

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.

Connection to the Countywide Strategic Plan

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors adopted the first-ever Countywide Strategic Plan on October 5, 2021. The Countywide Strategic Plan serves as a road map to help guide future work, focusing on the 10 Community Outcome Areas that represent the issues of greatest importance to the community, and uses our One Fairfax equity policy to invest in people and places that have limited access to opportunity. On February 20, 2024, the second Annual Report on the work of the strategic plan was released to the public. The report contains point-in-time progress highlights for each of the community outcome areas, plus three data dashboards and data stories that are being replicated across all of the outcome areas, and a number of additional initiatives to embed the elements of the plan within department-level work. The report also includes a Year Three Implementation Model, which will engage hundreds of County subject-matter experts to identify and champion the specific strategies that will move forward to implementation under the guidance of the Board of Supervisors. For more information on the Countywide Strategic Plan, please visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/strategicplan. The Civil Service Commission primarily supports the following Community Outcome Area:



| Community Outcome Area | Vision Statement |
|---|---|
| Effective and Efficient Government | <i>All people trust that their government responsibly manages resources, is responsive to their needs, provides exceptional services and equitably represents them.</i> |

Focus

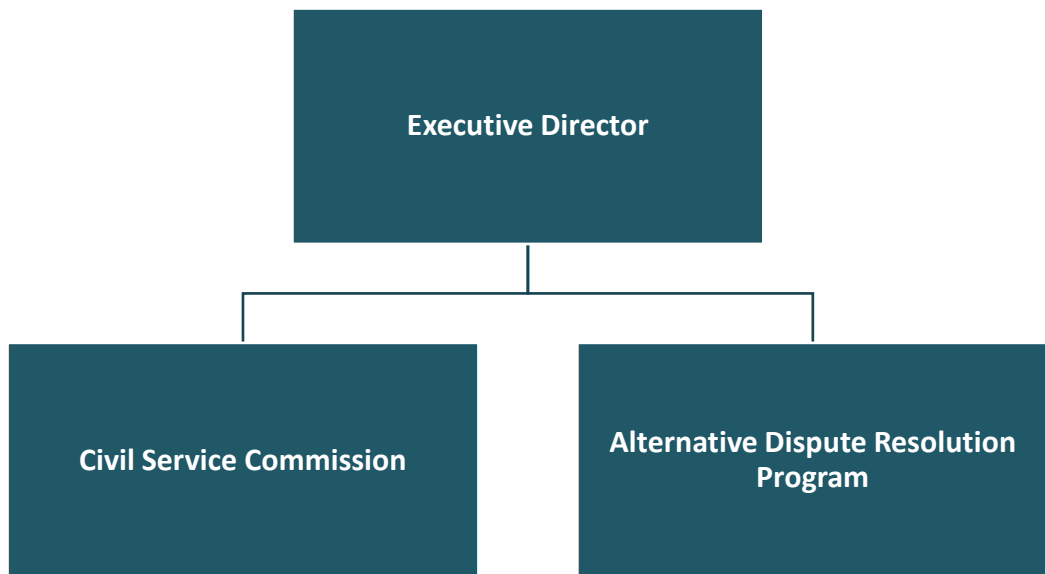
The Civil Service Commission (CSC or Commission) serves as an appellate hearing body to adjudicate employee grievances and reviews and conducts public hearings on proposed revisions to the Personnel Regulations. The CSC fosters the interests of civic, professional, and employee organizations and the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

The CSC endeavors to resolve grievances at the earliest possible opportunity, encourages mediation and settlement, and identifies and supports opportunities to train employees and management prior to Commission hearings.

The Commission hears grievances within 45 to 60 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. There are also extenuating circumstances that may require a longer timeframe, or the hearing is scheduled, and postponed and rescheduled at the request of one of the parties. During FY 2023 the CSC received 16 grievances involving final and binding decisions from the full Civil Service Commission and five 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 outlined 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. 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. With an increased focus on outreach, the number of employees impacted by the ADR program is anticipated to increase. 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. The greatest potential for improving efficiency and reduction of expenditures in most County agencies is providing employees with conflict competency tools and skills to utilize mediation and other ADR processes when there is conflict.

