



**FY12 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 educate and inform the tenant community about tenant rights and rental housing matters; to advocate for the rights and interests of District renters in the legislative, regulatory, and judicial contexts; and to provide financial assistance to displaced tenants for certain emergency housing and tenant relocation expenses.

SUMMARY OF SERVICES

The OTA provides a range of services to the tenant community to further each aspect of its mission. (1) OTA advises tenants on resolving disputes with landlords, identifies legal issues and the rights and responsibilities of tenants and landlords, and provides legal and technical assistance for further action such as filing tenant petitions. (2) OTA provides in-house representation for tenants in certain cases, and refers other cases to pro bono or contracted legal service providers and attorneys. (3) OTA works with other governmental and non-governmental officials and entities, including the DC Council, the Mayor's office, executive agencies, the courts, tenant stakeholders, advocates, and others, to promote better tenant protection laws and policies in the District. (4) OTA conducts educational seminars in a variety of contexts to inform tenants about their rights and other rental housing concerns. (5) OTA provides financial assistance for certain emergency housing and relocation expenses to tenants displaced by fires, floods, or government closures.

AGENCY WORKLOAD MEASURES

Metrics	FY 2009 Actual	FY 2010 Actual	FY 2011 Actual
# of Cases Initiated	1838	2261	2615
# Emergency Housing Assistance Cases	86	95	111

OBJECTIVE 1: Create and improve channels of communication between the agency and the tenant community.

INITIATIVE 1.1: Initiate internship program for law and pre-law students.

In FY 2012, the OTA will initiate a year-round internship program to introduce law students and "pre-law" college undergraduates to the work of the OTA, thus encouraging more lawyers to practice in this challenging but under-served area of the law, while supporting the agency's legal and legislative efforts. Completion date: September 2012.

INITIATIVE 1.2: Develop a newsletter to educate and inform tenant communities on a monthly basis.

In FY 2012, the OTA will develop a tenant newsletter aimed at keeping the tenant community abreast to issues as it relates to them. The newsletter will be electronic, however paper copies will be made available as well. Users will be able to visit the OTA online to sign up to receive the newsletters. Target rollout date for first newsletter: May 2012



INITIATIVE 1.3: Develop a customer satisfaction survey.

In FY 2012, the OTA will develop and distribute a satisfaction survey to clients so that the agency can better understand the impact of the services provided. This survey will offer the agency more insight to client's thoughts on 1) Overall satisfaction, 2) Service-specific satisfaction; 3) Turnaround time with respect to Case Intake process and 4) Interest in new services and/or products. This survey will be made available online as well as in paper form. Reminders and instructions to logon to our website to take the survey will be added to certain outreach materials to increase participation. Target completion date: June 2012.

INITIATIVE 1.4: Enhance virtual communications to allow for capacity of "live" online interaction with tenant communities.

In FY 2012, the OTA will host online Q&A sessions with the tenant community. Tenants will be able to logon to the agency website on designated dates and times to ask questions to the OTA, and receive live responses. The goal is for the agency to host 2 live online Q&A sessions with the tenant community by August 2012.

OBJECTIVE 2: Inform tenant communities about tenant rights and related issues.

INITIATIVE 2.1: Expand Searchable Database of Rental Housing Case Decisions.

In FY 2012, the OTA will expand its Rental Housing Case Decision database to make more resources available to the public. The agency goal for the fiscal year is to increase the amount of Rental Housing Commission decisions and Office of Administrative Hearings decisions available in the database by 20% respectively, as well as to make available a cumulative total of 150 abstracts of Court of Appeals decisions. Completion date: September 2012.

This program will continue to help fill a gap in the accessibility and affordability of legal research tools for rental housing cases. It will also continue to provide both tenant attorneys and pro se tenant litigants alike with information about the legal matters at issue in their specific cases, with reference to how similar matters have been decided in the past.

INITIATIVE 2.2: Enhance and improve educational materials available online.

The OTA will develop and make available new online educational material for the tenant community. Through the use of e learning development tools, the agency will offer a new way for the public to learn about tenant rights in the District. Material will cover rental housing issues such as leases, renters insurance, inspections, and security deposits. Users will be able to visit the OTA website to view and download various e learning applications. These applications will offer the public an alternate way of learning and searching for tenant related information, as well as the capability to instantly learn from the comfort of their homes, without having to wait for a scheduled workshop. The goal is to make available to the tenant community 3 new e learning applications by September 2012.

OBJECTIVE 3: Provide financial assistance to cover certain emergency housing and tenant relocation expenses under the OTA's "Emergency Housing Assistance Program" (EHAP).

INITIATIVE 3.1 Explore the feasibility of a public/private renters insurance program.

OTA will explore the feasibility of a public/private renters' insurance program to expand the number of tenants who have renters insurance partly to reduce the agency's EHAP costs. The purposes of such a program would be to encourage more tenants to insure their personal property; if possible, do so at lower rates than currently available; save the District/OTA money in terms relocation expenditures (the OTA provides financial assistance to tenants displaced by



building closures or fires in the absence of relevant insurance); and potentially generate revenue for the District/OTA. The goal is to develop a proposal in consultation with DISB and industry representatives that includes all the elements necessary for DISB feasibility and actuarial studies.

Target completion date for submission of a proposal to DISB: December 2012

PROPOSED KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS – Office of Tenant Advocate

Measure¹	FY10 Actual	FY11 Target	FY11 Actual	FY12 Projection	FY13 Projection	FY14 Projection
% of tenant intake cases resolved	100%	85%	100%	87%	89%	89%
# of cases initiated	2261	-	2615	-	-	-
# of rental housing case abstracts to be included in database	100	75	118	150	180	210
% of identified tenant associations to be represented in tenant summit.	53% (8/15)	50%	85% (34/40)	50%	50%	50%
% of all emergency housing cases resolved	100%	85%	100%	85%	85%	85%
% of households eligible for housing assistance for whom OTA made emergency housing available within 24 hours	100%	90%	100%	90%	90%	90%
# Emergency Housing cases	95	-	111	-	-	-

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