



Fairfax County Employee Handbook



A Fairfax County, Va publication.
To request this information in an alternate format
call 703-324-3311.



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Welcome to Fairfax County! By almost any measure, this is a great place to work. Our talented, dedicated and innovative staff is committed to the ideals of public service and it is an honor for me to serve alongside you.

Our county is recognized as one of the best managed jurisdictions in the country and we are one of just a few counties nationwide with a Triple-A bond rating, underscoring our financial strength and stewardship.

To help you succeed in your career with Fairfax County, we provide valuable training and tools, including this guide. Whether you are a new or veteran employee, you can find the answers to your questions regarding your employment with the county. Please take some time to review the guide and become familiar with Fairfax County's code of ethics and standards of conduct, as well as your benefits, rights and responsibilities as an employee.

The strategic planning process we are engaged in will help ensure that Fairfax County continues to deliver excellent service while guiding change that helps us move forward. Underpinning all of our work, including our strategic plan, are the principles of One Fairfax, which ensures that we consider social and racial equity when making policies as we deliver programs and services to the great residents of Fairfax County.

Congratulations on your new position and I wish you every success in your career with Fairfax County.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Bryan Hill". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Introduction

Welcome to Fairfax County Government! We are excited you have chosen to join our organization and hope you will enjoy a long and successful career with us. As you become familiar with our culture and mission, we hope you will take advantage of our programs and training to enhance your career while serving the residents of Fairfax County. You are joining an organization with a reputation for outstanding leadership, expertise and service. Our employees use their creativity and talent to meet demands, and offer outstanding services. With your active involvement, creativity, and support, your agency will continue to achieve its goals. We sincerely hope you will take pride in being an important part of Fairfax County's success.

We wouldn't be Human Resources if we didn't tell you this handbook is intended to serve as a source of information about your employment with Fairfax County and is presented solely for informational purposes and is not a contract between Fairfax County and any of its employees. The employee handbook supersedes all prior policies or procedures as to the subjects addressed in this handbook. If you are provided information that conflicts with this handbook, the most up to date provisions of the handbook and/ or appropriate regulation or procedure will govern. While every effort has been made to ensure that the information in this handbook accurately reflects the pertinent laws, ordinances, regulations and policies as of the time of publication, provisions may be changed or cancelled at any time. Such changes, amendments or cancellations may be done with or without notice. Employees are responsible for staying informed of changes in those laws, ordinances, regulations, and policies. Your department may have specific workplace policies and procedures that govern your employment.

If you need further information or advice on the matters covered in this handbook, please contact your supervisor, department head, or the Department of Human Resources.

Cathy Spage, Director, Department of Human Resources
June 2019

Learning and Development (continued)

FOCUS Training

The FOCUS course enrollment is based on the business requirements of each position. Access to FOCUS is role-based and security access is only granted upon successfully completing the required training identified for a role in the system.

Each agency's management determines who will have what access, subject to separation of duties requirements. To request access after you have completed the required training, go to the Organizational Development and Training site (in the Learning dropdown on FairfaxNet) and complete the online form which will route for approval.

For more information on the different types of FOCUS training, search Employee U using "focus" as a keyword.

Tuition Assistance Program

The Department of Human Resources provides tuition reimbursement through its Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) and Language Tuition Assistance Program (LTAP) as funding allows.

TAP and LTAP are open to benefit-eligible employees. Course work must be career related and taken through an accredited institution.

For LTAP, the foreign language skill, including American Sign Language or English (if English is your second language), must be needed to perform your job and must be approved by the supervisor. Funds are awarded annually.

Instructions and application forms can be found on FairfaxNet. Employees selected to receive reimbursement must successfully complete their coursework with a grade of "C" or above.

Search "[Tuition Assistance Program](#)" on FairfaxNet for more information.

Learning and Development

E-Learning

Thousands of e-learning courses are available to all employees through Employee U. Topics include leadership, communications, generational journeys, feedback and more.

Much of the mandatory county training and some certification training is through e-learning. Please see the e-learning catalog on Employee U: <https://ffclearning.fairfaxcounty.gov/learnerpage.aspx>

Mandatory Training

Mandatory training is required for all new employees. New employees will learn introductory information such as benefits, policies and regulations that are essential for working in Fairfax County. This training also explores the county's mission, vision, desired behaviors and conduct, including opportunities to hear from the county's leadership.

