

**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**



**Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Performance Oversight Hearing**

**Testimony of Tiffany Crowe  
Director, Department of Licensing and Consumer Protection**

**Before the Honorable Brianne Nadeau, Chairperson  
Committee on Public Works and Operations  
Council of the District of Columbia  
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20004**

**Thursday, February 24, 2026, 11 a.m.**

Good morning Chairperson Nadeau, Councilmembers, and staff. I am Tiffany Crowe, Director of the Department of Licensing and Consumer Protection (DLCP). DLCP's mission is to protect the economic interests of businesses, residents, and visitors of the District of Columbia (District) by issuing business and occupational and professional licenses, registering corporate entities, and enforcing the Consumer Protection Procedures Act. Over the past few years, DLCP has played a vital role in spurring economic growth and development in the District, helping individuals to obtain their business and occupational and professional license, and protecting consumers from unfair and deceptive trade practices.

I want to thank Mayor Muriel Bowser for appointing me as DLCP's first Director. Serving in this role alongside a team of over 100 people committed to supporting businesses and entrepreneurs, and those who are not afraid to take risks, has been the highlight of my career. When I accepted this position, I said that I wanted to build an executive team that could lead the agency with fresh ideas, streamline the agency's operations so that it can run more efficiently and better serve our customers, and cross train staff members in all types of business and occupational and professional licensing applications. In addition, I wanted to focus on the staff; many of whom had worked for the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs and were here when the split occurred. I was intentional about offering wellness activities to bring the agency together and boost morale, establishing processes, and offering training opportunities to support employees' personal and professional development.

While we did not achieve every goal I set out for the agency, with the support of Mayor Bowser, Deputy Mayor Albert, the Council, industry stakeholders, and the DLCP team, we were successful in achieving most of these goals and laying a solid foundation for others. I am proud of what we have accomplished and am excited for what is yet to come.

Fiscal Year (FY)2025 was a banner year for DLCP, and FY 2026 is shaping up to be the same. I will highlight a few of the agency's accomplishments and then share our priorities for the remainder of the fiscal year as we "run through the tape" toward achieving the Mayor's Growth Agenda initiatives.

In FY 2025, DLCP focused on preparing for the implementation of the Business and Entrepreneurship Support to Thrive (BEST) Amendment Act of 2022. This included making the necessary updates to the Business Licensing Portal, including adjusting the fees and fines and creating the new license categories and removing endorsements. In addition, the agency updated the necessary forms and documents and began the process of updating its regulations. We also embarked on an extensive public relations campaign to ensure the business community was aware of the changes. This was a daunting task, but one that will ultimately support economic growth of the District by supporting businesses, and I am happy to share that DLCP fully implemented on October 1, 2025.

In addition to experiencing an increase in business licenses, DLCP also enjoyed an increase in the number of vendors becoming licensed and participating in the Vendor Amnesty Program. In FY 2025, DLCP issued 634 new vendor licenses in comparison to 523 in FY 2024, which represents a 21% increase. Similarly, 11 vendors were accepted into the Vendor Amnesty Program in FY 2025 in comparison to four in FY 2024. These achievements are due in large part to the agency promoting a staff member to serve as the Vending Zone Manager, which has allowed the agency to foster better relationships with the vending community. Additionally, DLCP's increased collaboration with our sister agencies, including the Office of Tax and Revenue, the Department of Health, and the District Department of Transportation, has equipped us to assist microenterprise businesses.

DLCP is unique, in that it is one of the few agencies that touches nearly every business operating in the District. Before one can obtain a basis business license, they must register with the agency's Corporations Division. On average, DLCP registers 17,500 new entities and 4,600 trade names annually. While our most frequently used applications were available on CorpOnline, a large percentage was not. This resulted in businesses submitting applications in person or via email to the agency. This practice was not efficient and prone to errors.

On December 8, 2025, DLCP launched the new CorpOnline System. With the new system, one may submit any filing electronically as all applications are available online 24 hours a day, seven days a week. There are "how to" prompts that can assist individuals in completing the applications, and we have recently posted how to videos online. The new CorpOnline system allows one to register their corporate entity or trade name more quickly and efficiently. Additionally, the new system allows the agency to capture more information about beneficial owners, including their residential addresses, as required by District law. The old CorpOnline System did not have that functionality.

In the first two months since the new CorpOnline System launched in December, DLCP has completed 19,328 corporate and trade name filings, in comparison to 16,925 filings the same time last year. This represents an increase of 14%. Further, since the system launch, we have seen a 63% decrease in rejected filings because the system is able to guide users away from making errors. The increase in corporate and trade name filings and the decrease in rejected filings is reflective in the increase in revenues from FY 2024 to FY 2025. In FY 2025, the agency collected \$24,415,224 in corporate registration revenue in comparison to \$23,893,121 in FY 2024. For FY 2026, to date, the agency has collected \$5,606,699 in corporate registration revenues. This represents a 15% increase in revenues over the same period in FY 2025.

