



DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS

OFFICE OF STRATEGIC CODE ENFORCEMENT

FISCAL YEAR 2024 ANNUAL REPORT

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Executive Summary

Dear Stakeholders:

This is the Fiscal Year 2024 Annual Enforcement Report produced by the DC Department of Buildings (DOB). The goal of this Report is to show how DOB is working for you on all aspects of enforcement. Communicating our impact is a key initiative for DOB as the agency plays its part in the District's Comeback Plan.

This report examines six broad topics: complaints, violations, fine collection, abatement efficiency, enforcement escalation, and collections escalation. These topics will provide a window into the enforcement work the agency performed in FY24. It will also look back at the FY23 report to highlight trends and changes.

To prepare this report, DOB's Office of Strategic Code Enforcement (OSCE) worked closely with DOB's Performance Team in the Office of the Director to analyze data from each of the agency's primary enforcement programs: housing, illegal construction, vacant buildings, and zoning. The team also reviewed OSCE records on escalations and the collection of fines. This data was reviewed, compiled, and analyzed under the requirements of the Department of Buildings Establishment Act of 2020.

Over the course of the reporting period, we received nearly 21,000 requests for help from the public, inspectors identified more than 35,000 violations— 50% of those violations were confirmed abated—and the agency made approximately 323 referrals to sister agencies. Ultimately, DOB's efforts resulted in the collection of \$2.6 million in fines and \$25 million referred to the District's Central Collections Unit (CCU). These increases from FY23 illustrate how DOB's process of continuous improvement is making an impact.

DOB enforcement is working diligently for you. We look forward to using this FY24 Report as a basis for continued dialogue about DOB enforcement with our customers and stakeholders.

Sincerely,



Brian J. Hanlon

Director

DC Department of Buildings



Keith Parsons

Strategic Enforcement Administrator

DC Department of Buildings

Introduction

The DC Department of Buildings (DOB) was created on October 1, 2022, under the Department of Buildings Establishment Act of 2020 (the Act). DOB aims to be a national model for customer service and value creation; a catalyst for responsible economic development, social diversity, and environmental sustainability; and essential to a thriving and resilient city. DOB's mission is to protect the safety of District residents, businesses, and visitors while advancing the development of the built environment through permitting, inspections, code enforcement, addressing vacant and blighted properties, and zoning administration. Ultimately, DOB works diligently to keep the District safe, keep it green, and keep it moving forward. DOB proactively seeks solutions for customers and is proud to update the public on its progress in the prior fiscal year.

About This Report

The Act established the requirements for this Annual Enforcement Report, which covers the prior fiscal year (October 1, 2023, through September 30, 2024). The metrics included in this report are:

- **Complaint Data:** What requests come in from the public and what DOB does with them;
- **Violation Data:** What is cited by DOB and the status of those citations;
- **Fine Collection Data:** How much money DOB collected and how much is still outstanding;
- **Abatement Efficacy Data:** Which items DOB's abatement team fixed and which items were left for the owner to abate;
- **Enforcement Escalation Data:** What DOB referred to the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) for prosecution; and
- **Collections Escalation Data:** What fines DOB referred to the Office of the Chief Financial Officer's (OCFO) Central Collection Unit (CCU) for further collections activity.

This report assesses DOB's progress against the published Strategic Enforcement Plan (SEP) FY23 – FY25 that is available for review on [DOB's website](https://dob.dc.gov).

New This Year

As this is the second enforcement report created by DOB, the FY24 Report often refers back at FY23 results to make illuminating comparisons or updates. We look forward to continuing to use such reports to highlight changes and achievements in the agency's operations and impact.

Complaints

Every day, customers reach out to DOB requesting multiple types of services regarding potentially non-compliant properties. Customers may be anyone reaching out about enforcement but does not include those reaching out for a permit or similar service. “Complaints” are made by customers requesting inspection or verification of an issue they believe is in violation of the District of Columbia laws and regulations that are enforced by DOB. Complaints fall under four broad categories: housing conditions, illegal construction, vacant property, and zoning. Resolving each of these complaint types involves collaboration between different teams within DOB. Any complaint has three outcomes: (1) the appropriate DOB team member inspects, and then DOB performs appropriate follow-up work to ensure any violations are abated by the party responsible, which may include assessment of fines; (2) DOB determines that the complaint does not require follow-up; or (3) the complaint is received and is pending further action. The chart below lists the outcomes for each of the complaints in FY23 versus FY24.

