
Office of the People's Counsel

www.opc-dc.gov

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Table DJ0-1

Description	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Actual	FY 2020 Approved	FY 2021 Approved	% Change from FY 2020
OPERATING BUDGET	\$8,007,384	\$9,645,494	\$10,003,994	\$10,569,390	5.7
FTEs	39.0	49.4	53.4	52.4	-1.9
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 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 2021 approved budget is presented in the following tables:

FY 2021 Approved Gross Funds Operating Budget and FTEs, by Revenue Type

Table DJ0-2 contains the approved FY 2021 budget by revenue type compared to the FY 2020 approved budget. It also provides FY 2018 and FY 2019 actual data.

Table DJ0-2

(dollars in thousands)

Appropriated Fund	Dollars in Thousands						Full-Time Equivalents					
	Actual FY 2018	Actual FY 2019	Approved FY 2020	Approved FY 2021	Change from FY 2020	% Change*	Actual FY 2018	Actual FY 2019	Approved FY 2020	Approved FY 2021	Change from FY 2020	% Change
GENERAL FUND												
Local Funds	0	611	689	689	0	0.0	0.0	5.0	8.0	6.0	-2.0	-25.0
Special Purpose Revenue Funds	8,007	9,025	9,315	9,880	565	6.1	39.0	44.4	45.4	46.4	1.0	2.2
TOTAL FOR GENERAL FUND	8,007	9,635	10,004	10,569	565	5.7	39.0	49.4	53.4	52.4	-1.0	-1.9
PRIVATE FUNDS												
Private Grant Funds	0	10	0	0	0	N/A	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	N/A
TOTAL FOR PRIVATE FUNDS	0	10	0	0	0	N/A	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	N/A
GROSS FUNDS	8,007	9,645	10,004	10,569	565	5.7	39.0	49.4	53.4	52.4	-1.0	-1.9

*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 2021 Operating Appendices** located on the Office of the Chief Financial Officer's website.

FY 2021 Approved Operating Budget, by Comptroller Source Group

Table DJ0-3 contains the approved FY 2021 budget at the Comptroller Source Group (object class) level compared to the FY 2020 approved budget. It also provides FY 2018 and FY 2019 actual expenditures.

Table DJ0-3

(dollars in thousands)

Comptroller Source Group	Actual FY 2018	Actual FY 2019	Approved FY 2020	Approved FY 2021	Change from FY 2020	Percentage Change*
11 - Regular Pay - Continuing Full Time	4,536	5,084	5,603	6,040	437	7.8
12 - Regular Pay - Other	92	193	254	183	-71	-28.1
13 - Additional Gross Pay	76	8	0	0	0	N/A

Table DJ0-3

(dollars in thousands)

Comptroller Source Group	Actual FY 2018	Actual FY 2019	Approved FY 2020	Approved FY 2021	Change from FY 2020	Percentage Change*
14 - Fringe Benefits - Current Personnel	847	1,022	1,037	1,102	65	6.2
15 - Overtime Pay	0	1	0	0	0	N/A
SUBTOTAL PERSONAL SERVICES (PS)	5,552	6,307	6,895	7,325	430	6.2
20 - Supplies and Materials	55	56	60	60	0	0.0
30 - Energy, Communication and Building Rentals	0	0	0	0	0	8.7
31 - Telecommunications	43	65	46	55	8	18.4
32 - Rentals - Land and Structures	853	959	987	1,054	68	6.9
34 - Security Services	0	1	0	0	0	-100.0
35 - Occupancy Fixed Costs	25	1	26	13	-12	-48.4
40 - Other Services and Charges	660	1,375	1,191	1,264	73	6.2
41 - Contractual Services - Other	608	520	547	545	-2	-0.4
70 - Equipment and Equipment Rental	212	361	252	252	0	0.2
SUBTOTAL NONPERSONAL SERVICES (NPS)	2,455	3,338	3,109	3,244	135	4.3
GROSS FUNDS	8,007	9,645	10,004	10,569	565	5.7

*Percent change is based on whole dollars.

