

# Department of Code Compliance

## Mission

The mission of the Department of Code Compliance is to promote, protect, and maintain a healthy and desirable living environment in Fairfax County. This is accomplished through education and outreach, community partnerships, voluntary compliance, and enforcement of the Zoning Ordinance, the Property Maintenance Code, the Building Code, and other applicable codes to ensure the safety and wellbeing of those living, working, or visiting Fairfax County.

## Connection to the Countywide Strategic Plan

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors adopted the first-ever Countywide Strategic Plan on October 5, 2021. The Countywide Strategic Plan serves as a road map to help guide future work, focusing on the 10 Community Outcome Areas that represent the issues of greatest importance to the community, and uses our One Fairfax equity policy to invest in people and places that have limited access to opportunity. On February 20, 2024, the second Annual Report on the work of the strategic plan was released to the public. The report contains point-in-time progress highlights for each of the community outcome areas, plus three data dashboards and data stories that are being replicated across all of the outcome areas, and a number of additional initiatives to embed the elements of the plan within department-level work. The report also includes a Year Three Implementation Model, which will engage hundreds of County subject-matter experts to identify and champion the specific strategies that will move forward to implementation under the guidance of the Board of Supervisors. For more information on the Countywide Strategic Plan, please visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/strategicplan](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/strategicplan). The Department of Code Compliance primarily supports the following Community Outcome Area:



Community Outcome Area	Vision Statement
<b>Effective and Efficient Government</b>	<i>All people trust that their government responsibly manages resources, is responsive to their needs, provides exceptional services and equitably represents them.</i>

## Focus

The Department of Code Compliance (DCC) is a centralized enforcement agency created in 2010 which is responsible for several types of enforcement, including violations of the Zoning Ordinance, Virginia Maintenance Code, Building Code related to unpermitted work, the Grass and Vegetations Ordinance, Noise Ordinance, and the Blight Abatement and Illegal Signs in the Right of Way Programs. This approach creates a collaborative multi-functional environment that can successfully investigate and resolve complaints and violations in residential and commercial communities.

The DCC centralized intake better supports the public by creating an integrated one-call center that has enhanced customer service experience while assisting other agencies by reducing the number of misdirected calls and reports.

DCC continuously assesses community trends and new service needs by conducting research and participation in customer outreach and education efforts. Through meetings with civic and homeowners' associations and participation in public events, staff educates stakeholders about the DCC mission and processes, encourages deeper engagement with the public, and creates opportunities for feedback about challenges facing the community.

DCC partners with other agencies by serving on committees that deal with community issues, such as the Hoarding Committee and the DCC Equity Team. DCC maintains a protocol for scheduled, combined inspection efforts related to complaints involving illegal commercial enterprises that pose potential risk to public safety. This work with the Police and Fire Departments may include restaurants with public entertainment, dance halls, bars, massage establishments, and other entities operating without authorization.

The agency utilizes the DCC Strategic Plan and Equity Impact Plan to guide activities and implement programs which serve the community; are responsive to data; and reflect the vision and goals of the agency and the County. The agency's vision for FY 2025 and beyond is to be the leader in the preservation and protection of healthy and desirable neighborhoods through education, community partnerships, voluntary compliance, and enforcement.

Administrative Services staff provide clear direction, leadership, and strategic management for the agency by promoting continuous learning, providing employee development opportunities, succession planning, and continually evaluating staffing needs to recruit and retain employees who possess the necessary competencies to achieve the agency's mission. The Code Administration Section enhances the Department's capabilities by providing consultative guidance, training, and technical subject matter assistance in collaboration with partner agencies. Field Operations works in concert with the Code Administrative Section to pursue legal action, to advise on the investigative process, and to support the overall strategic objectives of DCC.

DCC expects a continued increase in demand for service which affects core business areas: Administrative Services, Code Administration, Operations, and Public Safety and Support Staff. This demand is the result of expanded authorities granted to DCC, such as the authority to abate public menaces, modifications to the County's Blight Abatement Program, enforcement responsibility for the Grass Ordinance that now includes bamboo, and enforcement and fine collections related to the Illegal Signs in the Right of Way Program.

The Illegal Signs in the Right of Way Program concluded its seventh full year in operation during FY 2023. This program is authorized through an agreement with the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and originally operated through a partnership with the Office of the Sheriff, with the Sheriff's Community Labor Force (CLF) collecting and disposing of signs from roadways, and DCC taking enforcement action in egregious cases. In FY 2023, the agency procured the services of a contractor to continue the program as the CLF no longer staffs the program.

