



DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS

OFFICE OF STRATEGIC CODE ENFORCEMENT

FISCAL YEAR 2025 ANNUAL REPORT

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Executive Summary

Dear Stakeholders:

This is the Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 Annual Enforcement Report produced by the DC Department of Buildings (DOB). The goal of this report is to demonstrate how DOB is working for you on all aspects of enforcement. Communicating our impact is one of DOB's key initiatives as the agency plays its part in the District's Growth Agenda.

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 FY25 as well as look back at the agency's FY24 performance to highlight trends and changes.

To prepare this report, DOB analyzed data from each of the agency's primary enforcement programs: housing, illegal construction, vacant buildings, and zoning. DOB also reviewed records on escalations to the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) and the collection of fines. This data was reviewed, compiled, and analyzed under the requirements of the Department of Buildings Establishment Act of 2020.

In FY25, DOB received over 24,000 inspection requests and DOB inspectors identified more than 41,000 violations—41% of which were confirmed abated—and DOB made more than 300 referrals to sister agencies. Ultimately, DOB's efforts resulted in the collection of nearly \$2 million in fines and \$8.6 million referred to the District's Central Collections Unit (CCU). These figures 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 FY25 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

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. DOB works diligently to ensure the safety of the built environment, promote environmentally sustainable construction practices, and remove friction to drive economic development. DOB proactively seeks solutions for customers and is proud to update the public on our progress in the prior fiscal year.

About This Report

The Department of Buildings Establishment Act of 2020 (the Act) established the requirements for this Annual Enforcement Report, which covers the prior fiscal year (October 1, 2024, through September 30, 2025). The metrics included in this report are:

- **Complaint Data:** Public requests and DOB's response;
- **Violation Data:** Violations cited by DOB and the status of those violations;
- **Fine Collection Data:** Fine revenue collected by DOB and outstanding balances;
- **Abatement Efficacy Data:** Violations abated by DOB or abated by the property owner;
- **Enforcement Escalation Data:** Violations escalated to OAG for prosecution; and
- **Collections Escalation Data:** Fines DOB referred to the 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](#).

New This Year

The FY25 Report often references FY24 results to make illuminating comparisons or updates. This is also the last report to reference the FY23–FY25 Strategic Enforcement Plan. Instead of looking at the quarterly goals set in that plan like last year, this report will look back over all four Goals and 12 Strategies in a holistic manner.

For the first time this year the report provides Special Assessments collected, which include costs incurred by the District when DOB performs abatement. This new information is in the Fine Collection section and provides a more complete picture of revenue collection related to DOB enforcement.

DOB also made significant changes to how it tracks and reports OAG referrals this year. This report now counts addresses, so a single case against a property owner with five properties counts as five referrals. DOB also implemented a more rigorous approval system for OAG referrals; accordingly, the referrals in this report are separated between FY25, FY24, and years earlier.

Complaints

DOB classifies “complaints” as requests made by customers for inspection or verification of an issue they believe may be in violation of District laws and regulations that are enforced by DOB. Customers may be anyone who contacts DOB about enforcement. The complaint data in this report does not include contact made to DOB for a permit or similar service. Complaints fall under four broad categories: housing conditions, illegal construction, vacant property, and zoning. Resolving any of these complaint types involves collaboration between different teams within DOB. Any complaint has three outcomes:

1. DOB performs an inspection—If violations are found then DOB will take appropriate action to ensure any violations are abated by the responsible party, this action 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 summarizes the number of outcomes for each of the complaint categories for FY24 and FY25.

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	
	FY24	FY25	FY24	FY25	FY24	FY25	FY24	FY25
Housing	8,170	11,428	488	340	1,012	1,280	9,670	13,048
Illegal Construction	3,481	3,734	77	51	186	122	3,744	3,907
Vacant and Blighted Properties	6,837	6,727	243	246	41	10	7,121	6,983
Zoning	25	34	0	9	0	25	25	68
Totals	18,513	21,923	808	646	1,239	1,437	20,560	24,006

There were 24,006 requests in FY25 for DOB to inspect potentially non-compliant properties, a 16% increase from FY24. Of these 24,000+ requests, approximately 91% warranted inspection for some issue, and only 3% did not require inspection. The FY25 percentages are similar to FY24 (90% and 4%). When a complaint does not require an inspection, it is typically because the complaint is duplicative of prior inspections or enforcement activities.