Chart 1: Complaints and Outcomes by DOB Program Area FY23 Versus FY24

Category	Outcome 1: Inspector Dispatched		Outcome 2: No Cause for Action		Outcome 3: Pending Further Review		Totals	
	FY23	FY24	FY23	FY24	FY23	FY24	FY23	FY24
Housing	7,098	8,170	609	488	623	1,012	8,330	9,670
Illegal Construction	3,503	3,481	499	77	222	186	4,224	3,744
Vacant and Blighted Properties	5,765	6,837	1,530	243	25	41	7,320	7,121
Zoning	8	25*	0	0	3	0	11,000	25
Totals	16,374	18,153	2,638	808	873	1,239	19,885	20,560

*The zoning team only performs an on-site inspection for alleged use violations. Otherwise, they perform a paper investigation.

There were 20,535 requests in FY24 for DOB to inspect potentially non compliant properties, a 3% increase from FY23.

Of these, approximately 90% warranted inspection for some issue and only 4% did not require inspection (largely due to the complaint being duplicative of prior inspections or enforcement activities). For example, it is common for the public to call about a building that DOB has already identified as vacant and/or blighted. Under the DC Code, once DOB identifies a property as vacant and/or blighted, the property retains that designation until confirmed otherwise. Customers should always consult DOB’s [Public Dashboard](#) under the “Vacant Properties” tab to ensure the property is not already tagged for a vacant property inspection.

Although less frequently, similar situations do occur in the agency's Illegal Construction and Residential Housing divisions. These "no cause for action" cases fell significantly in FY24, likely due to increases in the efficiency of DOB's internal processes. The remaining 6% of cases are post complaint but pre-inspection and pre-determination. These cases should ultimately resolve into one of the prior two categories as DOB's processes move forward.

Violations

When DOB inspectors conduct an inspection, violations may be found. The enforcement action taken by DOB depends on the violation type and program involved:



Complaint-Based Housing and the Proactive Inspection Programs

Any violation identified by these programs is a housing or property maintenance code violation that was cited in a Notice of Infraction Emergency (NOIE) or Notice of Infraction Routine (NOIR) and is sent for resolution or adjudication. Until the program receives confirmation that the violation was fixed, the violation remains open for the purpose of this report and will show up on DOB's [Public Dashboard](#) under the "Landlord Violations Tool."

During FY24, DOB also started issuing a Notice of Infraction Sanitation (NOIS) for issues such as trash or excessive grass and weeds on a property's exterior. The data from this new type of NOI is included in FY24 data.



Illegal Construction

This program uses several types of enforcement tools: Stop Work Orders, Correction Orders, and Notices of Infraction. All of these are considered as violations for the purpose of this report.



Vacant and Blighted Properties

These violations are generally property maintenance code issues that the vacant property team encounters when surveying a vacant or blighted property.

DOB's abatement team will abate certain issues if the owner fails to correct the identified issues in a timely manner. [Chart 2](#) on page 8 includes violations abated by DOB's abatement team in the column "Violations Resolved (Abated)." For more information on the work of DOB's abatement team, see the section on DOB Abatement Efficacy later in this report.



Zoning

This program generally reviews complicated disputes over compliance with an order from the Board of Zoning Adjustment. Resolution of these violations is often time-consuming due to the many involved stakeholders and complex subject matter.

Chart 2: Violations and Resolution (Abatement) by DOB Program Area, FY23 Versus FY24

DOB Program	Violations Identified		Violations Resolved (Abated)		Resolved Percentage	
	FY23	FY24	FY23	FY24	FY23	FY24
Housing—Complaint Based	22,338	21,160	8,489	8,352	38.00%	39.47%
Housing—Proactive Inspection	5,693	11,486	3,614	7,767	63.48%	67.62%
Illegal Construction	777	860	295	267	37.97%	31.05%
Vacant Property	1,599	1,868	1,009	1,376	63.10%	73.66%
Zoning	8	25	3	9	37.50%	36.00%
Totals	30,415	35,399	13,410	17,771	44.09%	50.20%

The property owner is generally responsible for fixing all violations identified by DOB and paying associated fines. If the property owner pays the fine, but does not remediate the violation, the violation may persist without resolution. Furthermore, depending on the pace of fine adjudication (i.e., the act or process of resolving a legal dispute) and when in the fiscal year the fine is identified, many violations are not resolved in the fiscal year they are cited. Unfortunately, not every case has a positive resolution, and eventually, if the owner does not confirm abatement, the case will be adjudicated and sent to the Central Collection Unit for further collection activity.

