

Electoral Board and General Registrar

15-02-Voter Registration

Fund/Agency: 001/15	Electoral Board and General Registrar	
Personnel Services	\$814,858	<div style="text-align: center;"> <p>CAPS Percentage of Agency Total</p> <p>A pie chart titled 'CAPS Percentage of Agency Total' is located on the right side of the table. It is divided into two segments: a blue segment representing 'Voter Registration' at 33.4% and a yellow segment representing 'All Other Agency CAPS' at 66.6%. A legend below the chart identifies the colors: a blue square for 'Voter Registration' and a yellow square for 'All Other Agency CAPS'.</p> </div>
Operating Expenses	\$201,859	
Recovered Costs	\$0	
Capital Equipment	\$0	
Total CAPS Cost:	\$1,016,717	
Federal Revenue	\$0	
State Revenue	\$78,241	
User Fee Revenue	\$0	
Other Revenue	\$0	
Total Revenue:	\$78,241	
Net CAPS Cost:	\$938,476	
Positions/SYE involved in the delivery of this CAPS	13/13	

► CAPS Summary

The goal of the Voter Registration division of the General Registrar is to provide registration opportunities for all eligible citizens who desire to vote, and to assure their franchise through the maintenance of complete and accurate records. This role has continued to grow in volume and complexity; due to the population growth of the County, and the ever-growing work requirements derived from new legislative demands.

In order to fulfill our mission goal, the General Registrar's staff has established working relationships with numerous County agencies; i.e., Public Schools, County Libraries, Print Shop, Facilities Management, Circuit Court, Department of Information Technology, Department of Taxation and Geographic Information Systems, to name a few. Additionally, our work brings us into direct contact with elected public officials and candidates vying for office.

Electoral Board and General Registrar

The work has always had a cyclical element. Virginia, unlike many states, has a November general election every year. Fairfax County has at least two and usually three elections each year, and sometimes as many as five or six, with no certain way of projecting for either them or the associated volume of work.

The voters' interest level in the particular election, the issues, and the candidates, all affect the volume of our work. For instance, a high interest election brings out more voters who are unfamiliar with the process. This situation can generate questions from these infrequent voters and potentially more problems realized as these individuals are likely to have potentially disqualifying information in the Virginia Voter Registration System. These variables, along with the above-mentioned complications in projecting our needs, require our "best guess".

As recent history indicates, since the implementation of the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (NVRA) on March 6, 1996, in Virginia, the volume of voter registration applications that are processed in a fiscal year have doubled. In FY 2001, which includes the Presidential Election of 2000, over 156,000 applications were processed. This represents a 106.9 percent increase over the Presidential Election of 1992, when approximately 75,000 applications were processed.

Although there is still a cyclical element to the work, the overall volume is twice as large. Since NVRA the monthly work volume is at a much more consistently high level than in pre-NVRA years. November had always been a low work-volume month, since fewer applications are received after the general election; however, volume increased five-fold after NVRA was implemented. The monthly totals do vary, but the volume is at a constant high. The other significant increase in work volume and related processing time is the number of applications that require denial letters to be sent. Before NVRA denials represented less than 1 percent of the total applications; now they average 12 percent of the total. To cope with this level of work staff created a new computer program to track the work. This process requires 3.0 SYE positions.

Processing of the voter registration application is a multi-stepped operation that requires over-night processing before the voter card is produced and mailed to the voter at the home address. The incomplete applications, that require additional research, represent approximately 25 percent of the total.

Besides processing applications, staff must process: 1) voter inquiries made in-person, by telephone and e-mail. An extremely high volume occurs in the month or two month period prior to the November election. This past year the General Registrar received approximately 1,100 telephone calls a day for two months and 8,800 calls on Election Day; 2) change requests; 3) other jurisdiction applications; 4) cancellations; 5) transfers; 6) deletes and reinstatements; 7) petition verifications for candidates; 8) street and map changes; 9) re-precincting needs; and 10) filing. Staff must also support such voting activities as: in-person and satellite voting coverage, verification of precinct rosters, pre and post-election processing of kits and crediting voting records. Three other major on-going responsibilities require a great deal of additional part-time support. These are: 1) processing returned address confirmations; 2) sending out redistricting notifications; and 3) certifying absentee ballot applications. In addition, the Registrar's office is responsible for managing the election night returns of results and materials from all of the County's precincts.