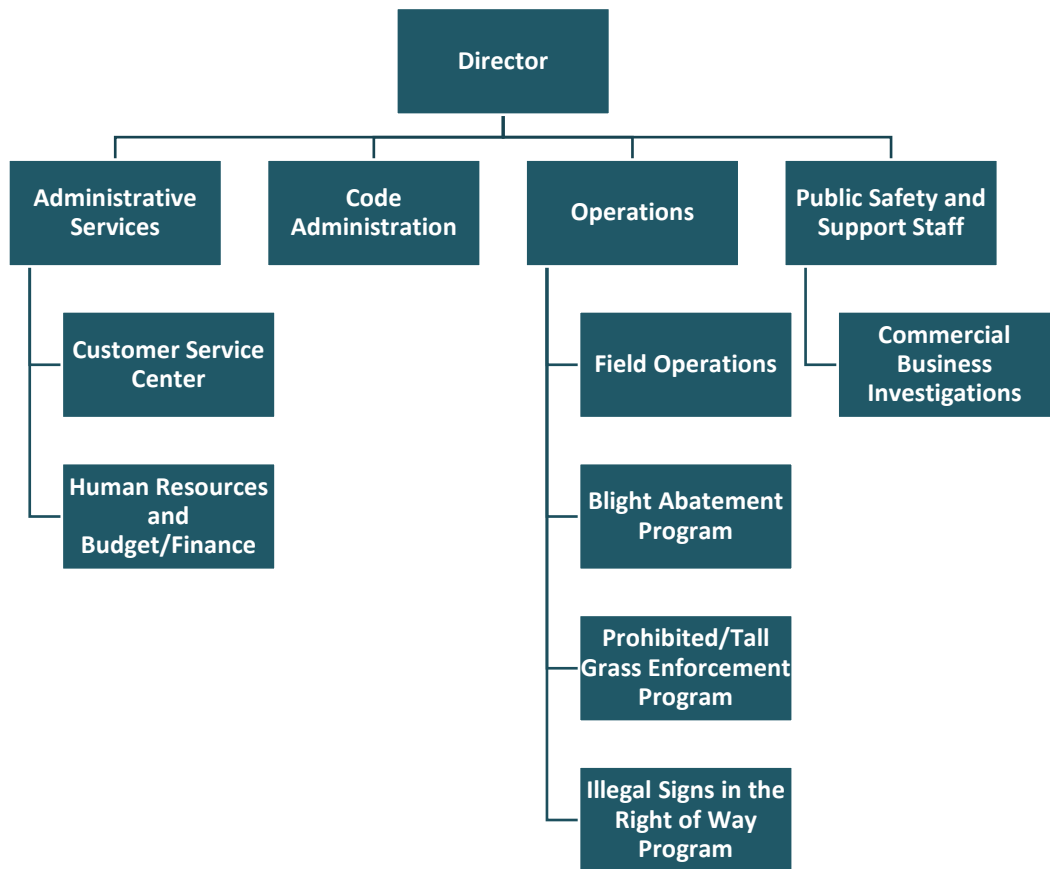
Additional workload resulting from code amendment changes and enforcement challenges such as the noise ordinance and the new bamboo ordinance, require analysis, training, and the development of new investigation protocols. Policies call for DCC to provide ongoing public outreach and education, to monitor and evaluate new procedures, and to coordinate with other affected departments. DCC anticipates an increased workload over the next several years due to Zoning Ordinance Amendments as part of the now approved Zoning Ordinance Modernization Project. This major initiative to modernize the County's ordinance has resulted in the development of new processes and procedures, training needs, and extensive research to carry out investigative efforts.

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DCC is involved in the ongoing implementation of the new Planning and Land Use System (PLUS) application, which replaced the legacy Fairfax Inspection Database Online (FIDO) to improve data collection and analysis. PLUS promises to improve efficiency within DCC and its sister agencies to execute the agency's strategic plan.

DCC considers and promotes equity in its decision-making processes and in the delivery of its current and future policies, programs, and services, as defined in the One Fairfax Policy. An agency action plan has been implemented as a living document that will continue to undergo review and updates to ensure sustained progress on the initiative. The DCC Equity team has been established and is charged with ongoing implementation and updating the DCC Equity Impact Plan.