These courses establish the foundation for continuous learning for all county employees. For training purposes, an employee within his/her first year of employment with Fairfax County Government should complete the mandatory training by the end of their six-month review. Please see Employee U for mandatory training requirements.

Leadership Tracks

HR's Organizational Development and Training Division offers all employees an easy "track" so they can select courses that match not only the Fairfax County competencies but fit into their career journey and goals. There are two tracks, one for professionals and one for supervisors. Both offer several courses that help with self-reflection, teambuilding and organizational savvy.

To learn more about the tracks, visit the OD&T webpage and start your career journey. Search "OD&T" on FairfaxNet for more information.

County History

One of the first people to record life in what is now Fairfax County was English explorer Captain John Smith. In 1608, he journeyed up the Potomac River as far as present-day Arlington County. In 1649, King Charles II of England granted all the land between the Rappahannock and Potomac rivers to a group of seven Englishmen. Eventually, in 1719, this land came into the possession of Thomas, sixth Lord Fairfax, after whom Fairfax County was named.

By 1732, there were attempts to form the land into a county, but it was not until 1741 that the Virginia Assembly, meeting in Williamsburg, created Fairfax County.

In 2017, Fairfax County celebrated its 275th anniversary with a series of commemorative events, videos and a visit from Lord Nicholas Fairfax, a direct descendent of Fairfax County's namesake.

A complete demographic view of the county is available at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/demographics/fairfax-county-general-overview.

Governance

Fairfax County operates under the urban county executive form of government. The powers of government are vested in an elected nine-member Board of Supervisors, plus a chairman elected at-large. Board members are elected for four-year terms. There are no term limits. The Board appoints the county executive, who is the administrative head of county government and is responsible for the administration of all county affairs under the Board's authority.

The County Executive's Office focuses on strategic planning, excellence in public service, fostering partnerships with our residents and community leaders, preparing the annual budget and executing all resolutions and orders of the Board.

For more information including upcoming meetings, reports and board priorities, go to www.fairfaxcounty.gov/boardofsupervisors/

Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct

It is the policy of Fairfax County Government to ensure that all employees observe the Code of Ethics and the Standards of Conduct and that all department heads and supervisors treat and discipline employees under their respective jurisdictions in a fair and equitable manner. Employees who feel they have not been so treated have a right to present their grievances following the procedures outlined in Chapter 17 of the Fairfax County Personnel Regulations: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hr/sites/hr/files/assets/documents/hr/chap17.pdf

Code of Ethics

Fairfax County's Code of Ethics is intended to inspire superior conduct, sensitivity and sound judgment. The code is intended to complement, not replace, professional codes of ethics. Employees are obligated to respect, honor and uphold the constitutions, laws and legal regulations, policies and procedures of the U.S., Virginia and Fairfax County. **The code is supported by six core principles:**

- **Honesty:** Be truthful in all endeavors; be honest and forthright with each other and the general public.
- **Public Service:** Ensure all actions taken and decisions made are in the best interest of the public and enrich and protect quality of life.
- **Respect:** Treat all individuals with dignity; be fair and impartial; affirm the value of diversity in the workplace and in Fairfax County; appreciate the uniqueness of each individual; create a work environment that enables all individuals to perform to the best of their abilities.
- **Responsibility:** Take responsibility for actions; work a full day; conduct all workplace actions with impartiality and fairness; report concerns in the workplace, including violations of laws, policies and procedures; seek clarification when in doubt; ensure that all decisions are unbiased.
- **Stewardship:** Exercise financial discipline with assets and resources; make accurate, clear and timely disclosures to the public; maintain accurate and complete records; demonstrate commitment to protecting entrusted resources.
- **Trust:** Build regard for one another through teamwork and open communication; develop confidence with the public by fulfilling commitments and delivering on promises.

Employee Assistance Program

Employee Assistance Program

For employees who experience problems such as family or marital difficulties, alcohol or drug abuse, mental health illness, financial or legal worries or job stress, the county offers a free, confidential Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to help with personal problems before they impact health, family life or job performance. Assessment, short-term counseling and referral for employees or family members is offered, along with work/life referral for child care, adoption, elder care, education planning, health and wellness, preventive medicine, pet services and more.

EAP counselors help assess and define the problem, offer support and understanding and give professional guidance and referral. Appointments can be made with counselors who have regular hours during the workweek. Employees may see a counselor during lunch, before or after work. If during working hours, employees must use personal leave. For more info search “[Employee Assistance Program](#)” on FairfaxNet.

