

# Department of Code Compliance

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LOB #248:

## **CENTRAL INTAKE CUSTOMER SERVICE**

### **Purpose**

Central Intake and Customer Services is responsible for managing the complaint intake and customer services center for the DCC. In addition, this business area provides all of the administrative support to DCC Operations for case processing and case documentation; ensures timely responses to Freedom of Information Act requests; ensures quality management of the data entered into the Fairfax Inspections Database Online case management tracking system; leads the business process improvement efforts and coordinates with the Department of Information Technology related to system improvements/replacements, web page content updates and assisting with agency data needs.

### **Description**

The administration of compliance programs pertaining to Zoning, Building, Property Maintenance, and Fire Codes, as well as the Blight and Grass ordinances remain centralized in the DCC. This centralized approach to code enforcement creates a collaborative multi-functional environment that can investigate and resolve violations and concerns in the residential and commercial communities. One of the customer service highlights of the consolidation model is the provision of centralized customer services intake. By consolidating the intake processes from multiple agencies, DCC has been able to better support its customers by creating more of an integrated one-call center. This action greatly enhances customer satisfaction and support by reducing calls that, formerly, needed to be transferred to another agency and agencies.

### **Benefits**

Central Intake and Customer Service is committed to the mission of the DCC. The mission is to provide services to protect the lives, property and environment of our community by providing a resource of trained professionals that promote and protect the integrity of our neighborhoods. This is accomplished through the enforcement of the Zoning Ordinance, Building Codes and other safety codes utilizing communication, cooperation and education in partnership with the community.

This line of business provides centralized customer services intake, by consolidating the intake processes from multiple agencies. This contributes to achieving Fairfax County vision elements such as:

#### **Maintaining Safe and Caring Communities**

The Customer Service Team maintains a high level of administrative expertise and provides assistance to citizens from the case intake process through the entire management process. The Customer Services Team also provides critical support to Operations throughout the life cycle of an investigation. This oversight and quality managements ensures we achieve our mission of providing prompt resolution of neighborhood concerns.

#### **Exercising Corporate Stewardship**

The focus of the DCC continues to be a multi-code enforcement organization within a unified leadership/management structure that responds effectively and efficiently to ensure safe, caring and sustainable neighborhoods and communities.

In addition, DCC meets with numerous civic and homeowners associations and participates in community events. These community outreach efforts are designed to educate the community about our mission and processes.

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## Mandates

Central Intake and Customer Service maintains investigation case files. These files are mandated to be available for requesting citizens as prescribed by the code:

Code of Virginia Title 2.2 - ADMINISTRATION OF GOVERNMENT. Chapter 37 - Virginia Freedom of Information Act (2.2-3700 thru 2.2-3714).

## Trends and Challenges

DCC was created in 2010 as a consolidation of staff from varying partnering agencies. DCC has identified challenges related to the need for additional administrative support and dedicated IT personnel, due to fiscal constraints, DCC has been unable to acquire the necessary positions. The Complaint Intake and Case Documentation Section handled approximately 16,000 calls per year, in addition to walk-in customers, and they provide the administrative support for all DCC Operations. Currently, the merit staff are supplemented with non-merit staff, however there is a high turnover rate, losing a non-merit staff member approximately every 5 months. These positions require significant training related to the codes and ordinances. The decreased ability to answer citizen questions and interview callers for complaint details results in less than optimal service and delays for agency customers and increases the need for investigator involvement.

The administrative team also uses the case tracking database at an in-depth level in order to provide assistance to investigators and to aid in the capturing of accurate data for documentation and reporting purposes. Without a full complement of knowledgeable staff to maintain up-to-date information, the agency is vulnerable to delays with case opening, service of legal notices, follow-up inspections, gathering of research and historic materials, citizen inquiries, and legal action.

DCC continues to work with staff to reduce printing and copying supplies by reviewing internal printing policies and reducing the use of individual desktop printers by utilizing the Multi-Functional Devices available throughout the department. In addition, DCC is trying to reduce paper and toner consumption by only printing documents when necessary and by printing materials double-sided whenever possible.

## Resources

Category	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Actual	FY 2016 Adopted
<b>LOB #248: Central Intake Customer Service</b>			
<b>FUNDING</b>			
<u>Expenditures:</u>			
Compensation	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$300,000
Operating Expenses	41,000	28,531	40,000
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$341,000</b>	<b>\$328,531</b>	<b>\$340,000</b>
General Fund Revenue	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Net Cost/(Savings) to General Fund</b>	<b>\$341,000</b>	<b>\$328,531</b>	<b>\$340,000</b>
<b>POSITIONS</b>			
Authorized Positions/Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs)			
<u>Positions:</u>			
Regular	5 / 5	5 / 5	5 / 5
<b>Total Positions</b>	<b>5 / 5</b>	<b>5 / 5</b>	<b>5 / 5</b>

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## Metrics

Metric Indicator	FY 2013 Actual	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Actual	FY 2016 Estimate	FY 2017 Estimate
Percentage of service requests processed within two (2) business days	97%	97%	97%	97%	97%

One of the customer service highlights of the consolidation model is the provision of centralized customer services intake. By consolidating the intake process from multiple agencies, DCC has been able to better support its customers by creating more of an integrated one-call center. This action greatly enhanced customer support by reducing calls that, formerly, needed to be transferred to another agency or agencies.

The unified approach reduces the number of calls that customers need to make to report concerns or obtain information. Thus, the goal of processing all service requests within two business days was established to ensure an effective intake process and expedient service request processing and case file setup for referral to field operations. Service requests can be obtained from customer calls, website intake, emails, referrals from staff and other agencies, letters and correspondence, and a variety of other means. DCC Customer Services staff received over 15,000 calls and 5,000 web complaints in FY 2015 and processed 97 percent of the service requests within two business days. DCC's outstanding service model has ensured the ability to continue to effectively process the vast majority of service requests within one business day.