
Office of the People’s Counsel

www.opc-dc.gov

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Description	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Approved	FY 2016 Proposed	% Change from FY 2015
Operating Budget	\$6,087,107	\$6,911,031	\$7,648,091	10.7
FTEs	35.9	40.4	40.4	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 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 2016 proposed budget is presented in the following tables:

FY 2016 Proposed Gross Funds Operating Budget, by Revenue Type

Table DJ0-1 contains the proposed FY 2016 agency budget compared to the FY 2015 approved budget. It also provides FY 2013 and FY 2014 actual expenditures.

Table DJ0-1
(dollars in thousands)

Appropriated Fund	Actual FY 2013	Actual FY 2014	Approved FY 2015	Proposed FY 2016	Change from FY 2015	Percent Change*
General Fund						
Special Purpose Revenue Funds	5,169	6,087	6,911	7,648	737	10.7
Total for General Fund	5,169	6,087	6,911	7,648	737	10.7
Gross Funds	5,169	6,087	6,911	7,648	737	10.7

*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 2016 Operating Appendices** located on the Office of the Chief Financial Officer's website.

FY 2016 Proposed Full-Time Equivalents, by Revenue Type

Table DJ0-2 contains the proposed FY 2016 FTE level compared to the FY 2015 approved FTE level by revenue type. It also provides FY 2013 and FY 2014 actual data.

Table DJ0-2

Appropriated Fund	Actual FY 2013	Actual FY 2014	Approved FY 2015	Proposed FY 2016	Change from FY 2015	Percent Change
General Fund						
Special Purpose Revenue Funds	32.8	35.9	40.4	40.4	0.0	0.0
Total for General Fund	32.8	35.9	40.4	40.4	0.0	0.0
Total Proposed FTEs	32.8	35.9	40.4	40.4	0.0	0.0

FY 2016 Proposed Operating Budget, by Comptroller Source Group

Table DJ0-3 contains the proposed FY 2016 budget at the Comptroller Source Group (object class) level compared to the FY 2015 approved budget. It also provides FY 2013 and FY 2014 actual expenditures.

Table DJ0-3
(dollars in thousands)

Comptroller Source Group	Actual FY 2013	Actual FY 2014	Approved FY 2015	Proposed FY 2016	Change from FY 2015	Percent Change*
11 - Regular Pay - Continuing Full Time	3,090	3,417	4,004	4,214	210	5.2
12 - Regular Pay - Other	1	0	0	0	0	N/A
13 - Additional Gross Pay	2	0	0	0	0	N/A
14 - Fringe Benefits - Current Personnel	548	591	689	725	36	5.2
15 - Overtime Pay	1	0	0	0	0	N/A
Subtotal Personal Services (PS)	3,641	4,008	4,693	4,939	246	5.2
20 - Supplies and Materials	33	30	40	40	0	0.0
30 - Energy, Communication and Building Rentals	1	0	1	1	0	5.2
31 - Telephone, Telegraph, Telegram, Etc.	24	36	32	37	5	15.5
32 - Rentals - Land and Structures	308	717	1,038	1,206	169	16.3
35 - Occupancy Fixed Costs	0	0	23	0	-23	-100.0
40 - Other Services and Charges	535	631	456	546	90	19.8
41 - Contractual Services - Other	530	506	472	722	250	53.0
70 - Equipment and Equipment Rental	97	158	157	157	0	0.0
Subtotal Nonpersonal Services (NPS)	1,527	2,079	2,218	2,709	491	22.1
Gross Funds	5,169	6,087	6,911	7,648	737	10.7

*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 2016 proposed budget.

FY 2016 Proposed Operating Budget and FTEs, by Program and Activity

Table DJ0-4 contains the proposed FY 2016 budget by program and activity compared to the FY 2015 approved budget. It also provides the FY 2014 actual data.

Table DJ0-4

(dollars in thousands)