For example, it is common for the public to contact DOB about a building that the agency 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 also occur in the agency's Illegal Construction and Residential Housing divisions. These "no cause for action" cases continued to fall significantly in FY25 (they were as high as 2,638 in FY23). A decrease in this category is positive because it means DOB is accurately giving information to the public so they don't request duplicative or unnecessary inspections. DOB's focus remains on making sure the results of complaints are impactful, substantive decisions about the built environment.

The remaining 6% of cases are post-complaint but pre-inspection and pre-determination. These cases should ultimately resolve into one of the "inspector dispatched" or "no cause for action" categories as DOB's processes move forward.

Another interesting long-term trend is the ongoing decrease in vacant property complaints.

Chart 2: Vacant Property Complaints FY23-FY25

Category	FY23	FY24	FY25
Vacant Property Complaints	7,320	7,121	6,983

Vacant property complaints are down more than 5% compared to FY23. Meanwhile, total vacant properties have remained around 3,500 over the past three years (**Note:** These are not all the same properties every year—individual properties may become vacant or occupied at different times). The falling number of complaints may reflect an overall increase in the level of maintenance of vacant properties during the same period, perhaps spurred by DOB's increased proactive inspection of vacant properties. Remember that DOB only designates a property as "vacant" if it has no occupants at all, so DOB's vacancy numbers do not correspond to commercial or residential tenant vacancy rates. A multi-unit property is designated "occupied" by DOB if even a single unit has a tenant, regardless of building size.

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 by DOB's Alternative Resolution Team or adjudication at the District's Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH), an independent agency. Until the program receives confirmation from the property owner that the violation was fixed, the violation remains open for the purpose of this report and will be displayed 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 FY25 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 3 includes violations abated by DOB's abatement team in the column "Violations Resolved (Abated)," as well as all items confirmed abated by DOB through other means. 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 complex subject matter and number of stakeholders involved.

Chart 3: Violations and Resolution (Abatement) by DOB Program Area, FY24 Versus FY25

DOB Program	Violations Identified		Violations Resolved (Abated)		Resolved Percentage	
	FY24	FY25	FY24	FY25	FY24	FY25
Housing—Complaint Based	21,160	25,966	8,352	9,314	39.47%	35.87%
Housing—Proactive Inspection	11,486	12,230	7,767	5,528	67.62%	45.20%
Illegal Construction	860	912	267	314	31.05%	34.43%
Vacant Property	1,868	2,452	1,376	2,206	73.66%	89.97%
Zoning	25	55	9	22	36.00%	40.00%
Totals	35,399	41,615	17,771	17,385	50.20%	41.78%

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 3 indicates some challenges in FY25. Overall abatement percentage fell, led primarily by housing code inspections, and particularly proactive inspections. However, this percentage decrease was driven partially by a decrease in abatements confirmed and partially by an increase in violations identified. The absolute number of abatements confirmed fell by less than 5%. DOB will continue to monitor this issue and make process improvements in the coming year, such as increased outreach. In particular, DOB will build on the two successful landlord roundtables held in FY25 that were targeted at smaller landlords, and the successful Outreach Abatement and Resolution program targeted at larger properties with high numbers of violations. By expanding and systematizing these types of outreach, DOB will drive increased abatement and compliance.

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 is not a party in these cases, but DOB housing code inspectors examine the premises at the request of the judge and report back to DCSC any unresolved or new issues or abatement of previously identified issues at the property. Because DCSC controls the progress of the case and when it is closed, cases often extend from one fiscal year into the next.

Chart 4 shows DOB housing condition inspection cases that were closed in FY23, FY24, or FY25. Per the chart, most housing conditions cases' terminal action indicates they are resolved or abated, although a significant number remain open.

