



The District's Dime

Going Beyond the Budget Book

The DC Fiscal Policy Institute blog

www.dcfpi.org

March 27, 2013

The Main Event: The DC Budget Is Back

By Jenny Reed

Tomorrow, Mayor Gray will release his proposed budget for fiscal year 2014 to the DC Council. From there, the Council will have just under eight weeks to review it, hold hearings, get public input, make changes and take a vote on how the city's resources should be best deployed to meet the needs of DC residents and businesses. To help kick things off, here's DCFPI's quick rundown of key dates and resources to help you understand the budget.

Key Dates in the Fiscal Year 2014 Budget Process

- **March 28th: Mayor Gray releases his proposed fiscal year 2014 budget.** The Mayor will hold a briefing for the Council at 9:30am, followed by a press conference at 11:00 am. The entire budget likely will be available online at both the Mayor's budget website (budget.dc.gov) and the Chief Financial Officer's website (cfo.dc.gov/page/budget-0) sometime later that day.
- **April 8th: DC Council holds hearing on mayor's proposed budget.** At this hearing, open to the public (but not to testify), the Mayor, Mayor's Budget Director and the Chief Financial Officer will testify about the ins and outs of the Mayor's proposed budget.
- **April 10th- May 2nd: DC Council holds hearings on proposed budget for each agency.** Here is a great chance to have your voice heard on the District's budget priorities. The DC Council holds an oversight hearing to hear questions, concerns and support for the proposed budgets for each agency and the public is encouraged to testify. A full schedule of the hearing dates is available on the Council's [website](#). Can't make it in person? You can always submit written testimony for the public record.
- **May 3rd: DC Council holds public hearing on fiscal year 2014 budget request act and budget support act.** Bring snacks and sign up early for this typically full-day hearing that covers the entire proposed fiscal 2014 budget. It is also the last public hearing before the DC Council begins to mark-up the budget so if you haven't been able to testify, now is the time!
- **May 22nd: DC Council votes on the fiscal year 2014 DC budget.** This is the first of two votes held on the fiscal year 2014 budget, but this is a really important one! Why? While there are two votes on the budget support act (the legislation necessary to implement the budget) there is only one vote on the budget request act which governs the spending authority for the entire DC government. This means that once the DC Council takes the vote on the 22nd, the budget is really locked down and any changes made between this vote and second vote on the budget support act really cannot change allocated dollar amounts.

Agency	Date & Time	Location	RSVP required?
Department of Healthcare Finance	April 3, 1:30pm	Department of Healthcare Finance (899 North Capitol St. NE)	Due to limited time, it is strongly encouraged for people to submit questions in advance by 10:00 am on Monday, April 1st. Questions may be submitted via this link or by emailing dcbehavioralhealth@gmail.com .
Department of Behavioral Health (formerly Department of Mental Health)	April 5, 12:30pm	Department of Behavioral Health (64 New York Avenue NE)	Due to limited time and space, people are asked to RSVP in advance and strongly encouraged to submit questions in advance by 5:00 pm on Monday, April 3. Questions may be submitted via this link or by emailing dcbehavioralhealth@gmail.com .
Child & Family Services Agency	April 8, 4:30-6pm	Child & Family Services Agency (200 I Street, SE)	Please RSVP to Racheal Streeter at CFSA, racheal.streeter@dc.gov ; to submit questions in advance, contact Beth Tossell, Children's Law Center, etossell@childrenslawcenter.org
District Department of the Environment	April 11, 10am-11:30am	District Department of the Environment (1200 First St. NE)	
Department of Housing & Community Development, DC Housing Authority, and Housing Finance Agency	April 18, 12-2pm	Housing Finance Agency (815 Florida Avenue NW)	Yes, please register by going to the following website: http://www.cnhed.org/news-events/monthly-meeting-registration/

Resources to Help You Understand the Fiscal Year 2014 Budget

- **DCFPI's budget & revenue guides.** Just yesterday, we wrote about our new [citizen's guide](#) to the DC budget; a user-friendly guide to help you understand the DC budget and how it is put together each year. Complement this with our [guide to the District's revenues](#), and you'll be well on your way to becoming a DC budget guru.
- **DCFPI's analyses of the fiscal year 2014 budget.** Each year, DCFPI puts out an in-depth look at the entire DC budget as well as analyses of the budget for key issues areas, including: Education, health care, affordable housing, TANF, revenues and more! Keep an eye on the District's Dime and our website about two weeks after the budget comes out for these in-depth analyses on the fiscal year 2014 budget.
- **Budget Briefings.** Each year, Mayor Gray and several DC agencies hold budget briefings to help the public better understand what is in the budget. Mayor Gray kicks off his Budget Town Halls (held in each ward) on April 10th in Ward 5; a full list of the dates, times and locations

can be found [here](#). In addition, several agencies will hold budget briefings after the Mayor's budget is released to help people understand how the proposed budget will impact the programs and services that the agency provides. Below is a list of the briefings that have been scheduled to date. DCFPI will send out more details of other agency briefings as they are scheduled.

- **DC Council's budget website.** In addition to the list of budget oversight hearings, the DC Council's website includes a [section on the fiscal year 2014 budget](#) where you can find additional resources on the DC budget including answers to questions that the DC Council's budget office asks of the mayor, and questions and answers that each council committee submits to an agency in advance of their oversight hearing.

Still have questions? Unsure where to find budget documents? Don't hesitate to [contact DCFPI](#) with any questions on the budget or budget process and stay tuned to the District's Dime for our first take on the mayor's fiscal year 2014 budget before the end of the week.