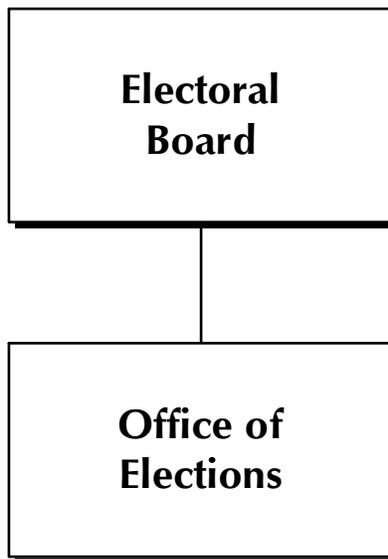


# Office of Elections



## 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 success of the democratic process requires fair and open elections which accurately reflect the will of the electorate. It is the responsibility of this agency to provide all Fairfax County residents with the means to have a voice in their government by offering:

- ◆ The opportunity to register to vote;
- ◆ The opportunity to vote in a convenient, accessible location;
- ◆ The opportunity to vote by using secure, accurate and user-friendly equipment that is equally accessible to all voters, including those with disabilities;
- ◆ A means for absentee voting for those voters unable to go to the polls on Election Day;
- ◆ Knowledgeable and helpful staff and poll workers;
- ◆ Accurate and timely reporting of election results; and
- ◆ A responsible use of available funding and resources.

The Election Administration Division of the Office of Elections manages the logistics for conducting and certifying elections by preparing election equipment, overseeing polling places and absentee voting satellites, recruiting and training election officers, preparing ballots, providing information to the public, and posting unofficial election results on the agency's Web site on election night. It also receives, audits, and provides public access to the candidates' campaign contributions and expenditure reports.

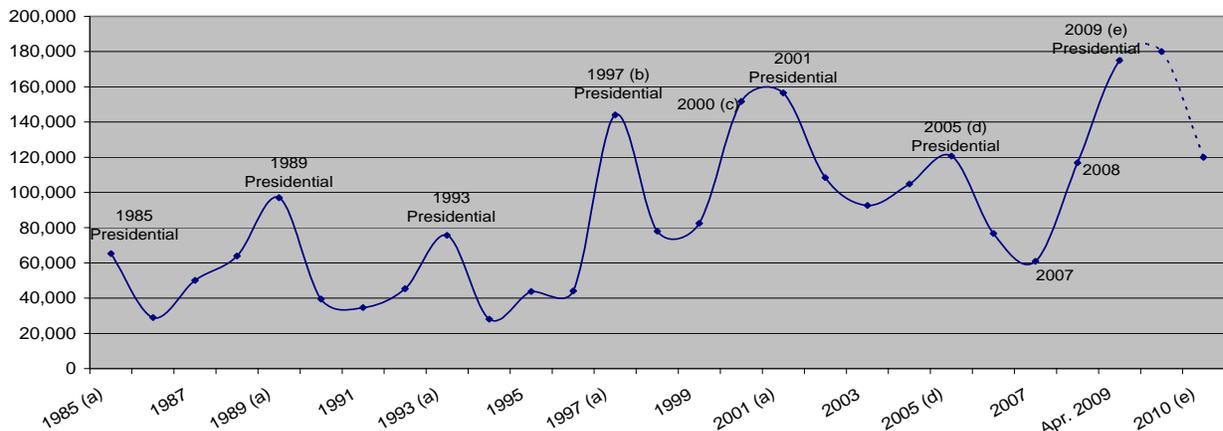
The Voter Registration Division of the Office of Elections offers a comprehensive year-round program of voter registration and, using the state wide Virginia Elections and Registration Information System (VERIS) database, determines the eligibility of voters, maintains the voter registration records and street file database, processes

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absentee ballot applications, certifies candidate nominating petitions, and provides public information and access to electronic lists of registered voters. Additionally, the division develops policies and procedures in accordance with federal and state laws.

