

# Office of the People's Counsel FY2016

**Agency** Office of the People's Counsel

**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.

**Summary of Services** OPC is a party to all utility-related proceedings before the DC Public Service Commission and represents the interests of DC ratepayers before local and federal regulatory agencies and courts. The Office assists individual consumers in disputes with utility companies about billing or services and provides consumer education and outreach to community groups and associations on emerging issues impacting the quality, reliability and affordability of their utility services and associated environmental issues. The Office provides technical assistance to consumers, the Consumer Utility Board (CUB), as well as other D.C. community groups. OPC also provides legislative analysis for, assistance to and testimony before the D.C. Council on utility matters.

## 2016 Objectives

### FY16 Objectives

Objective Number	Objective Description
<b>Consumer Services Division (1 Objective)</b>	
2	Provide consumer education and outreach and technical assistance to District ratepayers and consumers on matters relating to utilities.
<b>Litigation Services Division (1 Objective)</b>	
1	Ensure effective advocacy on behalf of consumers and ratepayers of natural gas, electric and telephone services in the District.
<b>Operations Division (1 Objective)</b>	
3	Enhance agency operational efficiency to improve customer service and reduce costs.

## 2016 Key Performance Indicators

Measure	Division	Frequency of Reporting	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2015 Target	FY 2016 Target
<b>2 - Provide consumer education and outreach and technical assistance to District ratepayers and consumers on matters relating to utilities. (2 Measures)</b>							
Number of consumer education and outreach meetings/encounters attended		Quarterly	160	323	470	175	175
Percentage of consumer complaints closed		Quarterly	85.21		104.7		90

## 2016 Workload Measures

Measure	Frequency of Reporting	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015
<b>Workload Measure (4 Measures)</b>				
Number of consumer inquiries	Quarterly	986	807	990
Number of cases litigated before the Public Service Commission	Quarterly	72	64	72

Number of limited and non-English speaking persons served by the agency	Quarterly	2,100	1,048	2,513
Number of consumer complaints	Quarterly	1,717	1,639	2,058

## 2016 Initiatives

Objective Number	Objective Title	Initiative Number	Initiative Title	Initiative Description
<b>Consumer Services Division - 2 (8 Initiatives)</b>				
2		2.1	Continue education and outreach programs to limited and Non-English speaking residents.	To further the agency's mission in providing consumer education and outreach to all DC residents, in FY16, OPC will translate its most important consumer education material in Amharic, Chinese, French, Korean, Spanish and Vietnamese, to ensure that all residents are well informed about changes in the District's utility markets, their rights and responsibilities as utility ratepayers, and OPC's role as utility consumer advocate.
2		2.2	Develop and conduct a consumer education program on DC PLUG.	OPC will conduct a consumer education program for Wards 3, 4, 5, 7 and 8 to provide ratepayers with neighborhood-specific information on the power line undergrounding construction, including the timing, notice and precise locations of construction and Pepco and DDOT contacts for assistance.
2		2.3	Develop and conduct a consumer education program on WGL's Pipeline Replacement Project.	OPC will conduct a city-wide consumer education program to provide ratepayers with neighborhood-specific information on the timing, notice and precise locations of construction pertaining to WGL's natural gas pipeline replacement program, as well as WGL contacts for consumer assistance.
2		2.4	Develop and conduct a consumer education program on Verizon's transition from a copper to fiber telecommunications network.	OPC will conduct a city-wide consumer education program to provide ratepayers with comprehensive information on consumers' rights and responsibilities and the telecommunications services available during Verizon's transition from its copper to fiber network.
2		2.5	Educate consumers about their rights regarding third party energy suppliers.	OPC will continue its consumer education program to inform ratepayers about their rights and responsibilities regarding service from third party energy suppliers and educate consumers on critical questions to ask marketers when considering contracting with a third party energy supplier. OPC will update its "Third Party Suppliers Guide" informational brochure to ensure consumers have up-to-date information about energy choices.
2		2.6	Continue implementation of CSD's social media program.	To improve the breadth of its education and outreach to all District utility consumers regarding OPC's consumer advocacy, OPC will expand its presence on social media through increased use of Twitter, Facebook and OPC's website.
2		2.7	Advocate for improved consumer	In FY 16, OPC will work with the DC Sustainable Energy Utility Advisory Board and the DC SEU for

			education on DC SEU energy efficiency and renewable energy programs.	enhanced consumer education and outreach to inform District ratepayers of the array of renewable and energy efficiency programs available to residential, small business, and commercial consumers.
2		2.8	Continue education of seniors about home energy efficiency measures.	OPC will enhance its energy efficiency outreach and education program for seniors to assist in reducing their home energy costs, increase their knowledge about energy efficiency measures and tips and ensure they are kept aware of the potential benefits and availability of renewable energy options in DC.

