




# County of Fairfax, Virginia

## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** April 9, 2024

**TO:** Consumer Protection Commission

**FROM:** Rebecca L. Makely, Director <sup>DS</sup>   
Department of Cable and Consumer Services

**SUBJECT:** Consumer Protection Commission Meeting for April 16, 2024

Please find attached the Consumer Protection Commission meeting packet. The next scheduled meeting is **Tuesday, April 16, 2024, at 7:30 p.m. in Conference Room 232** of the Government Center, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax, Virginia.

Please RSVP with your attendance to Susan Jones by **COB on Monday, April 15, 2024**, at [Susan.Jones@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Susan.Jones@fairfaxcounty.gov) or 703-324-5877.

cc: Amanda K. Kastl, Director, Consumer Services Division  
Department of Cable and Consumer Services

Susan C. Jones, Branch Manager  
Consumer Affairs Branch



**FAIRFAX COUNTY  
CONSUMER PROTECTION COMMISSION  
April 16, 2024 AGENDA**

Call to Order by the Chairperson (7:30 PM)

Remote Participation Motions

Minutes

- Approval of the draft March 19, 2024, meeting minutes

Report of the Director

Old Business

New Business

- Authorization to Advertise a Public Hearing to be held on May 21, 2024, 7:30 p.m. on Proposed Amendments to Fairfax County Code Section 84.1-6-3, Rates, fares, and charges established.

Commissioner Matters

Report of the Chairperson

General Interest

- Consumer Protection Commission Calendar
- Consumer Protection Commission Membership
- Consumer Affairs Statistics
- Community Outreach
- Consumer Resources

**Minutes of the Fairfax County Consumer Protection Commission**

March 19, 2024  
7:30 PM  
Government Center  
12000 Government Center Parkway  
Fairfax, VA 22035  
Chairperson Kratovil, Presiding

Attendance: Commissioners: Gasimov, Gulakowski, Kirk, Kharat, Kratovil, Roark, Rosier, Svab

Remote Participation: Commissioners: Belkowitz

Absent: Commissioners: Springer

Staff: Rebecca L. Makely, Director  
Cable and Consumer Services  
Amanda K. Kastl, Director  
Consumer Services Division  
Susan C. Jones, Branch Manager  
Consumer Affairs Branch  
Candice J. Hicks, Consumer Specialist 1  
Consumer Affairs Branch

Guests: Frederick E. Ellrod III, Director  
Communications Policy and  
Regulation Division

The meeting was called to order at 7:33 p.m. by Chairperson Kratovil.

Chairperson Kratovil notified the Commission that Commissioner Belkowitz requested to participate in the meeting remotely.

Commissioner Gulakowski made the motion to approve that Chairperson Kratovil’s decision to approve Commissioner Belkowitz’s request to participate from a remote location was in conformance with the Consumer Protection Commission’s Remote Participation Policy. Commissioner Kirk seconded the motion. The motion was approved, 8-0-0.

Chairperson Kratovil made the motion that Commissioner Belkowitz’s voice could be heard by all persons at the primary meeting location. Commissioner Kirk seconded the motion. The motion was approved, 8-0-0. Commissioner Belkowitz participated remotely from Fairfax Station due to being out of town on a family matter.

**Minutes**

Chairperson Kratovil moved to accept the February 20, 2024, minutes. Commissioner Gulakowski seconded the motion. The minutes were adopted unanimously, 9-0-0.

## **New Business**

**1. Communications Policy and Regulation Division Presentation.** Rick Ellrod, Director, Communications Policy and Regulation Division (CPRD) provided an overview the CPRD’s mission; consumer assistance; inspections; cable franchise negotiations; public, educational, and governmental (PEG) channels; the institutional network (I-Net); cable operator compliance; outreach; policy monitoring; and rate regulation.

A discussion ensued on shorter franchise contract agreements, current landscape on traditional cable vs. video streaming, PEG grants, term clauses, educational outreach events, customer service compliance, inspection of aerial construction sites, source of revenue, pricing regulation, equipment fees, and outreach to consumers on CPRD’s services and resources.

## **Report of the Director**

Director Makely stated National Consumer Protection Week (NCPW) was a success with 12 in person and virtual outreach events with over 400 attendees—including Fairfax County Consumer Affairs Day, which took place on March 7, 2024.

Director Makely stated a debriefing exercise was done by Consumer Affairs staff to discuss the National Consumer Protection Week on what worked, what did not work, and ways the event can be improved upon next year. Director Makely welcomed the Commissioners to provide feedback or suggestions about the event.