In FY 2010, the agency will conduct: (1) a November general election to select the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General and members of the House of Delegates; (2) elections in the Towns of Clifton, Herndon and Vienna to select a mayor and members of their town council; (3) June primary elections, if called by one or more of the political parties, to select nominees for federal offices; and (4) any special election(s) which may be required. The number of voter registration applications and absentee ballot requests is a direct function of population growth and voter interest in these elections, which in turn causes cyclical fluctuations in the agency workload.

**VOTER REGISTRATION APPLICATIONS PROCESSED BY FISCAL YEAR IN FAIRFAX COUNTY**



- (a) Presidential Election occurred in this fiscal year.
- (b) National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) adopted.
- (c) Application totals increased due to four month study when all DMV forms came directly to the agency.
- (d) Application totals decreased due to DMV's new "Print On Demand" (POD) applications.
- (e) Projected numbers are shown with a dotted line.

FY 2010 presents several issues that could significantly impact the agency's budget and workload:

- (1) **Legal Requirements Related to Voting Equipment:** In 2007, legislation was passed by the Virginia General Assembly prohibiting future acquisition of direct recording electronic voting machines (DREs.) The law also prohibits any form of wireless communication to or from voting or counting devices while the polls are open on Election Day. Additionally, several federal bills are currently pending that would require voting machines to produce a contemporaneous voter verifiable paper audit trail (VVPAT). Since the County's current DRE voting system was designed to utilize wireless communication and currently does not have VVPAT capability and is not suitably adaptable to VVPAT technology, the agency has begun a long-term phase-in of a new voting system. This process was started by purchasing one optical scan voting unit per precinct in the late FY 2008 time frame. Ultimately purchase of additional optical scan voting units will be necessary before the next presidential election. The Office of Elections is researching cost-effective ways to replace equipment. The Office of Elections just took receipt of over 2,000 voting booths and 300 ballot boxes that were acquired from a jurisdiction that was phasing out its optical scan equipment. This acquisition saved the County over \$200,000 since the equipment was purchased used and costs over \$700,000 if the equipment was purchased new.

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- (2) **Removal of State Board of Elections Funding for Poll Books:** Beginning at some point after the June 2009 primary, the State Board of Elections (SBE) will no longer provide paper poll books. This creates the double challenge of funding poll books for all 231 precincts and generating in excess of 45,000 pages of names and addresses within tight time constraints. This massive amount of data must be generated within a brief window of time from the deadline after closing the voter registration books and the distribution of the poll books to the precincts. The Office of Elections is currently looking at a cost-benefit analysis to determine if the office should attempt to purchase electronic poll books or continue providing paper poll books in the field and enter voter history manually.
- (3) **Functionality of the Virginia Election and Registration System (VERIS):** VERIS was implemented on a state-wide basis on February 1, 2007. At the time of implementation, there were significant problems and deficiencies in the system, resulting in the need to apply increased resources and staff to complete routine transactions. While many of the initial deficiencies have been addressed, the use of VERIS continues to be problematic. The State Board of Elections has scheduled multiple system "builds" to address outstanding issues with VERIS functionality. There are still a number of required functions that have not been fully implemented nor tested. In order to ensure timely and accurate operations, the Office of Elections will need to commit continuing resources to adequately acquaint staff with newly-modified processes and procedures.
- (4) **VERIS availability at satellite locations:** The 2008 Presidential Election brought to the forefront two issues with absentee voting. One was the growth in popularity of absentee voting. The trend in Fairfax County, and the nation, is that a significant portion of the voting public is now voting prior to Election Day. With a new Congress and President, a federal early-voting law is certain to be presented if not passed. Satellite locations are very popular with citizens. This created the second issue. The agency's satellite locations were and are inadequate to handle the current growth in absentee voting. The agency must install secure lines and computers in each of the satellite offices to handle absentee voting. With the addition of one to three terminals with VERIS access in every location the agency will solve several of the issues created by this election. Lines will move significantly faster which, in turn, will ease parking problems at all locations. Staff in the Government Center will be better equipped to handle the phones and the voters eliminating long wait times on phones and long lines of voters.