Organizational Chart



Budget and Staff Resources

| Category | FY 2023 Actual | FY 2024 Adopted | FY 2024 Revised | FY 2025 Advertised | FY 2025 Adopted |
|--|------------------|------------------|------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| FUNDING | | | | | |
| Expenditures: | | | | | |
| Personnel Services | \$322,563 | \$471,624 | \$471,624 | \$453,945 | \$453,945 |
| Operating Expenses | 30,165 | 66,186 | 66,186 | 66,186 | 66,186 |
| Total Expenditures | \$352,728 | \$537,810 | \$537,810 | \$520,131 | \$520,131 |
| AUTHORIZED POSITIONS/FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE) | | | | | |
| Regular | 4 / 4 | 4 / 4 | 4 / 4 | 3 / 3 | 3 / 3 |

FY 2025 Funding Adjustments

The following funding adjustments from the FY 2024 Adopted Budget Plan are necessary to support the FY 2025 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 7, 2024.

Employee Compensation \$19,921

An increase of \$19,921 in Personnel Services includes \$9,432 for a 2.00 percent market rate adjustment (MRA) for all employees and \$6,960 for performance-based and longevity increases for non-uniformed merit employees, both effective July 2024. The remaining increase of \$3,529 is included for employee pay increases for specific job classes identified in the County's benchmark class survey of comparator jurisdictions.

Reductions (\$37,600)

A decrease of \$37,600 and 1/1.0 FTE position reflects reductions utilized to balance the FY 2025 budget. The following table provides details on the specific reduction:

| Title | Impact | Positions | FTE | Reduction |
|--|---|-----------|-----|-----------|
| Eliminate Vacant Administrative Assistant Position | As a result of the County's shift to a hybrid in-office and telework policy, the Civil Service Commission has been able to streamline agency operations and realize efficiencies thus eliminating the need for this position. Since the position has been vacant for more than one year it is not anticipated this reduction will negatively impact the agency. | 1 | 1.0 | \$37,600 |

Changes to FY 2024 Adopted Budget Plan

The following funding adjustments reflect all approved changes in the FY 2024 Revised Budget Plan since passage of the FY 2024 Adopted Budget Plan. Included are all adjustments made as part of the FY 2023 Carryover Review, FY 2024 Third Quarter Review, and all other approved changes through April 30, 2024.

There have been no adjustments to this agency since approval of the FY 2024 Adopted Budget Plan.

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 2023 Actual | FY 2024 Adopted | FY 2024 Revised | FY 2025 Advertised | FY 2025 Adopted |
|--|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| EXPENDITURES | | | | | |
| Total Expenditures | \$174,384 | \$347,217 | \$347,217 | \$323,069 | \$323,069 |
| AUTHORIZED POSITIONS/FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE) | | | | | |
| Regular | 2 / 2 | 2 / 2 | 2 / 2 | 1 / 1 | 1 / 1 |

Alternative Dispute Resolution Program

This cost center consists of the Alternative Dispute Resolution program, 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 2023 Actual | FY 2024 Adopted | FY 2024 Revised | FY 2025 Advertised | FY 2025 Adopted |
|--|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| EXPENDITURES | | | | | |
| Total Expenditures | \$178,344 | \$190,593 | \$190,593 | \$197,062 | \$197,062 |
| AUTHORIZED POSITIONS/FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE) | | | | | |
| Regular | 2 / 2 | 2 / 2 | 2 / 2 | 2 / 2 | 2 / 2 |

Position Detail

The FY 2025 Adopted Budget Plan includes the following positions:

| | | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|-----------------------------------|--|
| CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION - 1 Position | | | | | |
| 1 | Executive Director | | 0 | Administrative Assistants IV [-1] | |
| ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROGRAM - 2 Positions | | | | | |
| 1 | Management Analyst IV | | 1 | Management Analyst II | |
| - | Denotes Abolished Position(s) due to Budget Reductions | | | | |

Performance Measurement Results by Community Outcome Area

Effective and Efficient Government

The Alternative Dispute Resolution program strives to provide at least 10 percent of Fairfax County employees with information, training, and neutral third-party services to prevent and resolve conflict in the workplace each year. A conflict competent workforce will excel in its ability to respond to conflict with beneficial outcomes, resulting in positive change and superior customer service to residents.

During FY 2023, ADR performed 140 conflict resolution sessions consisting of conflict coaching, team processes, restorative processes, facilitated dialogues, consultations, and intake sessions. Employees continue to express high levels of satisfaction with ADR services.