EAC and ADR

Employees Advisory Council

The Employees Advisory Council (EAC) is the county's recognized employee group established by statute to represent all county employees. The EAC provides a means for all employees in the competitive service to contribute input for the improvement of the career merit system and other aspects of Fairfax County Government. Employees do not pay dues to belong to the EAC. For more information on the EAC, visit the website at www.fceac.org/

Alternative Dispute Resolution

The county's Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) program supports effective, collaborative working relationships, promotes positive and productive workplace behaviors and encourages the use of conflict resolution techniques. ADR processes are confidential. For more information search “[ADR](#)” on FairfaxNet.

Benefits (continued)

Health Savings Account

A video on the county's use of HSAs can be viewed at: http://www.ebmcdn.net/fairfax/fairfax-cable-viewer.php?w=768&h=432&viewnode=fctn_hsa_plan_sep_16

LiveWell and the Employee Fitness & Wellness Center

LiveWell is the county's employee and retiree well-being program. LiveWell empowers, educates and engages county employees and retirees to make life-long choices that promote total well-being—physical, mental, emotional, social, spiritual and financial. LiveWell offers workshops, webinars, special events, screenings and health fairs. The Employee Fitness & Wellness Center, at the Government Center, offers health and fitness services for employees and their family members featuring state-of-the-art equipment, classes, personal training, locker rooms and special events. LiveWell also includes the MotivateMe program, encouraging participants to actively engage in their health and wellbeing through a relationship with their primary care provider, educational activities, and screenings. More information on the MotivateMe program is available on the LiveWell home page. For more information on LiveWell search “LiveWell” and for more information on the employee fitness & wellness center search “EFWC” on FairfaxNet.

Fairfax County Retirement Systems

The county provides employees with financial support beyond their working years. There are three systems:

- Employees' Retirement System: Covers full-time general county employees, part-time merit employees who work 20 hours or more per week, and some School System employees.
- Police Officers' Retirement System: Covers all sworn police officers.
- Uniformed Retirement System: Covers all uniformed employees of the Fire and Rescue Department, Sheriff's Office, helicopter pilots, animal protection police officers, and certain employees of the Department of Public Safety Communications.

More information is at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/retirement/

Standards of Conduct

All employees, regardless of grade, title or length of county service, **are expected to adhere to the following Standards of Conduct**. Violation of the Standards of Conduct is grounds for disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

Leave and Attendance

Employees are expected to:

- Comply with rules and regulations governing hours of work, absences, use of leave.

Employees are prohibited from:

- Failing to report to work as scheduled without proper notice to supervisor.
- Leaving work without permission.
- Arriving late for work on a consistent basis.

Personal Behavior and Conduct

Employees are expected to:

- Demonstrate professionalism and support the county's commitment to excellent customer service at all times.
- Exercise courtesy, respect and tact when dealing with fellow employees and the public regardless of age, race, color, religion, sex, creed, national origin, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, genetic information, union or political affiliation, veterans' status, disabled veterans' status or any other factor unrelated to the impartial conduct of county business.
- Comply with a proper order of an authorized supervisor.

Employees are prohibited from:

- Harassing employees, county vendors or members of the public on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, age, marital status, disability, genetic information or any other characteristic now or hereafter protected by federal, state or county law. The prohibition includes, but is not limited to, sexual harassment.

Standards of Conduct (continued)

- Engaging in rude or unprofessional behavior or disorderly conduct even if the behavior is not expressly forbidden by regulation or law.
- Engaging in bullying, as defined in Chapter 2 of the Fairfax County Personnel Regulations.
- Using racial, sexist or ethnic slurs or other language that disparages any person on the basis of age, race, color, religion, sex, national origin, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, creed, genetic information, union or political affiliation, veterans' status or disabled veterans' status.
- Being convicted of a crime that is committed on the job or a felony in Virginia of such nature that the public or other employees may be endangered if the employee remains in his or her position or of such nature that reasonably undermines the public trust in the employee's ability to perform his or her duties.
- Engaging in conduct on or off duty that violates federal or state law, county ordinances or policies when the violation is related to the employee's activity as a county employee or to county business or when it undermines public trust in the county or the employee's ability to perform his or her duties.
- Manufacturing, distributing, possessing, using or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs while at work or on county premises with the exception of attendance at events where alcohol is permitted during off-duty hours.
- Threatening, assaulting, intimidating or harassing another employee or a member of the public.
- Using obscene language toward fellow employees, supervisors, subordinates and/or members of the public.
- Abusing supervisory authority through favoritism, harassment, discrimination or mistreatment of employees.