Director Makely informed the Commission that the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) voted on March 14, 2024, to require cable and satellite TV pricing transparency; its new “all-in” pricing rules will address consumers’ confusion on hidden fees in cable and satellite TV billing. Director Makely stated staff will work on a communications campaign with the Board of Supervisors (BOS) to provide answers to questions received from residents. Director Makely met with the BOS in closed session and gained approval to join a coalition to file future comments with the FCC.

Director Makely advised that for the April 16, 2024, Consumer Protection Commission (CPC) meeting, staff will request authorization to advertise a public hearing to be held on May 21, 2024, 7:30 p.m. on proposed amendments to Fairfax County Code Section 84.1-6-3, rates, fares, and charges established.

## **Old Business**

There was no old business before the Commission.

## **Commissioner Matters**

Commissioner Rosier complimented DCCS staff efforts during NCPW.

Commissioner Gasimov had no matters to bring before the Commission.

Commissioner Kirk advised he is delighted that CPRD is reviewing FCC rulings and legislations so that what happened to the taxicab industry does not happen to the cable industry.

Commissioner Kharat had no matters to bring before the Commission.

Commissioner Roark had no matters to bring before the Commission.

Commissioner Gulakowski stated that he watched staff presentations on Fairfax County Consumer Affairs Day on Channel 16. He attended Supervisor Walkinshaw's Braddock District meeting and shared the duties of the CPC.

Commissioner Svab had no matters to bring before the Commission.

Commissioner Belkowitz had no matters to bring before the Commission.

Commissioner Kratovil had several issues to bring before the Commission.

1. Next CPC meeting is scheduled for April 16, 2024, at 7:30 p.m. Both the Consumer Protection Commission Community Engagement Committee and the Consumer Protection Commission Financial Scams and Fraud Committee will also meet on that date and time.
2. NCPW was a success with Consumer Affairs receiving two proclamations from the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors. Director Makely advised one proclamation was to proclaim March 3-9, 2024, as Consumer Protection Week, and the other proclamation was to proclaim March 2024 as Alternative Dispute Resolution Month.
3. Concerns about the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau's credit reporting and credit freezes, and the way consumer data is made available.

Chairperson Kratovil made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioners Gulakowski and Kirk seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 8:58 p.m.

# CPC Calendar

## **Consumer Protection Commission**

2024 Planning Calendar

April 16, 2024

- January 23
  - Election of Officers
  - 2024 Items of Interest
  - Committees' Resolution
  
- February 20
  - Authorization to Advertise A Public Hearing to be held on March 19, 2024, 7:30 p.m. on Proposed Amendments to Fairfax County Code Section 84.1-6-3, Rates, fares, and charges established.
  - Fraud Presentation by Fairfax County Police Department Financial Crime Unit
  
- March 19
  - Communications Policy and Regulation Division Presentation
  
- April 16
  - Authorization to Advertise A Public Hearing to be held on May 21, 2024, 7:30 p.m. on Proposed Amendments to Fairfax County Code Section 84.1-6-3, Rates, fares, and charges established.
  
- May 21
  - Public Hearing on Proposed Amendments to Fairfax County Code Section 84.1-6-3, Rates, fares, and charges established.
  
- June 18
  - Office of Public Affairs Presentation
  
- July 16
  - FY 2024 Annual Report Review
  
- August 20
  -
  
- September 17
  -
  
- October 15
  -
  
- November 19
  - Nominations of Officers
  
- December 17
  -

# CPC Membership



## Commissioners

Fairfax County Resident #1  
**Jacqueline Rosier (Secretary)**  
*Appt. Expires 7/31/2025*

Fairfax County Resident #2  
**Michael J. Roark**  
*Appt. Expires 7/31/2026*

Fairfax County Resident #3  
**Jason J. Kratovil (Chairperson)**  
*Appt. Expires 7/31/2024*

Fairfax County Resident #4  
**Dennis D. Kirk**  
*Appt. Expires 7/31/2025*

Fairfax County Resident #5  
**Vacant**

Fairfax County Resident #6  
**Vacant**

Fairfax County Resident #7  
**Pratik J. Kharat**  
*Appt. Expires 7/31/2024*

Fairfax County Resident #8  
**Harold G. Belkowitz**  
*Appt. Expires 7/31/2024*

Fairfax County Resident #9  
**Vacant**

Fairfax County Resident #10  
**Josef Gasimov**  
*Appt. Expires 7/31/2024*

Fairfax County Resident #11  
**Paul Svab**  
*Appt. Expires 7/31/2024*

Fairfax County Resident #12  
**Denis Gulakowski (Vice-Chairperson)**  
*Appt. Expires 7/31/2024*

Fairfax County Resident #13  
**Maurice B. Springer**  
*Appt. Expires 7/31/2024*