Chart 4 also suggests that housing conditions cases, while important, are a very small part of DOB's overall inspections portfolio and affect a very small percentage of the 300,000 residential housing units in the District.

Chart 4: Housing Conditions Cases and Resolution

Statuses for Housing Condition Cases			
Type	Total		
Summary Status	FY23	FY24	FY25
Closed Abated	74	28	8
Resolved/Abated	92	122	54
Open/On-going/Cancelled	41	183	150
Totals	207	233	212

Fine Collection

When DOB issues a NOI based upon a violation, it may assess a fine to the responsible party. 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 OAH. 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 several months from issuance of the NOI. Chart 5 compares these processes, including fines collected, for FY24 and FY25.

Chart 5: Fines Assessed and Fines Collected by DOB in FY24 and FY25

FY – QTR	Adjudication Status	Assessed Amount		Invoiced Amount		Paid Amount		Number of NOIs	
		2024	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025
Q1	PRE-FINAL ORDER AND/OR RESOLVED	\$2,748,341	\$7,577,953	\$368,089	\$624,138	\$116,588	\$258,950	1,032	2,639
Q2		\$4,667,572	\$7,830,464	\$696,543	\$1,205,480	\$241,137	\$361,872	2,258	2,970
Q3		\$6,179,811	\$10,371,205	\$565,716	\$1,399,753	\$220,747	\$196,312	2,099	4,047
Q4		\$7,554,833	\$13,250,130	\$429,676	\$452,953	\$240,263	\$229,350	2,712	4,831
	Totals	\$21,150,557	\$39,029,752	\$2,060,025	\$3,682,324	\$818,735	\$1,046,485	8,101	14,487
Q1	FINAL ORDER RECEIVED	\$6,088,638	\$3,474,586	\$3,332,075	\$731,563	\$397,949	\$169,946	1,684	3,955
Q2		\$6,088,615	\$2,965,331	\$3,404,111	\$1,162,272	\$740,793	\$223,081	2,553	1,644
Q3		\$6,285,125	\$2,760,159	\$4,990,821	\$1,186,926	\$307,132	\$312,669	2,784	2,200
Q4		\$4,177,670	\$2,672,760	\$2,001,807	\$486,817	\$440,254	\$212,217	2,061	964
	Totals	\$22,640,048	\$11,872,836	\$13,728,815	\$3,567,579	\$1,886,128	\$917,913	9,082	8,763
	Combined Totals	\$43,790,605	\$50,902,588	\$15,788,840	\$7,249,903	\$2,704,863	\$1,964,398	17,183	23,250

Under most circumstances, DOB does not collect fines until a final order has been issued in an adjudicated OAH case. Once that happens, DOB invoices the final amount for payment. One exception would be cases where customers immediately admit guilt (prior to OAH involvement) 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 5 show collections that occurred voluntarily before issuance of a final order. The rows labeled “Final Order Received” show collections that occurred after OAH issued a final order. DOB anticipates that FY25 fines, which have not yet been invoiced, will be invoiced in future fiscal years as they move through the adjudication process.

The FY24 numbers in Chart 5 are different from the same numbers presented in the FY24 Annual Enforcement Report. This is expected:

- If DOB issues a refund, then the paid amount may change.
- Where DOB settles or resolves a case that was showing as “invoiced” in the prior report the “invoiced” amount may be changed to reflect the settlement payment or dismissal without fines.
- The “Assessed” amount may be changed if DOB corrects an older NOI.

Notably, while the FY24 report showed an “invoiced” amount of more than \$20,429,486 for FY24, that amount is now reduced by approximately \$5 million. This largely represents work DOB has done to resolve or settle cases that would otherwise remain outstanding and be sent to CCU for collection.

This dovetails with another notable change. In FY25 the amount invoiced decreased to \$7,249,903, but at the same time, fines collected stayed close to \$2 million. In addition, fines collected before final order exceeded \$1 million for the first time. Combined with a small decrease in final orders, this paints a picture of DOB successfully moving away from brute-forcing NOIs through the time- and resource-intensive adjudication process, and instead resolving them informally and more quickly through settlements and alternative resolution. This also means that DOB's collection rate for fines increased significantly to around 27%.