At its core, DLCP is a regulatory agency, which means in addition to issuing business and occupational and professional licenses, we are also responsible for enforcing the law and taking appropriate enforcement action against those who are not in compliance. Our main goal is to bring individuals into compliance, which is in the best interest of the public as it will ensure that businesses are operating in compliance with the law while also promoting the economic vitality of the city.

In FY 2025, DLCP increased its proactive enforcement of unlicensed housing providers. Unlicensed housing providers are more likely to have housing code violations, which poses a health and safety risk to the residents living on the property. We have all heard egregious stories about the living conditions at some of these properties, and the Council has held several hearings on housing conditions, including this committee when it held a hearing on the Housing with Integrity. DLCP, like the Council, takes these situations very seriously and are committed to doing what is within our legal authority to address them.

In addition to increasing our proactive enforcement against unlicensed housing providers, we have enhanced our coordination efforts with the Department of Buildings and the Office of the Attorney General. These coordinated enforcement efforts, coupled with proactive enforcement, have allowed the District to better protect the community from unscrupulous housing providers. The agency's enhanced enforcement measures have resulted in a notable increase of Notices of Infraction (NOIs) issued to unlicensed housing providers as well as those coming into compliance.

DLCP's proactive enforcement was not limited to unlicensed housing providers, we also did the same for unlicensed Short-term Rental (STR) providers. In the last quarter of FY 2025, we launched a new STR enforcement initiative that involves identifying unlicensed operators and

sending them warning letters so that they could come into compliance. Those who did not come into compliance within the allotted timeframe were referred to the Enforcement Division for issuance of a NOI. We began with Ward 1 in September 2025, followed by Wards 3 and 4 in November. In response to the warning letters that were issued to unlicensed STR providers, approximately 50% came into compliance, while the remainder were referred to the Enforcement Unit. We will continue this initiative in FY 2026 because the response has been encouraging.

Finally, DLCP increased its outreach and education efforts in FY 2025. We recognize that we cannot be successful in what we do without the support of businesses and residents. Thus, educating the public and keeping them abreast of legislative and regulatory changes is central to our being able to achieve our mission. In FY 2025, DLCP's Small Business Resource Center conducted 60 outreach activities, the Occupational and Professional Licensing Administration conducted 23 trainings and workshops, and the Consumer Protection Unit continued to partner with local organizations and sister agencies to host consumer protection events for the most vulnerable populations. In addition to our outreach efforts, we published more advisory notices on the agency's website, provided more salient information for businesses and entrepreneurs in our external newsletter, and increased our use of social media. Additionally, in the first quarter of FY 2026, DLCP launched its Legislative Affairs and Policy page, which contains searchable versions of the DLCP's code books, pending legislation and regulations, and a means by which one can submit comments to the agency's Legislative Director. We created this website to better inform our customers.

This is just a glimmer at what DLCP accomplished in FY 2025 and FY 2026, to date. We cannot stop and will not stop doing what we can to support economic development in the District of Columbia and to protect consumers. For the remainder of FY 2026, we will continue to focus on our strategic priorities. First, we are going to build upon the success of the new

CorpOnline System by integrating the agency's databases into one system. One of the greatest frustrations businesses have is that our systems – internally and externally – do not talk to one another, which can result in costly delays. The D.C. Bridge Project will merge DLCP's various databases into one system; thereby, streamlining the process and make it easier and more efficient for people to apply for a business license. This project, which we refer to as the "D.C. Bridge Project", will launch in June 2026.

Additionally, we are working with our sister agencies to create system and/or mechanism by which we will have limited access to each other's systems so that customers will not have to visit multiple agencies. Our ability to access information in each other's systems would greatly improve the customer experience when applying for a business license and make it more efficient. Not only will the licensing process be more efficient and streamlined, but the agency will be able to take more robust enforcement action against those operating in contravention to the law.

Further, we will continue to make headway on our legislative and regulatory initiatives. This includes working with the Council to pass the Accountancy Practices Amendment Act of 2025, which will have the District join the other 30 states, including Virginia and soon Maryland, in establishing an alternative pathway for licensure for certified public accountants and promote license mobility. We are also working with our boards and commissions to take a keen look at the licensing requirements for the various non-health occupations and professions within the agency's purview to identify opportunities for increasing reciprocity and further removing barriers to licensure to increase access to licensure. Finally, we are going to build on the success of the BEST Act by proposing legislation that will further streamline the license process and make it more affordable for those wanting to start a business in the District of Columbia.

Lastly, now that the agency is three years old, we have had an opportunity to assess what works and does not work. With this information, we are in a better position to memorialize our processes. Thus, for the remainder of FY 2026, the agency will focus on standardizing its operations and drafting policies and standard operating procedures to guide our work and better serve our customers.

Councilmember Nadeau, I want to thank you for the support you have provided me and DLCP during my time leading the agency. I also want to thank the public witnesses who testified today or submitted written testimony. Their doing so does not go unnoticed, and I will take their suggestions and comments into consideration.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify today. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.