



RESIDENTS GUIDE TO THE DEPARTMENT OF CODE COMPLIANCE

WHAT DOES CODE COMPLIANCE DO?

The mission of the Department of Code Compliance (DCC) 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.

DCC is based on a combination of traditional staff alignments in code enforcement combined with the development of teams comprised of staff proficient in all aspects of code enforcement. Each team is comprised of a Division Supervisor and specialists in Zoning, Property Maintenance, Building Code, Fire and Health as well as support from law enforcement staff. Management of the DCC is under the control and guidance of the Director and the systems operations were divided into three categories, Field Operations, Code Authority/Strategic Initiatives and Administration.

DCC cites thousands of violations yearly dealing with issues ranging from multiple dwellings/overcrowding to overgrown lawns. In the vast majority of these cases compliance is achieved voluntarily, but in some cases legal action must be taken to abate the violation.

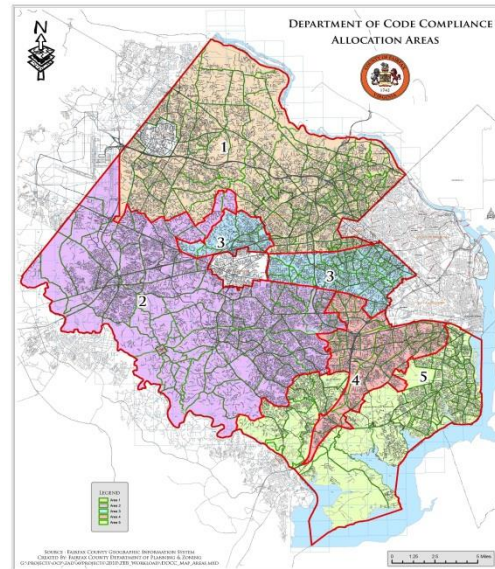
Some of the most common issues dealt with by DCC are:

- Overcrowding
- Multiple Dwellings
- Business in Residential Districts
- Outside Storage
- Inoperable Automobiles/Commercial Vehicles
- Junk/Storage Yards
- Blighted dwelling
- Hoarding
- Unpermitted Construction
- Emergency Egress
- Unsafe Bedrooms
- Faulty Electrical Systems
- Unsanitary Conditions
- Vacant and Unsecured Dwellings

FIELD OPERATIONS:

Field Operations has been constructed in five geographically-based teams of investigators assembled in a manner that fosters assistance and coordination with the local Police district stations and enhances connections to Board of Supervisors member offices. Under this structure, multi-disciplined teams of investigators are

concentrated in areas that have demonstrated a higher number of complaints while simultaneously reducing the number of direct reports to the team supervisor, allowing for greater efficiencies and effectiveness in case management, staff discussions, and quality control.



The Call Center and Field Operations work closely together throughout the complaint process, from intake, investigation, compliance and prosecution if necessary, to case resolution and closure. Field Operations staff provides an *Investigator of the Day* role to help Customer Call Center staff answer challenging questions and issues that customers might have. Call Center staff support the investigators in their case preparation, documentation, sending legal notices, administration of Virginia Freedom of Information Act requests, and many other aspects of work.

CENTRAL INTAKE:

County residents have clearly stated that they want a simple and quick way to make complaints; one that is straightforward, transparent, and easy to navigate. Once a complaint is submitted, they want to make sure the problem is resolved. To this end, one highlight of DCC is that it is centrally responsible for customer service intake and administrative support for the Codes within their assigned programs. DCC does not serve as the call center for all service requests in the County; each individual department maintains its own intake system. However by consolidating intake processes from multiple agencies relating to neighborhood safety issues and by enhancing the County's Web based system, DCC is in a position to better support its customers by creating more of an integrated call center approach. This has improved

customer satisfaction and support by reducing calls that, formerly, needed to be transferred to another agency or agencies. The Customer Call Center and Documentation Unit serves a very important role in this new organization as the first point of contact for customer questions and concerns, whether in person, online or over the phone. It is paramount to be able to interface with customers in order for DCC staff to fully understand the nature of the complaint, including when it occurs, any prior history, people or companies involved. The Call Center responded to over an estimated 19,000 total calls and 4,074 Web complaints in FY 2011, resulting in the creation of nearly 8,900 service requests within DCC.

SPECIAL INVESTIGATIVE UNIT:

In order to meet changing trends in neighborhood issues, DCC from its beginning has maintained a Special Investigative Unit (SIU) staffed by highly trained investigators who deal primarily with "after hours" activity in the commercial areas of the County. This SIU group coordinates its activities with the Police Department, Fire and Rescue, Alcohol Beverage Control Board, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Immigration Services and other state and federal agencies. SIU operates primarily on weekends after 10 pm and is staffed by DCC investigators who also maintain their normal caseload. SIU has been successful in bringing those illegal commercial activities, which present a danger to the public, due to code violations, into compliance or eliminated their operation due to continued violations.

PUBLIC OUTREACH:

In FY 2011, DCC staff made a concentrated effort to provide information regarding the County's enforcement efforts to both the general public and our sister agencies in an effort to educate our stakeholders of our mission and capabilities. Our outreach efforts involved over a dozen presentations to both Homeowners and Civic Associations. To schedule a presentation for your neighborhood association please feel free to contact us at 703-324-1300.

HOW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT:

If you wish to make a complaint to the Department of Code Compliance this can be done in the following ways:

By Telephone: 703-324-1300, TTY 711. When calling, be prepared to describe the situation, give your name, address, phone number and the best time to contact you.

In Person: 12055 Government Center Parkway, Suite 1016 from 8 am to 4:30 pm Monday through Thursday and from 9:15 am to 4:00 pm Fridays.

On-Line: Fairfax County Department of Code Compliance
<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/code/>

Upon receipt of your complaint, staff may:

- Contact you if additional information is needed prior to conducting the inspection.
- Take action if violations are found to gain compliance in a reasonable amount of time.

We look forward to working with you to keep our neighborhoods vibrant, clean and wonderful places in which to live.

STATUS OF A COMPLAINT:

You may check the status of your complaint or the complaint history of a property on line at:
<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/code/>

IMPORTANT CONTACT NUMBERS:

Department of Code Compliance
12055 Government Center Parkway
Suite 1016 Herrity Building
Fairfax, Virginia 22035
703-324-1300, TTY 711
<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes>

Police/Fire Non-Emergency
703-691-2131

Health Department
703-246-2300 TTY 703-591-6435

Virginia Department of Transportation
703-383-8368, TTY 1-800-432-1843



Fairfax County is committed to nondiscrimination on the basis of disability in all county programs, services and activities. Reasonable accommodations will be provided upon request. For information, call 703-324-1300, The Department of Code Compliance, TTY 711.
<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov> **2/1/2012**