## Organizational Chart



**Budget and Staff Resources**

Category	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Adopted	FY 2024 Revised	FY 2025 Advertised
<b>FUNDING</b>				
<b>Expenditures:</b>				
Personnel Services	\$4,229,077	\$4,922,288	\$4,922,288	\$4,928,761
Operating Expenses	408,397	551,756	555,243	619,780
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$4,637,474</b>	<b>\$5,474,044</b>	<b>\$5,477,531</b>	<b>\$5,548,541</b>
<b>Income:</b>				
Illegal Signs Fines	\$27,240	\$33,745	\$33,745	\$45,995
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$27,240</b>	<b>\$33,745</b>	<b>\$33,745</b>	<b>\$45,995</b>
<b>NET COST TO THE COUNTY</b>	<b>\$4,610,234</b>	<b>\$5,440,299</b>	<b>\$5,443,786</b>	<b>\$5,502,546</b>
<b>AUTHORIZED POSITIONS/FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE)</b>				
Regular	48 / 48	48 / 48	48 / 48	48 / 48

**FY 2025 Funding Adjustments**

The following funding adjustments from the FY 2024 Adopted Budget Plan are necessary to support the FY 2025 program:

**Employee Compensation \$181,209**

An increase of \$181,209 in Personnel Services includes \$98,446 for a 2.00 percent market rate adjustment (MRA) for all employees and \$74,771 for performance-based and longevity increases for non-uniformed merit employees, both effective July 2024. The remaining increase of \$7,992 is included for employee pay increases for specific job classes identified in the County's benchmark class survey of comparator jurisdictions.

**Planning and Land Use System (PLUS) Licenses \$91,080**

An increase of \$91,080 for PLUS licenses is based on anticipated billings for licensing costs associated with the agency's utilization of the PLUS system. PLUS is a new multi-agency platform for Fairfax County customers to complete their zoning, building, permitting or other land development processes online. Through PLUS, customers can conduct online transactions such as creating and submitting building permit applications online, pay fees, track application status, receive electronic notifications and conduct searches.

**Department of Vehicle Services Charges \$9,944**

An increase of \$9,944 in Department of Vehicle Services charges is based on anticipated billings for fuel, maintenance, and operating-related charges.

**Reductions (\$207,736)**

A decrease of \$207,736 reflects reductions utilized to balance the FY 2025 budget. The following table provides details on the specific reductions:

Title	Impact	Positions	FTE	Reduction
Realize Savings Associated with Non-Merit Personnel	This reduction of \$124,736 is associated with a reduction in the agency's spending on non-merit salaries utilized for part-time and temporary staff. As part-time and temporary staff are not routinely used by the agency, this reduction would have minimal impact on the agency's operations.	0	0.0	\$124,736

Title	Impact	Positions	FTE	Reduction
Realize Savings in Overtime Spending	This reduction of \$50,000 is associated with a reduction in the department's overtime spending utilized for staff to conduct flexible after-hours investigations. Based on flexible schedules and the monitoring of overtime usage, the department has significantly reduced overtime spending.	0	0.0	\$50,000
Reduce Operating Budget due to Efficiencies and Cost Savings	This reduction of \$33,000 is associated with a reduction in the agency's Operating Expenses budget utilized for various office equipment and supplies. Based on previous year-end balances, the agency is able to absorb the reduction without negatively impacting operations.	0	0.0	33,000

## Changes to FY 2024 Adopted Budget Plan

The following funding adjustments reflect all approved changes in the FY 2024 Revised Budget Plan since passage of the FY 2024 Adopted Budget Plan. Included are all adjustments made as part of the FY 2023 Carryover Review and all other approved changes through December 31, 2023.

**Carryover Adjustments** **\$3,487**

As part of the FY 2023 Carryover Review, the Board of Supervisors approved encumbered carryover of \$3,487 in Operating Expenses.

## Cost Centers

### Code Administration and Administrative Services

Code Administration includes the Code Authority Manager who is the designated Senior Deputy Zoning Administrator. This position collaborates closely with the Fairfax County Zoning Administrator, the DCC Deputy Director, the Office of the County Attorney, and other stakeholders relevant to code administration, policy interpretation, and legal action. Additionally, the DCC Code Administration Manager oversees one staff member, who is responsible for code analysis, research, amendment processing, legislative analysis, litigation review, and the agency's internal training program.

