

Office of the People's Counsel FY2022

Agency Office of the People's Counsel

Agency Code DJ0

Fiscal Year 2022

Mission The mission of the Office of the People's Counsel ("OPC" or "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.

Strategic Objectives

Objective Number	Strategic Objective
1	Provide consumer education, outreach and technical assistance to District ratepayers and consumers on matters relating to natural gas, electric, telephone and water services.
2	Ensure effective advocacy on behalf of consumers and ratepayers of natural gas, electric, telephone and water services in the District.
3	Enhance agency operational efficiency to improve agency efficiency and productivity, service delivery and cost reduction.
4	Create and maintain a highly efficient, transparent and responsive District government

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Measure	Directionality	FY 2019 Actual	FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Target
1 - Provide consumer education, outreach and technical assistance to District ratepayers and consumers on matters relating to natural gas, electric, telephone and water services. (2 Measures)					
Percent of consumer complaints closed annually	Up is Better	63.3%	81.7%	76%	90%
Number of consumer outreach meetings	Up is Better	1031	1334	1422	400

Operations

Operations Title	Operations Description	Type of Operations
1 - Provide consumer education, outreach and technical assistance to District ratepayers and consumers on matters relating to natural gas, electric, telephone and water services. (2 Activities)		
Daily Consumer Education Activities	OPC's consumer services division provides daily consumer education and outreach activity by attending and conducting various community meetings on a weekly and monthly basis.	Daily Service
Consumer assistance	On a daily basis, OPC provides consumers with pertinent information for city services, not provided by OPC. The agency receives many misdirected calls, and strives to ensure that residents needing assistance are referred to the correct city agency for service.	Daily Service
2 - Ensure effective advocacy on behalf of consumers and ratepayers of natural gas, electric, telephone and water services in the District. (1 Activity)		
OPC Consumer Advocacy	This operation describes the mission critical work OPC conducts in advocating for consumer regulatory issues.	Daily Service
3 - Enhance agency operational efficiency to improve agency efficiency and productivity, service delivery and cost reduction. (1 Activity)		
Enhancing Agency Operational Efficiency	OPC is working efficiently and effectively to assist District consumers with individual inquiries and complaints regarding their utility services and billing on both an informal and formal basis. OPC staff is continuing its comprehensive consumer education program, which includes outreach to non-English speaking and senior consumers. OPC has a robust seniors outreach and education program that is a vital component of its consumer education and outreach program. OPC has enhanced its partnerships with AARP, the Office on Aging and Commission on Aging. OPC staff educates seniors through presentations at community and mini-commission on aging meetings and at senior centers throughout the District. OPC staff also regularly updates the "Seniors Resource Guide" about home energy efficiency tips and changes in the District's utility markets. OPC's seniors outreach and education program is designed to assist seniors in managing their utility services costs.	Daily Service

Workload Measures (WMs)

Measure	FY 2019 Actual	FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual
1 - Consumer assistance (4 Measures)			
Number of consumer complaints received regarding water services	New in 2022	New in 2022	New in 2022
Number of NEP/LEP persons served by the agency	3113	1077	848
Number of consumer complaints received regarding electric, gas, or telephone services	1252	1090	1970
Number of general consumer inquiries regarding, programs, assistance or services	1150	1392	1258
1 - Daily Consumer Education Activities (2 Measures)			
Number of consumer outreach meetings for Water Services Division (WSD)	New in 2022	New in 2022	New in 2022
Number of consumer outreach meetings for Consumer Services Division (CSD)	New in 2022	New in 2022	New in 2022
2 - OPC Consumer Advocacy (2 Measures)			
Number of cases litigated before a DC Water Hearing Officer	New in 2022	New in 2022	New in 2022
Number of cases litigated before the Public Services Commission, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, Federal Communications Commission and PJM	46	Not Available	57