How these factors affect the amount of work varies from year-to-year. Presently redistricting notifications, that must be mailed after the census numbers are available and district lines are redrawn, will have the greatest impact on FY 2002 staffing needs.

Electoral Board and General Registrar

Voter registration outreach activities have changed dramatically since NVRA was implemented. Along with DMV, a variety of government agencies provide the citizens with an opportunity to complete a voter application (Social Services and Social Security offices to name a few). The public libraries stock voter applications in every branch for the mail-in registration. However, a number of very successful outreach programs are still made available to the citizens of Fairfax County. Each year prior to the November general election, field staff provides in-person registration at a variety of locations (shopping centers, retail stores and metro stops) throughout the community. Since the legal voting age was lowered by Congress, voter registration is offered in all public high schools to qualified seniors, resulting in approximately 5,000 registrations in 2001.

Fairfax County processes the largest volume of work in the Commonwealth, yet has the lowest staffing levels, when comparing six of the largest jurisdictions in the state. Ratio of registered voters served by each staff member is twice as high as the other jurisdictions. Part-time employees have been used to keep pace with the ever-expanding workflow within the agency. Concurrently however, there has been a greater need for a higher level of skill in these positions, due to: 1) the more complex requirements on the office of the General Registrar, 2) an increase demand on the office staff of working directly with the public, and 3) an increased work volume. To assist in meeting these requirements, 4 part-time positions were converted to 2 full-time positions during the FY 2001 Carryover Review.

► Method of Service Provision

The General Registrar's office has expanded hours to afford the most flexibility to the citizens of Fairfax County. We are open weekdays from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The Code of Virginia requires that we are open the two Saturdays preceding a general election and the last Saturday before a primary or special election. Additionally, we must staff our office, when requested by the two major political parties, if they choose "Firehouse primaries", Conventions or Canvasses.

► Performance/Workload Related Data

Title	FY 1998 Actual	FY 1999 Actual	FY 2000 Actual	FY 2001 Actual	FY 2002 Estimate
New Registrations	34,408	35,782	46,017	52,713	49,000
Re-Registrations	20,618	21,077	37,166	53,582	38,500
Transferred from Other Jurisdictions	10,543	10,498	12,535	15,892	11,000
Changes within Fairfax County	21,435	17,825	23,459	28,024	22,500
Record Removals	7,025	6,024	7,601	11,091	6,900

Electoral Board and General Registrar

► **Mandate Information**

This CAPS is Federally or State mandated. The percentage of this CAPS' resources utilized to satisfy the mandate is 76 - 100%. The specific Federal or State code and a brief description of the code follows:

- Voting Rights Act of 1965 - This Act prohibits discrimination in voter registration practices and requires preclearance of all voter registration activities.
- 42 USC; Article II, Sections 1, 2 and 8 of Virginia Constitution - These sections describe the qualifications and requirements associated with voter registration, which mandate compliance.
- Article 4, Section 24.2-400 through 24.2-447, Code of Virginia - These sections of the Virginia Code deal with specific voter registration processing requirements for Virginia's local registrars.
- Virginia Freedom of Information Act, Section 2.1-340 through 2.1-346.1 - These sections of the Act describes what access the public has to public records and the consequences of violating these provisions.
- National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (Public Law 103-31; 42 USC 1973gg et seq.) - This Act increases voter registration opportunities by allowing mail-in applications and registration at a variety of government agencies, including the Department of Motor Vehicles.
- Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act, Section 101 through 107 (USC 1973ff et seq.) - This Act allows certain U.S. citizens to vote absentee.