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**Litigation Services Division - 1 (9 Initiatives)**

1		1.1	PHI/Exelon Proceeding	Advocate on behalf of electric utility consumers in the PHI/Exelon proceeding.  In FY16, OPC will review the Commission's order denying the proposed merger of PHI and Exelon and respond to any appeals from said order.
1		1.2	Natural Gas Pipeline Replacement	In FY16, OPC will comprehensively review and evaluate WGL's annual pipeline replacement projects included in the approved five-year plan to ensure the projects and associated costs to be paid by DC consumers are accurate and appropriate.
1		1.3	Advocate for effective rules to protect consumers who receive energy service from third party suppliers.	In FY16, OPC will advocate for revision of the DC Public Service Commission rules governing the licensing and marketing practices of third party energy suppliers by proposing specific rules to better protect consumers who choose to purchase energy from third party suppliers.
1		1.4	Advocate for effective policies to modernize the District of Columbia's energy infrastructure.	In FY16, OPC will aggressively advocate for enhanced energy delivery to DC consumers in the DC Public Service Commission's energy grid modernization proceeding by developing and evaluating proposed new technologies and policies aimed at modernizing DC's energy delivery system to increase service reliability and sustainability, and to enhance DC residents' ability to produce and sell energy.
1		1.5	Advocate for affordable energy rates.	In FY16, OPC will advocate on behalf of consumers for affordable rates, reliable service and consumer protections in rate cases to be filed by Pepco and Washington Gas.
1		1.6	Advocate on behalf of consumers for effective implementation of the D.C. Power Line Undergrounding initiative.	In FY 16, OPC will zealously advocate for the provision of accurate, timely, and educational information to consumers regarding the D.C. Power Line Undergrounding ("D.C. PLUG") initiative and ensure that implementation of D.C. PLUG complies with the Electric Company Infrastructure Improvement and Financing Act of 2014.
1		1.7	Advocate for the refund of excessive natural gas costs to ratepayers.	In FY 16, OPC will zealously advocate for the refund of millions of dollars in natural gas costs back to DC consumers who were improperly charged for costs associated with the over-delivery of natural gas to Washington Gas by competitive energy suppliers.
1		1.8	Advocate for the	In FY 16, OPC will review the Public Service

			fair and reasonable conversion of Verizon's infrastructure from copper to fiber optics.	Commission's order regarding Verizon's copper-to-fiber network conversion and further advocate as necessary to require Verizon to fully comply with the Commission's directives and mandates to ensure quality telecommunications service to DC residents during the transition.
1		1.9	Advocate on behalf of consumers at the wholesale and federal levels.	In FY 16, OPC will advocate for affordable, reliable and sustainable energy service for DC consumers by actively participating in energy matters before the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and PJM Interconnection to ensure the fair and equitable inclusion in and compensation for demand response resources in PJM's energy and capacity markets. OPC will also advocate for sustainable and affordable energy service for DC consumers before the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency regarding its proposed carbon-emissions standards.
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<b>Operations Division - 3 (3 Initiatives)</b>				
3		3.1	INITIATIVE 3.1 Develop and implement an office communications team to enhance customer service and mission effectiveness.	OPC is conducting an internal communications assessment to analyze the agency's current communications structure and processes, and in FY16, will utilize the assessment results to draft a communications strategy and establish a dedicated communications team to enhance OPC's ability to communicate with external and internal customers to provide greater customer education and better service to District ratepayers.
3		3.2	Enhance agency operations through review and creation of agency standard operating policies and procedures.	In FY16, OPC will conduct an internal review of agency administrative orders and policies and procedures, revising and drafting new policies, as needed, in an effort to enhance agency operational efficiency, effectiveness and transparency.
3		3.3	Enhance agency operations through the implementation of new computer applications.	In FY16, OPC will purchase and install computer applications that will allow employees access to needed software application tools from anywhere they can access a Web connection, and from virtually any device. Additionally, OPC will migrate to newer computer applications which will create intranet sites using workflows to help streamline the agency's business processes that enhance efficiency and effectiveness of agency operations.
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