FY 2021 Approved Operating Budget and FTEs, by Division/Program and Activity

Table DJ0-4 contains the approved FY 2021 budget by division/program and activity compared to the FY 2020 approved budget. It also provides FY 2018 and FY 2019 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)

Division/Program and Activity	Dollars in Thousands					Full-Time Equivalents				
	Actual FY 2018	Actual FY 2019	Approved FY 2020	Approved FY 2021	Change from FY 2020	Actual FY 2018	Actual FY 2019	Approved FY 2020	Approved FY 2021	Change from FY 2020
(1000) AGENCY MANAGEMENT										
(1010) Personnel	217	379	360	474	114	1.4	1.6	2.7	3.4	0.6
(1020) Contracting and Procurement	259	242	427	272	-155	2.1	2.3	4.3	2.6	-1.6
(1030) Property Management	1,171	1,668	1,397	1,460	63	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
(1040) Information Technology	332	424	398	413	15	1.8	2.9	2.0	2.0	0.0
(1050) Financial Management	174	156	214	210	-4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
(1070) Fleet Management	17	13	16	16	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
(1085) Customer Service	103	162	94	256	162	1.2	1.6	1.2	2.2	1.0
SUBTOTAL (1000) AGENCY MANAGEMENT	2,273	3,043	2,906	3,101	195	6.5	8.4	10.2	10.2	0.0
(100F) AGENCY FINANCIAL OPERATIONS										
(110F) Budget Operations	352	358	488	515	26	3.0	3.3	3.4	3.4	0.0
(120F) Accounting Operations	0	1	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
SUBTOTAL (100F) AGENCY FINANCIAL OPERATIONS	352	359	488	515	26	3.0	3.3	3.4	3.4	0.0

Table DJ0-4

(dollars in thousands)

Division/Program and Activity	Dollars in Thousands					Full-Time Equivalent				
	Actual FY 2018	Actual FY 2019	Approved FY 2020	Approved FY 2021	Change from FY 2020	Actual FY 2018	Actual FY 2019	Approved FY 2020	Approved FY 2021	Change from FY 2020
(2000) OFFICE OF PEOPLE'S COUNSEL										
(2010) Consumer Advocacy and Representation	3,263	3,342	3,451	3,600	149	13.8	15.6	14.7	15.2	0.4
(2020) Public Information Dissemination	2,119	2,290	2,470	2,665	195	15.8	17.0	17.1	17.6	0.6
(2030) DC Water-Consumer Advocacy & Representation	0	611	689	689	0	0.0	5.0	8.0	6.0	-2.0
SUBTOTAL (2000) OFFICE OF PEOPLE'S COUNSEL	5,382	6,243	6,610	6,954	344	29.5	37.7	39.8	38.8	-1.0
TOTAL APPROVED OPERATING BUDGET	8,007	9,645	10,004	10,569	565	39.0	49.4	53.4	52.4	-1.0

(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 2021 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 2021 approved budget.

FY 2020 Approved Budget to FY 2021 Approved Budget, by Revenue Type

Table DJ0-5 itemizes the changes by revenue type between the FY 2020 approved budget and the FY 2021 approved budget. For a more comprehensive explanation of changes, please see the FY 2021 Approved Budget Changes section, which follows the table.

Table DJ0-5

(dollars in thousands)

