

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Office of the Secretary of the District of Columbia



Open Government Report 2014

To institutionalize a culture of transparent and open government, accountability, and to expand opportunities for resident participation and collaboration, this Report describes how the Office of the Secretary (OS) has and will continue to develop and enhance transparency, public participation, and collaboration. In accordance with Mayor's Order 2014-170, this report addresses the following topics:

1) **Transparency**

The Office of the Secretary of the District of Columbia provides protocol, authentication, ceremonial and public records management services on behalf of the Mayor and District government agencies. The Office of the Secretary consists of three offices and two units: Office of Documents and Administrative Issuances (ODAI), Office of Notary Commissions and Authentications (ONCA), Office of Public Records and Archives, Ceremonial Services Unit, and Protocol and International Affairs Unit.

The Office continues to make information available online through its website: <http://os.dc.gov/>, which is updated regularly. The updated website includes more information about staff and contacts within the Office of the Secretary. Starting in 2012, the Office has utilized Facebook, Twitter and Instagram to share the Office's activities, including foreign delegation visits, Sister City programs and event announcements.

The Office of Documents and Administrative Issuances publishes the weekly DC Register and all Mayor's Orders and Memoranda. ODAI sends out a message through its Twitter account on the availability of its weekly publication. The *DC Municipal Regulations*, the *DC Register*, and Administrative Issuances (Mayor's Orders) can be accessed at www.dcregs.dc.gov. ODAI also makes available historical Mayor's Orders on the *D.C. Regs* website.

The Office of Notary Commissions and Authentications has launched a new interactive mapping system that allows online searches for Washington, DC notaries public. This searchable online map gives the public greater access to local notaries, and increases each notary's visibility and ability to expand their service to the community. Information on all services provided by ONCA, fee schedules, hours of operation, and application to become notary public can be accessed via the OS website.

The Office of Public Records and Archives services records and research requests through emails at archives@dc.gov, mail, telephone calls and on-site visits. A new

feature has been updated in the website to allow online submission for requests of records research for general and genealogy purposes.

The Ceremonial Services Unit encourages the public to place their requests for ceremonial documents (such as proclamations, birthday letters, welcome/greetings, retirement letters, etc.) through the OS website. Samples of the different types of documents are available online.

The Protocol and International Affairs Unit serves as the primary link to the 186 embassies and two special interest sections located in the District of Columbia. The list of embassies is available online and the information is updated as soon as the U.S. Department of State makes it available. This unit also provides advice on numerous protocol issues including proper display of flags, use of the seal of the District of Columbia and order of speakers in programs. The protocol guidance is available online through the OS website. Currently, the District of Columbia has partnered with 13 national capitals around the world. Additionally, the District of Columbia has partnered with Sunderland, England, the ancestral home of the first president, George Washington. Residents interested in joining the Steering Committees for the Sister-City relationships can contact the Office to be included in the list.

Regarding FOIA requests, the Office of the Secretary is part of the Executive Office of the Mayor (EOM); the FOIA Officer designated for EOM covers OS.

The Office of the Secretary is working closely with the Office of the City Administrator (OCA) and the Office of the Chief Technology Officer (OCTO) to identify a significant number of datasets that OCA and OCTO expect to publish online later this year. If no dataset is selected to be included in this 2014 release, we will continue to work with OCA and OCTO to identify datasets appropriate to publish in 2015. In the future, requirements for open data reporting will be provided by the Chief Data Officer.

2) **Public Engagement and Participation**

The Office of the Secretary engages the public in various ways. Facebook, Twitter and Instagram have been the main media used to get the public involved in Office activities. Currently, the Office of the Secretary's Twitter account has more than 300 followers at *@SecretaryofDC*, the office has tweeted more than 2,000 messages. The facebook site is *Office of the Secretary of the District of Columbia*.

The Office of the Secretary's website has a web portal for handling ceremonial document requests and general questions through the "Ask the Secretary" form. The web-form is linked to the EOM IQ (Intranet Quorum) application and is retrieved and answered in accordance with the Customer Service Operations guidelines and standards. The "Ask the Secretary" log is checked daily, inquiries forwarded to the appropriate office and responses provided within three business days or within the timeframe requested. Currently, the Executive Assistant is responsible for managing the "Ask the Secretary" web portal, and general email box -- *secretary@dc.gov*.

The Office of Documents and Administrative Issuances has its own Twitter account and advises the public of the availability of each current issue of the *District of Columbia Register* and related information. ODAI also continues to fix, update and enhance the e-rulemaking system, the *D.C. Regs* website.

The Office of Public Records holds quarterly meetings with agency records management officers and regularly interview government and public clients. This office has used the information gathered to streamline customer service processes by providing online services for customers to make requests for archival materials; and providing training information for records management officers on the share point drive.

Pursuant to Section 1022 of DC Act 19-93, the “Office of the Secretary Limited Grant-Making Authority Emergency Act of 2011,” the Secretary has limited authority to issue competitive grants to non-profit organizations to promote District of Columbia self-determination, voting rights and/or Statehood. The objective of the grant is to strengthen support for democracy for the citizens of the District through activities that promote District voting representation in Congress, Statehood, legislative and budget autonomy, or full democracy. The Secretary of the District will issue a Request for Applications (RFA) from nonprofit organizations for the grant in the first quarter of each fiscal year.

3) **Collaboration**

As the Office of the Secretary is part of the Executive Office of the Mayor, many OS activities are collaborated with other offices under EOM. The Office of the Secretary works collaboratively with the Office of Boards and Commissions since the Secretary chairs many boards and commissions appointed by the Mayor. Home Rule Commission and Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday Commission are two of the commissions currently chaired by the Secretary. The tasks of each commission are outlined in the Mayor’s Orders.

The Office of the Secretary has several Memorandum of Understanding:

- MOU with the Federal Government for Record Storage with the National Archives (NARA).
- The Office is also responsible for coordinating the One Fund Giving Campaign and as such has MOU with the United Way for management of this program.
- In FY2014, OS signed an MOU with the DC Office of Cable Television to produce segments to commemorate the District’s 40th Anniversary Celebration of Home Rule.

On correspondence, the Office works closely with the Mayor’s Correspondence Unit to make information available to the public.