Benefits (continued)

automatically for all employees who enroll with medical insurance coverage. Employees have 30 days from hire date or date of benefit eligibility to enroll in the county health insurance plans. Get customized health care plan options at <https://www.myalex.com/fairfaxcounty/>

Dental Insurance

Dental insurance is available to Fairfax County employees at group rates. The county's plan provides comprehensive coverage for in- and out-of-network providers. New employees have 30 days from hire date to enroll in dental coverage. The county contributes a percentage of the premium cost for all levels of coverage.

Group Life Insurance

Fairfax County pays for basic group term life insurance, equal to one times your annual salary, for all benefit eligible merit employees. In addition, you may elect optional coverage during your first 30 days of employment equal to one, two, three or four times your annual salary. Optional coverage, up to two times your annual salary, is guaranteed if elected within this period. After this period, you may still request optional coverage during open enrollment, however, you will be required to provide proof of good health. There are also two levels of optional spouse/dependent term life insurance coverage available.

Flexible Spending Account

Fairfax County employees can participate in two flexible spending accounts: the Dependent Care and Healthcare Flexible Spending Accounts. These accounts allow you to set aside funds on a pre-tax basis to reimburse yourself for out-of-pocket dependent care (daycare) or medical expenses for you and your eligible dependents. Because the dollars you place in these accounts are taken out of your pay before taxes, you lower your taxable income, saving on Social Security taxes and state and federal income taxes. Find more information in the Employee Center dropdown on FairfaxNet.

Work Hours/Time and Attendance (continued)

Final and Annual/Compensatory Leave Payoff

When leaving Fairfax County employment, you will receive your final pay according to the biweekly pay schedule. The payment for annual and compensatory leave balances will be received on the payday following receipt of your final pay. This payoff will be deposited in your bank account via direct deposit. You will not be paid for unused sick leave. However, if you have separated from county employment in good standing and return to county employment in a merit position within one year of your separation, your sick leave balance will be reinstated. You are responsible for repaying, at the time of separation from county service, any outstanding advance sick leave or overpayment received at the time of termination, unless county service has ended due to full disability or death. Questions concerning final pay, leave payoff or outstanding amount owed may be directed to your payroll contact or the Payroll Division of the Department of Human Resources.

Benefits

Complete information on county benefits can be found by searching “[benefits](#)” on FairfaxNet.

Medical and Vision Insurance

Informational materials for the medical plans offered by the county are available on FairfaxNet, Benefits Division of the Department of Human Resources. You should familiarize yourself with this information and choose the benefits that best suit your needs.

The Benefits Division provides a New Employee Orientation class that is mandatory training for all new county merit employees. This class provide a wealth of information on new employee benefits.

The county pays for a significant portion of insurance coverage, regardless of the plan chosen. The remainder of the premium is deducted from your paycheck, pre-tax. Vision benefits are included

Standards of Conduct (continued)

Protection and Proper Use of County Data, Property, Funds and Records

Employees are expected to:

- Use public property, resources and funds in accordance with established procedures.
- Maintain confidentiality with regard to client or customer information in accordance with state and federal law, county ordinance and county policy.
- Maintain employee confidentiality by preventing the disclosure of personal information to any unauthorized party.

Employees are prohibited from:

- Using county data, facilities, equipment, property or employees for other than officially approved activities, except as permitted under county policy or procedure.
- Engaging in any action prohibited by county information technology policy or procedure.
- Carelessly or willfully causing destruction of county property.
- Knowingly falsifying or conspiring to falsify any county record or report whether paper or electronic, (e.g., resume, time and attendance reports, workers’ compensation claims, travel and/or expense vouchers).

Driving

Employees are expected to:

- Operate all county vehicles in accordance with federal, state and local driving laws.
- Operate privately owned vehicles being used in the performance of county business in accordance with state and local driving laws.
- Remain aware of status of operator’s license and report any suspension or revocation of driving privileges to their supervisor immediately if job duties require the operation of a vehicle for county business.

Standards of Conduct (continued)

Employees are prohibited from:

- Knowingly operating a vehicle on county business without a valid operator's license.
- Possessing, using or being under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs or prescription drugs that might adversely affect one's ability to drive, while driving a county vehicle or while driving a personal vehicle on county business.

Safety

Employees are expected to:

- Promote a safe and healthy working environment by complying with all appropriate safety and health regulations.
- Promptly report safety and health hazards so that they can be corrected before injuries result.
- Dress in appropriate attire, uniform or safety equipment as specified by the standards and work rules for the agency and position.
- Immediately report workplace violence to your supervisor or appropriate authority.