DESCRIPTION	DIVISION/PROGRAM	BUDGET	FTE
LOCAL FUNDS: FY 2020 Approved Budget and FTE		689	8.0
Removal of One-Time Costs	Office of People's Counsel	-30	0.0
LOCAL FUNDS: FY 2021 Recurring Budget		659	8.0
Increase: To align personal services and Fringe Benefits with projected costs	Office of People's Counsel	62	1.0
Increase: To align resources with operational spending goals	Office of People's Counsel	28	0.0
Decrease: To align personal services and Fringe Benefits with projected costs	Office of People's Counsel	-60	-3.0
Enhance: To replace recurring funds with one-time funds (one-time)	Office of People's Counsel	30	0.0
Reduce: To replace recurring funds with one-time funds	Office of People's Counsel	-30	0.0
LOCAL FUNDS: FY 2021 Mayor's Proposed Budget		689	6.0
No Change		0	0.0
LOCAL FUNDS: FY 2021 District's Approved Budget		689	6.0
SPECIAL PURPOSE REVENUE FUNDS: FY 2020 Approved Budget and FTE		9,315	45.4
Increase: To align personal services and Fringe Benefits with projected costs	Multiple Programs	429	1.0
Increase: To align resources with operational spending goals	Multiple Programs	73	0.0
Increase: To align Fixed Costs with proposed estimates	Agency Management	63	0.0
SPECIAL PURPOSE REVENUE FUNDS: FY 2021 Mayor's Proposed Budget		9,880	46.4
No Change		0	0.0
SPECIAL PURPOSE REVENUE FUNDS: FY 2021 District's Approved Budget		9,880	46.4
GROSS FOR DJ0 - OFFICE OF THE PEOPLE'S COUNSEL		10,569	52.4

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

FY 2021 Approved Budget Changes

The Office of the People's Counsel's (OPC) approved FY 2021 gross budget is \$10,569,390, which represents a 5.7 percent increase over its FY 2020 approved gross budget of \$10,003,994. The budget is comprised of \$689,246 in Local funds, and \$9,880,144 in Special Purpose Revenue funds.

Recurring Budget

The FY 2021 budget for OPC includes a reduction of \$30,000 to account for the removal of one-time funding appropriated in FY 2020 to retain an external counsel to enable OPC to legally represent ratepayer before DC Water, administrative hearing officers, and the DC Court of Appeals in administrative hearings, judicial proceedings, and public hearings.

Mayor's Proposed Budget

Increase: In Local funds, OPC proposes various adjustments in the Office of People's Counsel program to support projected costs, which includes \$61,746 in personal services cost for salary, step increases, and Fringe Benefit adjustment and \$28,358 in support of professional services fees.

In Special Purpose Revenue funds, the budget proposal includes a projected personal services increase of \$428,687 and 1.0 FTE across multiple programs to support projected salary, step increase, and Fringe Benefit adjustment. The additional position will provide administrative support. Other adjustment includes an increase of \$73,275 across multiple programs in professional services fees, and \$63,434 in the Agency Management program based on Fixed Cost estimates from the Department of General Services.

Decrease: In Local funds, OPC proposes a reduction of \$60,104 and 2.0 FTEs to partially offset personal services costs to support six positions who provide administrative support for the DC Water program.

Enhance: In Local funds, the budget proposal for OPC includes \$30,000 in one-time funds to replace an offsetting reduction of recurring funds to support DC Water consumer advocacy and the agency's legal representation costs through the hiring of an external counsel.

Reduce: As noted above, the budget also reflects a reduction of \$30,000 in recurring funds in order to substitute one-time funds.

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 2021:

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.
4. Create and maintain a highly efficient, transparent and responsive District government.

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.

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
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
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

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

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 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.	Daily Service

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 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Target	FY 2019 Actual	FY 2020 Target	FY 2021 Target
Number of consumer outreach meetings	No	650	175	1031	660	400
Percent of consumer complaints closed annually	No	84.8%	90%	63.3%	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 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Target	FY 2019 Actual	FY 2020 Target	FY 2021 Target
Number of proceedings initiated by OPC	No	4	4	5	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 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Actual
Number of Consumer Complaints	No	2349	1593	1252
Number of Consumer Inquiries	No	924	1182	1150
Number of NEP/LEP persons served by the agency	No	5834	2871	3113

2. OPC Consumer Advocacy

Measure	New Measure/ Benchmark Year	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Actual
Number of cases litigated before the Public Services Commission, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, Federal Communications Commission and PJM	No	Not Available	Data Forthcoming	Data Forthcoming

Performance Plan End Notes:

*For more information about the structure and components of FY 2021 draft performance plans, please see the FY 2021 Approved Budget and Financial Plan, Volume 1, Appendix E.

**Key performance indicators that are new may not have historical data and may only have FY 2021 targets.

***For the final versions of agency FY 2021 performance plans when they become available in December 2020, see the OCA website at <https://oca.dc.gov>