Chart 2 indicates encouraging progression for the agency. Both absolute abatement numbers and abatement percentages are increasing for almost all programs. More than half of violations identified in FY24 were confirmed abated in FY24, indicating these good results are coming more quickly as well.

Housing Conditions Cases

DOB inspectors routinely support the adjudication of housing conditions cases in the District of Columbia Superior Court (DCSC). These cases involve disputes between landlords and tenants over rental payments and property conditions. DOB housing code inspectors examine the premises at the request of the judge, and report back to DCSC any issues or abatement at the property. DCSC controls the progress of the case, and dictates the case's outcome and when it is closed. Some cases go on for extended periods of time due to unique complexities or circumstances beyond DOB's control.

[Chart 3](#) on page 9 shows DOB housing condition inspection cases that were allowed in FY23 or FY24. Per the chart, most housing conditions cases' terminal action indicates they are resolved or abated, although a significant number remain open.

Chart 3 also suggest that housing conditions cases, while important, are a very small part of DOB's overall inspections portfolio and affects a very small percentage of the 300,000+ housing units in the District.

Chart 3: Housing Conditions Cases and Resolution

Statuses for Housing Condition Cases		
Type	Total	
	FY23	FY24
Resolved/Abated	96	88
Open/On-going/Cancelled	82	195
Totals	178	283

Fine Collection

When DOB issues a Notice of Infraction (NOI) based upon a violation, the party responsible may be assessed a fine by the agency. For DOB to have legal authority to collect the fine, the NOI must go through an appeal and adjudication process. This adjudication process is administered by judges at the District's Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH), an independent agency. While every case is different, OAH adjudications routinely take about six months, and many take longer.

Because of this process, collecting fines from responsible parties often takes many months, if not longer. Chart 4 compares these processes, including fines collected, for FY23 and FY24.

Most of the other FY23 numbers in this report match the FY23 numbers from the FY23 Report released last year. Chart 4 is different. DOB updated the FY23 numbers as well as presenting number for FY24. Both sets of numbers were run as of October 31, 2024. The FY23 numbers are larger than in the FY23 Report, showing both how the additional time increased fine collection, and reflecting a methodology adjustment that refined our report of FY23 collections. The longer the District has to adjudicate and collect fines, the more fines are collected.

Chart 4: Fines Assessed Versus Fines Collected by DOB Year Over FY 2023 Versus FY 2024 Showing How Final Order Issuance Time Shifts Fine Collection

FY QTR	Adjudication Status	Assessed Amount		Invoiced Amount		Paid Amount		Number of NOIs	
		2023	2024	2023	2024	2023	2024	2023	2024
Q1	PRE-FINAL ORDER AND/OR RESOLVED	2,492,154	5,733,631	270,560	370,714	221,676	130,442	837	2,260
Q2		4,254,312	8,069,714	301,465	721,212	222,739	259,928	1,327	2,833
Q3		4,420,403	9,172,425	205,997	574,261	219,231	229,414	1,681	2,724
Q4		5,689,739	10,954,533	220,194	497,180	165,100	259,187	2,402	3,452
	Totals	16,856,608	33,930,303	998,216	2,163,368	828,746	878,972	6,247	11,269
Q1	FINAL ORDER RECEIVED	6,657,162	3,171,609	2,787,233	4,478,463	483,571	380,852	861	1,713
Q2		3,688,589	2,961,064	6,321,020	5,471,904	447,031	669,408	919	2,601
Q3		3,272,654	1,750,593	2,638,828	5,965,684	407,026	292,943	1,465	2,847
Q4		3,520,342	595,631	3,330,142	2,350,067	584,783	401,876	1,982	2,090
	Totals	17,138,747	8,478,897	15,077,223	18,266,118	1,922,410	1,745,079	5,227	9,251
	Combined Totals	33,995,355	42,409,200	16,075,440	20,429,486	2,751,156	2,624,050	11,474	20,520

Under most circumstances, DOB does not collect fines until a final order has been issued in an adjudicated OAH case. Once a final order has been issued, DOB invoices the final amount for payment. One exception would be cases where customers immediately admit guilt and pay a fine through [DOB's payment portal](#). In that case, the payment is not separately invoiced. After invoicing, received payments are tracked. The rows labeled "Pre-Final Order and/or Resolved" in Chart 4 show collections that occurred voluntarily before issuance of a final order. The rows labeled "Final Order Received" show collections that occurred after a final order issued. DOB generally anticipates that FY24 fines that are not currently invoiced will be invoiced in future fiscal years as they go through the adjudication process.

