

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.

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. The Office of Elections primarily supports the following Community Outcome Area:



Community Outcome Area	Vision Statement
Effective and Efficient Government	<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 Office of Elections (Office) is guided by policy set by the State Board of Elections, the Virginia 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 residents with a critical channel to have a voice in their government. The Office is required to conduct fair and transparent elections that accurately reflect the intent of the electorate to ensure continued confidence in the integrity of the electoral process and has two primary statutory functions: voter registration and conducting elections. Additionally, the Office coordinates ballot access for local candidates and ensures that voters and residents 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, 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, and provides public information and access to electronic lists of registered voters and absentee

applicants. In addition to the main location at the Fairfax County Government Center, the Office also manages 16 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. Voter information and procedures are developed in four languages, to comply with federal and state laws. The Office also responds to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests, suggestions, and complaints from voters, campaigns, candidates, elected officials and the press.

The workload and related expenses in the Office of Elections correspond to the offices up for election in a given year, 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.

Staff has adapted quickly and effectively to accommodate significant changes in voting patterns that resulted from the no-excuse absentee voting legislation that took effect on July 1, 2020. This legislation permits all registered voters to vote absentee, early in person, or by mail without a reason or excuse, which resulted in a significant increase in absentee voting. The Office also responded effectively to legislation that took effect on July 1, 2021, that enabled voters to receive absentee ballots by mail on an ongoing basis without submitting an application for each election. Changes in absentee voting laws will continue to be a major budget driver.

Same Day Registration (SDR) legislation took effect on October 18, 2022. This enables voters to register to vote after the voter registration books close and immediately cast provisional ballots at in-person early voting locations and at their polling place on Election Day. In November 2022, this new requirement resulted in more than 3,900 SDRs and more than double the number of provisional ballots compared with the previous year. During FY 2024, the Office began training and assigning SDR experts for every in-person absentee voting location and every polling place.

The Office also continued its efforts to improve the voter list management. As part of this effort, the Office sent mailings to every voter whose mail was returned as undeliverable, giving them an opportunity to update their mailing address and/or ask to be removed from the voter list if they moved out of Fairfax County. While this action was not legally required, it was beneficial to voters.

Effective July 1, 2023, the Virginia General Assembly changed a statutory requirement for absentee by mail voting (Va. Code § 24.2-706) that removed the need for a witness signature on the "statement of absentee voter" and replaced it with a requirement for the last four digits of the voter's Social Security number and year of birth. To implement these legislative changes, the Office developed a new absentee ballot return envelope that features a privacy flap that covers the "statement of absentee voter" while the mailer is in transit, but, importantly, allows staff to review and process the envelope as efficiently as possible.

The Office successfully conducted the November 2023 General and Special Elections which included candidates for the Senate of Virginia, House of Delegates, Clerk of Court, Commonwealth’s Attorney, Sheriff, Board of Supervisors, Fairfax County School Board, and other local offices. There were 265 different ballot styles and a total of 117 candidates for this election.

Organizational Chart



Budget and Staff Resources

Category	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Adopted	FY 2024 Revised	FY 2025 Advertised
FUNDING				
Expenditures:				
Personnel Services	\$4,945,505	\$6,119,511	\$6,119,511	\$6,712,867
Operating Expenses	3,349,487	2,758,137	4,204,205	2,785,437
Total Expenditures	\$8,294,992	\$8,877,648	\$10,323,716	\$9,498,304
Income:				
State Shared General Registrar Expenses	\$143,854	\$153,421	\$153,421	\$153,421
Election Filing Fees	40,209	1,600	7,000	1,600
Total Income	\$184,063	\$155,021	\$160,421	\$155,021
NET COST TO THE COUNTY	\$8,110,929	\$8,722,627	\$10,163,295	\$9,343,283
AUTHORIZED POSITIONS/FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE)				
Regular	32 / 32	34 / 34	34 / 34	36 / 36
Exempt	6 / 6	6 / 6	6 / 6	6 / 6

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 \$158,081

An increase of \$158,081 in Personnel Services includes \$113,216 for a 2.00 percent market rate adjustment (MRA) for all employees and \$32,883 for performance-based and longevity increases for non-uniformed merit employees, both effective July 2024. The remaining increase of \$11,982 is included to support other compensation adjustments and employee retention and recruitment efforts that will reduce pay compression and align the County’s pay structures with the market based on benchmark data.

