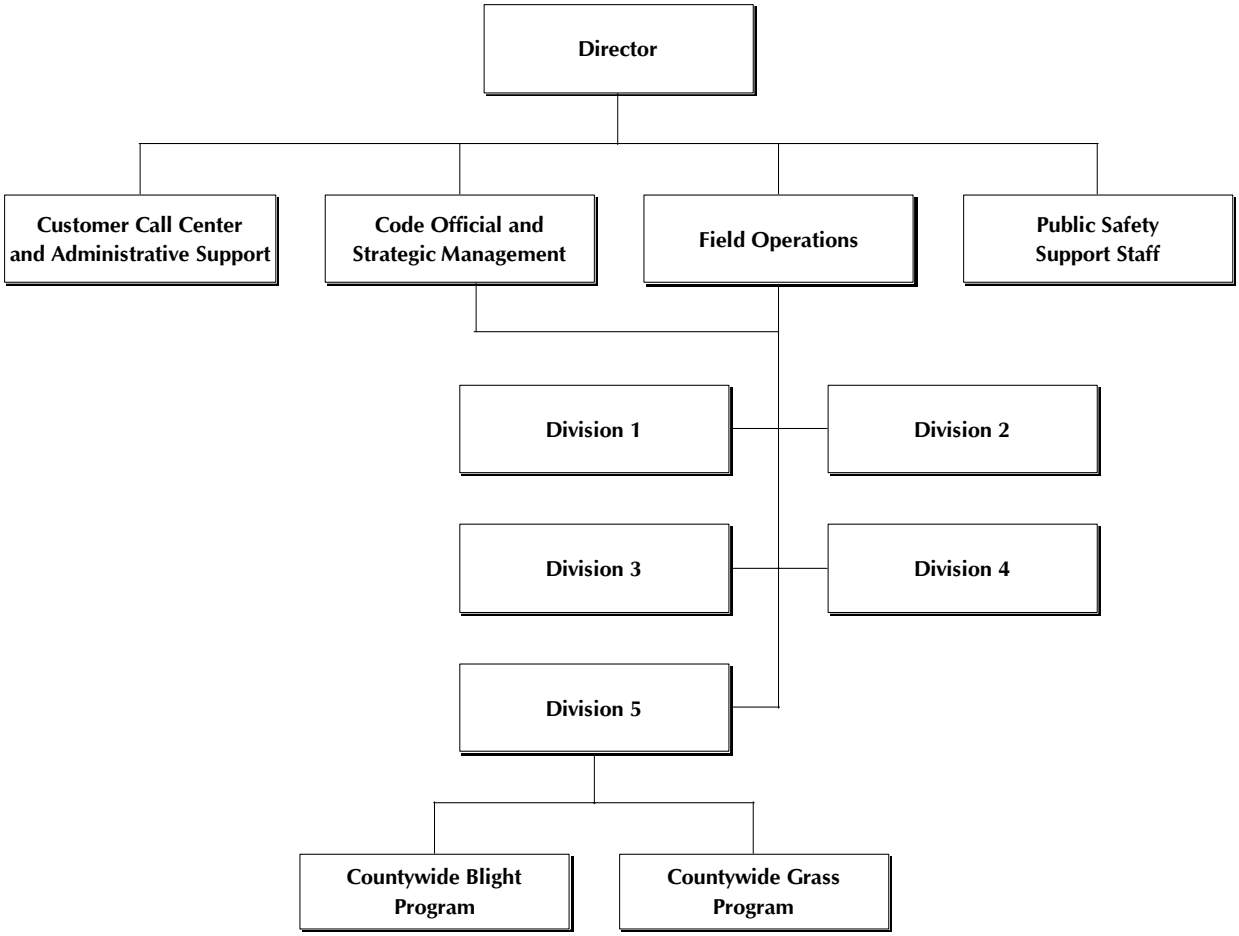
Department of Code Compliance



Mission

To respond as a unified and multi-code compliance program, to effectively and efficiently address quality of life challenges facing Fairfax County neighborhoods and communities.