Chart 4 demonstrates how the pace of the adjudication process increases DOB's collections.

- **FY23:** OAH issued 6,247 final orders (out of 11,474 cases). As a result, DOB collected \$2,751,156 of those fines (including some collections before final order being received).
- **FY24:** OAH issued 11,269 final orders (out of 20,520 cases). As a result, DOB collected \$2,624,050 of those fines (including some collections before final order being received).

The issuance of additional final orders will move the collections process further and increase recovery. When the adjudication process moves more quickly, DOB's fine collections increase. In addition, unpaid adjudicated fines are eventually referred to the Office of the Chief Financial Officer's (OCFO's) Central Collections Unit (CCU), 180 days after the issuance of the final order, as discussed later in the Collections Escalation section.

Another illustration of the way the adjudication process affects the collection of fines can be found in the "Enforcement" tab on DOB's [Public Dashboard](#). This tab allows the public to track the enforcement and collection of fines with additional detail. For instance, within this tab, one can see that approximately \$39 million in fines are in the "pre-adjudication" stage (including NOIs from present time dating back to 2018) as of October 31, 2024.

DOB Abatement Efficacy

The property owner is the primary party responsible for abating violations identified by DOB. However, DOB's Vacant and Blighted Properties Program has an abatement team that routinely corrects violations under three limited types of conditions:

1. If a vacant property is open and accessible or has exterior violations such as tall grass and weeds or trash and the property owner has failed to respond to DOB's Notice of Infraction;
2. If an occupied unit of housing is deemed unsafe such that it must be closed, absent simple fixes (for example, if replacing fire extinguishers or smoke detectors can prevent a tenant from being moved into temporary housing, DOB's abatement team will conduct those repairs); and/or
3. If a vacant property threatens the health and safety of the community, such as by posing an imminent risk of collapse onto a public right of way, as identified by local public safety organizations.

Chart 5 shows the abatement team's impact for FY24 compared to FY23.

Chart 5: Abatement Team Impact for FY23 Versus FY24 by Referral Source

Referral Source to DOB Abatement Team	DOB Abated (Including Through DOB Contractors)		Owner Abatement	
	FY23	FY24	FY23	FY24
Housing—Complaint Based	281	263	93	141
Housing—Proactive Inspection	36	140	12	62
Vacant and Blighted Property	885	983	130	238
Emergency and Miscellaneous	-	15	-	8
Totals	1,202	1,401	235	449

For these services, it is important to capture how quickly the identified issues have been fixed once a case has been referred for abatement. Chart 6 shows the average abatement time (business days) for the various abatement methods.

Chart 6: Average Abatement Time in Business Days by Abatement Method for FY23 Versus FY24

Abatement Method	Abatements		Average Time (Business Days)	
	FY23	FY24	FY23	FY24
DOB Abatement Team	836	929	5.78	5.33
DOB Contractor	18	77	68.89	40.30
DOB Associated Likely Contractor*	348	395	68.54	92.83
Owner	235	449	34.06	5.33
Totals	1,437	1,850		

**DOB data does not definitively show whether a contractor was used, and that could not be known without manual review of all records. Given the abatement timeframe is similar to the known contractor case files, these are likely also contractor cases.*

For cases where DOB's internal team completes the abatement, many occur in under a week. In cases where DOB uses a contractor, abatement times may take longer because DOB must define the scope of work (complexities vary by property) and reach an agreement with the selected contractor, after which the contractor must perform the work. Cases where the owner abates the violation(s) may take less time in part because the owner is incentivized to fix the problem before DOB's contractor does so. If a DOB contractor fixes the problem, the property would ultimately face a tax assessment. The abatement team also has an extremely limited budget, and as a result, abatements by DOB are rare.