Mandated Election Expenses **\$475,000**

An increase of \$475,000 to Operating Expenses is included to support election operations that have been modified due to state mandates. This includes additional staffing due to Same Day Registration requirements, changes to absentee by mail voting requirements, as well as increased costs in printing and mailing expenses.

Positions Supporting Election Functions **\$170,275**

An increase of \$170,275 and 2/2.0 FTE new positions, including \$160,275 in Personnel Services and \$10,000 in Operating Expenses, is included for a Business Analyst and an Administrative Assistant position to support IT needs as well as expanded voter services and processing of voting related documents. It should be noted that an increase of \$85,460 in Fringe Benefits is included in Agency 89, Employee Benefits. For more information on Fringe Benefits, refer to the Agency 89, Employee Benefits, narrative in the Nondepartmental program area section of Volume 1.

Reductions **(\$182,700)**

A decrease of \$182,700 reflects reductions utilized to balance the FY 2025 budget. The following table provides details on the specific reduction:

Title	Impact	Positions	FTE	Reduction
Realize Savings from the Leasing of Poll Pads	The Office of Elections has moved from the leasing of poll pads to the outright purchase of the election equipment, thereby realizing cost savings of \$182,700. This reduction will not impact voters and/or the election process and can be taken with no impact on agency operations.	0	0.0	\$182,700

**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 **\$1,446,068**

As part of the FY 2023 Carryover Review, the Board of Supervisors approved funding of \$1,446,068 for encumbered carryover in Operating Expenses.

Position Detail

The FY 2025 Advertised Budget Plan includes the following positions:

OFFICE OF ELECTIONS – 42 Positions			
1	General Registrar, E	1	Deputy Registrar, E
2	Management Analysts III	1	Business Analyst IV
5	Management Analysts II, 1E	1	Business Analyst II [+1]
4	Management Analysts I, 2E	2	Business Analysts I
1	Human Resources Generalist II	6	Administrative Assistants V, 1E
1	IT Technician II	10	Administrative Assistants IV [+1]
1	IT Technician I	3	Administrative Assistants III
1	Communications Specialist III, E	1	GIS Analyst II
1	Financial Specialist II		
+	Denotes New Position(s)		
E	Denotes Exempt Position(s)		

**Performance
Measurement
Results by
Community
Outcome Area**

Efficient and Effective Government

The Office of Elections has responded effectively and efficiently to legislative changes that have significantly expanded in-person and mail absentee voting, required precinct specific election results reporting, and added a permanent absentee voter list and absentee ballot drop boxes. The Office also implemented a Same Day Registration program for voters that took effect in October 2022. In addition, the Office improved and expanded its communication efforts to better educate voters, candidates, political party representatives and other interested parties on the election process.

During the November 2023 General and Special Elections, the voter turnout was 41 percent of the active registered voters in Fairfax County. A total of 323,816 voters cast ballots in this election, including absentee and provisional voters. Fairfax County had 264 precincts and 16 early voting locations that were used during this election.

Community Outcome Area	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Estimate	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Estimate	FY 2025 Estimate
Effective and Efficient Government						
Inclusive Community Engagement						
Machines/precinct	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00
Officers/precinct	15.75	8.90	8.60	8.93	9.43	14.29
Effective and Representative County and School Workforce						
Percent of registrations, transfers and address/name changes completed without error	98.0%	100.0%	98.0%	99.0%	99.0%	99.0%

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