The Fairfax County Office of Elections recently implemented a hybrid voting system. This system was created as a result of Virginia's ban on acquiring new DRE technology. Fairfax County did not have enough DRE machines to handle the turnout in a presidential election. Also, national pressure to move away from DRE technology that lacks a voter-verified paper audit trail has forced Fairfax County to reevaluate its equipment. Voters, press, candidates and public officials alike expect fair, accurate, verifiable and secure elections combined with speedy returns and efficient service. Historically, the use of technology has been a key factor in providing the best service to Fairfax County voters. A further movement towards optical scan technology as the DRE equipment is nearing the end of its lifespan is expected. This may necessitate the purchase of further equipment in the near term.

The department continues to investigate new technology and to develop and implement best practice solutions to provide efficient service to the voters. Security, accuracy, equity and privacy concerns continue to be the top priority. The agency is working closely with the State Board of Elections, the Virginia Information Technologies Agency, the County's Department of Information Technology, and vendors to ensure that these issues are being properly addressed. The growing County population and its increasing diversity also present a number of challenges and concerns. The biggest challenge, however, will be to implement the new mandates and manage change, while keeping costs down. The agency fully expects to work on state and federal legislation to minimize the financial impact on local jurisdictions.

## Challenge of FY 2010 Budget Reductions

The Fairfax County Office of Elections is undergoing several reductions in response to the County's financial situation. The most notable cut is to the number of election officers that will be utilized in FY 2010. By decreasing the number of election officers at the polling locations by 1,700, the Office of Elections will realize significant savings. It is anticipated that this will have a minimal impact on service delivery as lower voter turnout is expected in this year's election cycle compared to the 2008 Presidential election.

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The Office of Elections will also realize budgetary savings by decreasing postage, eliminating "I Voted" stickers on Election Day, not purchasing polling location maps and curtailing travel for training and national certification.

Although these cuts will have an impact on how the office conducts the primary function of voting, Fairfax County Office of Elections hopes to minimize the visibility of these cuts to its citizens and will attempt to provide the same level of service that the voters of Fairfax County have come to expect.

## Budget and Staff Resources

Agency Summary					
Category	FY 2008 Actual	FY 2009 Adopted Budget Plan	FY 2009 Revised Budget Plan	FY 2010 Advertised Budget Plan	FY 2010 Adopted Budget Plan
Authorized Positions/Staff Years					
Regular	21/ 21	21/ 21	21/ 21	21/ 21	21/ 21
Exempt	3/ 3	3/ 3	3/ 3	3/ 3	3/ 3
Expenditures:					
Personnel Services	\$2,100,826	\$2,533,460	\$2,812,508	\$2,139,938	\$2,181,938
Operating Expenses	935,768	740,422	2,347,847	478,837	478,837
Capital Equipment	0	0	11,793	0	0
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$3,036,594</b>	<b>\$3,273,882</b>	<b>\$5,172,148</b>	<b>\$2,618,775</b>	<b>\$2,660,775</b>
Income:					
Publication Sales	\$601	\$1,000	\$530	\$530	\$530
State Shared General Registrar Expenses	108,251	102,338	332,718	102,338	102,338
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$108,852</b>	<b>\$103,338</b>	<b>\$333,248</b>	<b>\$102,868</b>	<b>\$102,868</b>
<b>Net Cost to the County</b>	<b>\$2,927,742</b>	<b>\$3,170,544</b>	<b>\$4,838,900</b>	<b>\$2,515,907</b>	<b>\$2,557,907</b>

Position Summary					
1	General Registrar E	1	IT Technician II	1	Administrative Assistant V
2	Management Analysts II, 1 E	1	Administrative Associate	3	Administrative Assistants IV, 1 E
1	Management Analyst	1	Business Analyst I	2	Administrative Assistants III
		4	Election Specialists	7	Administrative Assistants II
<b>TOTAL POSITIONS</b>					
<b>24 Positions / 24.0 Staff Years</b>			<b>E Denotes Exempt Positions</b>		

## FY 2010 Funding Adjustments

The following funding adjustments from the *FY 2009 Adopted Budget Plan* are necessary to support the FY 2010 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 April 27, 2009.