Focus

As part of the FY 2011 Adopted Budget Plan, the Board approved the creation of the Department of Code Compliance (DCC), combining the functions of the Code Enforcement Strike Team, the majority of the Zoning Enforcement function in the Department of Planning and Zoning (DPZ), and a small portion of the Environmental Health Division of the Health Department. It should be noted that Public Safety/Fire Marshal staff will continue to be deployed from their home agencies in support of the new department. The vision of the consolidation was to create an adaptable, accountable, multi-code enforcement organization within a unified leadership/management structure that responds effectively and efficiently toward building and sustaining neighborhoods and communities.

Effective July 1, 2010, administration of compliance programs pertaining to Zoning, Building, Property Maintenance, Health, and Fire Codes, as well as the Blight and Grass Ordinances are now centralized in DCC, a collaborative multi-functional environment that investigates and resolves violations and concerns in the residential and commercial communities. One of the main drivers of creating a single code compliance agency was to allow the County to take coordinated action on new or emerging code enforcement problems instead of having multiple agencies enforce the various codes, making it difficult to coordinate a countywide response. DCC is able to enforce multiple codes, including Zoning, Property Maintenance, Building, Fire and Health and more effectively resolve complaints.

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County residents have clearly stated that they want a simple and quick way to make complaints, one that is straightforward, transparent, and easy to navigate. Once a complaint is submitted, they want to make sure the problem is resolved. To this end, one highlight of the new organization is that DCC will be centrally responsible for customer service intake and administrative support. By consolidating the intake processes from multiple agencies, DCC is in a position to better support its customers by creating more of an integrated one-call center. This should enhance customer satisfaction and support by reducing calls that, formerly, needed to be transferred to another agency or agencies.

The Customer Call Center and Documentation Unit serves a very important role in this new organization as the first point of contact for customer questions and concerns, whether in person, online or over the phone. It is paramount to be able to interface with customers in order for DCC staff to fully understand the nature of the complaint, including when it occurs, any prior history, people or companies involved, etc. One area that DCC will be focusing on is refining the intake process to encompass a multi-code perspective. For example, the customer might be calling in a complaint about noise or construction activities, but by talking to the customer, it may be possible to identify other issues that could involve a variety of multiple code issues and skills. This would better enable DCC to deploy the right investigative staff necessary to address the issues from the start. The Call Center will respond to nearly 10,000 calls per year creating services requests within DCC, referring matters to other agencies if necessary, and providing a valuable resource to residents to interface with DCC staff over the phone. The Call Center also monitors multiple on-line and written complaint and question submissions and assigns them according to locations, nature of the complaint, and life-safety concerns.

Field Operations respond to service requests by first identifying apparent life-safety matters which would require immediate response for occupant or neighborhood safety. Casework often involves researching prior history at the address of concern, investigation in the field of the complaint, contact with the owner or occupant of the property and discussion of observed violations, interviewing witnesses, issuance of legal Notices of Violation as appropriate, monitoring of compliance efforts, forwarding for legal action if required, testifying in court, along with customer and resident interface during this process. Investigators also routinely meet with community groups to discuss the services provided and methods to submit complaints and monitor progress on-line, as well as to hear concerns of those residents about cases or issues in their community or trends that they are observing. These discussions greatly benefit DCC by enabling the field division to gauge issues and progress in the community, while also giving DCC overall trend information to best determine methods to abate or resolve concerns.

Field Operations has been constructed in five geographically-based teams of inspectors assembled in a manner that fosters assistance and coordination with the local Police district stations and enhances connections to Board member offices. Under this structure, multi-disciplined teams of inspectors are concentrated in areas that have demonstrated a higher number of complaints while simultaneously reducing the number of direct reports to the team supervisor, allowing for greater efficiencies and effectiveness in case management, staff discussions, and quality control. In order to meet operational needs and expectations of the community and the Board of Supervisors, as well as strategic needs as the community changes, it was critical to design a community-integrated organization that allows for current needs to be met with the flexibility to adapt to future changes in the community.