Comparing FY23 and FY24 yields more positive developments: DOB is both conducting an increased number of abatements, and, in many cases, conducting them more quickly. DOB's in-house abatement team in particular increased its performance on both measures. Overall, abatement activity rose 29%.

Enforcement Escalation

DOB routinely works with external enforcement partners and sister agencies to hold violators accountable. These referrals occur through multiple avenues: (1) sister agency referrals; (2) referral to OAG; and (3) OSCE investigations.

DOB Agency Referrals

DOB has a system where inspectors leave a note in the system of record with a “hashtag” for a sister agency, which will generate an automatic email to the appropriate point of contact at that agency with information that allows them to assume responsibility for part of or the entire case. Typical examples would include a housing inspector referring a case to the Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE) if they see evidence of mold, or to the Office of the Tenant Advocate (OTA) if a tenant is displaced.

Chart 7 shows the number and type of referrals to sister agencies in FY24 compared to FY23.

Chart 7: DOB Referrals to Sister Agencies Using Database Hashtags for FY23 Versus FY24

Sister Agency	Type of Referral	Number of Referrals	
		FY23	FY24
Office of the Tenant Advocate	Support for tenant occupant, often temporary housing	144	221
Department of Energy and Environment	Mold, drainage, or another item in DOEE’s purview	118	161
DC Health	Support for occupant, rodent abatement	9	1
Metropolitan Police Department	Criminal issue identified for MPD follow-up	9	6
Department of Aging and Community Living	Support for senior occupant	6	12
Department of Behavioral Health	Support for occupant with behavioral health needs	6	
Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services (DYRS)	Support for youth		2
Department of Human Services	Support for occupant	3	
Fire and Emergency Medical Services	Emergency services	1	

Referral to OAG

DOB's Office of Strategic Code Enforcement maintains robust cooperation with OAG to refer and support several types of cases litigated by OAG. The main types of cases are:

1. Receivership actions where OAG asks the Court to appoint a "receiver" to take over control of a rental property where the landlord or management company is failing to maintain it;
2. Cases where OAG is seeking to enforce a correction order or other DOB-issued directive against a respondent who will not comply; and
3. Nuisance cases where a property is being used for drugs, prostitution, or gun-related crimes. OAG has limited resources, and these cases are resource intensive. While there are relatively few of these cases, they can be very impactful due to their nature.

Chart 8: DOB Support for Cases at OAG FY23 Versus FY2024

Type of Case	Cases Initiated			
	FY23	Status	FY24	Status
Receivership	3	Ongoing	5	Ongoing
Nuisance	2	Ongoing	0	Ongoing
Enforcement of DOB Order	1	Ongoing	2	Ongoing
Consumer Mediation	1	Ongoing	1	Ongoing

DOB support of these cases can include providing copies of all NOIs related to a property or customer, performing building-wide follow-up inspections to allow OAG to provide a comprehensive update on the property to the court, and providing testimony in court both to authenticate documents and establish underlying facts. Chart 8 shows DOB support for cases at OAG in FY24 compared to FY23.

OSCE Investigations

DOB's Office of Strategic Code Enforcement conducts investigations related to fraud or abuse of the agency's processes. These investigations may result in referrals to external partners if the potential violations are outside the scope and authority of DOB. These referrals commonly involve either business licensing referrals to the Department of Licensing and Consumer Protection (DLCP) or to one of the licensing boards and commissions supported by DLCP.

Chart 9: DOB Investigation Referrals FY23 Versus FY24

Type of Referral	Number	
	FY23	FY24
DLCP—Unlicensed Activity	14	10
DLCP—Boards and Commissions	3	2
DLCP—Other	4	2
Federal Bureau of Investigation	1	
DC Office of the Attorney General	1	5
DC Office of the Inspector General	1	
DC Office of Tax and Revenue	1	
United States Attorney's Office		1
Alcoholic Beverage and Cannabis Administration		2
Department of Insurance, Securities and Banking		1

Both OSCE and DOB's Zoning Enforcement team routinely make referrals to DLCP. Chart 9 includes referrals from both teams.

Collections Escalation

DOB is not a collections agency. For that reason, DOB refers uncollected fines to OCFO's CCU. The CCU is operated by an OCFO contractor that engages in collection activities on behalf of DOB and other District agencies. The CCU only pursues collection of settled debts, so DOB does not refer items for collection until they are adjudicated by OAH and about six months (180 days) have passed since the issuance of the Final Order. This collections escalation is separate from any potential tax sale that the Office of Tax and Revenue (OTR) may conduct if a property has delinquent tax bills.

