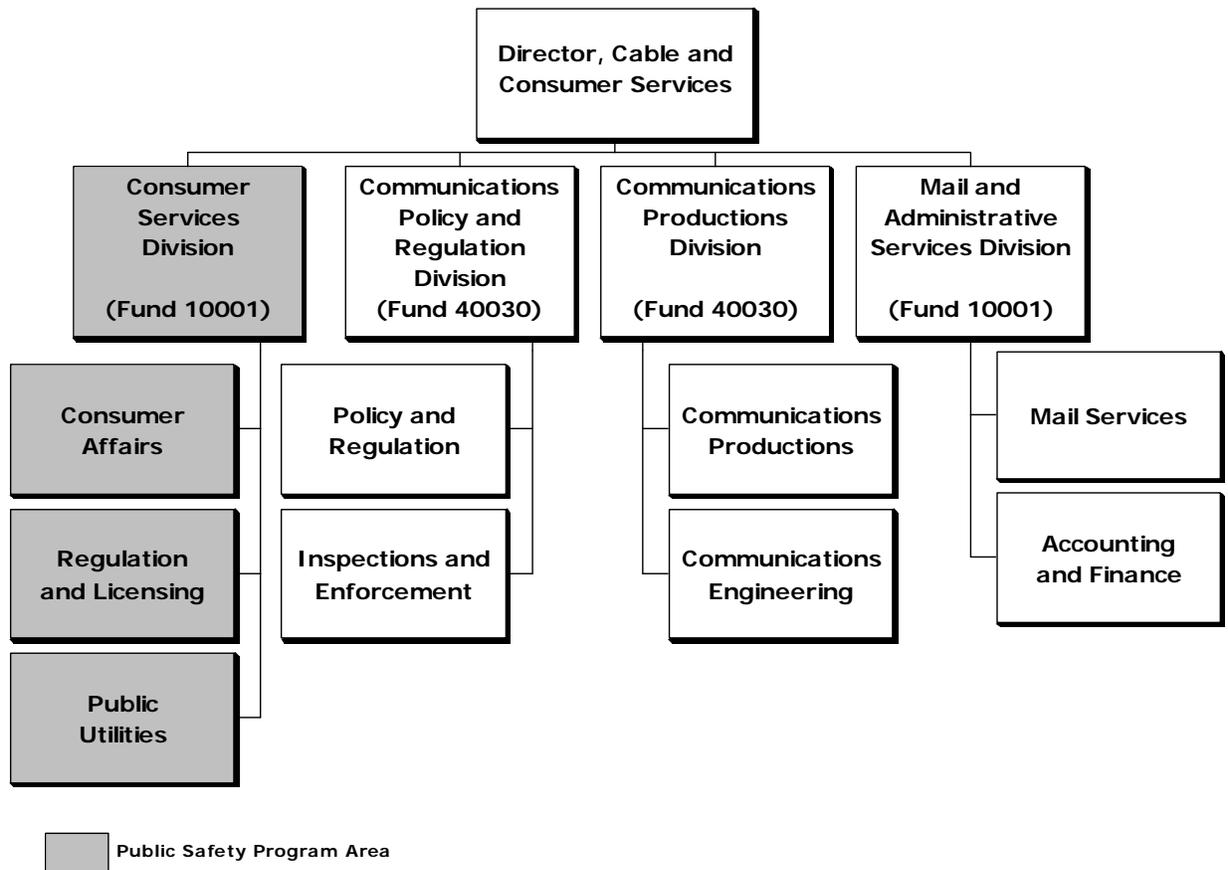


Department of Cable and Consumer Services



Mission

To mediate consumer and tenant-landlord issues, provide consumer educational information, regulate taxi and towing industries, issue licenses for certain business activities, and provide utility rate case intervention on behalf of the public. To protect and maintain the fiscal integrity and financial solvency of the department. To provide mail and inter-office distribution services to County agencies.