## Staff

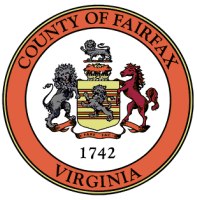
Rebecca L. Makely, Director  
Department of Cable and Consumer Services  
703-324-5947  
[Rebecca.Makely@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Rebecca.Makely@fairfaxcounty.gov)

Amanda K. Kastl, Director  
Consumer Services Division  
703-324-2639  
[Amanda.Kastl@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Amanda.Kastl@fairfaxcounty.gov)

Susan C. Jones, Branch Manager  
Consumer Affairs Branch  
703-324-5877  
[Susan.Jones@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Susan.Jones@fairfaxcounty.gov)

Main Number 703-222-8435, TTY 711  
Fax Number 703-653-1310  
[consumer@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:consumer@fairfaxcounty.gov)

# Consumer Affairs Statistics



**Department of Cable and Consumer Services**  
**Consumer Affairs Branch**  
**Monthly Summary Statistics**

3/1/2024 Through 3/31/2024

	<b>Current Month</b>		<b>Fiscal YR to Date</b>	
<b>Cases Received</b>	64		572	
<b>Cases Closed</b>	70		551	
Resolved	49	70%	377	68%
Unresolved	1	1%	35	6%
Referred	2	3%	28	5%
Legal	2	3%	9	2%
Other	16	23%	102	19%
<b>Advice Inquiries Closed</b>	368		3193	
<b>Amount Reclaimed</b>	\$51,175.22		\$423,760.96	

**Top Complaint Types**

Tenant-Landlord	41%
Housing Services	18%
Automotive	9%
Utilities	6%
Retail Stores	5%
Others	21%

# Community Outreach

## **Outreach Event Calendar April 2024**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>EVENT</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>	<b># of Guests</b>	<b>Event Time</b>	<b>Staff</b>
4/16/2024	<b>Consumer Affairs 101 Virtual</b>	Vitrual Center for Active Adults 4400 Legato Road, Suite 1100 Fairfax, VA		10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.	SCJ
4/18/2024	<b>Tenant-Landlord Presentation</b>	George Mason University 4400 University Drive Fairfax, VA		2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.	SW
4/19/2024	<b>Scam Jam</b>	Fairfax County Government Center 12000 Government Center Pkwy Fairfax, VA Live on Channel 16		9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	SCJ
4/23/2024	<b>Consumer Connection Human Rights &amp; Equity Programs</b>	Fairfax County Consumer Affairs Facebook		11:00 a.m. - 11:12 a.m.	SCJ
4/25/2024	<b>Fair Housing Summitt</b>	Fairfax County Board Auditorium 12000 Government Center Pkwy Fairfax, VA Live on Channel 16		9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.	SW MDP
4/30/2024	<b>Tenant Rights and Responsibilities</b>	Tururo Anglican Church 10520 Main Street Fairfax, VA		12:15 p.m. - 1:15 p.m.	SW

## **Outreach Event Calendar May 2024**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>EVENT</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>	<b># of Guests</b>	<b>Event Time</b>	<b>Staff</b>
5/4/2024	<b>Culmore Community Day</b>	Woodrow Wilson Library 6101 Knollwood Drive Falls Church, VA		10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.	SCJ
5/10/2024	<b>Tenant-Landlord Presentation</b>	Continuum of Care 12000 Government Center Fairfax, VA		9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	MDP
5/10/2024	<b>55+ Wellness and Safety Expo</b>	Vienna Community Center 120 Cherry Street SE Vienna, VA		11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.	SCJ
5/13/2024	<b>Consumer Connection Pool Inspections</b>	Fairfax County Consumer Affairs Facebook		11:00 a.m. - 11:15 a.m.	SCJ

# Consumer Resources

## **Resource Items**

**Fairfax County Department of Cable and Consumer Services**

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/cableconsumer>

**Fairfax County Consumer Affairs**

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/cableconsumer/csd/consumer>

**Fairfax County Consumer Affairs Facebook**

<https://www.facebook.com/fairfaxcountyconsumer/>

***Consumer Connection: Fairfax County Consumer Affairs Day for National Consumer Protection Week (March 7, 2024)***

[\*Welcome and Consumer Affairs 101\*](#)

[\*Tenants and Landlords: Understanding Lease Agreements\*](#)

[\*Tenants and Landlords: Maintenance Concerns\*](#)

[\*Medical Billing\*](#)

[\*Vehicle Purchasing and Maintenance Issues\*](#)

[\*Scams and How to Protect Yourself\*](#)

## **Information Items**

**Good News If You're Installing an Electric Vehicle Charging Station ([more](#))**

**Fairfax County invests in electric vehicles to meet climate goal ([more](#))**

**AARP 2024 Scam Jam Fairfax flyer**



# Good News If You're Installing an Electric Vehicle Charging Station

March 19, 2024

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors authorized an 18-month extension for an exemption of all electrical and building permit fees for electric vehicle charging stations (EVCS). The current exemption, which was scheduled to expire on May 1, 2024, has been extended through October 31, 2025.

