2019	% Change
<b>Appropriated Fund</b>												
<b>GENERAL FUND</b>												
Local Funds	0	0	775	689	-86	-11.1	0.0	0.0	8.0	8.0	0.0	0.0
Special Purpose												
Revenue Funds	7,901	8,007	8,971	9,315	344	3.8	41.2	39.0	45.4	45.4	0.0	0.0
<b>TOTAL FOR GENERAL FUND</b>	<b>7,901</b>	<b>8,007</b>	<b>9,746</b>	<b>10,004</b>	<b>258</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>41.2</b>	<b>39.0</b>	<b>53.4</b>	<b>53.4</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>
<b>GROSS FUNDS</b>	<b>7,901</b>	<b>8,007</b>	<b>9,746</b>	<b>10,004</b>	<b>258</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>41.2</b>	<b>39.0</b>	<b>53.4</b>	<b>53.4</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</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 2020 Operating Appendices** located on the Office of the Chief Financial Officer's website.

## FY 2020 Approved Operating Budget, by Comptroller Source Group

Table DJ0-3 contains the approved FY 2020 budget at the Comptroller Source Group (object class) level compared to the FY 2019 approved budget. It also provides FY 2017 and FY 2018 actual expenditures.

**Table DJ0-3**

(dollars in thousands)

Comptroller Source Group	Actual FY 2017	Actual FY 2018	Approved FY 2019	Approved FY 2020	Change from FY 2019	Percentage Change*
11 - Regular Pay - Continuing Full Time	4,469	4,536	5,737	5,603	-134	-2.3
12 - Regular Pay - Other	0	92	0	254	254	N/A
13 - Additional Gross Pay	5	76	0	0	0	N/A
14 - Fringe Benefits - Current Personnel	808	847	1,015	1,037	21	2.1
15 - Overtime Pay	0	0	0	0	0	N/A
<b>SUBTOTAL PERSONAL SERVICES (PS)</b>	<b>5,282</b>	<b>5,552</b>	<b>6,753</b>	<b>6,895</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>2.1</b>
20 - Supplies and Materials	45	55	45	60	15	33.3
30 - Energy, Communication and Building Rentals	0	0	0	0	0	-16.4

**Table DJ0-3**

(dollars in thousands)

<b>Comptroller Source Group</b>	<b>Actual FY 2017</b>	<b>Actual FY 2018</b>	<b>Approved FY 2019</b>	<b>Approved FY 2020</b>	<b>Change from FY 2019</b>	<b>Percentage Change*</b>
31 - Telecommunications	45	43	46	46	0	0.0
32 - Rentals - Land and Structures	832	853	959	987	27	2.8
34 - Security Services	0	0	1	0	0	-50.9
35 - Occupancy Fixed Costs	2	25	1	26	25	4,102.5
40 - Other Services and Charges	1,084	660	1,117	1,191	74	6.7
41 - Contractual Services - Other	553	608	572	547	-25	-4.4
70 - Equipment and Equipment Rental	58	212	252	252	0	0.0
<b>SUBTOTAL NONPERSONAL SERVICES (NPS)</b>	<b>2,619</b>	<b>2,455</b>	<b>2,993</b>	<b>3,109</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>3.9</b>
<b>GROSS FUNDS</b>	<b>7,901</b>	<b>8,007</b>	<b>9,746</b>	<b>10,004</b>	<b>258</b>	<b>2.7</b>

\*Percent change is based on whole dollars.

**FY 2020 Approved Operating Budget and FTEs, by Division/Program and Activity**

Table DJ0-4 contains the approved FY 2020 budget by division/program and activity compared to the FY 2019 approved budget. It also provides FY 2017 and FY 2018 actual data. For a more comprehensive explanation of divisions/programs and activities, please see the Division/Program Description section, which follows the table.