DCC Administrative Services responsibilities include financial and human resources functions, training, employee development, and strategic analysis in addition to performance measurement, workforce planning, succession planning, organizational development, and other functions necessary to ensure services and resources are aligned with the agency's mission.

The Central Intake and Customer Services Section is responsible for managing the DCC complaint intake and customer service center. This section provides all the administrative support to DCC Operations for case processing and case documentation. Additionally, the team responds to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests, coordinates with the Department of Information Technology regarding systems replacements, web page content updates, and other technology needs. The Central Intake and Customer Services Center maintains a high level of administrative expertise and provides assistance to citizens throughout the entire case management process.

Category	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Adopted	FY 2024 Revised	FY 2025 Advertised
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>				
Total Expenditures	\$1,347,568	\$1,569,374	\$1,572,861	\$1,677,670
<b>AUTHORIZED POSITIONS/FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE)</b>				
Regular	11 / 11	11 / 11	11 / 11	11 / 11

### Field Operations

The Field Operations section focuses on the assignment and resolution of complaints within five field divisions based on geographic location within Fairfax County. Service requests are obtained from customer calls, website intake, emails, referrals from staff and other agencies, letters and correspondence, and a variety of other means. Operations staff respond to service requests utilizing a review process which involves research, investigation, documentation, issuance of formal notices of violation, follow-up inspections to ensure compliance, and referral to court processes. Both DCC cost centers work closely together throughout the process, from intake, investigation, compliance, and prosecution, if necessary, to case resolution and closure. DCC Leadership collaboratively works together regarding strategic planning, community education, inter-agency coordination, and policy development.

Category	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Adopted	FY 2024 Revised	FY 2025 Advertised
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>				
Total Expenditures	\$3,289,906	\$3,904,670	\$3,904,670	\$3,870,871
<b>AUTHORIZED POSITIONS/FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE)</b>				
Regular	37 / 37	37 / 37	37 / 37	37 / 37

### Position Detail

The FY 2025 Advertised Budget Plan includes the following positions:

CODE ADMINISTRATION AND ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES – 11 Positions			
1	Director, Code Compliance	1	Management Analyst II
1	Code Authority Manager	1	Management Analyst I
1	Code Specialist III	1	Administrative Assistant V
1	Management Analyst III	4	Administrative Assistants IV
FIELD OPERATIONS – 37 Positions			
1	Deputy Director of Code Compliance Dept	19	Code Compliance Investigators II
5	Code Compliance Supervisors	2	Code Specialists I
10	Code Compliance Investigators III		

### Performance Measurement Results by Community Outcome Area

#### Effective and Efficient Government

The Director’s Office, Code Administration, and Administrative Services focus on customer contact, service request intake, and overall support to Field Operations. All service requests are processed within two business days of receipt to ensure an effective intake process and expedient service request processing and case file setup for referral to Field Operations. DCC Customer Services staff received 9,811 calls and more than 4,005 web complaints in FY 2023. This section processed 98 percent of service requests within two business days, thereby meeting the established target. DCC’s outstanding service model has ensured the ability to continue to effectively process most service requests within one business day.

The primary goal of Field Operations is to provide the efficient and effective resolution of all alleged code violations. Two objectives are considered critical in achieving this goal: conducting a first inspection within 14 business days of the initial complaint and resolving non-litigated service requests within 120 days. During FY 2023, over 5,226 first inspections were conducted, with 75 percent conducted within 14 business days. Additionally, 68 percent of non-litigated service requests were resolved within 120 days in FY 2023. A temporary drop in the number of inspections conducted within 14 days and service requests resolved within 120 days is associated with the migration to the

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new PLUS system during FY 2023. Since the initial release, the department has made improvements and expects to return to past levels in future years.

Community Outcome Area	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Estimate	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Estimate	FY 2025 Estimate
<b>Effective and Efficient Government</b>						
<b>Customer Satisfaction with County Services</b>						
Percent of service requests processed within two business days	98.0%	98.0%	98.0%	98.0%	98.0%	98.0%
Percent of first inspections conducted within 14 business days	98.0%	96.0%	97.0%	75.0%	90.0%	95.0%
Percent of non-litigated service requests resolved within 120 days	78.0%	83.0%	83.0%	68.0%	75.0%	77.0%

A complete list of performance measures can be viewed at <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/budget/fy-2025-advertised-performance-measures-pm>