



# County of Fairfax, Virginia

## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** August 27, 2015  
**TO:** Board of Supervisors  
**FROM:** Joseph M. Mondoro, Acting Chief Financial Officer  
**SUBJECT:** Responses to BOS Budget Questions – Carryover Package

Attached for your review are responses to Board questions raised on the *FY 2015 Carryover Review*. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me.

The following responses are included in this package:

| Question Number | Question   | Supervisor | Pages |
|-----------------|--|------------|-------|
| C1              | Please provide possible scenarios for phasing in the remaining 15 percent social security offset for service related disability over a 3, 4 or 5 year period. Identify the costs of phase in options and how a phase in could be incorporated into the annual budget process.  | Gross      | 1-2   |
| C2              | As a follow-up to the Human Services Committee meeting of July 21, 2015, please provide a summary of how the County will be improving Crisis Intervention Services. Please provide information in the context of the General Fund support for the Mobile Crisis Unit included in Carryover, the \$142,972 received from the State, maximization of existing resources in the Police Department, Office of the Sheriff and Community Services Board as well as how the "bridge" funds identified by CSB will be utilized. | Hudgins    | 3-4   |

### Attachment

cc: Edward L. Long Jr., County Executive  
Patricia Harrison, Deputy County Executive  
David J. Molchany, Deputy County Executive  
David M. Rohrer, Deputy County Executive  
Robert A. Stalzer, Deputy County Executive

## Response to Questions on the FY 2015 Carryover Review

**Request By:** Supervisor Gross

**Question:** Please provide possible scenarios for phasing in the remaining 15 percent social security offset for service related disability over a 3, 4 or 5 year period. Identify the costs of phase in options and how a phase in could be incorporated into the annual budget process.

**Response:** Employees in the Uniformed and Employees' Retirement Systems who qualify for a service-connected disability retirement receive a tax-free pension benefit that is between 40 percent and 90 percent of their salary at retirement, depending on the date of their retirement and the severity of the disability. In addition, these retirees may qualify for a Social Security disability benefit, and will qualify for an age-based Social Security benefit upon reaching their first date of eligibility for Social Security benefits. The combination of these benefits can often create a higher benefit than they would receive under a normal service retirement. This is mitigated by the Social Security offset, which reduces the County benefit by an amount equal to 15 percent of Social Security disability benefits and, in most cases, age-based Social Security benefits. Approximately 207 retirees are currently impacted by the offset, of which 93 are in the Uniformed Retirement System and 114 are in the Employees' Retirement System. It should be noted that the Police Officers Retirement System is not impacted since Police Officers do not earn eligibility for Social Security during their employment.

The concept of integrating Social Security with pension benefits has been in place since the inception of the Uniformed Retirement System in 1974 and, before that, since the inception of the Employees' Retirement System in 1955, which provided benefits for the Uniformed System classes of employees prior to the inception of a separate system. Prior to FY 2008, the Social Security offset was 64 percent. Since FY 2008, the offset has been reduced to 15 percent.

Elimination of the remaining 15 percent offset would require one-time funding of \$4.8 million in order to fully fund the increased actuarial accrued liability resulting from the benefit enhancement. In addition, the employer contribution rates for both the Uniformed and Employees' Retirement Systems would be increased, for a recurring General Fund impact of \$86,250. These figures are based upon the July 1, 2014 valuation. It should be noted that the increased employer contribution rates would also impact other funds and Schools.

If the elimination were phased in over a number of years, the costs cited above could be prorated as shown below.

| Fiscal<br>Year             | Reduction<br>in Offset | One-Time<br>Cost   | Recurring<br>Cost |
|----------------------------|------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Three-Year Strategy</b> |                        |                    |                   |
| FY 2017                    | 5%                     | \$1,600,000        | \$28,750          |
| FY 2018                    | 5%                     | \$1,600,000        | \$28,750          |
| FY 2019                    | 5%                     | \$1,600,000        | \$28,750          |
|                            | <b>15%</b>             | <b>\$4,800,000</b> | <b>\$86,250</b>   |

| <b>Fiscal Year</b>        | <b>Reduction in Offset</b> | <b>One-Time Cost</b> | <b>Recurring Cost</b> |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Five-Year Strategy</b> |                            |                      |                       |
| FY 2017                   | 3%                         | \$960,000            | \$17,250              |
| FY 2018                   | 3%                         | \$960,000            | \$17,250              |
| FY 2019                   | 3%                         | \$960,000            | \$17,250              |
| FY 2020                   | 3%                         | \$960,000            | \$17,250              |
| FY 2021                   | 3%                         | \$960,000            | \$17,250              |
|                           | <b>15%</b>                 | <b>\$4,800,000</b>   | <b>\$86,250</b>       |

It is recommended that changes to the retirement system rates be made as part of the annual budget process and effective at the start of the next fiscal year. Employer contribution rates for the retirement systems cannot be changed in the middle of the fiscal year. Additionally, if changes are made as part of the annual budget process, cost estimates can be updated based on the most recent actuarial valuation (for example, the FY 2017 cost impact would use the July 1, 2015 valuation which is completed in the fall).

