

# Civil Service Commission

**Mission** To represent the public interest in the improvement of Personnel Administration in the County and to advise the County Board of Supervisors, the County Executive, and the Human Resources Director in the formulation of policies concerning Personnel Administration within the competitive service, and act as an impartial hearing body for County employee grievances and appeals. The Alternative Dispute Resolution Program envisions a community in Fairfax County Government where all workplace cultures are conflict competent and employees are encouraged to learn through collaborative problem-solving skills.

**Focus** The Civil Service Commission (CSC) serves as an appellate hearing body to adjudicate employee grievances. The Commission also reviews and conducts public hearings on proposed revisions to the 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.

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 prior to Commission hearings.

The Commission is fully able to hear grievances within 45 days of receipt of an employee's petition on appeal. However, flexibility is required throughout the process to allow the two parties to discuss the issues, and where possible, reach an agreement and settle the grievance. The number of grievances involving final and binding decisions from the full Civil Service Commission in FY 2018 was 14 appeals. During FY 2018, there were three advisory appeals. Advisory appeals to the Civil Service Commission include Fairfax County Public Schools issues (non-instructional employees), County employee performance evaluations, written reprimands, and other issues, as discussed in Chapter 17 of the County's Personnel Regulations.

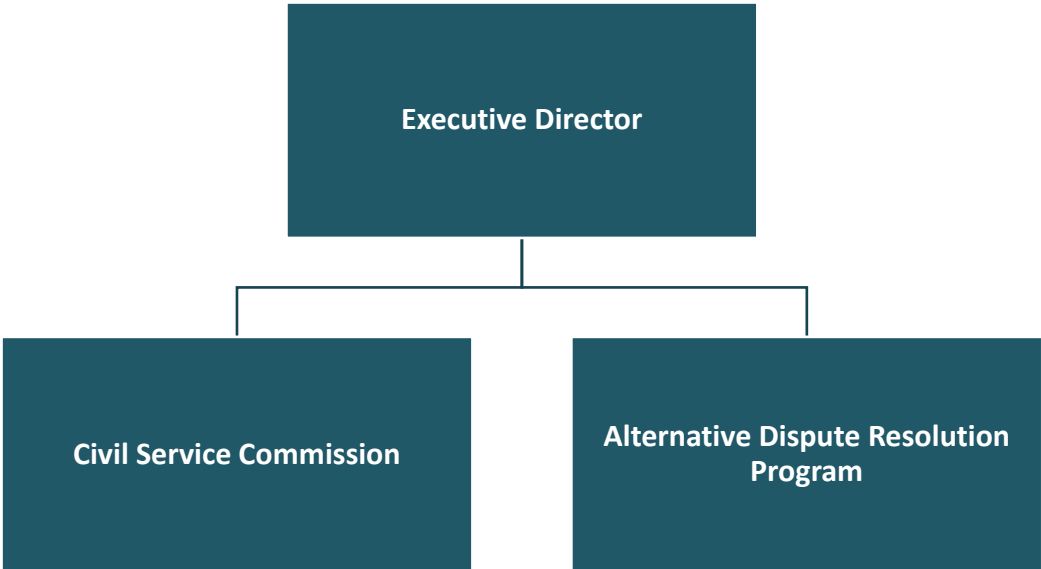
The Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) program is an integrated conflict management system, linking employees to a continuum of services which offer employees and managers different opportunities to appropriately address conflict in the workplace. The ADR program supports the goal of the Performance Management program by bringing supervisors and employees together in an informal setting to resolve performance evaluation issues. In addition, ADR staff provides formal impartial third-party conflict resolution processes such as mediation, conflict coaching, and targeted conflict resolution and peace building team workshops for County employees. Conflict Resolution, Conflict Coaching, and Mediation training modules, as well as specific conflict competency training are presented by ADR staff throughout the year. It is anticipated that with an increased focus on outreach, the number of employees impacted by the ADR program will increase in future years. By teaching conflict management skills to employees, the ADR program will strengthen their capacity to engage with workplace conflict before it escalates to a level requiring more adversarial and disciplinary measures. When there is conflict, the greatest potential for improving efficiencies and reduction of expenditures in most County agencies is providing employees with conflict competency tools and skills and to utilize mediation and other ADR processes.

