

Office of Elections

Mission To provide each resident of Fairfax County with the opportunity to exercise his or her right to vote in an efficient and equitable manner in accordance with the Constitutions of the United States and the Commonwealth of Virginia and the Code of Virginia.

Focus The Office of Elections is guided by policy set by the State Board of Elections, the State Department of Elections, and the Fairfax County Electoral Board, and is administered by the General Registrar. The Office supports the electoral process which provides Fairfax County citizens with a critical channel to have a voice in their government. The Office is required to conduct fair, transparent elections that accurately reflect the intent of the electorate to ensure continued confidence in the integrity of the electoral process. The Office has two primary statutory functions: voter registration and conducting elections. Additionally, the Office coordinates ballot access for local candidates and ensures that voters and citizens are appropriately informed of upcoming elections and changes in electoral procedures and laws.

The Office provides year-round voter registration and community engagement activities. Using a State maintained statewide database called the Virginia Elections and Registration Information System (VERIS), the Office determines the eligibility of voters, maintains the voter registration records database, certifies candidate nominating petitions, processes absentee ballot applications, provides photo IDs, and provides public information and access to electronic lists of registered voters and absentee applicants. In addition to the main location at the Government Center, the Office also manages 11 absentee voting locations each fall to ensure that residents throughout the County have access to in-person registration and absentee voting services.



The Office manages the logistics of conducting and certifying elections by recruiting and training election officers, preparing voting equipment, overseeing polling places, preparing ballots, compiling election returns, and posting unofficial election results on the agency's website on election night. In addition, the Office receives, audits, and provides public access to candidates' campaign contribution and expenditure reports. The Office also develops voter information and procedures to comply with federal and state laws, and responds to inquiries, suggestions and complaints from voters, campaigns, candidates, elected officials, and the press.

In FY 2019, the Office of Elections successfully administered the 2018 Congressional Election with approximately 383,525 votes cast, including absentee voting. The workload and related expenses of the Office are related to the number of voter registrations as well as the election turnout and the number of absentee ballots received. The Office is responsible for analyzing these variables and for developing plans and programs to facilitate successful elections.

At the beginning of FY 2018, the General Registrar began a new voter registration notification procedure that reduced the cost of every correspondence from approximately \$0.70 per piece to less than \$0.20 per piece. The Office also began providing a "sample ballot" mailer to every registered voter in Fairfax County ahead of the 2018 November Election. The sample ballots contain critical information about each voters' selections, Voter Photo ID requirements, and absentee voting opportunities. The mailing was a huge success and voters were seen throughout the County at absentee locations and their polling places with the sample ballots. The Office plans to continue this practice for every November General Election. The Office continues to look for innovations and

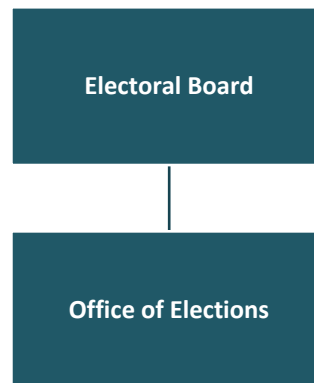
technology solutions to improve communications with voters, election officers, and the media to ensure critical information is disseminated quickly.

In future years, the Office anticipates that the State Department of Elections will continue to reduce the amount of support provided. As a result, the Office will continue to rely on funding from the County to ensure elections are efficiently conducted.

Pandemic Response and Impact

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Office of Elections has made significant adjustments, especially as it relates to staffing. The Office extended the time staff are working to prepare equipment (i.e. starting ten weeks out instead of six) due to limitations on access to the Logistics Center. Staff working hours have been adjusted to account for the reduction of available part-time employees. Due to the increased demand for ballots by mail, postage and printing costs have increased significantly. Citing concerns over exposure to COVID-19, several polling places became unavailable. This required staff to send notices to 15,000 voters identifying their new polling places. Vote by-mail is expected to increase significantly over the typical 50,000 ballots, and could reach 500,000 ballots mailed.

Organizational Chart



Budget and Staff Resources

Category	FY 2019 Actual	FY 2020 Adopted	FY 2020 Revised	FY 2021 Advertised	FY 2021 Adopted
FUNDING					
Expenditures:					
Personnel Services	\$3,585,150	\$3,398,522	\$4,357,522	\$3,586,267	\$3,488,888
Operating Expenses	777,580	1,061,637	2,893,752	1,504,637	1,504,637
Capital Equipment	0	0	8,239	0	0
Total Expenditures	\$4,362,730	\$4,460,159	\$7,259,513	\$5,090,904	\$4,993,525
Income:					
State Shared General					
Registrar Expenses	\$88,003	\$85,806	\$585,806	\$85,806	\$85,806
Election Filing Fees	45,917	0	600	1,600	1,600
Total Income	\$133,920	\$85,806	\$586,406	\$87,406	\$87,406
NET COST TO THE COUNTY	\$4,228,810	\$4,374,353	\$6,673,107	\$5,003,498	\$4,906,119

Category	FY 2019 Actual	FY 2020 Adopted	FY 2020 Revised	FY 2021 Advertised	FY 2021 Adopted
AUTHORIZED POSITIONS/FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE)					
Regular	25 / 25	24 / 24	29 / 29	30 / 30	30 / 30
Exempt	5 / 5	6 / 6	6 / 6	6 / 6	6 / 6

**FY 2021
Funding
Adjustments**

The following funding adjustments from the FY 2020 Adopted Budget Plan are necessary to support the FY 2021 program. Included are all adjustments recommended by the County Executive that were approved by the Board of Supervisors, as well as any additional Board of Supervisors' actions, as approved in the adoption of the Budget on May 12, 2020.