The Call Center and Field Operations work closely together throughout the complaint evolution, from intake, investigation, compliance and prosecution if necessary, to case resolution and closure. Field Operations staff provides a customer *Inspector of the Day* role to help Customer Call Center staff answer challenging questions and issues that customers might have. Call Center staff support the investigators in their case preparation, documentation, sending legal notices, administration of Virginia Freedom of Information Act requests, and many other aspects of work.

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Budget and Staff Resources

Agency Summary				
Category	FY 2010 Actual	FY 2011 Adopted Budget Plan	FY 2011 Revised Budget Plan	FY 2012 Advertised Budget Plan
Authorized Positions/Staff Years				
Regular	0/ 0	0/ 0	44/ 44	44/ 44
Expenditures:				
Personnel Services	$0	$0	$2,995,837	$2,995,837
Operating Expenses	0	0	904,415	514,746
Capital Equipment	0	0	0	0
Total Expenditures	**$0**	**$0**	**$3,900,252**	**$3,510,583**

FY 2012 Funding Adjustments

The following funding adjustments from the FY 2011 Adopted Budget Plan are necessary to support the FY 2012 program:

- **Employee Compensation** **$0**
  It should be noted that no funding is included for pay for performance, merit increments, or market rate adjustments in FY 2011.

- **Carryover Adjustments** **$3,510,583**
  A net increase of $3,510,583 due to recurring adjustments made as part of the *FY 2010 Carryover Review* to create the Department of Code Compliance. Of this total, $1,812,474, 18/18.0 SYE positions, and associated limited term support were transferred from Land Development Services, an amount of $1,575,871 and 24/24.0 SYE positions were transferred from the Department of Planning and Zoning, and an amount of $122,238, and 2/2.0 SYE positions were transferred from the Health Department. Commensurate reductions are reflected in each of the agency budgets noted above.

- **Reductions** **$0**
  It should be noted that no reductions to balance the FY 2012 budget are included in this agency based on the limited ability to generate additional savings.

Changes to FY 2011 Adopted Budget Plan

The following funding adjustments reflect all approved changes in the FY 2011 Revised Budget Plan since passage of the FY 2011 Adopted Budget Plan. Included are all adjustments made as part of the FY 2010 Carryover Review, and all other approved changes through December 31, 2010:

- **Carryover Adjustments** **$3,900,252**
  As part of the *FY 2010 Carryover Review*, the Board of Supervisors approved a net increase of $3,900,252 to create the Department of Code Compliance. Of this total, an amount of $2,052,143, 18/18.0 SYE merit positions, and associated limited term support was transferred from Land Development Services, to the Department of Code Compliance (DCC). This primarily reflects the positions and operating funding that previously supported the Code Enforcement Strike Team since its creation as part of the *FY 2008 Carryover Review*. Of this total, $1,812,474 reflects recurring ongoing funding for salaries and operating expenses, while the remaining $239,669 reflects one-time encumbered carryover from FY 2010.

  In addition, $1,725,871 and 24/24.0 SYE merit positions were transferred from the Department of Planning and Zoning to DCC, reflecting the majority of the Zoning Enforcement function. Of this total, $1,575,871 reflects recurring funding for salaries and ongoing operating expenses, while the remaining $150,000 reflects one-time encumbered carryover.

Finally, $122,238, and 2/2.0 SYE merit positions were transferred from the Environmental Health Division of the Health Department to DCC. Commensurate reductions are reflected in each of the agency budgets noted above.

Cost Centers

DCC is organized with two cost centers in order to best service its customers and the residents of Fairfax County. The Central Services Cost Center includes the Customer Call and Documentation Unit which provides a first point of contact and enables staff to discuss concerns and complaints with residents of the County in order to provide the most effective service possible. The Field Operations Cost Center responds to service requests and also meets with community groups to discuss the services provided and methods to submit complaints and monitor progress, as well as to hear concerns of those residents about cases or issues in their community or trends that they are observing. Both DCC Cost Centers work closely together throughout the complaint evolution, from intake, investigation, compliance and prosecution if necessary, to case resolution and closure.