Strategic Initiatives

Strategic Initiative Title	Strategic Initiative Description	Proposed Completion Date
Consumer assistance (1 Strategic Initiative)		
Community Engagement & Awareness	OPC will develop strategies that will engage consumers and address trends that are impacting utility consumers. These strategies will be developed through a series of collaborative internal workgroup meetings, with implementation beginning in FY 23.	09-30-2022
Daily Consumer Education Activities (2 Strategic initiatives)		
Annual Consumer Community Conversation	OPC will host its inaugural consumer community conversation related to Climate Change to give the consumers an understanding of Climate Change so they are empowered to have a meaningful voice at the table when decisions are being made.	12-31-2021
Quarterly Agency Partner Discussion	OPC will hold quarterly resource discussions throughout FY 22 to foster continued coordination of government and nonprofit service providers to assist DC consumers related to climate change and energy efficiencies related to each utility. (The goal is to utilize the quarterly discussions with our partners to gain knowledge and build on the content of the Annual Event, which is held in October)	09-30-2022

Strategic Initiative Title	Strategic Initiative Description	Proposed Completion Date
OPC Consumer Advocacy (10 Strategic initiatives)		
Clean Water Initiative	Conduct a presentation on safe drinkable water, including lead in water and DC Water's lead pipe replacement plan. Offer training for Water Services Division staff to learn and become educated in clean water initiatives, including safe drinking water initiatives.	09-30-2022
Deep Decarbonization Consumer Blueprint	OPC will develop and release a "consumer blueprint" for deep decarbonization in the District. The blueprint will provide a vision of how the District can most equitably, affordably, and reliably achieve its goal of net zero carbon emissions by 2050, identify key benefits and pitfalls for consumers in deep decarbonization plans and proposals, and lay out requirements for how such plans and proposals can best serve District consumers.	09-30-2022
Energy Efficiency and Demand Response – FC 1160	In FC 1160 OPC will evaluate Pepco's proposed Energy Efficiency and Demand Response ("EEDR") program application to ensure that any such programs are just, reasonable, racially equitable, cost-effective, and are in line with the District's climate change goals. OPC will file comments on the proposed application and actively participate in any follow-up working group processes.	09-30-2022
Utility Climate Planning – FC 1167	In FC 1167 OPC will evaluate and comment on Pepco and Washington Gas Light's climate plans and related studies and information, and on other parties' electrification studies. OPC will conduct and file an Electrification Study, which will address certain costs and benefits, and important equity considerations in electrification investments as they affect District residents at all income levels.	09-30-2022
Water Affordability	OPC has just completed its water affordability study and will utilize the study to inform its advocacy on behalf DC Water consumers to ultimately reduce the number of consumers who are experiencing water affordability problems.	09-30-2022
Alternative Ratemaking – FC 1156	OPC will examine the Commission's order on reconsideration to determine if an appeal is merited. OPC will also participate in the Pennsylvania New Jersey Maryland Interconnection LLC's Working Group to ensure the Commission adopts an electric price structure that allows the minimum in cost recovery, produces effective regulatory oversight of the rate increase process while also supporting a reliable and environmentally sustainable grid.	09-30-2022
Affordability Study	OPC has just completed its water affordability study and will utilize the study to inform its advocacy on behalf DC Water consumers to ultimately reduce the number of consumers who are experiencing water affordability problems.	09-30-2022
Gas Leaks and Project Pipes -- FC1154	OPC will participate in this proceeding to advance policy positions to ensure that there will be a distinct process of cost recovery between normal and accelerated pipe replacement work. OPC will also propose a method of leak reporting that results in a consistent set of reports detailing the status of natural gas leaks in the District of Columbia.	09-30-2022
Construction Petition	OPC will file a petition before the DC Public Service Commission designed to establish a set of construction protocols that would be applied throughout the city that prevents damage to homes.	09-30-2022
DC Water Rate Proceeding	In the DC Water Rate proceeding, OPC will review and analyze DC Water's rate adjustment filing and testify, file written comments, and otherwise advocate for affordable rates and charges and other benefits for District ratepayers.	09-30-2022