



Office of Administrative Hearings OAH (FS)

MISSION

The mission of the Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) is to provide the District of Columbia's citizens and government agencies with a fair, efficient and effective forum to manage and resolve administrative disputes.

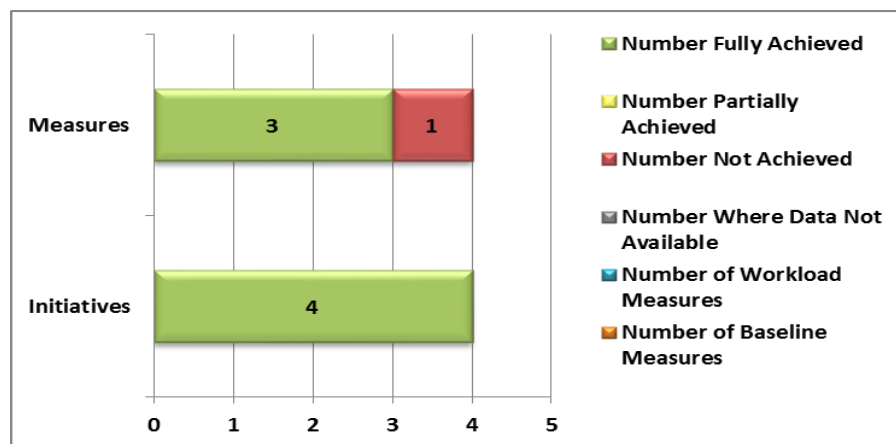
SUMMARY OF SERVICES

OAH is an impartial, independent agency which adjudicates cases for over 40 District of Columbia agencies, boards and commissions. OAH holds hearings, conducts mediations and provides other adjudication services to resolve disputes arising under the District's laws and regulations.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ✓ After operating from more than five different locations for eight years, OAH relocated in August 2011 to a centralized court facility on the 4th Floor of One Judiciary Square. As part of this relocation effort, OAH completely and successfully reorganized its organizational and personnel structure to focus more on specific adjudication functions than on proximity of support for a particular jurisdiction.
- ✓ As part of its relocation in August 2011, OAH opened its Resource Center and hired a Resource Center Coordinator who also oversees OAH's access to justice and language access initiatives. The Resource Center provides self-represented litigants with information and assistance related to their matters before OAH. The Resource Center has partnered with various law schools and legal services organizations to provide "Know Your Rights" and other informational brochures to the public, often in multiple languages. During walk-in hours, self-represented litigants can meet with Resource Center staff or supervised volunteers regarding their cases and, if necessary, receive legal information and assistance with OAH forms and procedure. Through the Resource Center, OAH has formalized its referral system in an effort to assist members of the public in obtaining representation in their cases before OAH.
- ✓ In January 2011, OAH successfully piloted an e-filing initiative in its Unemployment Insurance Appeals ("UI") jurisdiction. UI cases accounted for approximately 13% of OAH's case filings in FY11. In October 2011, OAH promulgated rules to permit e-filing in all its jurisdictions.

OVERVIEW OF AGENCY PERFORMANCE





Performance Initiatives – Assessment Details

Performance Assessment Key:

- Fully achieved ● Partially achieved ● Not achieved ● Data not reported

Agency Management

OBJECTIVE 1: Reduce the time for reaching final disposition.

- **INITIATIVE 1.1: Increase utilization of OAH’s mediation alternative to a full administrative hearing.**
Fully achieved. In FY09, OAH convened a Mediation Committee whose objective is to develop and expand the use of mediation to meet or exceed the Key Performance Indicator goal (2.5%) for resolving cases quickly and effectively without the need for evidentiary hearings or written orders, or to help narrow issues that need to be heard, thereby reducing the time required for evidentiary hearings. In FY10-11, the Mediation Committee undertook several successful initiatives, including: overseeing the furnishing of the Mediation Center space on the 7th floor, including the selection and placement of artwork in consultation with the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities; working with the OAH Rules Committee to finalize the mediation rules section of the new OAH Procedural Rules; gathering survey forms from other mediation sites to assist in developing appropriate surveys for participants in OAH mediations; and revising forms and brochure for mediation. As a result of these and other agency-wide efforts, in FY11 OAH exceeded its Key Performance Indicator for mediation by over 70% (4.3% versus 2.5%).

