
Office of the Tenant Advocate

<http://ota.dc.gov>

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Description	FY 2010 Actual	FY 2011 Approved	FY 2012 Proposed	% Change from FY 2011
Operating Budget	\$2,318,789	\$1,816,195	\$1,923,771	5.9
FTEs	13.8	13.5	13.5	0.0

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 advocate for the rights and interests of District renters in the legislative, regulatory, and judicial contexts; to educate and inform the tenant community about tenant rights and rental housing matters; and to provide assistance for emergency housing when tenants find themselves temporarily displaced due to an unanticipated housing emergency as contemplated in the Housing Assistance Fund statute.

Summary of Services

OTA provides a spectrum of services to the tenant community to further each aspect of its mission. The agency (1) conducts educational seminars in a variety of contexts to inform tenants about their rights and other rental housing concerns; (2) advises tenants on resolving or filing complaints and petitions regarding disputes with landlords; provides in-house representation for tenants in certain cases; and refers other cases to pro bono and/or contracted legal service providers

and attorneys; (3) works with other governmental entities, tenant stakeholders, and others to promote better tenant protection laws and policies in the District; and (4) provides financial assistance for emergency housing expenses under certain circumstances in order to fulfill the agency's mandate defined under the Housing Assistance Fund statute.

The agency's FY 2012 proposed budget is presented in the following tables:

FY 2012 Proposed Gross Funds Operating Budget, by Revenue Type

Table CQ0-1 contains the proposed FY 2012 agency budget compared to the FY 2011 approved budget. It also provides FY 2009 and FY 2010 actual expenditures.

Table CQ0-1
(dollars in thousands)

Appropriated Fund	Actual FY 2009	Actual FY 2010	Approved FY 2011	Proposed FY 2012	Change from FY 2011	Percent Change*
General Fund						
Local Funds	840	539	645	1,924	1,279	198.2
Special Purpose Revenue Funds	1,097	1,780	1,171	0	-1,171	-100.0
Total for General Fund	1,937	2,319	1,816	1,924	108	5.9
Gross Funds	1,937	2,319	1,816	1,924	108	5.9

*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 2012 Operating Appendices** located on the Office of the Chief Financial Officer's website.

FY 2012 Proposed Full-Time Equivalents, by Revenue Type

Table CQ0-2 contains the proposed FY 2012 FTE level compared to the FY 2011 approved FTE level by revenue type. It also provides FY 2009 and FY 2010 actual data.

Table CQ0-2

Appropriated Fund	Actual FY 2009	Actual FY 2010	Approved FY 2011	Proposed FY 2012	Change from FY 2011	Percent Change
General Fund						
Local Funds	6.9	4.3	75	13.5	6.0	80.0
Special Purpose Revenue Funds	6.5	9.6	6.0	0.0	-6.0	-100.0
Total for General Fund	13.3	13.8	13.5	13.5	0.0	0.0
Total Proposed FTEs	13.3	13.8	13.5	13.5	0.0	0.0

FY 2012 Proposed Operating Budget, by Comptroller Source Group

Table CQ0-3 contains the proposed FY 2012 budget at the Comptroller Source Group (object class) level compared to the FY 2011 approved budget. It also provides FY 2009 and FY 2010 actual expenditures.

Table CQ0-3
(dollars in thousands)

Comptroller Source Group	Actual FY 2009	Actual FY 2010	Approved FY 2011	Proposed FY 2012	Change from FY 2011	Percent Change*
11 - Regular Pay - Cont Full Time	954	936	911	942	31	3.4
12 - Regular Pay - Other	1	27	15	14	-1	-4.9
13 - Additional Gross Pay	0	21	0	0	0	N/A
14 - Fringe Benefits - Curr Personnel	173	224	187	170	-17	-9.0
15 - Overtime Pay	2	6	0	0	0	N/A
Subtotal Personal Services (PS)	1,131	1,213	1,113	1,126	13	1.2
20 - Supplies and Materials	18	39	0	22	22	N/A
31 - Telephone, Telegraph, Telegram, Etc.	17	31	0	38	38	N/A
32 - Rentals - Land and Structures	78	171	0	0	0	N/A
34 - Security Services	5	0	0	0	0	N/A
35 - Occupancy Fixed Costs	10	1	0	0	0	N/A
40 - Other Services and Charges	85	129	573	290	-283	-49.4
41 - Contractual Services - Other	570	736	130	434	304	234.0
50 - Subsidies and Transfers	0	0	0	10	10	N/A
70 - Equipment and Equipment Rental	23	0	0	2	2	N/A
Subtotal Nonpersonal Services (NPS)	806	1,106	703	797	95	13.5
Gross Funds	1,937	2,319	1,816	1,924	108	5.9

*Percent change is based on whole dollars.

