

# Commonwealth of Virginia

## COUNTY OF FAIRFAX

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COMMONWEALTH'S ATTORNEY

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### **COMMONWEALTH'S ATTORNEY DESCANO EXPANDS RESPONSE TO COVID-19**

*Statement regarding expansion of new policies in response to COVID-19 outbreak.*

FAIRFAX COUNTY, VA – Fairfax County Commonwealth's Attorney Steve Descano released the following statement regarding the expansion of his office's response to the COVID-19 outbreak.

"The COVID-19 outbreak has been causing concern across our county, commonwealth, country, and beyond. In response, my office has been working with our partners in Fairfax County to take steps limiting new individuals coming into our system and minimizing individuals already in. We've implemented a policy of reviewing individuals that are currently serving a sentence and, on a case by case basis, determining if we can recommend them for early release. To date, that includes looking at individuals that had a release date that falls within Governor Northam's State of Emergency which ends in mid-June. However, as I've taken a stronger look at this issue, I've determined that we can do more and we should do more. That's why starting immediately, I'm expanding the scope of this review with two important steps. First, we are expanding the cases we review for potential early release to include everyone currently in jail. It will be done in stages as this is a serious endeavor, but the goal is to review every case and recommend for early release if appropriate. Second, I will be conducting a review of all pretrial decisions made by my office prior to the COVID-19 outbreak hitting our community to ensure that a decision that was made by this office falls in line not only with these policies, but more importantly with our community's values. It's times like these that test our values the most. It's our shared values that guide me and my decisions. In fact, there are two particular values that will always animate this office—to make sure no one falls through the cracks and to make sure this community is kept safe."

The Commonwealth's Attorney's Office remains open for business throughout the COVID-19 outbreak.

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