Central Services

Funding Summary				
Category	FY 2010 Actual	FY 2011 Adopted Budget Plan	FY 2011 Revised Budget Plan	FY 2012 Advertised Budget Plan
Authorized Positions/Staff Years				
Regular	0/ 0	0/ 0	8/ 8	8/ 8
Total Expenditures	**$0**	**$0**	**$1,569,793**	**$1,180,124**

Position Summary			
1	Director, Code Compliance	1	Management Analyst I
1	Code Auth/Strategic Initiative Mgr.	2	Administrative Assistants III
1	Code Compliance Operations Mgr.	2	Administrative Assistants II
TOTAL POSITIONS			
8 Positions / 8.0 Staff Years			

Key Performance Measures

Goal

To provide an effective intake process to receive the community's complaints and concerns for appropriate and efficient resolution.

Objectives

- To process service requests within 2 business days.

Indicator	Prior Year Actuals			Current Estimate	Future Estimate
	FY 2008 Actual	FY 2009 Actual	FY 2010 Estimate/Actual	FY 2011	FY 2012
Output:					
Calls received	NA	NA	NA / NA	6,000	6,000
Web complaints	NA	NA	NA / NA	1,647	1,647
Service requests processed	NA	NA	NA / NA	7,866	7,866
Efficiency:					
Calls received per staff	NA	NA	NA / NA	1,200	1,200
Service requests processed per staff	NA	NA	NA / NA	1,573	1,573

Indicator	Prior Year Actuals FY 2008 Actual	FY 2009 Actual	FY 2010 Estimate/Actual	Current Estimate FY 2011	Future Estimate FY 2012
Service Quality:					
Average time to process a service request (business days)	NA	NA	NA / NA	2.0	2.0
Outcome:					
Percent of service requests processed within two business days	NA	NA	NA / NA	100.0%	100.0%

Performance Measurement Results

Performance Measures for DCC have been identified to enable accountability of the department's two cost centers: Central Services and Field Operations. The measures chosen are based on the results of extensive community and stakeholder discussions pertaining to those areas of performance significance to them. The measures will serve as management tools for staff of DCC and Senior Leadership to monitor workload volume, staffing effectiveness and efficiencies, and overall performance outcomes.

Since the new DCC consolidated multiple functions from former home agencies, prior year actuals from former agency programs have not been represented due to variations in those measures and challenges in summing multiple divergent components. Estimates for FY 2011 are based on workload measurements available from the first quarter performance of the new DCC during that fiscal year. The future estimate for FY 2012 extends the projection from performance information from FY 2011. Based on this limited data set, performance estimates will be revised and updated in future years.

The Central Services cost center primarily focuses on customer contact, service request intake and overall support to field operations. In order to improve and enhance overall customer service and satisfaction, the call center was established by consolidating several intake processes from former agencies. The unified approach reduces the number of calls that customers need to make to report concerns or obtain information. Thus, the goal of processing all service requests within two business days was established to ensure an effective intake process and expedient service request processing and case file setup for referral to field operations. Service requests can be obtained from customer calls, website intake, emails, referrals from staff and other agencies, letters and correspondence and a variety of other means. Of these intake mechanisms, customer calls via telephone and the County's website intake comprise 92 percent of all service request intakes, and therefore those two processes were selected to help monitor overall call and customer concern trends. The number of service requests resulting from the intake processes reflects the overall number of cases being referred to field operations. Efficiency, Service Quality and Outcome measures help gauge workload distribution by staffing and timeliness.

Field Operations

Funding Summary				
Category	FY 2010 Actual	FY 2011 Adopted Budget Plan	FY 2011 Revised Budget Plan	FY 2012 Advertised Budget Plan
Authorized Positions/Staff Years				
Regular	0/ 0	0/ 0	36/ 36	36/ 36
Total Expenditures	**$0**	**$0**	**$2,330,459**	**$2,330,459**

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Position Summary			
5	Code Compliance Supervisors	2	Code Specialists II
1	Housing Community Developer III	3	Master Combination Inspectors
1	Urban Forester II	4	Combination Inspectors
1	Environmental Health Specialist II	19	Property Maint./Zoning Inspectors
TOTAL POSITIONS			
36 Positions / 36.0 Staff Years			

Key Performance Measures

Goal

To provide efficient and effective investigation and resolution of all service requests.