**Pandemic  
Response and  
Impact**

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting state of emergency, CSC and ADR staff shifted to full-time telework status. The CSC postponed appeal hearings scheduled for the fourth quarter of FY 2020. Postponed hearings will be rescheduled and held in a socially-distanced manner in FY 2021 as soon as it is safe to do so. As the County looks to increase its video conferencing capabilities, the CSC will explore the possibility of holding virtual appeal hearings in FY 2021. Working collaboratively with the Department of Information Technology, the Department of Clerk Services, the Department of Human Resources (DHR), and the Office of the County Attorney, CSC has developed a process to hold public hearings on proposed regulation changes electronically and held CSC's first electronic public hearing in June 2020. CSC also looks to adapt the in-person grievance training it provides to a virtual format. The goal continues to be to provide timely and fair grievance processes to all employees while maintaining the safety of all involved.

ADR staff has focused on reviewing and restructuring training and presentations to address the shifting landscape of the workplace and the way employees interact with the public and each other in a largely remote working environment. The team continues to collaborate with partnering agencies, such as DHR and the Juvenile Domestic Relations District Court, to provide virtual training opportunities. ADR staff has also continued to provide intake assessments, consultations and conflict coaching remotely. Several of the courses offered by ADR are Virginia Supreme Court approved prerequisites for qualification as a Virginia state certified mediator. The Virginia Supreme Court is currently establishing criteria for virtual versions of those courses. Thus, ADR has suspended several of its course offerings pending release of virtual course criteria. Going forward, ADR will continue to retool and restructure its services to best equip and support the County workforce.

**Organizational  
Chart**



**Budget and Staff Resources**

Category	FY 2019 Actual	FY 2020 Adopted	FY 2020 Revised	FY 2021 Advertised	FY 2021 Adopted
<b>FUNDING</b>					
<b>Expenditures:</b>					
Personnel Services	\$375,587	\$402,545	\$402,545	\$417,945	\$402,545
Operating Expenses	18,554	66,186	66,222	66,186	66,186
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$394,141</b>	<b>\$468,731</b>	<b>\$468,767</b>	<b>\$484,131</b>	<b>\$468,731</b>
<b>AUTHORIZED POSITIONS/FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE)</b>					
Regular	4 / 4	4 / 4	4 / 4	4 / 4	4 / 4

**FY 2021 Funding Adjustments**

The following funding adjustments from the FY 2020 Adopted Budget Plan are necessary to support the FY 2021 program. Included are all adjustments recommended by the County Executive that were approved by the Board of Supervisors, as well as any additional Board of Supervisors' actions, as approved in the adoption of the Budget on May 12, 2020.

FY 2021 funding remains at the same level as the FY 2020 Adopted Budget Plan.

**Changes to FY 2020 Adopted Budget Plan**

The following funding adjustments reflect all approved changes in the FY 2020 Revised Budget Plan since passage of the FY 2020 Adopted Budget Plan. Included are all adjustments made as part of the FY 2019 Carryover Review, FY 2020 Third Quarter Review, and all other approved changes through April 30, 2020.

**Carryover Adjustments** \$36  
 As part of the FY 2019 Carryover Review, the Board of Supervisors approved funding of \$36 in encumbered funding in Operating Expenses associated with office supplies.

**Cost Centers Civil Service Commission**

The Civil Service Commission Cost Center serves as an appellate hearing body to adjudicate employee grievances. This cost center is responsible for conducting public hearings on proposed revisions to the County's Personnel Regulations. Staff regularly meets with employees and managers, to resolve grievances at the earliest possible opportunity, encourage mediation and settlement, and identify and support opportunities for delivery of training to employees and management prior to Commission hearings.

Category	FY 2019 Actual	FY 2020 Adopted	FY 2020 Revised	FY 2021 Advertised	FY 2021 Adopted
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>					
Total Expenditures	\$210,327	\$309,890	\$309,926	\$319,712	\$309,890
<b>AUTHORIZED POSITIONS/FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE)</b>					
Regular	2 / 2	2 / 2	2 / 2	2 / 2	2 / 2

**Alternative Dispute Resolution Program**

This cost center consists of the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) program which is an integrated conflict management system, linking employees to a continuum of services which offer employees and managers a variety of opportunities to acquire conflict management skills and tools and appropriately address conflict in the workplace. These include formal mediation, facilitated dialogue, team conflict resolution processes, conflict coaching and conflict resolution process workshops and training modules for County employees. The ADR program also trains County employees to provide peer mediation, peer conflict coaching and conflict management skills training to employees, managers, and teams. As needed, this program provides the structure to support the Performance Management program to resolve performance evaluation issues.