Information Technology Position \$90,366

An increase of 1/1.0 FTE new position and \$90,366 is associated with the addition of a Business Analyst I position to address the increase in information technology workload requirements required to carry out elections. It should be noted that an increase of \$45,345 in Fringe Benefits funding is included in Agency 89, Employee Benefits. For further information on Fringe Benefits, refer to the Agency 89, Employee Benefits, narrative in the Nondepartmental program area.

Operating Expenses \$443,000

An increase of \$443,000 in Operating Expenses includes \$338,000 to support the maintenance and upgrades of licenses and software necessary for election activities and an increase of \$105,000 in the PC Replacement Program to support computers necessary to carry out election functions.

**Changes to
FY 2020
Adopted
Budget Plan**

The following funding adjustments reflect all approved changes in the FY 2020 Revised Budget Plan since passage of the FY 2020 Adopted Budget Plan. Included are all adjustments made as part of the FY 2019 Carryover Review, FY 2020 Third Quarter Review, and all other approved changes through April 30, 2020.

Carryover Adjustments \$860,604

As part of the FY 2019 Carryover Review, the Board of Supervisors approved funding of \$860,604, including \$818,799 in encumbered funding largely associated with the purchase of replacement voter machine carts for increased security for voting equipment, and \$41,805 in unencumbered funding for replacement batteries for voting machines.

Third Quarter Adjustments \$1,938,750

As part of the FY 2020 Third Quarter Review, the Board of Supervisors approved funding in the amount of \$1,938,750 to support expenditures incurred for the March 2020 Presidential Primary Election and the November 2020 Presidential Election, offset by State shared revenue of \$500,000. This one-time funding supports the cost of Election Officers, overtime, ballots, poll books, postage for ballot mailing, and supplies for polling places and satellites. In addition, funding in the amount of \$303,750 includes \$41,250 to support software development and upgrades for the poll worker, asset, and election night management systems; \$125,000 to support a comprehensive third-party security assessment and review of the election infrastructure and related components, as well as an action plan; \$50,000 to support the upgrade of voting equipment from Windows 7 to Windows 10 equipment prior to the 2020 Presidential Election; \$87,500 to fund the necessary buildout and upgrade of the ballot production and storage rooms prior to the November 2020 Presidential Election.

Reclassification of Non-Merit Benefits Eligible Positions to Merit **\$0**

As part of an ongoing Board-directed review of the County's use of limited-term staffing, 5/5.0 FTE new merit positions are included due to the reclassification of non-merit benefits-eligible positions to merit status. These are part of a total of 235 positions that were identified in the *FY 2019 Carryover Review* across all County agencies as candidates for possible conversion based on the tasks performed by each position and the hours worked by incumbents. No additional funding has been included as the work hours of these positions are expected to remain largely unchanged.

Position Detail

The FY 2021 Adopted Budget Plan includes the following positions:

OFFICE OF ELECTIONS – 36 Positions			
1	General Registrar, E	1	Business Analyst III
2	Management Analysts III, 1E	2	Business Analysts I [+1]
3	Management Analysts II, 1E	4	Administrative Assistants V, 2E
3	Management Analysts I, 1E	9	Administrative Assistants IV
1	IT Technician II	5	Administrative Assistants III
1	IT Technician I	4	Administrative Assistants II
+	Denotes New Position(s)		
E	Denotes Exempt Position(s)		

Performance Measurement Results

During the November 2019 Election, the voter turnout was 44.3 percent of the 712,986 active registered voters in Fairfax County. A total of 279,252 voters visited their precinct to vote during the General Election. Fairfax County has 243 precincts and an average of 1,150 voters voted at each of these precincts. Eleven absentee satellites were used during the General Election.

The Office continues to monitor voter registration activity and its operational impact. Virginia law requires that submitted voter registration applications be processed within 30 days of receipt of the application. Additionally, absentee applications are required to be processed in less than three days. The Virginia Department of Elections monitored this data through calendar year 2015, however, they no longer provide this analysis. Office leadership remains cognizant of these requirements and continuously monitors incoming traffic to ensure compliance with statutes and provide rapid service to voters.

Indicator	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Estimate/Actual	FY 2020 Estimate	FY 2021 Estimate
Machines/precinct	4.15	3.00	3.00/3.00	3.00	4.20
Officers/precinct	14.98	10.23	10.00/10.20	10.00	14.82
Percent of registrations, transfers and address/name changes completed without error	98.1%	98.0%	98.0%/98.2%	98.0%	98.0%

A complete list of performance measures can be viewed at <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/budget/fy-2021-adopted-performance-measures-pm>