AGENCY DASHBOARD			
Key Data	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014
1. Number of Case Inquiries	7,494	7,314	7,678
2. Number of Consumer Educational Seminars Conducted	166	172	224
3. Number of Outgoing U.S. Mail Pieces	5,517,889	5,931,594	5,417,831
4. Number of Licenses Issued	2,217	1,954	2,243

Department of Cable and Consumer Services

Focus

The Public Safety component of the Department of Cable and Consumer Services includes Consumer Affairs, Regulation and Licensing, and Public Utilities.

Consumer Affairs mediates and investigates consumer complaints, tenant-landlord disputes, and cable television issues. Staff works with businesses and consumers to resolve complaints to the satisfaction of both parties. In addition to mediation, staff develops conciliation agreements to resolve complex disputes, offers binding arbitration when mediation efforts are exhausted, and provides an advice line for consumers to speak directly to staff about consumer issues.

Consumer Affairs provides education to the community by conducting presentations and distributing educational information on a variety of consumer topics. Educational meetings are *conducted* with the public to provide information about current consumer trends and ways to avoid consumer scams, frauds, and other problems. Consumer Affairs

publishes the quarterly *Informed Consumer* e-Newsletter and posts weekly tips on Facebook; provides staff support to the Consumer Protection Commission and the Tenant-Landlord Commission; educates and supports over 2,000 homeowners' associations, condominium unit owners' associations, and civic associations; publishes a detailed Community Association Supplement Guide with information on current laws and community services; and hosts the *Your Community Your Call* television program shown on Fairfax County Government Channel 16.

Regulation and Licensing is responsible for issuing certificates, licenses, permits, or registrations to taxicab operators, taxicab drivers, canvassers, peddlers, solicitors, vendors, promoters, massage establishments and technicians, pawn brokers, precious metal and gem dealers, going out-of-business sales, solicitors representing charitable organizations, and trespass tow operators. Regulation and Licensing also conducts taxicab inspections to ensure vehicle safety and accuracy of taximeters. In coordination with Public Utilities, Regulation and Licensing biennially reviews new taxicab certificate applications and recommends to the Board of Supervisors the appropriate number of taxicabs required to service transportation needs in the County. Regulation and Licensing also investigates taxicab and trespass towing complaints, and with Public Utilities, develops rate recommendations for taxicab and trespass towing within the County. In addition, Regulation and Licensing provides staff support to the Trespass Towing Advisory Board which makes recommendations to the Board of Supervisors on towing industry regulations and rates.

The Department of Cable and Consumer Services supports the following County Vision Elements:



Maintaining Safe and Caring Communities



Connecting People and Places



Practicing Environmental Stewardship



Exercising Corporate Stewardship

Department of Cable and Consumer Services

Public Utilities protects and advances the interests of both County residents and County government in matters involving public utility, taxicab, and trespass towing related issues. Public Utilities monitors and intervenes in regulatory proceedings before the State Corporation Commission involving utilities serving Fairfax County and also works directly with these utilities to encourage the development of policies and practices that benefit and safeguard consumer interests. In addition, Public Utilities meets with utilities, taxicab companies, and drivers to resolve service issues; provides staff support for the County's Energy Efficiency and Conservation Coordinating Committee; and serves in a leadership capacity in the Virginia Energy Purchasing Governmental Association (VEPGA). Public Utilities conducts negotiations for electric service with both Dominion Virginia Power and Northern Virginia Electric Cooperative, which has resulted in favorable contract terms at the lowest cost for all County government agencies. Public Utilities develops and presents expert testimony before federal, state, and local governmental bodies on behalf of the Board of Supervisors and the public. Public Utilities saved Fairfax County residents a cumulative total of over \$116 million through FY 2014 on the basis of recurring utility cost savings achieved over the past 19 years.