Referral to CCU can be tracked directly on DOB's [Public Dashboard](#) under the "Enforcement" tab, under "Transfer to District Central Collections."

Chart 10: Types of Outstanding Cases Referred to CCU and Dollar Value FY23 Versus FY24

NOIs Transmitted to Central Collection Unit (CCU)				
NOI Type	Total Owed		Count of NOIs	
	FY23	FY24	FY23	FY24
Housing Complaint	\$3,414,535	\$20,297,219	189	1,662
Housing—Proactive	-	\$168,050	-	31
Illegal Construction	\$162,311	\$1,890,017	7	99
Vacant Property	\$156,285	\$2,756,094	34	508
Total	\$3,733,132	\$25,111,379	230	2,300

Strategic Enforcement Plan Update

In 2024, DOB issued its Strategic Enforcement Plan (SEP) for FY 2023 – FY 2025. The SEP is [available](https://dob.dc.gov) on dob.dc.gov. DOB made considerable progress on the SEP during FY 2024, building on the accomplishments of the previous year, as set out in [Chart 11](#) on pages 17.

Chart 1: DOB Progress or Recalibration of SEP Goals FY23 Versus FY24

FY23		
Original SEP Goal	Original Timeline (FY23)	Current Status
Recruit, train, and retain additional housing code inspectors (continues in Q2 FY 2023)	Q1 – Q2	Partially complete. DOB continues to aggressively recruit qualified housing code inspectors.
Community outreach on strategic enforcement through Thought Exchange event	Q1	Complete, December 15, 2022, zoom meeting.
First meeting of Built Environment Enforcement Working group	Q2	Complete, March 28, 2023, Microsoft Teams meeting.
Providing additional information for owners concerning vacant property status	Q2	Complete. Among other changes, the vacant property dashboard was enhanced with information about exempt properties.
Increase vacant property enforcement operations capabilities	Q3	Complete. Vacant property unit hired additional staff, and subsequently completed almost 10,000 inspections in FY 2023
Launch private litigation guide project/release private litigation guide	Q3 – Q4	This project has been re-prioritized but has not been cancelled. New target launch: Q4 FY 2024.
First report from Built Environment Enforcement Working Group	Q3	The Built Environment Enforcement Working Group remains active but has not produced any written reports.
Add unit-level information to DOB housing registry and supporting systems	Q4	Complete
	Q4	Project in progress

Chart 1: DOB Progress or Recalibration of SEP Goals FY23 Versus FY24

FY24		
Original SEP Goal	Original Timeline (FY23)	Current Status
Recruit, train, and retain additional housing code inspectors	Q1 – Q2 FY23	Complete: DOB's housing code inspections team is generally complete. DOB continues to recruit to replace inspectors who move on.
Community outreach on strategic enforcement through Thought Exchange event	Q1 FY23	Complete
First meeting of Built Environment Enforcement Working group	Q2 FY23	Complete
Providing additional information for owners concerning vacant property status	Q2 FY23	Complete
Increase vacant property enforcement operations capabilities	Q3 FY23	Complete
Launch private litigation guide project/release private litigation guide	Q3 – Q4 FY23	New target launch: Q2 FY25
Reports from Built Environment Enforcement Working Group	Q3 FY23, Q2 FY24, Q4 FY24	The Built Environment Enforcement Working Group remains active but has not produced any written reports.
Add unit-level information to DOB housing registry and supporting systems	Q4 FY23	Complete
Start of District-wide housing complaint clearinghouse project / Launch of clearinghouse	Q1 FY24; Q4 FY24	Cancelled
Regulations protecting adjoining and adjacent properties by requiring insurance for certain permits	Q1 FY24	Draft regulations promulgated, first round of comments complete, drafting second notice of proposed rulemaking

The private litigation guide remains in development but is anticipated for release in early 2025. After review and pre-development the housing complaint clearinghouse project has been cancelled in favor of smaller efforts that DOB hopes will accomplish similar goals. The regulations on adjoining and adjacent properties are in progress and are working their way through a second round after robust public feedback. Finally, while the Built Environment Enforcement Working Group remains an active and invaluable asset to DOB and its stakeholders, the operation of that group has served more as a sounding board for DOB enforcement. It has not been structured to produce deliverables.