Objectives

- To conduct the first inspection within 20 business days.
- To resolve non-litigated service requests within 120 days.

Indicator	Prior Year Actuals			Current Estimate	Future Estimate
	FY 2008 Actual	FY 2009 Actual	FY 2010 Estimate/Actual	FY 2011	FY 2012
Output:					
New service requests processed	NA	NA	NA / NA	7,713	7,713
First inspections concluded	NA	NA	NA / NA	5,538	5,538
Non-litigated service requests	NA	NA	NA / NA	7,300	7,300
Efficiency:					
Service requests per inspector	NA	NA	NA / NA	220	220
Average number of non-litigated service requests per inspector	NA	NA	NA / NA	208	208
Service Quality:					
Average time to complete first inspection (business days)	NA	NA	NA / NA	5.7	5.7
Average time to achieve resolution of non-litigated service requests (days)	NA	NA	NA / NA	90	90
Outcome:					
Percent of first inspections conducted within 20 business days	NA	NA	NA / NA	92.0%	92.0%
Percent of non-litigated service requests resolved within 120 days	NA	NA	NA / NA	100.0%	100.0%

Performance Measurement Results

Performance Measures for DCC have been identified to enable accountability of the department's two cost centers: Central Services and Field Operations. The measures chosen are based on the results of extensive community and stakeholder discussions pertaining to those areas of performance significance to them. The measures will serve as management tools for staff of DCC and Senior Leadership to monitor workload volume, staffing effectiveness and efficiencies, and overall performance outcomes.

Since the new DCC consolidated multiple functions from former home agencies, prior year actuals from former agency programs have not been represented due to variations in those measures and challenges in summing multiple divergent components. Estimates for FY 2011 are based on workload measurements available from the first quarter performance of the new DCC during that fiscal year. The future estimate for FY 2012 extends the projection from performance information from FY 2011. Based on this limited data set, performance estimates will be revised and updated in future years.

The Field Operations cost center focuses on effective review, assignment and resolution of service requests within the five field divisions based on the cases' geographic location in the County. Case life-cycle often consists of assignment, research, investigation, documentation, issuance of formal notices of violation, follow-up to ensure compliance, and referral to court processes and testimony as required, concluding with compliance tracking. Case life-cycle times can vary widely by technical discipline, ability of DCC staff to contact the owner (some owners do not live within the County or the State of Virginia), and willingness of the owner or tenant to comply.

Case durations can vary from short-duration grass enforcement cases wherein an owner readily responds to cut their grass within a few days, to long-term, multi-month cases involving correction of illegally and extensively subdivided structures or illegal uses of houses or properties, to blight abatement cases requiring Board of Supervisors' Public Hearings to abate blighted conditions. To address these many aspects of field operations, an overall goal to provide efficient and effective investigation and resolution was identified. Two objectives were selected as being critical to achieving this goal: conducting a first inspection within 20 business days and, resolving non-litigated service request within 120 days. Timely first inspections are critical in order to allow staff investigators to observe and identify the issues, concerns or behaviors that residents have reported.

Inspector service request (case) volume is an indicator of overall workload volume, which also can affect the average time to complete first inspections on those cases. Resolution of non-litigated service requests focuses on gaining compliance within need for court processes. Timeliness of resolution and completion of those non-litigated cases depends on the owner or tenant availability and willingness to comply, as well as the investigator's diligence in pursuing resolution. When resolution cannot be achieved and cases must be referred for court processes, the overall timing required to achieve compliance falls within the court's timeframe and their ability to obtain compliance from the owner. While resolution of both litigated and non-litigated cases are important to the residents and community, and both are pursued diligently and monitored by DCC, the non-litigated cases are being reported for organizational performance measurements due to DCC's greater control of the resolution processes.