Category	FY 2019 Actual	FY 2020 Adopted	FY 2020 Revised	FY 2021 Advertised	FY 2021 Adopted
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>					
Total Expenditures	\$183,814	\$158,841	\$158,841	\$164,419	\$158,841
<b>AUTHORIZED POSITIONS/FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE)</b>					
Regular	2 / 2	2 / 2	2 / 2	2 / 2	2 / 2

**Position Detail**

The FY 2021 Adopted Budget Plan includes the following positions:

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION - 2 Positions	
1	Executive Director
1	Administrative Assistant IV
ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROGRAM - 2 Positions	
1	Management Analyst IV
1	Management Analyst II

**Performance Measurement Results**

In FY 2017, under the leadership of the Civil Service Commission, the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) program adjusted its performance measures as part of the agency's efforts to create a dynamic program evaluation plan. The goal of the evaluation plan is ongoing examination of effectiveness as well as efficiency of the ADR program and its individual services.

The ADR outreach efforts continue to provide employees with access to information about ADR services online and at job sites. Approximately 16.2 percent of the total workforce (2,138 employees) participated in one or more ADR services, presentations, or programs in FY 2019. High numbers of employees reached through outreach continued through FY 2019. Although the actual data has exceeded expectations consistently for the past three years, the goal to annually reach 10 percent of the Fairfax County workforce with ADR services is high and will remain in place.

ADR conflict competency training modules are exceedingly well attended and effective. As a result, the intended output goal of 30 trainings per year was increased to 40 trainings per year for FY 2018, which has been surpassed for the past two years. Even though participant numbers for several conflict competency training courses have been increased from 20 to 30, the number of participants on waitlists more than double training capacity consistently. It is anticipated that the ADR Office will again need to increase the number of trainings offered. In addition, the number of trained Peer Conflict Resolution Specialists (Peer Mediators and Peer Conflict Coaches) continues to exceed expectations. A total of 126 individuals were added to the ADR lists of peer mediators and conflict coaches, which is more than twice the projected number. As a result, ADR can serve more

employees with formal, as well as informal, mediation and conflict coaching services. An effort is underway to provide all employees with additional information about the safe and supportive aspects of these ADR processes to encourage an increase in the use of these resources.

Data addressing cost efficiency is difficult to calculate since costs associated with conflict, although reported to be high according to research like Helmut Buss, *Measuring and Reducing the Cost of Conflict at Work*, are almost impossible to track. However, anonymous survey data collected from employees who contacted the ADR office because of conflict in their workplace suggests that there is significant impact. In FY 2019, out of 68 survey participants, 85.2 percent reported that their well-being was affected by the conflict situation. Out of the 85.2 percent, 40 percent experienced stress/anxiety; 33 percent had difficulties sleeping; and 12 percent reported health issues (i.e. elevated blood pressure, getting sick, dizziness and headaches). Seventy percent said that they were considering leaving their jobs and 66 percent reported that their ability to work effectively had been affected negatively by the conflict situation. In addition, approximately 29 percent of employees have taken time off due to stress and 94 percent state that they spend time thinking and talking about the conflict. Participants also reported that the average time lost at work due to the conflict in their environment was between 3.04 and 4.04 hours per day.

Poor health, time absent from work and work time spent preoccupied with disputes all result in a reduction of productivity and reflect a loss of revenue. However, it is difficult to translate this loss into a reliable dollar amount or prove the amount of savings resulting from well-managed conflict.

Late in FY 2018, the ADR program added a merit staff position which allowed the office to expand its consultation role in FY 2019 and develop additional Conflict Management Process tools and serve as subject matter experts at the request of several County departments, including the Fire and Rescue Department, the Health Department, and the Department of Human Resources. The ADR Office collaborates extensively with individuals from the Fire and Rescue Department training facility to develop conflict management modules relevant to each level of management that will eventually be taught by peers. The ADR Office will continue to initiate partnerships with agencies to develop processes to address conflicts within the contexts of their specific work environments and to develop conflict competency tools and skill for agency and countywide impact.

Within the context of the County's One Fairfax policy, an intensive ADR project is underway to support Equity Leads, teams and units in their efforts to create understanding and buy-in of the importance of the One Fairfax policy and to successfully prepare their departments and agencies to meet desired outcomes.

Indicator	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Estimate/Actual	FY 2020 Estimate	FY 2021 Estimate
<b>Civil Service Commission</b>					
Average meetings required to adjudicate appeals	2	2	2/2	2	2
<b>Alternative Dispute Resolution Program</b>					
Employees participating in at least one aspect of the ADR Program	2,134	2,100	1,500/2,138	1,500	1,800
Percent of employee participation in conflict management process	16.2%	15.9%	10.0%/16.2%	10.0%	10%
Percent of trainees reporting increase in conflict competence	93%	97%	75%/95%	75%	75%

A complete list of performance measures can be viewed at <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/budget/fy-2021-adopted-performance-measures-pm>