**Table DJ0-4**

(dollars in thousands)

<b>Division/Program and Activity</b>	<b>Dollars in Thousands</b>					<b>Full-Time Equivalents</b>				
	<b>Actual FY 2017</b>	<b>Actual FY 2018</b>	<b>Approved FY 2019</b>	<b>Approved FY 2020</b>	<b>Change from FY 2019</b>	<b>Actual FY 2017</b>	<b>Actual FY 2018</b>	<b>Approved FY 2019</b>	<b>Approved FY 2020</b>	<b>Change from FY 2019</b>
<b>(1000) AGENCY MANAGEMENT</b>										
(1010) Personnel	158	217	168	360	192	1.6	1.4	1.6	2.7	1.0
(1020) Contracting and Procurement	252	259	271	427	157	2.3	2.1	2.4	4.3	2.0
(1030) Property Management	1,071	1,171	1,529	1,397	-132	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
(1040) Information Technology	200	332	450	398	-53	2.0	1.8	3.0	2.0	-1.0
(1050) Financial Management	307	174	204	214	10	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
(1070) Fleet Management	15	17	16	16	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
(1085) Customer Service	97	103	126	94	-32	0.2	1.2	1.6	1.2	-0.4
<b>SUBTOTAL (1000) AGENCY MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>2,101</b>	<b>2,273</b>	<b>2,764</b>	<b>2,906</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>6.2</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>8.6</b>	<b>10.2</b>	<b>1.6</b>
<b>(100F) AGENCY FINANCIAL OPERATIONS</b>										
(110F) Budget Operations	338	352	469	488	19	3.4	3.0	3.4	3.4	0.0
<b>SUBTOTAL (100F) AGENCY FINANCIAL OPERATIONS</b>	<b>338</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>469</b>	<b>488</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>0.0</b>
<b>(2000) OFFICE OF PEOPLES COUNSEL</b>										
(2010) Consumer Advocacy and Representation	3,417	3,263	3,437	3,451	14	15.8	13.8	16.0	14.7	-1.3
(2020) Public Information Dissemination	2,047	2,119	2,300	2,470	170	15.9	15.8	17.4	17.1	-0.3
(2030) DC Water-Consumer Advocacy & Represent.	0	0	775	689	-86	0.0	0.0	8.0	8.0	0.0
<b>SUBTOTAL (2000) OFFICE OF PEOPLES COUNSEL</b>	<b>5,464</b>	<b>5,382</b>	<b>6,512</b>	<b>6,610</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>31.6</b>	<b>29.5</b>	<b>41.4</b>	<b>39.8</b>	<b>-1.6</b>

**Table DJ0-4**

(dollars in thousands)

Division/Program and Activity	Dollars in Thousands					Full-Time Equivalent				
	Actual FY 2017	Actual FY 2018	Approved FY 2019	Approved FY 2020	Change from FY 2019	Actual FY 2017	Actual FY 2018	Approved FY 2019	Approved FY 2020	Change from FY 2019
<b>(9960) AUDIT ADJUSTMENTS</b>										
(9961) Yr End Close	-2	0	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>SUBTOTAL (9960) AUDIT ADJUSTMENTS</b>	<b>-2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>
<b>TOTAL APPROVED OPERATING BUDGET</b>	<b>7,901</b>	<b>8,007</b>	<b>9,746</b>	<b>10,004</b>	<b>258</b>	<b>41.2</b>	<b>39.0</b>	<b>53.4</b>	<b>53.4</b>	<b>0.0</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 2020 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 People's Counsel operates 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 3 activities:

- **Consumer Advocacy and Representation (Energy and Local Telecommunications)** – provides legal and technical analysis and consumer advocacy services for District consumers to ensure safe, reliable electric, natural gas and local telecommunications services at rates that are just, reasonable, and consistent with statutory mandates; and advocates for the conservation of natural resources of the District, consideration of the economy, and the preservation of environmental quality;
- **Consumer Advocacy and Representation (Water)**– provides legal and technical analysis and consumer advocacy services for District consumers to ensure safe, reliable water and sewer services at rates that are just, reasonable, and consistent with 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, 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 2020 approved budget.

## FY 2019 Approved Budget to FY 2020 Approved Budget, by Revenue Type

Table DJ0-5 itemizes the changes by revenue type between the FY 2019 approved budget and the FY 2020 approved budget. For a more comprehensive explanation of changes, please see the FY 2020 Approved Budget Changes section, which follows the table.