Employees are prohibited from:

- Bringing a gun, either concealed or displayed, to work or onto county premises, with the exception that employees of county agencies may store a lawfully possessed firearm and ammunition in a locked motor vehicle on county premises. This prohibition shall apply to all employees, except those authorized to carry a firearm at work or onto county premises based on the nature of their work. Such employees may do so only if specifically authorized by their appointing authority.
- Bringing any weapon (except a gun as expressly permitted above), either concealed or displayed, to work or onto county premises, unless specifically authorized to do so by the appointing authority.
- For the purposes of this standard of conduct, the term weapon

Work Hours/Time and Attendance (continued)

- a. Less than three years of service receive four (4) hours, equivalent to 13 eight-hour workdays per year.
- b. Three (3) years but less than fifteen (15) years receive six (6) hours, equivalent to 19.5 eight-hour workdays per year.
- c. Fifteen (15) and greater years of service receive eight (8) hours, equivalent to 26 eight-hour workdays per year.

Merit employees with scheduled hours other than 80 hours per pay period shall receive leave prorated per total scheduled hours. Employees working in more than one merit position will accrue annual leave in all positions.

Sick Leave

Sick leave shall be used in accordance with Fairfax County Personnel Regulations.

For most full-time merit county employees, sick leave is earned at a rate of four hours per pay period, equivalent to 13 eight-hour workdays per year.

Injury Leave

Injury leave is a county benefit that continues the full salary of an injured employee by paying the difference between the employee's Workers' Compensation entitlement and county salary. This is a county employee benefit, which is not required by the Workers' Compensation Act or any other state or federal law.

Chapter 10 of the Fairfax County Personnel Regulations and associated Personnel Payroll Administration Policies and Procedures outline the types of leave granted to county employees and the appropriate rules that govern the application of leave policies. www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hr/sites/hr/files/assets/documents/hr/chap10.pdf

Work Hours/Time and Attendance (continued)

Time and Attendance

All employees are paid and earn leave based on data recorded in the FOCUS system. Misrepresentation of an employee's regular schedule, leave or overtime is cause for discipline up to and including dismissal. Paid leave and overtime worked are authorized only in accordance with the provisions of the Personnel Regulations and related official memoranda from the Department of Human Resources. Agency management is responsible for having procedures in place that ensure compliance with county time and attendance regulations.

Time Entry and Approvals

Time data may be entered by the employee, a supervisor/manager, a designated supervisor/manager delegate, a timekeeper or the department's payroll contact. Refer questions to your supervisor or agency payroll contact.

Leave

Leave is any authorized absence during regularly scheduled work hours that has been approved by proper authority. Leave may be authorized with or without pay. Absence without approval is considered unauthorized absence.

All merit employees are encouraged to take annual leave earned. During the year, careful consideration shall be given to the desire and needs of employees in the granting of annual leave. Department heads or designees shall grant leave in accordance with these rules based on the work requirements in the department, and whenever possible, the personal wishes of the employee.

Annual Leave

During pay periods in which a merit employee is in paid status for at least one hour, annual leave shall be credited per scheduled hours. Incumbents in positions with 80 scheduled work hours per pay period will receive the following annual leave credits per pay period, based on length of service:

Standards of Conduct (continued)

includes instruments of combat or any object carried for the purpose of inflicting or threatening bodily injury.

Outside Employment/Conflict of Interest/Political Activities

Employees are expected to:

- Disqualify themselves in any decision where a conflict of interest may be presumed to exist.
- Obtain permission from their appointing authority prior to engaging in private business activity, employment or other activity outside of work that conflicts or interferes with full discharge of their official duties or the work they perform as a county employee.

Employees are prohibited from:

- Accepting anything of value for performing or refraining from performing, an official job-related act or accepting anything of value in order to assist another person in obtaining a county job, promotion or contract.
- Using information obtained in connection with county employment in order to obtain financial gain for the employee or others.
- Accepting anything that might tend to influence the manner of performance of county employment or that might be intended to influence the manner in which an employee performs his or her job.
- Having a personal interest in any contract with the county.
- Participating in matters related to their employment in which the interests of the county employee or the interests of the county employee's family members or business associates, might be affected.
- Engaging in political activities, as defined in state law and county ordinance, while on duty, in uniform or on the premises of their employment with the county, except when engaging in those activities is permitted by County Code § 3-1-19.
- Using their official authority to coerce or attempt to coerce a

Standards of Conduct (continued)

subordinate employee to pay, lend or contribute anything of value to a political party, candidate or campaign or to discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of that person's political affiliations or participation in permitted political activities or failure to participate in political activities, except when the affiliation or activity may be established by law as disqualification for employment.