While the base volume of inspections, fines assessed, and NOIs continue to rise, DOB's improved resolution processes create counter balance by offering an alternative compliance pathway to the lengthy NOI/OAH process. These opposing trends make fine collection in FY25 a complex and dynamic challenge.

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.

Special Assessment

Chart 6: Special Assessments Invoiced, Collected, and Instances, FY23 – FY25

FY	Invoiced Amount			Paid Amount			Number of Instances		
	2023	2024	2025	2023	2024	2025	2023	2024	2025
Total	1,366,658	1,744,125	1,767,116	691,564	895,498	1,295,463	882	1,160	931

When DOB spends public money to correct code violations, the District is entitled to recover those costs. This cost is levied against the property as a "Special Assessment" that operates as a tax lien. Special Assessments are treated differently than fines. If the assessment is not paid, ultimately the property goes into tax debt and can be sold at a tax sale. The amount of a Special Assessment is set by the cost of the District, or its contractor, to perform the work. The District's rates are posted online for abatements conducted in-house by DOB. A contractor issues the District a specific cost estimate if the contractor performs the abatement. Special Assessments are not meant to be punitive.

In the third column of Chart 6, an "instance" of Special Assessment abatement can be any type of abatement job. This ranges from cutting overgrown grass on a property to a major emergency removal that could cost hundreds of thousands of dollars. DOB is working on updating its data tracking to better distinguish between these different jobs and anticipates completing the update in FY26.

A key advantage of Special Assessments is that, by definition, when DOB issues one, the violation has already been corrected by DOB or its contractor. By comparison, incentivizing a property owner to fix something by issuing a fine can often result in delayed abatement while the fine goes through the adjudication process.

Another advantage of Special Assessments is that DOB has a significantly higher collection rate. For example, DOB collected 51% of Special Assessments issued in FY24, and more than 73% in FY25.

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. DOB performs an inspection—If violations are found then DOB will take appropriate action to ensure any violations are abated by the responsible party, this action 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.

For the third condition, contractor resources will be used to correct the violation(s) so that it does not present an immediate hazard to the public. These resources are paid for out of DOB's nuisance abatement fund. Chart 7 summarizes the abatement team's work broken down by referral source.

Chart 7: Abatement Team Impact for FY24 and FY25 by Referral Source

Referral Source to DOB Abatement Team	DOB Abated (Including Through DOB Contractors)		Owner Abatement	
	FY24	FY25	FY24	FY25
Housing—Complaint Based	263	34	141	224
Housing—Proactive Inspection	140	1	62	55
Vacant and Blighted Property	983	985	238	172
Emergency and Miscellaneous	15	95	8	11
Totals	1,401	1,115	449	462

For these services, it is important to capture how quickly the identified issues have been resolved once a case has been referred for abatement. These instances of abatement can be very large jobs like demolition of properties, or very small jobs like cut and clean for a vacant property. Chart 8 shows the average abatement time in business days for the various abatement methods.

For these services, it is important to capture how quickly the identified issues have been resolved once a case has been referred for abatement. These instances of abatement can be very large jobs like demolition of properties, or very small jobs like cut and clean for a vacant property. Chart 8 shows the average abatement time in business days for the various abatement methods.

Chart 8: Average Abatement Time in Business Days by Abatement Method for FY24 and FY25

Abatement Method	Abatements		Average Time (Business Days)	
	FY24	FY25	FY24	FY25
DOB Abatement Team	929	961	5.33	11
DOB Contractor	77	1	40.30	61
DOB Associated Likely Contractor*	395	153	92.83	57
Owner	449	462	34.06	60
Totals	1,850	1,577		

**DOB's data does not definitively show whether a contractor was involved, and confirming this would require a manual review of all records. However, given that the abatement timeframe aligns closely with known contractor case files, these cases are likely contractor cases.*

Abatement time across FY24 and FY25 is a mixed trend. Chart 8 is categorized based on who completed the abatement: DOB's internal abatement team, the property owner, or a DOB contractor. When using a weighted average—where each abatement type is weighted by its average duration and then combined across all abatements, the average of all abatements dropped from 32 days in FY24 to under 30 days in FY25. There is still more work to do, and DOB's goal is to have 80% of emergency violations abated in under 30 days.

