



**FY 2014 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) The 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) The 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) The OTA conducts educational seminars in a variety of contexts to inform tenants about their rights and other rental housing concerns. (5) The OTA provides financial assistance for certain emergency housing and relocation expenses to tenants displaced by fires, floods, property having been closed by the government, or other unanticipated emergencies.

**AGENCY WORKLOAD MEASURES**

<b>Metrics</b>	<b>FY 2011 Actual</b>	<b>FY 2012 Actual</b>	<b>FY 2013 Actual</b>
# of Cases Initiated	2615	2767	3396
# Emergency Housing Assistance Cases	111	115	116

**OBJECTIVE 1: Create and enhance communication venues to better serve the tenant population.**

**INITIATIVE 1.1: Produce and Broadcast a Webinar Program Series.**

In FY 2014, the OTA will produce and broadcast webinars addressing the five most common issues facing the District’s tenant population. Completion date: **September 2014.**

**INITIATIVE 1.2: Repackage and publish the newly created Webinar Program Series productions on the OTA website.**

In FY 2014, the OTA will repackage each new Webinar Program Series production in a manner consistent with District website standards, and will publish the repackaged productions on ota.dc.gov. Completion date: **September 2014.**

**INITIATIVE 1.3: Expand Tenant publicity efforts for OTA Hotline services through utilization of existing community resources.**

In FY 2014, the OTA will leverage existing community resources -- such as the Northwest Current, East of the River, the District Government Calendar, and Channel 16 -- to further promote the OTA’s Hotline services, including but not limited to the monthly Live Q&A Chat sessions, Webinar Program Series, and Ask the Director web write-in program. Completion date: **September 2014.**



**OBJECTIVE 2: Expand OTA’s programmatic outreach into the student off-campus rental housing market.**

**INITIATIVE 2.1: Produce and broadcast a Public Service Announcement targeting the student off-campus rental housing market.**

In FY 2014, the OTA’s focus will be on expanding its programmatic outreach into the neglected student off-campus rental housing market. The initial aspect of this focus will be the production and broadcast of a Public Service Announcement (PSA) specifically reaching out to university students attending universities located in the District. The PSA will enhance student awareness that the District’s rental housing laws apply to them, and the PSA will inform students of government resources available to them. Completion date: **December 2013.**

**INITIATIVE 2.2: Produce and broadcast a Webinar specific to the student off-campus rental housing population.**

In FY 2014, the OTA will produce and broadcast an additional webinar that specifically addresses issues common to the student off-campus rental housing population. The webinar will then be repackaged and published on ota.dc.gov. It will also be made available to the Consortium of District of Columbia university student life officers for each university’s individual use. Completion date: **April 2014.**

**INITIATIVE 2.3: Produce and distribute a joint letter educating the housing provider community serving the student off-campus rental housing population about the legal requirements for housing providers.**

In FY 2014, the OTA and DCRA will jointly produce a letter to educate the housing provider community serving the student off-campus rental housing population about the legal requirements for housing providers. To beta-test this program, the letter will be distributed to the 400+ unlicensed and unregistered housing providers who maintain a relationship with Georgetown University. Completion date: **February 2014.**

**INITIATIVE 2.4: Produce and participate in student education “rallies.”**

Starting in FY 2014, the OTA will produce and participate in student education “rallies” at universities located in the District. The purpose of these “rallies” will be to educate students about their tenant rights and responsibilities, and how to use the legal system to vindicate rights that have been violated. In addition, students will be given the opportunity to interact with OTA Case Managers and attorney advisors to discuss specific landlord-tenant disputes. To beta-test this initiative, the OTA will coordinate its FY 2014 efforts with the Georgetown University Neighborhood Life Office. Completion date: **May 2014.**

**INITIATIVE 2.5: Develop and distribute a student satisfaction survey of off-campus rental housing.**

In FY 2014, the OTA will develop a student satisfaction survey to be distributed by university student life offices, addressing legal and cultural aspects of their rental housing experience. Survey results will inform future student rental applicants and promote legal compliance by housing providers. To beta-test this initiative in FY 2014, the OTA will coordinate its efforts with the Georgetown University Neighborhood Life Office. Completion date: **June 2014.**



**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 Create new external partnerships to better serve clients of the EHAP program.**

In FY 2014, the OTA will create new partnerships with non-governmental resources in an effort to increase efficiency and enhance coverage of the EHAP program. Completion date: **September 2014.**

**KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS – *Office of Tenant Advocate***

<b>Measure</b>	<b>FY 2012 Actual</b>	<b>FY 2013 Target</b>	<b>FY 2013 Actual</b>	<b>FY 2014 Projections</b>	<b>FY 2015 Projections</b>	<b>FY 2016 Projections</b>
% of tenant intake cases resolved	100%	89%	100%	89%	89%	89%
# of rental housing case abstracts to be included in database	131	180	180	210	240	255
% of identified tenant associations to be represented in tenant summit.	86% (43/50)	50%	96% (48/50)	50%	50%	50%
% of households eligible for housing assistance for whom OTA made emergency housing available within 24 hours, if funding was available	100%	90%	100%	90%	90%	90%