- Discriminating in the provision of public services, including, but not limited to, firefighting, emergency medical or law enforcement services or responding to requests for such services, on the basis of the political affiliation or political activities of the person or organization for which such services are provided or requested.
- Suggesting or implying that the county has officially endorsed a political party, candidate or campaign.

Each employee will:

- Observe the Code of Ethics, Standards of Conduct and other workplace rules.
- Conduct him/herself, both on and off the job, in a manner which will reflect credit on the county government and respective departments.

Department heads and supervisors will:

- Inform employees of rules governing conduct and discipline as well as other workplace rules and special requirements.
- Treat employees in a fair and equitable manner.
- Investigate apparent employee offenses, by following the county's policy on harassment, discrimination, and retaliation; (Search "OHREP" on FairfaxNet.)
- Administer appropriate disciplinary action when warranted and as described in Chapter 16 of the Fairfax County Personnel Regulations: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hr/sites/hr/files/assets/documents/hr/chap16.pdf.
- Consult with the HR Director or designees if necessary where disciplinary action involving loss of pay is contemplated.

Work Hours/Time and Attendance (continued)

Overtime Pay

On occasion, job demands may require work to be performed beyond the scheduled working hours. Fairfax County policy makes supervisors accountable for directing and permitting subordinates to work beyond their scheduled hours. Managers are responsible for approving in advance (verbally or in writing) all employee overtime. When advance approval of overtime is not possible, supervisory approval should be obtained and documented, to the extent possible, within one business day of the employee's overtime. If required to work more than normally scheduled hours, eligible employees receive compensation in the form of overtime pay or compensatory time earned, as determined by the Fair Labor Standards Act, county Personnel Regulations and associated procedural memoranda.

Compensatory Time

Compensatory time is earned and credited to an employee's records based on actual hours worked more than the employee's scheduled hours. FLSA eligible employees who earn compensatory time for FLSA overtime hours worked (as defined in Chapter 4, Personnel Regulations: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hr/sites/hr/files/assets/documents/hr/chap4.pdf.) shall accrue 1.5 hours of compensatory time for each overtime hour worked. All other compensatory time shall be accrued on an hour-for-hour basis. Compensatory time off for overtime worked shall be granted upon request of the employee, when approved by the department head or designee.

Holidays

Holidays observed by the county are granted to merit employees with pay, unless such employees are required to be on scheduled duty. The Board of Supervisors may also set aside other days as holidays.

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Jr's Day
- George Washington's Birthday
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Columbus Day
- Veterans Day
- Thanksgiving and following day
- Christmas Day

Pay Structure FAQs continued

A: If funding is available and the employee passes their performance evaluation, the employee will receive both the MRA and a performance increase each year. However, if the employee is at maximum of their salary range, they will only receive the MRA.

Q: If the plan cannot be fully funded, what is the priority for which increases are funded?

A: The Board adopted guidelines to consider in years where full funding may not be possible. Adjustments would first be made to the MRA, for all employees. If reductions must be made, the MRA will be reduced from full to partial to no MRA funding, depending on affordability. If merit performance increases and longevity increases cannot be funded in full, but some funding is available, consideration will be given to an across-the-board increase to pay ranges and salaries for all employees (Public Safety and General County).

Work Hours/Time and Attendance

Working Hours

Working hours depend on the type of job you are doing. Most full-time employees are scheduled to work 40 hours per week. Because of the nature of various department activities, schedules for workdays and lunch periods vary.

Every employee is entitled to two 15-minute breaks during an eight-hour workday. In some departments, these breaks are combined with a 30-minute unpaid lunch to permit an hour for a lunch break. Your supervisor will explain the schedule for your job. The start and end time of a workday is defined by the agency.

Supervisory approval is required for any changes to workday schedules. You are expected to arrive on time and remain at work during established hours. If you are unable to report to work, notify your supervisor as soon as possible, in accordance with the policies of your department.