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) referrals to OAG; and (3) Office of Strategic Code Enforcement (OSCE) investigations.

Sister 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 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 9: DOB Referrals to Sister Agencies for FY24 Versus FY25

Sister Agency	Type of Referral	Number of Referrals	
		FY24	FY25
DACL – Department of Aging and Community Living	Support for senior occupant	12	10
DBH – Department of Behavioral Health	Support for occupant with behavioral health needs		4
DOEE – Department of Energy and Environment	Mold, drainage, or another item in DOEE’s purview	161	262
DOH – DC Health	Support for occupant, rodent abatement	1	10
DYRS – Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services	Support for youth	2	
MPD – Metropolitan Police Department	Criminal issue identified for MPD follow-up	6	1
OTA – Office of the Tenant Advocate	Support for tenant occupant, often temporary housing	221	17
		403	304

Referral to OAG

In addition, OCSE 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 control of a rental property where the landlord or management company is failing to properly 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 these cases are relatively few, they can be very impactful due to their nature.

In FY25, DOB changed how it tracks work with OAG on cases. Because investigative work on a property often involves assessing multiple pathways for resolution or types of cases, this report will no longer classify types of cases. In addition, DOB implemented a more formal approval process for case referrals that allows the initiation of cases to be tracked more precisely. As a result, Chart 10 shows the number of cases initiated in FY25 versus FY24 and earlier under the prior system.

Chart 10: DOB Support for Cases at OAG FY24 and Earlier Versus FY24

	FY24 and Earlier	FY25
Cases Initiated	101	66

DOB tracks property addresses in Chart 10. If one OAG case involves five properties, the table reflects five cases. This differs from last year, when the smaller case numbers typically included multiple properties. Therefore, while there were many new cases this year, Chart 10 does not indicate that cases increased ten-fold.

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.

OSCE Investigations

OSCE 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 11: DOB Investigation Referrals in FY24 Versus FY25

Type of Referral	Number	
	FY24	FY25
ABCA – Alcoholic Beverage and Cannabis Administration	2	2
CFPB – Consumer Financial Protection Bureau	0	1
DISB – Department of Insurance, Securities and Banking	1	
DLCP – Boards and Commissions	2	3
DLCP – Other	2	7
DLCP – Unlicensed Activity	10	143
FBI – Federal Bureau of Investigation		
OAG – Office of the Attorney General	5	3
OIG – Office of the Inspector General		
OTR – Office of Tax and Revenue		
OTR – Office of Tax and Revenue	1	
	23	159

Both OSCE and DOB's Zoning Enforcement team routinely make referrals to DLCP. Chart 11 includes referrals from both teams.

The increase from 10 referrals to DLCP in FY24 to 143 referrals in FY25 represents a significant refinement in DOB's collaboration with the sister agency. DOB is continuing to improve this process to enable continued collaboration while conserving DOB's staff resources.

Collections Escalation

DOB refers uncollected fines to the Office of the Chief Financial Officer'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 12: Types of Outstanding Cases Referred to CCU and Dollar Value FY24 Versus FY25

NOI Type	Total Owed		Count of NOIs	
	FY24	FY25	FY24	FY25
Housing Complaint	19,781,979	4,679,619	1,721	399
Housing—Proactive	363,110	254,097	50	34
Illegal Construction	2,399,700	1,837,219	128	111
Vacant Property	2,846,492	1,884,817	549	322
Zoning		1,227		1
Total	25,391,281	8,656,980	2,448	867

As discussed above under Fine Collection, the decrease in referrals to CCU reflects DOB increasingly handling cases internally and diverting them from the adjudication-judgment-referral track. This speeds up abatement and reduces workload for sister agencies.

Strategic Enforcement Plan Omnibus Update

This Annual Enforcement Report serves, in part, as an update on progress under the three-year Strategic Enforcement Plan (SEP) for FY23–FY25. Because this is the last year for that SEP, this report will look back at all four Goals and all 12 Strategies from that document. The new SEP will be released in calendar year 2026.