In short, progress on the SEP remains robust. While some items have required pivots, the SEP has remained a useful guide for DOB. The final year of the SEP is FY25 during which DOB will turn towards developing the new SEP for FY26 – FY28.

Conclusion

The DOB is proud to present this summary of our enforcement work for the past year, as performed under the SEP, which is a living document. The SEP and future Annual Enforcement Reports will explain to the DC Council and public how the SEP adapts and grows, along with the agency. Similarly, the Annual Enforcement Report will continue to advance and develop and provide a way to analyze trends and progress by DOB.

Customers who have additional interest in DOB's data should go to dob.dc.gov and review the [Agency Dashboard](#).

Appendix – Glossary Terms

Source: Standard Operating Procedures, Office of Strategic Code Enforcement, DC Department of Buildings

Affidavit: A written statement confirmed by affirmation that Notices of Infraction (NOI) filed with the Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) have not been returned undelivered prior to filing them with OAH.

Alternative Resolution Team (ART): A team that negotiates settlements with DOB customers to achieve case (Notice of Infraction) resolution without litigation.

Blighted Property: A vacant building that is determined by the Mayor to be unsafe, insanitary, or which is otherwise determined to threaten the health, safety, or general welfare of the community. D.C. Official Code § 42-3131.05(1)(A)

Building-wide Inspections: Are triggered by multiple customer complaints on a property because of a fire incident, a request from a council member, or a request from a community-based organization (CBO). DOB's approach is to post notification to the tenants and inspect 100% of all eligible units.

Business Units: General term used to identify the DOB offices, division, units, to include Illegal Construction, Residential Inspections, Vacant Buildings, and Zoning.

Cap ID: A unique number used to designate particular cases in DOB's database of record. The format of the CAP ID changes depending on the DOB program area. Typical CAP ID formats include parent CAPs: 21ENF-HOUS- 01234 (housing case). Two child CAP IDs are linked to the Housing parent CAP if violations are identified. Their formats include: 22NOIE-INS-01234 (emergency) and 22NOIR-INS-01234 (routine).

Dispatch: DOB's online inspections-on-demand system accommodates the most common inspection requests. Designed with customers in mind, Dispatch allows automatic scheduling and provides real-time updates on inspection requests, including arrival times and completion.

DOB Mobile App (CityGov): DOB's handheld application for conducting inspections.

Fine: A penalty of money that the District of Columbia levies for punishment for an offense.

Illegal Construction Unit: DOB office responsible for enforcing the District of Columbia's construction regulations.

Kustomer (KRM): DOB's enterprise Customer Relationship Management (CRM) platform that consolidates and manages interactions between DOB and customers—whether by phone, email, or website—routing the issues to the appropriate division or team member.

Life Safety Violations: They pose a particular danger to the physical health, safety, and well-being of the public. Common life safety violations include broken or missing smoke detectors or carbon monoxide detectors, missing fire extinguishers, and non-functional/inoperable heating equipment during the winter.

Motion: A request of the OAH to rule on a specific issue.

Notice of Infraction (NOI): A type of civil infraction which contains information required by statute to put respondents on notice that they have violated a District of Columbia law or regulation and are subject to fines. DOB issues NOIs to entities or individuals who violate the housing, construction, and/or property maintenance codes or otherwise violate DC laws, rules, or regulations under the enforcement authority of DOB.

Occupied: (A) For purposes of a dwelling unit, the use of one's residence in improved real property on a regular basis D.C. Official Code § 42- 3131.05(3)(A); and (B) For purposes of a commercial unit, use consistent with zoning regulations, for which there is a current and valid certificate of occupancy, and (i) paid utility receipts for the specified period, executed lease agreements, or sales tax return, or (ii) other evidence of use of the building that the mayor may require by rule. D.C. Official Code § 42-3131.05(3)(B)

Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH): An administrative court that provides centralized adjudication services for several District agencies. As an independent agency, OAH is a neutral, impartial tribunal that holds hearings and decides appeals from government decisions. The OAH decides cases involving unemployment compensation, Medicaid and other public benefits, public space, rent control, professional licenses, business licenses, and building, health, and fire code violations, among others.

Office of the Attorney General (OAG): The chief legal office of the District of Columbia.