Employment Status

County employment is divided into competitive and non-competitive service. Competitive positions include those filled in accordance with merit principles outlined in the Fairfax County Personnel Regulations and are afforded specific rights, responsibilities and protections. Employees in non-merit positions (generally including part-time and political appointees) are only entitled to such rights and benefits specifically provided for in the Code of Virginia, the County Code, Fairfax County Personnel Regulations, an appointment resolution passed by the Board of Supervisors or procedural directives such as [Procedural Memorandum 11-01: Exempt Service](#), issued by the County Executive. (Search “exempt service” on FairfaxNet.)

Probationary Period

Upon initial appointment to a merit position within Fairfax County Government, you must successfully complete a 12-month probationary period. This provides the opportunity for you to evaluate your job suitability or fit and for your supervisor to assess your performance. Police officers, deputy sheriffs, animal protection police officers, public safety communicators and firefighters begin their probationary periods after successfully completing the training academies. The department head may terminate an employee’s appointment during this period if they are unable or unwilling to perform their duties satisfactorily. You have limited appeal rights during this probationary period.

Performance Management

Performance management is designed to be a year-round partnership between you and your supervisor with continuous communication throughout the planning, coaching, reviewing and rewarding phases. Performance management considers “what” you accomplish over the review period as well as “how” you go about accomplishing your work. Each employee is evaluated on a set of countywide behaviors that apply to all county employees, regardless of position. Additionally, employees are evaluated on competencies related to duties performed in their job. Newly hired or promoted

Performance Management (continued)

employees are evaluated after six and 12 months in the new position. Thereafter, unless you are promoted, performance reviews are conducted annually and used to identify strengths as well as areas for improvement in your work.

If you have questions regarding performance requirements, ask your supervisor for clarification. Additional performance management information can be found by searching “[DHR Performance Management](#)” on FairfaxNet.

Performance Pay Increases

In years when performance pay increases are funded, employees in their initial probationary period (hired prior to April 1) are eligible to receive the full performance pay increase granted to merit staff. Initial appointees hired April 1 or later are not eligible to receive performance pay increases until the next annual cycle. This designation does not apply to market rate adjustments (MRAs) and across-the-board pay increases.

All employees receiving performance-based increases are expected to be performing satisfactorily, including initial probationary staff. Probationary employees, eligible for the performance increase based on hire date, may be denied the increase if documented performance problems exist. Pay increases for employees who were promoted during the review period will be calculated based on the higher (promotional) salary. No prorating will be applied. Questions may be directed to your agency HR manager or payroll contact.

MRAs, across-the-board increases and longevity increases are not tied to the performance management process. Merit performance pay increases will be granted based on where the employee's current salary is within their pay range. Non-merit employees are not automatically eligible to receive performance increases. Pay increase decisions for non-merit employees are at the discretion of the department head.

Pay Structure FAQs continued

or 25 years of service?

A: Longevity increases are given every July to all employees reaching 20 or 25 years by June 30 of that year. Employees reaching those milestones on July 1 or later will receive the longevity increase the following fiscal year.

Q: Once an employee reaches the maximum salary in their pay range, will they continue to be eligible to receive MRAs, performance increases or longevity increases?

A: Once an employee is at the maximum of their pay range, they will only receive the MRA, if funded, since it moves the pay range and the employee's salary. Employees at the top of their pay range will not be eligible for performance or longevity increases.

Q: If a merit employee is eligible for a four percent longevity increase, do they also receive a performance increase that same year?

A: No. The longevity increase is in lieu of a performance increase.

Q: If an employee has more than 25 years of service, what longevity increases can they expect?

A: The longevity increase at 25 years of service is the final longevity increase for eligible employees.

Q: Will an employee get a longevity increase even if they did not pass their performance evaluation?

A: Yes. Longevity increases are intended to recognize employees for their overall contributions across many years of service.

Years When Pay Increases Cannot Be Fully Funded

Q: Will employees get the MRA and performance increase (or longevity) increase every year?

Pay Structure FAQs (continued)

Q: Who is eligible to receive an MRA?

A: All merit and non-merit employees will receive the MRA when funded. Employees participating in the DROP program are eligible to receive the MRA. (Note that while DROP participants are eligible to receive the MRA, the increase does not increase the salary basis used to calculate retirement payments.)

Q: In what order are increases applied?

A: The MRA is applied, then the performance or longevity increase.

Q: When will MRA and step increases be applied?

A: For most years, the MRA will be applied to all eligible employees in Pay Period 15. Step increases are given each pay period based on the employee's next increase date.

General Information About the Longevity Increase and Employee Eligibility

Q: How large is the longevity increase and is it a lump sum bonus payment or an increase to base pay?