Y23-25 SEP Goal	Strategy	Omnibus Update
Goal 1: Protection	Focus on Abatement of Housing Life-Safety Violations	DOB's housing enforcement increased from 6,772 NOIs in FY22 to 15,239 in FY25
	Protection of Neighboring Properties During Construction	DOB drafted regulations, second proposed rulemaking in progress.
	Increase the Use of Notices of Infraction to Address Zoning Violations	Pilot project was not continued because zoning has better enforcement tools than NOIs.
	Expanded Enforcement and Information About Vacant Properties	DOB tracked 4,554 vacant properties in FY22, decreased to 3,535 in FY25. Vacant property complaints decreased by 5%.
Goal 2: Partnership	Partner with Legislators on Needed Tools and Solutions	DOB has been a key partner on legislation, including Vacant to Vibrant.
	Work with Adjudicators to Streamline Outcomes	DOB is working with OAH to procure a case management system that connects seamlessly with OAH's e-court system.
	Work with Other Enforcers to Compound Consequences	DOB's coordination with DLCP, OAG, and other agencies is stronger than ever.
	Enlist Public Stakeholders in the Enforcement Process	DOB developed publicly available guides for navigating property disputes for Residents and Other Stakeholders .
Goal 3: Communication	Developing a District-wide Housing Complaint Clearinghouse	This project was shelved as impractical under current priorities and budget restraints.
	Create Built Environment Enforcement Working Group	The Built Environment Enforcement Working Group continues to meet quarterly to advise DOB on strategic enforcement.
Goal 4: Consequences	No Threats, Just Promises	DOB conducted focused enforcement efforts against two landlords in FY25.
	Escalation that Matters	DOB supported OAG in securing a \$41 million verdict against the former owner of Marbury Plaza.
	Actions and Accountability	DOB's FY26 key performance indicators reduce the time for inspections to occur, and track the time to confirmed abatement for the first time.

Conclusion

DOB is proud to present this summary of the agency's 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 the public how the SEP adapts and grows 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](#).

Glossary

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.

Central Collection Unit (CCU): An office within the Office of the Chief Financial Officer. It is operated by an OCFO contractor that engages in collection activities on behalf of DOB and other District agencies.

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.

Life Safety Violations: They pose a particular danger to the physical health, safety, and wellbeing 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 that contains information required by statute to put respondents on notice that they have violated a District 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 DOB's enforcement authority. Categories include:

- **NOIE:** Includes only "emergency" life or safety violations. The most urgent type of NOI.
- **NOIR:** Does not include life or safety violations and only includes "routine" violations. The middle priority NOI.
- **NOIS:** Includes only "sanitation" violations like trash and debris or tall grass and weeds. The lowest priority NOI.

Occupied: For a dwelling unit, the regular use of one's residence in improved real property (DC Official Code § 42- 3131.05(3)(A)). For a commercial unit, use consistent with zoning regulations, and there is a current and valid certificate of occupancy; and paid utility receipts for the specified period, executed lease agreements, or sales tax return; or other evidence of building use (DC 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 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.

Property Maintenance Inspections Program: Conducts complaint-based inspections created because of resident complaints. The program is also responsible for conducting Basic Business License inspections for one and two dwelling units before a license is issued. A license shall only be issued upon a passing inspection result.

Residential Inspections: A unit in the DOB Office of Strategic Code Enforcement (OSCE) responsible for conducting complaint-based property maintenance inspections resulting from complaints and proactive inspections for rental units registered to participate in routine inspections. Also responsible for conducting Basic Business License inspections for one and two 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 that has not been occupied continuously. For residential buildings, factors that determine vacant status include 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 (DC Official Code § 42-3131.05(5)).

Vacant Property Exemption: A limited waiver from the Class 3 property tax rate. The law allows for exemptions of qualified vacant residential or commercial properties (DC 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 permits, Certificates of Occupancy, occupancy load, verification of address and lot and square, subdivision applications, and Home Occupation Permits.

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



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