## Response to Questions on the FY 2015 Carryover Review

**Request By:** Supervisor Hudgins

**Question:** As a follow-up to the Human Services Committee meeting of July 21, 2015, please provide a summary of how the County will be improving Crisis Intervention Services. Please provide information in the context of the General Fund support for the Mobile Crisis Unit included in Carryover, the \$142,972 received from the State, maximization of existing resources in the Police Department, Office of the Sheriff and Community Services Board as well as how the "bridge" funds identified by CSB will be utilized.

**Response:** Crisis Intervention Services in Fairfax County will be improved through the efforts of a multiagency collaboration between the Fairfax County Police Department (FCPD), Office of the Sheriff, Fairfax County Court system, and the Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board (CSB). The emerging continuum of improved crisis intervention services, called Diversion First and designed to divert individuals from more costly services such as incarceration and hospitalization to supports within the community, includes a Mental Health Docket, a second Mobile Crisis Unit, a Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Assessment Site, a CIT Coordinator and training, as well as a Crisis Recovery Team and Peer Resource Center.

Consistent with the July 21, 2015 presentation at the Board of Supervisors Human Services Committee meeting, an increase of \$800,000 and 6/6.0 FTE positions in the CSB will support a second Mobile Crisis Unit. The additional unit, operating 12 hours per day, 7 days per week, will provide crisis intervention and assessment services to individuals in psychiatric crisis who are unable or unwilling to seek services in CSB's existing clinics. Given the effectiveness of the existing Mobile Crisis Unit, CSB anticipates that additional personnel will be able to divert individuals in a psychiatric emergency from more costly options, such as facility-based emergency services, voluntary or involuntary hospital admissions and incarceration.

In addition, FCPD, Sheriff and CSB will jointly develop and operate a limited CIT Assessment Site at Merrifield Center, supported through \$142,972 in grant funding from the Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS) and approximately \$707,433 in existing County General Funds appropriated in FCPD, Sheriff, and CSB. Of the \$142,972 in grant funding, \$102,972 will partially fund a CIT Coordinator responsible for administrative operations of the Assessment Site, including facilitating stakeholder involvement and establishing policies and procedures governing transfer of custody, data collection and reporting, quarterly Crisis Intervention Trainings, and best practices. FCPD will redirect an existing Police First Lieutenant position, currently serving as the Patrol Bureau Aide and Assistant Commander of the Planning & Research Bureau, to serve as the coordinator and absorb any work and associated minor costs without impacting service quality. To supplement existing CIT training provided by FCPD officers and Sheriff deputies, the remaining \$40,000 from DBHDS will support professional development activities required for successful implementation of the assessment site, such as national conferences, site visits, and guest speakers at quarterly CIT trainings. It is worth noting FCPD had 397, or 43 percent, of first line operations

staff, and 79, or 30 percent, of other sworn staff complete CIT 40 Hour Core training in calendar years 2013 and 2014.

Once operational, the CIT Assessment Site at Merrifield Center will serve as a therapeutic alternative to arrest, redirecting individuals in crisis from the criminal justice system to the health care system. Initially, the CIT Assessment Site is anticipated to operate 11:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. (21 hours per day) every day of the year, with existing Police Officer II positions typically redirected from the FCPD Patrol Bureau and existing Deputy Sheriff II positions typically redirected from the Alternative Incarceration Branch to cover peak hours of 11:30 a.m. to midnight. All public safety staff assigned to the CIT Assessment Site will receive CIT training prior to being deployed. In addition, public safety staffing levels will be maintained at an appropriate level to ensure that there is no impact to operations and service quality. In the case of the Sheriff's Office, the costs associated with maintaining staffing levels will be absorbed in FY 2016 but will have to be reviewed in FY 2017. Peak times at the CIT Assessment Site will primarily be staffed by one Police Officer II and one Deputy Sheriff II responsible for transferring custody of individuals experiencing an acute or sub-acute mental health crisis to existing CSB Emergency Services personnel for clinical assessment, civil commitment, referrals and linkage to appropriate services. From midnight to 8:30 a.m., limited services will be provided through an existing CSB Emergency Services Supervisor, \$150,000 in overtime funding for FCPD personnel to provide security on-site, and Deputy Sheriff coverage from the Adult Detention Center to respond and serve Juvenile petitions at Merrifield.

To further mature and develop the County's CIT program and expand the continuum of crisis intervention services, \$500,000 in "bridge" funding has been appropriated from CSB's fund balance as part of *FY 2015 Carryover Review*. Of the \$500,000 in "bridge" funding, \$131,728 will support a new Crisis Recovery Team beginning January 1, 2016 providing extended observation, re-assessment, and access to adult partial hospitalization, case management and other services not otherwise available during evenings, nights, weekends or holidays to individuals in psychiatric crisis. Funding of \$140,955 will support the Merrifield Peer Resource Center opening October 1, 2015 providing resources and supports such as assistance applying for governmental services and benefits, individual and peer support, and National Alliance on Mental Illness workshops, as well as wellness education and training. The remaining \$227,317 will be held in reserve to fund emerging needs, such as additional law enforcement and medical personnel. While non-recurring, the "bridge funding" is intended to help improve officer and consumer safety in the short-term, support a successful initial implementation, and better position the County for future funding opportunities.