**Table DJ0-5**

(dollars in thousands)

DESCRIPTION	DIVISION/PROGRAM	BUDGET	FTE
<b>LOCAL FUNDS: FY 2019 Approved Budget and FTE</b>		<b>775</b>	<b>8.0</b>
Removal of One-Time Costs	Office of Peoples Counsel	-125	0.0
<b>LOCAL FUNDS: FY 2020 Recurring Budget</b>		<b>650</b>	<b>8.0</b>
Increase: To align personal services and Fringe Benefits with projected costs	Office of Peoples Counsel	12	0.0
Decrease: To partially offset projected adjustments in personal services costs	Office of Peoples Counsel	-3	0.0
Enhance: To retain outside counsel to support ratepayers (one-time)	Office of Peoples Counsel	30	0.0
<b>LOCAL FUNDS: FY 2020 Mayor's Proposed Budget</b>		<b>689</b>	<b>8.0</b>
No Change		0	0.0
<b>LOCAL FUNDS: FY 2020 District's Approved Budget</b>		<b>689</b>	<b>8.0</b>
<b>SPECIAL PURPOSE REVENUE FUNDS: FY 2019 Approved Budget and FTE</b>		<b>8,971</b>	<b>45.4</b>
Increase: To align budget with projected revenues	Multiple Programs	162	0.0
Increase: To align personal services and Fringe Benefits with projected costs	Multiple Programs	130	0.0
Increase: To align Fixed Costs with proposed estimates	Agency Management	52	0.0
<b>SPECIAL PURPOSE REVENUE FUNDS: FY 2020 Mayor's Proposed Budget</b>		<b>9,315</b>	<b>45.4</b>
No Change		0	0.0
<b>SPECIAL PURPOSE REVENUE FUNDS: FY 2020 District's Approved Budget</b>		<b>9,315</b>	<b>45.4</b>
<b>GROSS FOR DJ0 - OFFICE OF THE PEOPLE'S COUNSEL</b>		<b>10,004</b>	<b>53.4</b>

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

## FY 2020 Approved Budget Changes

The Office of the People's Counsel's (OPC) approved FY 2020 gross budget is \$10,003,994 which represents a 2.7 percent increase over its FY 2019 approved gross budget of \$9,745,655. The budget is comprised of \$689,246 in Local funds, and \$9,314,748 in Special Purpose Revenue funds.

### Recurring Budget

The FY 2020 budget for OPC includes a reduction of \$125,000 to account for the removal of one-time funding appropriated in FY 2019 to support consumer outreach initiatives and the costs associated with an audit of DC Water's billing, meter, and customer service.

### Mayor's Proposed Budget

**Increase:** In Local funds, OPC's proposed budget includes an increase of \$12,197 in the Office of Peoples Counsel program to support projected salary steps and Fringe Benefits costs.

In Special Purpose Revenue funds, the budget proposal includes a net increase of \$162,295 across multiple programs to align the budget with projected revenue. This adjustment includes projected increases of \$169,295 to support outreach activities, advertising, and supply costs, and \$15,000 in Supplies cost, offset by a decrease of \$22,000 in Contractual Services for costs associated with consumer advocacy. Additionally, the budget proposal includes an increase of \$129,808 across multiple programs to support projected salary steps

and Fringe Benefits costs. The budget proposal accounts for a net increase of \$52,060 in the Agency Management program to align the budget with Fixed Cost projections from the Department of General Services for Energy, Rent, Security Services and Occupancy.

**Decrease:** In Local funds, the budget proposal for a decrease of \$3,020 in Contractual Services costs in the Office of Peoples Counsel program to partially offset the adjustment in personal services.

**Enhance:** In Local funds, the budget proposal reflects a one-time increase of \$30,000 to retain external counsel to enable OPC to legally represent ratepayers before DC Water, administrative hearing officers, and the DC Court of Appeals in administrative hearings, judicial proceedings, and public hearings.

**District's Approved Budget**

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

## Agency Performance Plan\*

The Office of the People's Counsel (OPC) has the following strategic objectives for FY 2020:

### Strategic Objectives

Strategic Objectives describe what the agency will do, at a high level, to achieve its mission. These are action-based sentences that define what an agency does for its customers, whether the customers are residents or other District agencies, and how that improves the District.

### Objectives

1. Provide consumer education, outreach and technical assistance to District ratepayers and consumers on matters relating to natural gas, electric and telephone utilities.
2. Ensure effective advocacy on behalf of consumers and ratepayers of natural gas, electric and telephone services in the District.
3. Enhance agency operational efficiency to improve agency efficiency and productivity, service delivery and cost reduction.

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### ACTIVITIES

Activities include the work that happens on a daily basis to help achieve the Strategic Objectives. Activity names come from the budget line items. This is further divided into “daily services” (ex. sanitation disposal), and long-term “key projects” that are high profile, one-time and span several years, (ex. redevelopment of Walter Reed Army Medical Center). Many agencies will mostly have daily services, whereas some agencies that have more of their budget come from capital funding will have several key projects.