Program/Activity	Dollars in Thousands				Full-Time Equivalents			
	Actual FY 2014	Approved FY 2015	Proposed FY 2016	Change from FY 2015	Actual FY 2014	Approved FY 2015	Proposed FY 2016	Change from FY 2015
(1000) Agency Management								
(1010) Personnel	87	88	137	49	0.9	1.0	1.6	0.6
(1020) Contracting and Procurement	190	199	237	39	1.9	2.0	2.4	0.4
(1030) Property Management	1,068	1,352	1,508	156	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
(1040) Information Technology	225	236	244	7	1.9	2.0	2.0	0.0
(1050) Financial Management	103	79	150	71	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
(1070) Fleet Management	14	13	13	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
(1085) Customer Service	53	49	72	23	0.9	1.0	1.2	0.2
Subtotal (1000) Agency Management	1,739	2,016	2,361	345	5.6	6.0	7.2	1.2
(100F) Agency Financial Operations								
(110F) Budget Operations	287	289	317	28	2.2	2.4	2.4	0.0
Subtotal (100F) Agency Financial Operations	287	289	317	28	2.2	2.4	2.4	0.0
(2000) Office of People’s Counsel								
(2010) Consumer Advocacy and Representation	2,594	2,977	3,071	94	15.1	17.4	15.0	-2.5
(2020) Public Information Dissemination	1,467	1,628	1,898	270	12.9	14.6	15.8	1.3
Subtotal (2000) Office of People’s Counsel	4,061	4,605	4,970	365	28.0	32.0	30.8	-1.2
Total Proposed Operating Budget	6,087	6,911	7,648	737	35.9	40.4	40.4	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 2016 Operating Appendices** located on the Office of the Chief Financial Officer’s website.

FY 2016 Proposed Budget Changes

The Office of the People's Counsel's (OPC) proposed FY 2016 gross budget is \$7,648,091, which represents a 10.7 percent increase over its FY 2015 approved gross budget of \$6,911,031. The budget is comprised entirely of Special Purpose Revenue funds.

Agency Budget Submission

Increase: The OPC's Special Purpose Revenue funds are derived from assessing utility companies in the District. In continuing the efforts to provide quality services, OPC's budget proposal includes an increase of \$246,083 in personal services to fund projected changes in salary steps and Fringe Benefit costs. This adjustment is comprised of \$118,772 in the Agency Management program, \$99,644 in the Office of the People's Counsel program, and \$27,667 in the Agency Financial Operations program. A net increase of \$150,722 in the Agency Management program aligns the budget with funding for various Fixed Cost items based on projections from the Department of General Services and the Office of the Chief Technology Officer. These items account for increases of \$168,806 to fund the agency's lease agreement, \$4,920 to support Telecom costs, \$41 for Energy, and a reduction of \$23,045 in Occupancy costs. Other adjustments are a net increase of \$90,255, which is comprised of \$75,255 in the Agency Management program, and \$15,000 in the Office of the People's Counsel program. These adjustments account for miscellaneous items that include operational costs for professional services, office support, staff training, and travel.

Mayor's Proposed Budget

No Change: OPC's budget proposal reflects no change from the agency budget submission to the Mayor's proposed budget.

District's Proposed Budget

Enhance: OPC's budget proposal includes a nonpersonal services enhancement of \$250,000, to fund targeted outreach and education initiatives on energy efficiency programs and practices for low-income and elderly residents of the District.

FY 2015 Approved Budget to FY 2016 Proposed Budget, by Revenue Type

Table DJ0-5 itemizes the changes by revenue type between the FY 2015 approved budget and the FY 2016 proposed budget.

Table DJ0-5
(dollars in thousands)

DESCRIPTION	PROGRAM	BUDGET	FTE
SPECIAL PURPOSE REVENUE FUNDS: FY 2015 Approved Budget and FTE		6,911	40.4
Increase: To adjust personal services	Multiple Programs	246	0.0
Increase: To align Fixed Costs with proposed estimates	Agency Management	151	0.0
Increase: To align funding with nonpersonal services costs	Multiple Programs	90	0.0
SPECIAL PURPOSE REVENUE FUNDS: FY 2016 Agency Budget Submission		7,398	40.4
No Change		0	0.0
SPECIAL PURPOSE REVENUE FUNDS: FY 2016 Mayor's Proposed Budget		7,398	40.4
Enhance: To fund energy efficiency education initiatives	Office of People's Counsel	250	0.0
SPECIAL PURPOSE REVENUE FUNDS: FY 2016 District's Proposed Budget		7,648	40.4
Gross for DJ0 - Office of the People's Counsel		7,648	40.4

(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 2016:

Objective 1: Ensure effective advocacy on behalf of consumers and ratepayers of natural gas, electric, and telephone service in the District.

Objective 2: Provide consumer education outreach and technical assistance to District ratepayers and consumers on matters relating to utilities.

Objective 3: Enhance agency operational efficiency to improve customer service and reduce costs.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Office of the People's Counsel

Measure	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2016
	Actual	Target	Actual	Projection	Projection	Projection
Number of consumer education and outreach meetings/encounters attended	160	175	323	175	175	175
Percent of consumer complaints closed	94%	90%	84.2%	90%	90%	90%