

Department of Neighborhood and Community Services

LOB #161:

INTERFAITH COORDINATION

Purpose

Community Interfaith Coordination (CIC) provides consultation, technical assistance and support to faith communities, faith-based organizations and interfaith groups engaged in outreach, education, and service to promote the well-being of Fairfax County residents and communities. CIC supports the Fairfax County Clergy and Leadership Council, Faith Communities In Action (FCIA) and Council and FCIA Committees.

Description

Community Interfaith Coordination is a business unit in the Countywide Service Integration and Planning Management (CSIPM) division. The CIC provides a wide variety of services and technical assistance to the faith-based community including: education and access to County and community resources, connection to service engagement opportunities and partnerships, and development of community emergency and disaster preparedness response plans. The CIC assists other County agencies with successfully developing and maintaining partnerships with houses of worship and facilitating house of worship inclusion on boards, authorities, commissions and work groups. Additionally, topic specific support is provided in key areas such as domestic violence, older adult, prevention initiatives, and emergency preparedness and response.

The work of the CIC serves to connect the County's religious communities to promote inclusion on Fairfax County boards, authorities and councils in discussing program needs and policy decisions; coordinate partnerships that increase capacity for providing human services to those in need; encourage understanding, and respect among faith communities; and enhance Countywide preparedness for emergencies and disasters and provide for appropriate chaplain services to affected communities.

One of the most critical functions of the CIC is to train and manage the Fairfax County Community Chaplain (FCCC) Corps. The FCCC provides chaplain care to community members impacted by the effects of a disaster or emergency. The FCCC Corps chaplains work as a part of an emergency or disaster team under the directions of the locally designated incident management system and in cooperation with County police and fire and rescue chaplains and mental health personnel. FCCC Corps chaplains may be deployed to Family Assistance Centers (FACs), Emergency Shelters, Site Information Centers (SIC), and other locations set up in a crisis or emergency as directed. FCCC Corps chaplains may accompany Fairfax County police officers on death notifications. Chaplains may also be deployed to homes or locations in the County to provide chaplain services to family and friends at scenes when a sudden death or suicide occurs.

The CIC also coordinates the work of various advisory groups and councils including the Fairfax County Clergy and Leadership Council and the Faith Communities in Action Network. These groups promote a respectful, healthy, and caring community through Countywide interfaith, government and non-profit organization dialogue, information exchange, and coordination.

Benefits

Diversity: As a result of CIC's work, Fairfax County enjoys a close association with its diverse faith communities. Two areas of particularly significant benefit include the County's strengthened ability to bridge language and cultural barriers within its increasingly diverse communities as well as an enhanced capacity to fill mounting human service needs. Overall, the CICs efforts increase Fairfax County's ability to identify growing trends and needs within the community and its capacity to plan and implement policies, programs and services that provide effective and efficient solutions.

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Mandates

This Line of Business is not mandated.

Trends and Challenges

Language and cultural diversity: Fairfax County's growth in language and cultural diversity will require stronger communication strategies to insure services are known and accessible. The Census Bureau estimates that 373,215 persons (or 34 percent) of the area's total population speak a language other than English at home (2007-2012 ACS PUMS). In 2012, Fairfax County Public Schools reported 49 percent or nearly half of its 96,482 enrolled elementary students spoke one of 170 other language than English. Since 2000, the County's Asian and Pacific Islander population has increased from 13.1 percent to 18.5 percent and the Hispanic population has grown from 11.0 percent to 16.2 percent. As the County's diversity expands, so has the faith community's. Houses of worship have been supportive in bridging the County's language and cultural divide by assisting residents to connect with resources, navigate services, and augment existing service inventory. In addition, the faith community through Faith Communities in Action and the Fairfax County Clergy and Leadership Council has worked in partnership with County staff, officials, advisory boards and committees to review, plan, and implement County services that more effectively address services for the County's growing population diversity.

Financial and food assistance: Faith Communities are filling the gap for the continued rise of individuals and families needing financial and food assistance. Houses of worship support the County's local food pantries and operate their own with some feeding over 200 families each weekend. Houses of Worship are the contributors to local community-based organizations financial assistance programs and often support families directly. Maintenance of these efforts are critical to insure County and community capacity to meet the increasing food and financial aid demand.

Human services needs and concerns: The faith community is addressing a number of other growing County human service needs and concerns. They include an increase in reported police domestic violence cases; a higher than national rate for teen depression and thoughts of suicide; a continued HIV infection rate of African American County residents; and a rise in the older adult population. The faith community is working in partnership with County agencies to address each of these issues through education, prevention and service partnerships. The Community Interfaith Coordination unit supports County agencies' efforts to maintain and increase the faith community engagement, coordination and capacity to address these issues and others.

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Resources

Category	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Actual	FY 2016 Adopted
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FUNDING			
<u>Expenditures:</u>			
Compensation	\$142,451	\$180,531	\$148,260
Operating Expenses	15,231	24,554	23,500
Total Expenditures	\$157,682	\$205,085	\$171,760
General Fund Revenue	\$0	\$0	\$0
Net Cost/(Savings) to General Fund	\$157,682	\$205,085	\$171,760
POSITIONS			
<i>Authorized Positions/Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs)</i>			
<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 faith communities participating in interfaith emergency preparedness planning, response and recovery training, and Countywide coordination services	173	175	176	185	194
Percent of faith communities satisfied with the training and tool received through the emergency preparedness planning and response recovery training	100%	100%	98%	98%	98%
Percent of faith communities with an increased capacity to provide Countywide interfaith coordinated response to emergencies	86%	98%	95%	85%	85%

Community Interfaith Coordination continues to work in coordination with the Fairfax County Faith Communities in Action, the Fairfax County Office of Emergency Management and Volunteer Fairfax to increase community capacity to participate and coordinate during and after a disaster with other organizations within their respective communities. Of the organizations attending the training, 98 percent reported that they had increased their capacity to participate and coordinate during and after a disaster. A primary focus of the CIC is support for the County's emergency preparedness and response efforts.