- ◆ **Employee Compensation** **\$24,186**  
A net increase of \$24,186 reflects the full-year impact of salary increases awarded during FY 2009. It should be noted that no funding is included for pay for performance or merit awards in FY 2010.
  
- ◆ **One-time Election Expenses** **(\$324,293)**  
A decrease of \$324,293 including \$195,708 in Personnel Services and \$128,585 in Operating Expenses for one-time costs associated with the 2008 Presidential election.

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◆ **Reductions** **(\$313,000)**

A decrease of \$313,000 reflects agency reductions utilized to balance the FY 2010 budget. The following chart provides details on the specific reductions approved, including funding and associated positions.

LOB Reduction	Impact	Posn	SYE	Reduction
Eliminate "I Voted Today" Stickers	This reduction will have no impact on the conduct of elections. All voters who vote in an election will be affected.	0	0.0	\$6,000
Eliminate Precinct Maps for Polls	The impact of this reduction is the decreased ability for voters to locate their correct precinct on Election Day. Elected officials, County agencies, political parties, candidates and other users will be unable to purchase precinct maps at the Office of Maps and Publications. The County agencies, officials, voters and candidates who use the maps will be affected.	0	0.0	\$4,000
Eliminate High School Elections	The impact is a reduction in high school civic education and exposure of future voters to current County voting systems. The 18 County high schools who participate in the program will also have to find other resources to conduct their student government elections.	0	0.0	\$10,000
Reduce Polling Place Staffing	The impact is the potential for increased lines at polling locations, reduced alphabetical splits of poll books and a decline in customer service. All potential voters could be affected.	0	0.0	\$170,000
Postage Reduction	There should be no significant impact for this reduction, unless there is an unexpected increase in voter registration activities or an unexpected demand for mailed absentee ballots. Since voter registration and absentee mailings are mandated, no voters will be affected.	0	0.0	\$100,000
Curtailing Certification Training	This reduction will impact the staff's ability to monitor and influence state and federal legislation and diminish the agency's ability to maintain a workforce recognized as leaders in the profession. There is also a decreased ability to follow emerging trends, learn best practices and network with national and international leaders in the election industry.	0	0.0	\$23,000

## **Changes to FY 2009 Adopted Budget Plan**

*The following funding adjustments reflect all approved changes in the FY 2009 Revised Budget Plan since passage of the FY 2009 Adopted Budget Plan. Included are all adjustments made as part of the FY 2008 Carryover Review, FY 2009 Third Quarter Review, and all other approved changes through April 20, 2009.*

◆ **Carryover Adjustments** **\$1,619,218**

As part of the *FY 2008 Carryover Review*, the Board of Supervisors approved encumbered funding of \$1,219,218 in Operating Expenses. Additional funding of \$400,000 was approved to purchase ballots and associated supplies for the November 2008 Presidential election.

◆ **Third Quarter Adjustments** **\$279,048**

Funding of \$279,048 is included in Personnel Services for costs associated with the special elections in Fairfax County during the last half of FY 2009.

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## Key Performance Measures

### Objectives

- ◆ To provide the legally mandated one voting machine for each 750 registered voters in each precinct with a minimum of three voting machines per precinct and a countywide average of 4.46 voting machines per precinct.
- ◆ To provide, at a minimum, three election officers at each polling place, with a countywide average of 7.79 election officers at each polling place based on the number of registered voters in the precinct and anticipated voter turnout.
- ◆ To maintain no less than 98 percent, the number of error-free data entry transactions initially completed for all voter registration documents processed, including all registrations, transfers and address/name changes.