ADR continued its focus on creating tailored opportunities for employees to engage with ADR services. ADR staff facilitated 11 Team Process sessions including 340 participants and 19 training delivery hours. Team Processes are tailored to the specific needs of the team and begin with a request for ADR support from a supervisor or manager. ADR staff conduct the intake and assess the situation for various factors and intrateam dynamics to make sure ADR would add value. The general topics for these sessions included Strategies for Enhancing Team Interactions, Strategies for Enhancing Communication, and Managing Customer Interactions. Content shared with teams focused on managing emotions and triggers, identifying positions and interests, intentional use of “I” language, and asking purposeful questions.

The number of employees seeking conflict resolution services continues to fall below pre-pandemic numbers, with employees increasingly only seeking services when conflict has reached an unsustainable level. Parties at this point are often deeply entrenched in their positions and relationships are severely damaged, making it more challenging to resolve the conflict and repair the harm. As a result of the late interventions, only one-third of employees who received ADR services in FY 2023, reported improved relationships; however, participants did report high levels of satisfaction with the ADR service received. ADR will continue to employ various engagement and outreach strategies to encourage early intervention.

County employees may also take training to further enhance their skill set, thereby optimizing their performance and engaging in meaningful professional development. In addition to its core conflict management training, ADR offers the Supervisor Coffee Break training series to support supervisors as they manage interpersonal and team dynamics. In FY 2023, ADR delivered six training sessions including, “Tools for Giving Feedback,” “Active Listening and Summarizing Skills,” and “Asking Powerful Questions to Build Trust.” A total of 161 individuals attended one or more of these sessions. ADR staff also offered its “Tools for Effective Communication” series monthly, training a total of 537 individuals. Each session equips participants with a specific skill designed to help enhance communication and strengthen workplace relationships.

In FY 2023, ADR delivered a total of 39 trainings. Ninety-seven percent of participants completing surveys reported gaining key skills they could apply in their work, and 93 percent reported feeling more confident in addressing conflict. ADR staff trained 40 employees in mediation and conflict coaching skills, making them eligible to become peer mediators and conflict coaches.

Attention was dedicated to help maximize accessibility and inclusivity in all ADR trainings. Presentations were updated to include a more diverse representation of identities, modifying language as needed, sharing pronouns and inviting participants to do the same, and providing instruction on how to turn on live captions.

In addition to enhancing the portfolio of online ADR training and service delivery, staff focused on targeted outreach to agency leadership. Several agencies requested specialized team-building programs, and staff developed tailored presentations to meet the needs. These agency partnerships give employees direct interaction with ADR via supervisor guidance, as well as build avenues for employees to seek ADR services independently. With several new partnerships initiated in FY 2023, there are clear indicators of employees' increased awareness of the opportunities for support offered by the ADR office.

The ADR office provided several services in person during FY 2023 and will gradually resume in person training options for some of its course offerings. ADR recognizes the benefits of in person interaction and that all employees do not have access to workstations that allow for virtual participation; however, ADR will maintain virtual training as the primary training format based on the efficiencies it offers.

CSC and ADR are dedicated to ensuring equity in all aspects of programming. To conduct a complete and accurate self-assessment and identify potential barriers to equitable outcomes, the agency began collecting demographic data for those who interact with the office. The data will be used to inform engagement strategies as well as the development of training content. ADR also developed content highlighting the potential role and entry points of implicit bias in delivering ADR services and strategies for actively mitigating such biases. Beginning in FY 2024, the preparation and debrief for each ADR session includes discussion with ADR practitioners about implicit biases, thereby ensuring a consistent and intentional focus on equity, self-reflection, and timely use of intervention strategies. Additionally, ADR staff identified a variety of source materials to further research, evaluate, and incorporate in training content. ADR remains available to facilitate One Fairfax related conversations and provide training and support to other County agencies.

| Indicator | FY 2021 Actual | FY 2022 Actual | FY 2023 Estimate | FY 2023 Actual | FY 2024 Estimate | FY 2025 Estimate |
|---|----------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Effective and Efficient Government | | | | | | |
| Effective and Representative County and School Workforce | | | | | | |
| Employees participating in at least one aspect of the ADR Program | 1,633 | 2,193 | 1,800 | 2,607 | 1,800 | 1,800 |
| Percent of employee participation in conflict management process | 10.0% | 17.0% | 10.0% | 20.0% | 10.0% | 10.0% |
| Percent of trainees reporting increase in conflict competence | 87% | 95% | 75% | 97% | 75% | 75% |
| Customer Satisfaction with County Services | | | | | | |
| Average meetings required to adjudicate appeals | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |

performance measures can be viewed at <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/budget/fy-2025-adopted-performance-measures-pm>