- **INITIATIVE 1.2: Increase the use of technology to streamline decisions’ issuance.**
Fully achieved. In FY11-12, OAH is piloting and implementing a “bench order” program in OAH’s largest jurisdiction, Department of Public Works, to reduce the time for issuing decisions in certain cases. OAH’s governing statute and the DC Administrative Procedures Act require that all Final Orders issued by OAH be in writing. However, in certain simple cases, including those where parties fail to appear, change pleas, or settle matters prior to the hearing, Final Orders can be issued at the hearing itself, thereby limiting post-hearing delays in issuing orders as well as facilitating prompt payment of an adjudged fines and/or statutory penalties.

The success of this initiative depends on coordinating OAH’s case management system, procedural rules and courtroom technology. Through this initiative, Due Process, as guaranteed by the United States Constitution and federal and District law, will be delivered more efficiently. This increased efficiency will help OAH keep pace with the over 50% increase in case filings since OAH began operations in FY05.

- **INITIATIVE 1.3: Fully integrate OAH’s court-oriented case management system.**
Fully achieved. In addition to the bench order program discussed in Initiative 1.2, in FY11-12 OAH is piloting and implementing an agency-wide e-filing program. In order to commence a case at OAH, agencies and the public must file paper copies of pleadings. Once a case is commenced, parties may agree to serve each other documents electronically, but are still required to file paper copies with OAH. Many agencies within OAH’s jurisdiction that generate higher volume case filings are developing electronic tickets which, with the proper technology interface and due process protections, can be received and processed electronically into OAH’s case management system. As such, the use of e-filing technology would aid in the efficient processing of this projected case increase. To meet this growing need, In October 2011, OAH promulgated rules to permit e-filing in all its cases. As with the bench



order program, the success of this initiative depends on coordinating OAH's case management system, procedural rules and courtroom technology.

OBJECTIVE 2: Improve the experience of participants in administrative hearings through quality customer service.

● **INITIATIVE 2.1: Address access to justice issues for unrepresented parties identified through Bellows Fellowship research.**

Fully achieved. As an outgrowth of the Bellows Fellowship research, in August 2011 OAH opened its Resource Center and hired a Resource Center Coordinator who also oversees OAH's access to justice and language access initiatives. The Resource Center provides self-represented litigants with information and assistance related to their matters before OAH. The Resource Center has partnered with various law schools and legal services organizations to provide "Know Your Rights" and other informational brochures to the public, often in multiple languages. During walk-in hours, self-represented litigants can meet with Resource Center staff or supervised volunteers regarding their cases and, if necessary, receive legal information and assistance with OAH forms and procedure. Through the Resource Center, OAH has formalized its referral system in an effort to assist members of the public in obtaining representation in their cases before OAH.



Key Performance Indicators – Details

Performance Assessment Key:

● Fully achieved ● Partially achieved ● Not achieved ● Data not reported

		Measure Name	FY2010 YE Actual	FY2011 YE Target	FY2011 YE Revised Target	FY2011 YE Actual	FY2011 YE Rating	Budget Program
●	1.1	% of unemployment insurance case dispositions within 90 days of filing	0	95%		98.20%	103.37%	
●	1.2	% of hearings reduced due to conducting ADR/Mediation	0	2.5%		4.21%	168.33%	
●	1.3	% of non-default, non-UI case dispositions within 120 days of filing	0	80%		40.09%	50.11%	
●	2.1	% of consumer satisfaction surveys with a rating of Met My Expectations or Exceeds My Expectations	0	93%		96.10%	103.34%	