Office of the General Counsel (OGC): Provides legal oversight to DOB. Currently, its office consists of full-time attorneys and supporting administrative staff.

Office of Information Services (OIS): A DOB office responsible for agency management of computing technology.

Office of Tax and Revenue (OTR): District government agency responsible for administering the District of Columbia's tax laws.

Office of Tax and Revenue (OTR) Property Detail: A property report provided from the Office of Tax and Revenue Real Property Tax Database.

Proactive Inspection Program: Managed and facilitated through DOB, a method of scheduling regular inspections of multi-unit rentals in the District of Columbia.

Resident Inspector Program: An innovative approach that applies successful elements of the on-demand, gig economy to the most requested types of inspections performed by DOB. DOB trains District residents to perform housing, illegal construction, and vacant building inspections, and then pays the trained inspectors whenever they successfully complete an inspection.

Residential Inspections: A unit in the DOB Office of Strategic Code Enforcement responsible for conducting complaint-based property maintenance inspections resulting from complaints and proactive inspections for rental units registered to participated in routine inspections. Also responsible for conducting Basic Business License inspections for one (1) and two (2) dwelling units before a license is issued.

Respondent: The recipient of a NOI issued by the DOB, usually a property or business owner, their agent or representative.

Service Level Agreement (SLA): An expectation that is communicated to customers to help manage their expectations. Vacant Building complaints have an SLA of 103 business days ranging from complaint intake to submission of an NOI package at OAH. Internal SLA with the agency is to schedule a complaint for response within three (3) calendar days. Complete initial inspection within 14 calendar days.

Settlement: A written agreement signed by the DOB and a respondent to resolve an NOI without a hearing at OAH.

Special Assessment: Charges for the associated labor and material costs incurred to correct violations.

Strategic Code Enforcement Administrator: Executive manager of the DOB Office of Strategic Code Enforcement of which the Civil Infractions Unit is a part.

Superior Court: The trial court of the District of Columbia, it hears cases involving criminal and civil law, as well as family court, landlord and tenant, probate, tax and driving violations.

Tax Classification: Refers to the set of rules governing how individuals, businesses and other entities are taxed. Tax classifications utilized for the purpose of vacant buildings are:

- **Class 1** = Residential Occupied: \$0.85 per \$100 in assessed value
- **Class 2** = Commercial Occupied: \$1.65-\$1.77 per \$100 in assessed value
- **Class 3** = Vacant: \$5.00 per \$100 of the assessed value
- **Class 4** = Blighted: \$10.00 per \$100.00 of assessed value

Thirty to Sixty Day Violations: Violations deemed non-life safety in nature.

Vacant Building: Real property improved by a building which, on or after April 27, 2001, has not been occupied continuously; provided, that in the case of residential buildings, a building shall only be a vacant building if the mayor determines that there is no resident for which an intent to return and occupy the building can be shown. When determining whether there is a resident, the mayor shall consider the following: Electrical, gas, water meter either not running or showing low usage; Accumulated mail; Neighbor complaint; No window covering; No furniture observable; Open accessibility; Deferred maintenance, including loose or failing gutters, severe paint chipping, or overgrown grass; and The dwelling is boarded up. D.C. Official Code § 42-3131.05(5)

Residential Inspections: A unit in the DOB Office of Strategic Code Enforcement responsible for conducting complaint-based property maintenance inspections resulting from complaints and proactive inspections for rental units registered to participated in routine inspections. Also responsible for conducting Basic Business License inspections for one (1) and two (2) dwelling units before a license is issued.

Vacant Property Exemption: A limited waiver from the District of Columbia's Class 3 property tax rate. The law allows for exemptions of vacant residential or commercial properties for which they qualify. The list of Vacation Property Exemptions can be found in D.C. Official Code § 42- 3131.06(b).

Vacant Buildings Division: A unit within the DOB Office of Strategic Code Enforcement responsible for the enforcement of the District of Columbia's vacant building regulations.

Zoning Administration: An office within DOB that reviews applications for conformity with DC Zoning Regulations (Title 11 DCMR); including building permit applications, Certificate of Occupancy (C of O) applications, occupancy load, verification of address and lot and square, subdivision applications, and Home Occupation Permit (HOP) applications.

311: District of Columbia government's portal that allows people in the District of Columbia to request assistance with city services and obtain information via email, phone, mobile application, text, or tweet.



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