

Update on The Office of the Tenant Advocate Operating Status during COVID-19 Emergency

What is our operating status?

Along with the rest of District government, our agency remains operational. However, we have made changes to how services are being provided.

How does this impact what we do?

- **Day to Day Functions** - no changes. All day-to-day functions of the agency are being maintained, except that the OTA is not taking clients on a walk-in basis for the duration of the emergency. The OTA will provide all services, including client intakes, via telephone, e-mail, and on-line.
- **Legal Services** - Tenants needing legal services should contact OTA either electronically, through the web-based “Ask the Chief Tenant Advocate” system, or by telephone. The tenant should either 1) go online to <https://ota.dc.gov/> and click OTA Housing Assistance and Community Service, then click on Ask the Director, complete the request, and submit; or (2) call (202) 719-6560, and leave a message. The OTA Legal Branch will respond within 24 hours or the next business day.
- **Policy Advocacy** - Tenants with requests or questions regarding policy matters should send an email to Joel.Cohn@dc.gov or leave a message at (202) 719-6568. Someone from the Policy Branch will respond within 24 hours or the next business day.
- **Emergency Housing** - OTA will respond to displacements in collaboration with the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA), DC Homeland Security (HSEMA), or the American Red Cross.
- **Educational Services** - Tenants with requests or questions regarding education and outreach services should send an email to Stephen.Dudek@dc.gov. Mr. Dudek will respond within 24 hours or the next business day.

How does this impact our physical locations?

- **OTA’s office** - closed to the public for the duration of the public health emergency, thus regular walk-in hours (Monday - Friday from 9 am - 4 pm) are suspended.

What precautions are we taking to limit the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19)?

Our employees are taking precautions to keep themselves healthy and limit the spread of infections like regularly washing their hands, cleaning facilities more frequently, and reducing close contact with each other and residents. Employees have been asked to let their supervisor know immediately if they feel sick.

Where should you go if you have questions?

For questions about any of the services we provide and information on any future changes, please contact us at (202) 719-6560 or ota.dc.gov. For more information, please visit coronavirus.dc.gov.