



FY 2011 PERFORMANCE PLAN Office of the Tenant Advocate

MISSION

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 a tenant finds 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. (1) OTA conducts educational seminars in a variety of contexts to inform tenants about their rights and other rental housing concerns. (2) OTA 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) OTA works with other governmental entities, tenant stakeholders, and others to promote better tenant protection laws and policies in the District. (4) OTA 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.

AGENCY WORKLOAD MEASURES

Measure	FY2009 Actual	FY2010 YTD
# of cases initiated.	1838	1954
# Housing Assistance Fund cases.	86	81



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

INITIATIVE 1.1: Expand the OTA’s case management system to enhance reporting capabilities.

Client intake data will be maintained on a case tracking management system to be updated daily, with monthly reports to TrackDC to be submitted for posting on the OTA website. Analysis of each report will be used to create educational toolkits to enhance tenants’ general understanding of available resources and remedies when they have a dispute with their landlords. This *modus operandi* will also enable the OTA to provide the Executive, Council of the District of Columbia, and other interested parties with more detailed information about specific cases upon request. It will also serve to increase the efficacy of advice provided by OTA Case Management Specialists to clients and where appropriate, implement more standardized policies. Target completion date: September 2011

INITIATIVE 1.2: Revise contracting process and contract terms for outside legal service providers and attorneys and enhance tracking of case referrals to better ensure quality control compliance.

In FY 2011, the OTA will implement an expanded version of the 2010 “Request for Qualifications” (RFQ) system to further align OTA goals and objectives with the quality of legal providers selected to provide client selection with the most appropriate legal referral. Target completion date: December 2010

INITIATIVE 1.3: Initiate the in-house “hot line” case management retired attorney program.

In FY 2011, the OTA will implement the first phase of an overall OTA hot line program that will provide 16 hours a week of in-house legal consultation for the tenant community. Program start up will begin with a SOW that defines the work to be performed. Target completion date: September 2011.

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

INITIATIVE 2.1: Develop an educational curriculum for the Latino tenant community.

The OTA will work in conjunction with the Carlos Rosario International Public Charter School to create a curriculum that directly focuses on tenant rights within the Latino community. That curriculum will provide basic information about real estate terminology, the contents of a lease, rent control protections, how to determine if a unit is under rent control, eviction and other protections that apply to all tenants in the District, the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program, and the roles and responsibilities of tenants and landlords. This educational program will be designed to help close the information gap that often exists between tenants who belong to a minority population and their landlords. It will also be designed generally to broaden awareness about the OTA as a government resource, and help build trust in District government generally so that more members of this community can benefit from government resources.

Target completion date: September 2011



INITIATIVE 2.2: Revise current educational materials informing tenants about rental housing legal issues.

In FY2010 OTA produced a series of short videos, featuring members of the advocacy staff, addressing “nut-and-bolt” rental housing issues such as leases, renters insurance, inspections, and security deposits. In FY11, these videos will be revised and translated into Spanish for distribution to community-based housing organizations and released on the OTA website. Research will be undertaken to determine the feasibility of establishment of an OTA Facebook site for easy downloadable access.

Target completion date: September 2011

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

INITIATIVE 3.1: Develop regulations consistent with the Emergency Housing Program.

Through the Emergency Housing Program established pursuant to D.C. Official Code §42-3407.03(a), the OTA provides emergency relocation assistance to tenants who have been displaced due to circumstances beyond their control, such as a government closure or a fire or flood. In consultation with government and non-government stakeholders, the OTA will develop proposed rule-making for the Program and submit them to the Council by December 1, 2010. When made effective through final rule-making, these regulations will inform tenants and their representatives about the program’s eligibility criteria, the application process, and the terms and conditions of program benefits.

Target completion date: September 2011.

PROPOSED KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Measure ¹	FY2009 Actual	FY2010 Projection	FY2010 YTD	FY2011 Projection	FY2012 Projection	FY2013 Projection
% of tenant intake cases resolved through landlord action, assistance with petition filing, technical assistance to the tenant, or case referral.	77.9%	80%	TBD	85%	87%	89%
% of customers referred who were satisfied with the services provided	Not Available	Not Available	Baseline	TBD	TBD	TBD
# of rental housing case abstracts to be included in database.	57	50	100	75	90	130
% of identified tenant associations to be represented in tenant summit.	53.3	50%	TBD	50%	50%	50%

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



Measure¹	FY2009 Actual	FY2010 Projection	FY2010 YTD	FY2011 Projection	FY2012 Projection	FY2013 Projection
% of all Housing Assistance Fund cases resolved through relocation-funding assistance.	100%	75%	100%	85%	85%	85%
% of households for housing assistance for whom OTA made emergency housing available within 24 hours.	100%	80%	100%	90%	90%	90%