Indicator	Prior Year Actuals			Current Estimate	Future Estimate
	FY 2006 Actual	FY 2007 Actual	FY 2008 Estimate/Actual	FY 2009	FY 2010
<b>Output:</b>					
Registered voters	611,183	626,983	645,700 / 626,411	677,346	670,300
Poll voters	258,165	318,410	258,280 / 190,912	418,000	280,000
Absentee voters	19,306	30,255	18,000 / 10,875	90,000	36,000
Precincts	224	225	227 / 225	228	231
Voting machines	1,168	1,131	1,190 / 1,157	1,170	1,031
Absentee satellites	7	7	7 / 7	8	7
Election officers	1,783	1,963	2,000 / 1,851	2,700	1,800
Registrations, transfers and address/name changes processed	100,881	81,121	104,250 / 131,331	151,100	185,850
<b>Efficiency:</b>					
Cost of machines/precinct (1)	\$1,413	\$1,022	\$1,311 / \$1,254	\$1,371	\$1,366
Cost of officers/precinct	\$871	\$1,022	\$1,031 / \$973	\$1,334	\$929
Cost per poll voter	\$1.98	\$1.61	\$2.24 / \$2.62	\$1.48	\$1.89
Cost per registration, transfer or address/name change processed (2)	\$4.58	\$5.47	\$5.41 / \$5.27	\$5.54	\$5.82
<b>Service Quality:</b>					
Percent of polling places that are handicapped accessible	99.5%	100.0%	100.0% / 100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Percent of polling places that are in compliance (machines)	100.0%	100.0%	100.0% / 100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Percent of polling places that are in compliance (size)	100.0%	100.0%	100.0% / 100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Percent voter turnout	45.4%	55.6%	42.8% / 33.3%	75.0%	50.0%
Error rate	1.7%	2.0%	2.0% / 2.0%	3.0%	2.0%

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Indicator	Prior Year Actuals			Current Estimate	Future Estimate
	FY 2006 Actual	FY 2007 Actual	FY 2008 Estimate/Actual	FY 2009	FY 2010
<b>Outcome:</b>					
Registered voters/precinct	2,728	2,787	2,844 / 2,784	2,971	2,902
Machines/precinct	5.21	5.03	5.24 / 5.02	4.91	4.46
Officers/precinct	7.96	8.72	8.81 / 8.23	11.84	7.79
Percent of registrations, transfers and address/name changes completed without error	98.3%	98.0%	98.0% / 98.0%	97.0%	98.0%

Note: For comparison purposes, calculations are based on statistics for the November general elections.

(1) In FY 2009, the agency acquired optical scan voting machines to supplement the existing touch screen machines used in voting precincts. Since the Virginia Election law no longer permits the purchase of additional touch screen machines, this acquisition was necessary to provide sufficient equipment for the 2008 Presidential Election. The FY 2009 and FY 2010 measures reflect the change in voting equipment and cannot be compared directly with the previous election years.

(2) In FY 2007 the new state information system, Virginia Election and Registration Information System (VERIS), was implemented, which mandated interfaces that measurably increased processing times. VERIS also accounts for data in a different method than the earlier system; thus the total transactions count and error rates do not translate exactly from system to system. Transaction counts are now more accurate. FY 2009 and FY 2010 estimated costs per transaction (registration, transfer or address/name change processed) are projected to be at these higher processing rates. While exact error rates are currently not measurable, the estimated rate of 97 percent for FY 2009 and 98 percent for FY 2010 are reliable projections. The lower error-free entry for FY 2009 is due to utilizing more inexperienced part-time staff in this presidential election year. New methodologies are being developed which will allow the agency to once again accurately measure the error rate involving these transactions.

## Performance Measurement Results

For the November 2008 general election: 1) 99 percent of all polling places were open on time and 100 percent of the precincts were open within 5 minutes of 6:00 a.m.; 2) 100 percent of precincts were staffed well above the legal mandate of three election officers per precinct, with the average precinct staffed with over eight officers; 3) all 228 precincts were equipped with an average of five voting machines per precinct or about one machine per 535 active registered voters, which is approximately 25 percent above the statutory requirement of one machine for every 750 voters; and 4) of the 1,170 voting machines used in the election, less than 1 percent were out of service at any given time during the day. All polling places and absentee voting locations complied with federal and state accessibility standards for the November 2008 general election.