Program Description

The Office of Tenant Advocate operates through the following 5 programs:

Housing Assistance Community Service Program – Provides outreach and educational programs to support community-based program efforts.

This program serves as the front line component of the agency handling tenant complaints, as the watchdog, and as first responders to building wide inspection requests. It provides community outreach activities, monitors rental housing case hearings, and provides technical assistance support to *pro se* tenants.

Legal Representation – provides legal representation to D.C. residents.

This program contains the following 3 activities:

- **Housing Assistance** - provides advice to the Chief Tenant Advocate on all legal matters presented to the agency, supervises legal staff, identifies legal issues pursuant to OTA's representational mandate, extends legal service representation, and responds to the wide variety of demands in tenant cases;
- **Scheduling and Enforcement** – provides advice and analysis regarding legal rights in response to individual tenant inquiries regarding disputes with their landlords. Assists tenants in completing and filing tenant petitions and drafting other court documents. Provides in-house legal representation based on public interest impact and as resources allow; or provides funding for other legal service providers; or otherwise assists tenants in finding representation for court and administrative proceedings; and
- **Housing Service Center** – 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. The budget proposes to expand this Hotline in FY 2012 to include 2 part-time attorneys (16 hrs / week) to answer and direct legal inquiries (in accordance with D.C. Official Code § 42-3531.07(7)).

Legal Advocacy Program - provides support to community-based programs that inform tenants regarding their legislative and regulatory legal protections.

This program contains the following 2 activities:

- **Legal Advocacy** – serves as the legal expert on all legislation relating to tenant rights, other affordable housing, tenant, and housing-related laws. The agency tracks legislative and regulatory issues and recommends appropriate changes; and
- **Research and Development** – researches and analyzes law “best practices” regarding policy challenges confronting the tenant community.

OTA Educational Institute – provides a more formal series of educational and outreach forums with educational material regarding rental housing laws, rules, and policies, especially rights to petition and to form tenant associations.

Administrative Services – Provides for administrative support and the required tools to achieve operational and programmatic results. The program is standard for all agencies using performance-based budgeting. The Administrative Services program performs the agency management functions for the agency.

Program Structure Change

The Office of Tenant Advocate has no program structure changes in FY 2012.

FY 2012 Proposed Operating Budget and FTEs, by Program and Activity

Table CQ0-4 contains the proposed FY 2012 budget by program and activity compared to the FY 2011 approved budget. It also provides the FY 2010 actual data.

Table CQ0-4

(dollars in thousands)

Program/Activity	Dollars in Thousands				Full-Time Equivalents			
	Actual FY 2010	Approved FY 2011	Proposed FY 2012	Change from FY 2011	Actual FY 2010	Approved FY 2011	Proposed FY 2012	Change from FY 2011
(1000) Administrative Services								
(1030) Property Management	202	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
(1040) Information Technology	0	0	38	38	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
(1090) Performance Management	568	392	327	-65	5.0	4.5	3.5	-1.0
Subtotal (1000) Administrative Services	770	392	365	-27	5.0	4.5	3.5	-1.0
(2000) Housing Assistance Community Service Program								
(2010) Housing Assistance Community Service Program	835	774	561	-213	4.4	5.0	4.0	-1.0
Subtotal (2000) Housing Assistance Community Service Program	835	774	561	-213	4.4	5.0	4.0	-1.0
(3000) Legal Representation								
(3010) Housing Assistance	608	463	273	-190	3.6	3.0	3.0	0.0
(3020) Scheduling and Enforcement Unit	0	0	168	168	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
(3030) Housing Service Center	0	0	328	328	0.0	0.0	1.0	1.0
Subtotal (3000) Legal Representation	608	463	769	307	3.6	3.0	4.0	1.0
(4000) Legal Advocacy Program								
(4010) Legal Advocacy Program	106	187	109	-78	0.9	1.0	1.0	0.0
(4020) Research and Development	0	0	19	19	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Subtotal (4000) Legal Advocacy Program	106	187	128	-59	0.9	1.0	1.0	0.0
(5000) OTA Educational Institute								
(5010) OTA Educational Institute	0	0	100	100	0.0	0.0	1.0	1.0
Subtotal (5000) OTA Educational Institute	0	0	100	100	0.0	0.0	1.0	1.0
Total Proposed Operating Budget	2,319	1,816	1,924	108	13.8	13.5	13.5	0.0

(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 2012 Operating Appendices** located on the Office of the Chief Financial Officer's website.

