

Lines of Business

LOB #89:

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

Purpose

The purpose of the grievance procedure is to provide a fair, detailed process whereby employees may voice complaints concerning issues related to their employment with the County. The objective is to improve employee-management relations through a prompt and fair method of resolving problems. Once an employee has completed steps 1 through 4 in the grievance process, and the County Executive has ruled the complaint is grievable, then the employee files a Petition on Appeal (POA) with the Civil Service Commission (CSC). Upon receipt of the POA, the Commission schedules a hearing, and other relevant submission dates, for exhibits, witnesses, etc. The Commission encourages resolution at any point in the process, believing that a negotiated solution can be a “win-win” for the parties.

The Commission also conducts public hearings for the Board of Supervisors on proposed changes to the County's *Personnel Regulations*. After the public hearing, the Civil Service Commission makes recommendations to the Board of Supervisors regarding the proposed changes.

Description

The CSC serves as an appellate hearing body to adjudicate employee grievances. The Commission also reviews and conducts public hearings on proposed revisions to the County's Personnel Regulations. The Commission fosters the interests of civic, professional and employee organizations and the interests of institutions of learning in the improvement of personnel standards.

Staff provides guidance and support for employees and supervisors who are facing difficult situations at work. The Commission endeavors to resolve grievances at the earliest possible opportunity, encourages mediation and settlement, and identifies and supports opportunities for delivery of training to employees and management on Commission processes.

The CSC was created in 1957 to represent public interest in personnel administration within Fairfax County. In 1980, the Commission hired its first Executive Director; prior to that appointment, the Commission was staffed by the Director of the Office of Personnel.

The role of the CSC has evolved over the past decade. With more grievances filed than in the earlier years, the focus has shifted from being an advisory board regarding personnel management to more emphasis on the adjudication of employee grievances.

The relocation of the ADR program to the CSC in 2007 also reflects the CSC's role as a resource for employees and supervisors who are experiencing difficulty in the workplace. While the grievance process remains, there is additional emphasis for addressing issues in the workplace as early as possible, to avoid the formalized discipline process if feasible.

Civil Service Commission

Benefits

There are many benefits for both the supervisor and employee. A formalized grievance process allows for and encourages employees to raise concerns without fear of reprisal. It also provides a fair and speedy means of dealing with complaints with consistency and transparency. Along with the Alternative Dispute Resolution program, a grievance process can help prevent minor disagreements developing into more serious disputes. It provides a mechanism for employees to raise concerns initially with their direct supervisor or manager and, failing agreement at that level, to bring the matter to the attention of individuals that are normally higher up in the management structure. The process and office serves as an outlet for supervisors and employees to express frustrations and discontent. In the long run, it saves time and money as solutions are found for workplace problems. The cost to both parties for a grievance filed, is far less than the cost of litigation.

Additionally, the CSC supports an organizational climate based on openness and trust because it demonstrates a commitment by the County to resolve internal matters openly and thoroughly.

Mandates

The grievance process and Civil Service Commission is state mandated under the [Code of Virginia § 15.2-1506, 1507](#).

Trends and Challenges

Trends

- Many County agencies are being asked to do “more with less” and are seeking assistance in working through conflict associated with change or other workplace situations.
- Over the past five years, the number of grievance appeals (Petition on Appeals) has held relatively steady; however, the number of earlier interventions and resolutions has increased, both from the ADR program and employee groups. This has increased workload.

Challenges

- A sustainable way to gather data and evaluative information.

Civil Service Commission

Resources

Category	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Actual	FY 2016 Adopted
LOB #89: Civil Service Commission			
FUNDING			
<u>Expenditures:</u>			
Compensation	\$207,576	\$198,513	\$217,187
Operating Expenses	41,073	35,833	66,386
Total Expenditures	\$248,649	\$234,346	\$283,573
General Fund Revenue	\$0	\$0	\$0
Net Cost/(Savings) to General Fund	\$248,649	\$234,346	\$283,573
POSITIONS			
Authorized Positions/Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs)			
<u>Positions:</u>			
Regular	2 / 2	2 / 2	2 / 2
Total Positions	2 / 2	2 / 2	2 / 2

Metrics

Metric Indicator	FY 2013 Actual	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Actual	FY 2016 Estimate	FY 2017 Estimate
Number of Appeals settled before the hearing date	7	6	8	5	5
Number of Petitions on Appeal received	21	19	18	20	20
Average time (in weeks) from receipt of the Petition on Appeal to the scheduled prehearing conference date	2	2	2	2	2

In conjunction with the ADR program, where the goal is a workplace culture of conflict competent employees, the CSC encourages parties in a grievance to acknowledge differences and work towards a resolution that is mutually agreeable. The CSC recognizes that not all discipline or appeals can be settled; however, the goal is to encourage the parties to recognize that a mutually agreed upon settlement, can be more beneficial to the parties, and in the cases of discipline that is not termination, assist in the workplace that resulted in the conflict to begin with.