Budget and Staff Resources

Category	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Adopted	FY 2015 Revised	FY 2016 Advertised	FY 2016 Adopted
FUNDING					
Expenditures:					
<u>Legislative-Executive</u>					
Personnel Services	\$667,470	\$733,059	\$733,059	\$715,285	\$717,191
Operating Expenses	2,549,819	3,350,191	3,350,191	3,350,191	3,350,191
Recovered Costs	(2,342,168)	(3,110,987)	(3,110,987)	(3,110,987)	(3,110,987)
Subtotal	\$875,121	\$972,263	\$972,263	\$954,489	\$956,395
<u>Public Safety</u>					
Personnel Services	\$641,372	\$547,249	\$547,249	\$567,876	\$569,299
Operating Expenses	102,754	129,178	129,178	128,878	128,878
Subtotal	\$744,126	\$676,427	\$676,427	\$696,754	\$698,177
Total General Fund Expenditures	\$1,619,247	\$1,648,690	\$1,648,690	\$1,651,243	\$1,654,572
Income:					
<u>Public Safety</u>					
Massage Therapy Permits	\$41,905	\$40,940	\$43,390	\$43,390	\$43,390
Precious Metal Dealers Licenses	11,675	11,850	11,850	11,850	11,850
Solicitors Licenses	12,340	11,520	12,740	12,740	12,740
Taxicab Licenses	175,880	149,390	149,390	149,390	149,390
Going Out of Business Fees	65	65	65	65	65
Towing Permits	1,500	0	1,500	1,500	1,500
Total Income	\$243,365	\$213,765	\$218,935	\$218,935	\$218,935
NET COST TO THE COUNTY	\$1,375,882	\$1,434,925	\$1,429,755	\$1,432,308	\$1,435,637
AUTHORIZED POSITIONS/FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE)					
Legislative-Executive Regular	15 / 15	15 / 15	15 / 15	14 / 14	14 / 14
Public Safety Regular	10 / 10	10 / 10	10 / 10	10 / 10	10 / 10

Department of Cable and Consumer Services

FY 2016 Funding Adjustments

The following funding adjustments from the FY 2015 Adopted Budget Plan are necessary to support the FY 2016 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 28, 2015.

◆ **Employee Compensation** **\$22,050**

An increase of \$22,050 in Personnel Services includes \$6,019 for a 1.10 percent market rate adjustment (MRA) for all employees and \$16,031 for performance-based and longevity increases for non-uniformed merit employees, both effective July 2015.

◆ **Reductions** **(\$300)**

A decrease of \$300 reflects the following reduction utilized to balance the FY 2016 budget:

Title	Impact	Posn	FTE	Reduction
Reduce Printing and Copying Supplies	This reduction is associated with a countywide policy decision being implemented to reduce the volume of printing and copying documents over a multi-year period. This was a common and recurring theme brought forward by employees as part of the Mission Savings process in Fall 2014. Agencies are being directed to review internal printing policies and reduce the use of individual desktop printers by utilizing the Multi-Functional Devices (MFDs) available throughout County buildings. In addition, agencies are being directed to reduce paper and toner consumption by only printing documents when necessary and by printing materials double-sided whenever possible.	0	0.0	\$300

Changes to FY 2015 Adopted Budget Plan

The following funding adjustments reflect all approved changes in the FY 2015 Revised Budget Plan since passage of the FY 2015 Adopted Budget Plan. Included are all adjustments made as part of the FY 2014 Carryover Review, FY 2015 Third Quarter Review, and all other approved changes through April 30, 2015.

- ◆ There have been no adjustments to this department since approval of the FY 2015 Adopted Budget Plan.

Cost Centers

The three cost centers of the Department of Cable and Consumer Services are Consumer Affairs, Regulation and Licensing, and Public Utilities. Each of these areas supports the core mission and carries out key initiatives of the department. For presentation purposes, they are consolidated under the heading *Consumer Services*, and summarized below.

Department of Cable and Consumer Services

Consumer Services

The Consumer Affairs Branch mediates and investigates consumer complaints, provides an advice line for consumer inquiries, and conducts educational outreach to the community. The Regulation and Licensing Branch issues certificates, licenses, permits, or registrations to taxicab operators, taxicab drivers, canvassers, peddlers, solicitors, vendors, promoters, massage establishments and technicians, pawn brokers, precious metal and gem dealers, going out-of-business sales, solicitors representing charitable organizations, and trespass tow operators; conducts taxicab inspections; and investigates taxicab and trespass towing complaints. The Public Utilities Branch protects and advances the interests of both County residents and County government in matters involving public utility, taxicab, and trespass towing rates and regulation; monitors and intervenes in regulatory proceedings; provides staff support for the County's Energy Efficiency and Conservation Coordinating Committee, and conducts negotiations for electric service.