A: The longevity increase is a four percent increase to the employee's base pay up to the maximum of the pay range.

Q: What date is used to determine years of service for the longevity increase?

A: The leave accrual date is used to calculate years of service. This is the same date used to calculate years of service for public safety longevity increases and represents continuous years of service with less than a one year break in service. See your agency payroll contact or HR manager if you have questions about your leave accrual date.

Q: When are longevity increases given to employees reaching 20

Promotion Policy

A promotion is a selection to fill a position through the competitive process in a class with a higher paygrade. It is the policy of Fairfax County Government to provide a career service for its employees, which encourages individual development and acquisition of skills and experience. In the competitive service, individuals must go through a competitive process (i.e., competitive examining), which is open to all qualified applicants. This process may consist of a written test, an evaluation of the individual's education and experience, and/or an evaluation of other attributes necessary for successful performance in the position to be filled. Search "[job application guidelines and tips](#)" on www.fairfaxcounty.gov for more information

Compensation

Pay Plans

Pay plans are approved by the Board of Supervisors. Fairfax County has seven pay plans for its employees and they are as follows:

- S (General County Employees)
- L (Lawyers in the County Attorney's Office)
- E (Executive)
- C (Uniformed Sheriff)
- F (Uniformed Fire/Rescue)
- O (Uniformed Police)
- P (Public Safety Communicators, Animal Protection Police Officers)

The pay range for your position depends on the grade level for your classification. The grade level for every class of work in the county is listed on the Classification Plan for the appropriate year. Your payroll contact can explain how to read the current Classification Plan and Compensation Plan.

Paydays

Payday is every other Friday. The pay period covers the two-week period that ends two weeks prior to payday. There are 26 pay periods in most calendar years. To view the pay periods, search "Pay Period

Compensation (continued)

Reference Chart” on FairfaxNet. The length of time that elapses before new employees receive their first pay depends on the day within the pay period that they begin work.

Employees typically receive pay for their first two weeks on the job four weeks after their start date. The department payroll contact can tell new employees when to expect their first pay.

Direct Deposit

The county provides electronic funds transfer (EFT) for direct deposit of your biweekly pay into your financial institution account. All new employees are required to participate in direct deposit. Employees can obtain a direct deposit authorization form from their department payroll contact or on the HR Payroll FairfaxNet page. (Find in the Employee Center dropdown on FairfaxNet.)

Pay Structure FAQs

Q: What components are included under the general county merit employees’ pay structure?

A: The plan design, when fully funded, includes:

- Market rate adjustment (MRA).
- Performance increase.
- Longevity increase for employees who reach 20 and 25 years of service, (paid in lieu of the performance increase).

Q: What pay plans are affected by this pay structure?

A: The pay structure governs pay for employees on the S pay scale (General County, Civilian Public Safety) and L pay scale (Lawyers in the County Attorney’s Office). It does not apply to Uniformed Public Safety Employees. Pay scale S and L employees participating in the Deferred Retirement Option Plan program are covered.

Q: How are performance increase amounts determined?

A: Merit performance pay increases are granted based on where the employee’s current salary is within their pay range. (Non-merit employees are not automatically eligible to receive performance increases. Increase decisions for non-merit employees are at the discretion of the department head, following established procedures for processing increases.)

Q: What calculation is used to determine the employee’s current percent standing within their pay range?

A: Calculation to be used: $100 * (\text{current hourly rate} - \text{minimum hourly}) / (\text{maximum hourly} - \text{minimum hourly})$.

This will be rounded to the nearest tenth of a percent.

Position on Pay Plan		Performance Increase Eligible
Greater than or Equal to	Less Than	
0%	15%	3.00%
15%	30%	2.50%
30%	45%	2.00%
45%	60%	1.75%
60%	75%	1.50%
75%	100%	1.25% (or until hit maximum)

Q: Does Employee Self-Service (ESS) in FOCUS provide employees information about their pay range?

A: Yes. The field titled “Percent in Pay Range” can be found in the Organizational Assignment and Salary Data tab in ESS.

Q: Does only merit service count toward the length of service for longevity increases? How is time calculated for those with breaks in service or for reemployed annuitants? Do periods of part-time service impact the calculation?

A: Longevity increases are calculated based on the employee’s leave accrual date, which represents continuous merit service with breaks in service of less than one year. Part-time merit service does count. Service before retirement will not count for reemployed annuitants. Exempt/non-merit service does not count.