FY 2012 Proposed Budget Changes

Cost Decreases/Increases: The Office of the Tenant Advocate decreased Local funds \$130,000 in Contractual Services – Other. The agency increased the supplies funding by \$22,417. Telecom funding increased by \$35,844 due to a higher assessment from the Office of Finance and Resource Management (OFRM). Equipment and Equipment Rental funding increased \$2,500. There is an increase of \$10,558 to cover adjustments in salary and fringe benefits. Funding for Other Services and Charges increased by \$3,542 and Subsidies and Transfers increased by \$10,000.

Transfers: The Office of the Tenant Advocate transferred out \$26,481 in Local funds fixed costs for the information technology assessment to the Office of the Chief Technology Officer (OCTO) in FY 2012.

Shift: The Office of the Tenant Advocate will continue to provide legal and housing assistance to community-based programs. A shift of \$1,292,000 was made to change the funding source of the agency to Local funds instead of Condo Conversion and Rental Accommodation Special Purpose Revenue fees. The shift includes \$1,171,028 and 6.0 FTEs in Special Purpose Revenue funds (shown in the table below under Special Purpose Revenue) and the conversion of \$120,972 in existing Condo Conversion Fees fund balance.

FY 2011 Approved Budget to FY 2012 Proposed Budget, by Revenue Type

Table CQ0-5 itemizes the changes by revenue type between the FY 2011 approved budget and the FY 2012 proposed budget.

Table CQ0-5

(dollars in thousands)

	PROGRAM	BUDGET	FTE
LOCAL FUNDS: FY 2011 Approved Budget and FTE		645	7.5
Cost Increase: Adjust personal services costs for salary, steps and fringe benefits	Multiple Programs	11	0.0
Cost Increase: Increase funding for supplies	Housing Assistance Community Service Program	22	0.0
Cost Increase: Increase funding for other services and charges	Multiple Programs	59	0.0
Cost Increase: Increase funding for telecom	Administrative Services	36	0.0
Cost Increase: Increase funding for equipment and equipment rental	OTA Educational Institute	2	0.0
Cost Decrease: Reduce contractual services - other	Housing Assistance Community Service Program	-130	0.0
FY 2012 Initial Adjusted Budget		645	7.5
Shift: Transfer Special Purpose Revenue funds budget to Local funds	Multiple Programs	1,292	6.0
Cost Increase: Increase funding for other services and charges	Administrative Services	4	0.0
Transfer Out: Transfer Local fund portion of the IT assessment to OCTO	Administrative Services	-26	0.0
Cost Increase: Increase in subsidies and transfer	Multiple Programs	10	0.0
LOCAL FUNDS: FY 2012 Proposed Budget and FTE		1,924	13.5
SPECIAL PURPOSE REVENUE FUNDS: FY 2011 Approved Budget and FTE		1,171	6.0
No Change: No change	Multiple Programs	0	0.0
FY 2012 Initial Adjusted Budget		1,171	6.0
Shift: Convert Special Purpose Revenue funds budget to Local funds	Multiple Programs	-1,171	-6.0
SPECIAL PURPOSE REVENUE FUNDS: FY 2012 Proposed Budget and FTE		0	0.0
Gross for CQ0 - Office of the Tenant Advocate		1,924	13.5

(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 2012:

Objective 1: Ensure quality legal services “in-house” and from contracted legal service providers.

Objective 2: Inform the tenant community about tenant rights and related issues.

Objective 3: Provide financial assistance for certain emergency housing and tenant relocation expenses as defined in the Housing Assistance Fund law.

Agency Performance Plan

Measure¹	FY 2009 Actual	FY 2010 Target	FY 2011 Actual	FY 2011 Projection	FY 2012 Projection	FY 2013 Projection
Percentage of tenant intake cases resolved	77.9%	80%	100%	85%	87%	89%
Number of rental housing case abstracts to be included in database	57	50	100	75	90	130
Percentage of identified tenant associations to be represented in tenant summit	53.3%	50%	53%	50%	50%	50%
Percentage of all Housing Assistance Fund cases resolved through relocation-funding assistance	100%	75%	100%	85%	85%	85%
Percentage of households for housing assistance for whom OTA made emergency housing available within 24 hours	100%	80%	100%	90%	90%	90%

Performance Plan Endnote:

1. In addition to the measures listed, OTA will provide year-end data on the outcomes of cases referred to legal services.