Category	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Adopted	FY 2015 Revised	FY 2016 Advertised	FY 2016 Adopted
EXPENDITURES					
Total Expenditures	\$744,126	\$676,427	\$676,427	\$696,754	\$698,177
AUTHORIZED POSITIONS/FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE)					
Regular	10 / 10	10 / 10	10 / 10	10 / 10	10 / 10

<u>Consumer Affairs</u>	<u>Regulation and Licensing</u>	<u>Public Utilities</u>
1 Consumer Specialist III	1 Consumer Specialist III	1 Senior Utilities Analyst
2 Consumer Specialists II	1 Consumer Specialist II	2 Utilities Analysts
2 Consumer Specialists I	2 Administrative Assistants III	
1 Administrative Assistant IV		
1 Administrative Assistant II		
1 Consumer Specialist II		
1 Consumer Specialist I		
2 Administrative Assistants II		

TOTAL POSITIONS

10 Positions / 10.0 FTE

* Positions in bold are supported by Fund 40030, Cable Communications

Key Performance Measures

Indicator	Prior Year Actuals			Current Estimate	Future Estimate
	FY 2012 Actual	FY 2013 Actual	FY 2014 Estimate/Actual	FY 2015	FY 2016
Consumer Services					
Percent of case inquiries closed	99%	98%	98%/99%	98%	98%
Percent of consumer educational seminars meeting objectives	100%	100%	100%/100%	100%	100%
Percent of permanent licenses issued within 60 calendar days of application	100%	100%	98%/100%	98%	98%
Cumulative County savings due to utility case intervention (in millions)	\$111	\$115	\$120/\$116	\$116	\$117

A complete list of performance measures can be viewed at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dmb/fy2016/adopted/pm/04ps.pdf

Department of Cable and Consumer Services

Performance Measurement Results

The Consumer Affairs Branch responded to 7,678 case inquiries within 48 hours, closing 99 percent by year-end in FY 2014.

The Regulation and Licensing Branch issued 2,243 permanent licenses in FY 2014, an increase of 289 licenses or 15 percent. This increase was due in part to a 19 percent increase in the number of licenses issued to massage therapists and a 31 percent increase in the number of solicitor licenses issued. While the number of licenses issued increased in FY 2014, market fluctuations lead to slight variations in the number of licenses issued from year to year. Staff has projected a modest decrease from the FY 2014 actual in future years. In FY 2014, 100 percent of permanent licenses were issued within 60 calendar days, exceeding the performance target by two percent.

The Public Utilities Branch saved Fairfax County residents a cumulative total of over \$116 million through FY 2014 on the basis of recurring utility cost savings achieved over the past 19 years; this is anticipated to increase to \$117 million in FY 2016. Public Utilities prepared and presented an analysis of proposed rates and the need for new certificates for taxicab services in Fairfax County before the Consumer Protection Commission and the Board of Supervisors. Public Utilities also submitted testimony in the Dominion Virginia Power's Biennial Review, State Corporation Commission (SCC) Case No. PUE-2013-00020. Dominion's application requested that its authorized rate of return on common equity (ROE) be increased from 10.4 percent to 11.5 percent. County staff submitted testimony that recommended an ROE of 8.3 percent rather than Dominion's 11.5 percent. The SCC's final order rejected the company's request to increase its ROE to 11.5 percent, and instead reduced Dominion's authorized ROE to 10.0 percent. This determination will reduce the company's revenue requirements by \$65 million per year. In addition, the SCC's decision will save Dominion customers at least \$6.4 million per year (\$1.2 million per year for Fairfax County customers) in charges attributable to the four rate adjustment clauses currently added to customers' bills. Public Utilities also served as project manager of the County's residential and business energy education and outreach effort to ensure the program's timely development, implementation, and completion.