The exemption supports the county's climate goal for a carbon-free Fairfax — “a future for Fairfax County that is healthy, sustainable, and economically prosperous without local greenhouse gas emissions”—as well as the [Environment Community Outcome Area](#) of the [Countywide Strategic Plan](#). Eliminating the permit fees for EVCS may encourage the use of [electric vehicles](#), which is an important step toward [achieving the overarching goal of community-wide carbon neutrality by 2050](#).

A permit is still required for any new installation of EVCS, in accordance with the Uniform Statewide Building Code, and the permit holder is subject to the re-inspection fee. No permit is required if you are plugging a stand-alone charging station into an existing outlet. In addition, EVCS must comply with zoning requirements (for detailed information, see the memorandum “[Applicable Zoning Provisions for Electric Vehicle Charging Spaces](#).”)



*A vehicle is being charged at an electric vehicle charging station (EVCS). There is a EVCS permit fee exemption available through October 31, 2025.*

A new GIS application was created to let the public see the distribution of Electric Vehicle Charging Station (EVCS) permits across Fairfax County for the first 12 months of the trial period. This application overlays the location of LDS Commercial and Residential Electrical Permits for EVCS against the Fairfax County Vulnerability Index Map to show equity impacts.

For general information on permits for EVCS and to access the GIS application, please visit [Electric Vehicle Charging Stations Permits](#).

Contact Name

Customer Experience Team

Contact Information

**703-222-0801, TTY 711**

# Fairfax County invests in electric vehicles to meet climate goal

By: Andie Vigliotti

March 20, 2024/01:52 PM EDT

FAIRFAX COUNTY, Va. ([DC News Now](#)) — The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors extended a previous permit exemption for electric vehicle charging stations until Oct. 2025, as part of the county’s broader plan to reach climate goals.

An announcement on Tuesday by the Land Development Services said this exemption applies to all electrical and building permit fees for electric vehicle charging stations. It was previously set to expire on May 1.

When the Board of Supervisors first approved the fee waiver in Oct. 2022, staff were set to report back after the 18-month trial period on the “effectiveness of eliminating permit fees in incentivizing installation of EVC equipment.”

A report presented on Jan. 30 stated that 896 permits were issued for the installation of EVC equipment since the exemption was granted, the vast majority of which were residential.

Without the exemption, the average permit fee for residential installations is \$127 and for commercial installations is \$421.

Although the installation of new electric vehicle charging stations still requires a permit, “no permit is required if you are plugging a stand-alone charging station into an existing outlet,” according to the statement.

This exemption promotes the use of electrical vehicles in the county, which helps the community to meet its goals of carbon neutrality by 2050.

“One of the most important steps that can be taken to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in Fairfax County is to transition to electric vehicles,” the staff report to the Board of Supervisors said.

The county has taken several steps towards reducing emissions in the county, including expanding a community program called Charge Up Fairfax, which helps community associations access electric vehicle charging.

This shift toward green energy through embracing electric vehicles isn't just being embraced in Fairfax County.

The state attempted to provide rebates for electric vehicle purchases, similar to the Clean Vehicle Tax Credit offered by the Federal Government.

The bill passed at the beginning of 2021, but it was unable to secure funding through the appropriations process due to pushback from Republican lawmakers.



# 2024 SCAM JAM FAIRFAX

## You're Invited to Fraud-Buster Friday

Learn how to **spot scams** and protect yourself, your family, and your savings.

Hear a **first-hand account of fraud** so you're prepared when criminals try to scam you or your loved ones.

Get **tips from the FBI** to help you protect yourself and warn others.

Learn how **artificial intelligence is enabling scammers** to steal your hard-earned money.

Stay a step ahead and **bring sensitive documents** for secure paper shredding.

**FRIDAY, APRIL 19, 2024**

**Information Sessions** 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

**Shred Truck** 12:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

**Fairfax County Government Center**

12000 Government Center Pkwy, Fairfax, Virginia 22035

*Complimentary morning refreshments and lunch will be provided for all registered participants.*



### REGISTRATION REQUIRED

Please scan the QR code, call 1-877-926-8300, or visit [events.aarp.org/FFXSJ24](https://events.aarp.org/FFXSJ24)



The 7th Annual Scam Jam is hosted by AARP Virginia and the Fairfax County Silver Shield Task Force