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#### 1. Provide consumer education, outreach and technical assistance to District ratepayers and consumers on matters relating to natural gas, electric and telephone utilities. (2 Activities)

Activity Title	Activity Description	Type of Activity
Consumer assistance	On a daily basis, OPC provides consumers with pertinent information for city services, not provided by OPC. The agency receives many misdirected calls, and strives to ensure that residents needing assistance are referred to the correct city agency for service.	Daily Service
Daily Consumer Education Activities	OPC's consumer services division provides daily consumer education and outreach activity by attending and conducting various community meetings on a weekly and monthly basis.	Daily Service

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#### 2. Ensure effective advocacy on behalf of consumers and ratepayers of natural gas, electric and telephone services in the District. (1 Activity)

Activity Title	Activity Description	Type of Activity
OPC Consumer Advocacy	This operation describes the mission critical work OPC conducts in advocating for consumer regulatory issues.	Daily Service

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#### 3. Enhance agency operational efficiency to improve agency efficiency and productivity, service delivery and cost reduction. (1 Activity)

Activity Title	Activity Description	Type of Activity
Enhancing Agency Operational Efficiency	OPC is working efficiently and effectively to assist District consumers with individual inquiries and complaints regarding their utility services and billing on both an informal and formal basis. OPC staff is continuing its comprehensive consumer	Daily Service

**3. Enhance agency operational efficiency to improve agency efficiency and productivity, service delivery and cost reduction. (1 Activity)**

Activity Title	Activity Description	Type of Activity
	education program, which includes outreach to non-English speaking and senior consumers. OPC has a robust seniors outreach and education program that is a vital component of its consumer education and outreach program. OPC has enhanced its partnerships with AARP, the Office on Aging and Commission on Aging. OPC staff educates seniors through presentations at community and mini-commission on aging meetings and at senior centers throughout the District. OPC staff also regularly updates the “Seniors Resource Guide” about home energy efficiency tips and changes in the District’s utility markets. OPC’s seniors outreach and education program is designed to assist seniors in managing their utility services costs.	

**KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

Key Performance Indicators measure how well an agency is achieving its Strategic Objectives. They are outcome-oriented and should be used to answer the question, “What does the agency need to measure to determine success?”

**1. Provide consumer education, outreach and technical assistance to District ratepayers and consumers on matters relating to natural gas, electric and telephone utilities. (2 Measures)**

Measure	New Measure/ Benchmark Year	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Target	FY 2020 Target
Number of consumer outreach meetings	No	510	175	650	175	175
Percent of consumer complaints closed annually	No	95%	90%	84.8%	90%	90%

**2. Ensure effective advocacy on behalf of consumers and ratepayers of natural gas, electric and telephone services in the District. (1 Measure)**

Measure	New Measure/ Benchmark Year	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Target	FY 2020 Target
Number of proceedings initiated by OPC	No	Not Available	4	4	4	4

**WORKLOAD MEASURES**

Workload Measures, also called inputs or outputs, quantify an activity, effort or process that is necessary to make progress towards the Strategic Objectives. They help answer the question; “How much are we doing?”

**1. Consumer assistance**

Measure	New Measure/ Benchmark Year	FY 2016 Actual	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Actual
Number of Consumer Complaints	No	2585	2349	1593
Number of Consumer Inquiries	No	72	924	1182
Number of NEP/LEP persons served by the agency	No	4492	5834	2871



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## 2. OPC Consumer Advocacy

<b>Measure</b>	<b>New Measure/ Benchmark Year</b>	<b>FY 2016 Actual</b>	<b>FY 2017 Actual</b>	<b>FY 2018 Actual</b>
Number of cases litigated before the Public Services Commission, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, Federal Communications Commission and PJM	No	61	46	56

### Performance Plan End Notes:

\*For more information about the structure and components of FY 2020 draft performance plans, please see the FY 2020 Proposed Budget and Financial Plan, Volume 1, Appendix E.

\*\*Key Performance Indicators that are new may not have historical data and may only have FY 2020 targets.

\*\*\* District wide measures for the objective "Create and maintain a highly efficient, transparent and responsive District government" have been introduced as part of FY 2019 and FY 2020 Performance Plans and will be reported by the Office of the City Administrator (OCA). FY 2019 and FY 2020 are pilot years for this initiative, therefore not all data are available.