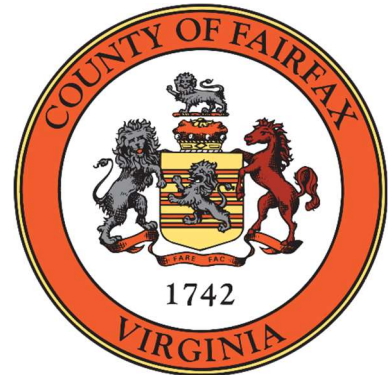


County of Fairfax

COVID-19 Pandemic After Action Report and Improvement Plan



FINAL
03/01/2023

This page intentionally left blank.

Contents

Executive Summary v

1. Introduction 1

2. History of the COVID-19 Pandemic in Fairfax County..... 1

3. Incident Timeline 6

4. Perspectives from the Deputy County Executives, the Chief Financial Officer, and the Chief Equity Officer 9

5. Government Operations..... 23

 Multiagency Coordination and Collaboration 23

 Changes to Countywide Programs and Policies..... 23

 Financial Recovery Efforts..... 27

6. Community Support during the COVID-19 Response 28

 Communications to County Residents..... 28

 Support for County Residents..... 28

 Support to Non-Profits..... 30

 Support to Private Sector..... 31

7. Capabilities Analysis—Strengths, Areas for Improvement, and Recommendations for Moving Forward 34

 Planning..... 35

 Logistics and Supply Chain Management 43

 Operational Coordination 46

 Infrastructure 53

 Operational Communications..... 56

 Special Focus: Equity..... 61

8. Surveys Summaries 65

 County Agency Employees Survey Responses Summary 66

 Community Input Survey 73

Businesses Survey Responses Summary..... 78

Community-based Organizations Survey Responses Summary 82

Appendix 1—Acronyms/Terms and Definitions..... 87

Appendix 2—Health Department AAR Summary..... 91

Appendix 3—Fairfax County COVID-19 Response Highlights..... 97

Appendix 4—Comprehensive Timeline 101

Appendix 5—Report Methodology 107

 Stakeholders in the Review..... 107

 Fairfax County Agency Employees Survey Questions..... 111

 Community Input Survey Questions 113

 Community-Based Organizations Survey Questions 119

 Businesses Survey Questions..... 122

Appendix 6—Improvement Plan 131

Reference 1: Fairfax County Board of Supervisors COVID-19 Actions 147

Reference 2: Virginia COVID-19 Related Executive Orders 159

Reference 3: Federal COVID-19 Related Proclamations and Executive Orders 163

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Incident Name	County of Fairfax, COVID-19, Global Coronavirus Pandemic
Dates	January 22, 2020 – March 1, 2023
Scope	This AAR covers the response to the COVID-19 ¹ Global Coronavirus Pandemic by all agencies in Fairfax County from January 2020 through December 2021. NOTE: Some data and graphics present the most recent information available and could include details as current as March 1, 2023.
Mission Area(s)	Response and Recovery
Topic Areas (Common Themes)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Planning – Internal planning operations for response 2. Logistics and Supply Chain Management – Internal supplies and distribution 3. Government Operations/Operational Coordination – Agency operational changes and internal coordination 4. County Infrastructure – IT and other functions/equipment used to change work processes 5. Communications – Internal and external communications 6. Equity
Threat or Hazard	Global Coronavirus Pandemic
Synopsis	<p>In January 2020, Fairfax County began taking action to prepare for the impacts of the novel coronavirus, COVID-19, which was quickly spreading throughout the world and would be declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization just two months later, on March 11, 2020. The unprecedented nature of this pandemic resulted in historic emergency response actions taken by jurisdictions across the globe.</p> <p>The Fairfax County Health Department² Incident Management Team and the Health Department Operations Center activated in January 2020 to conduct response efforts. The Fairfax County Emergency Operations Center was activated in March 2020 to provide a centralized coordination entity for the county enterprise.</p> <p>The length of the COVID-19 incident has significantly tested the county's emergency response infrastructure as well as the ability of the county to continue business operations and services to the community. The initial response phase lasted from January 2020 to June 2020. Emergency</p>

¹ COVID-19 is the commonly used acronym for Coronavirus Disease 2019 caused by novel coronavirus SARS-CoV-2.

² See Appendix 2 for a summary of the Fairfax County Health Department COVID-19 After Action Reports

Key Findings

declarations, stay-at-home orders, personal protective equipment (PPE) shortages, continuity operations, and the transition to virtual operations and telework occurred during this phase. This operational environment presented many challenges and impacts for the county to manage.

After the first six months, the response transitioned into a steady state and “new normal” operations from July 2020 to June 2021. In this phase, the county focused on re-opening paused programs and services, returning to in-person and hybrid work postures, and responding to the pandemic's effects. Both internally and externally, multi-agency coordination and communication were vital in Fairfax County's response to COVID-19. County agencies increased their coordination and collaboration during this disaster while pivoting their operations, workforce posture, and service delivery to meet the community's needs. Support to the private sector included a variety of grants to sustain businesses significantly hampered by pandemic restrictions and adjustment to permitting and inspection services. Support to residents encompassed return-to-school support, food donations and distribution, housing and eviction prevention services, and creative sustainment of cultural and recreational opportunities. The changing environment required heightened leadership and decision-making, resulting in many changes to county policies and programs to keep up with the evolving disaster. The county also developed new methods of communication to ensure situational awareness and information sharing, and public messaging was evident, especially when information changed rapidly, and the quantity of information was overwhelming.

From July 2021 through December 2021, county operations continued to settle into the “new normal” operations. The COVID-19 virus continued to evolve and circulate with new variants causing increases in positive cases throughout the county. Through 2022 and at this point in 2023, the county government, businesses, community organizations, and individuals continue to evaluate, and adjust operations and interactions based on public health risk assessments.

The Fairfax County declaration will end on March 1, 2023. FEMA announced in February 2023 that the public health emergency and the national emergency declaration will end on May 11, 2023.

The long duration of the COVID-19 pandemic response provided a significant opportunity for Fairfax County to assess what went well and what can be improved moving forward. Findings in this AAR are organized

by the following National Response Framework³ core capabilities: Planning, Logistics and Supply Chain Management, Operational Coordination, Infrastructure, and Operational Communications. A focus area outside the core capabilities for Equity is also included. These ‘capability focus areas’ provide a framework by which strengths and areas for improvement were identified, and opportunities and recommendations were developed. The following outlines a selection of strengths and areas for improvement identified during the review.

Strengths:

- Implementation of existing plans to support emergency response operations and continuing county business operations.
- Shift to virtual operations and telework as supported by pre-existing policies and the flexibility of the county workforce.
- IT infrastructure and support for the transition to telework, including procurement of necessary equipment and systems.
- Regular coordination meetings at various staffing levels and with county agencies for information sharing and collaboration.
- The creation of the Workforce Protection Group (WFPG) for collaboration to address staff health and safety and risk management issues throughout the pandemic.
- Activation of the Joint Information Center (JIC) in support of public messaging functions.
- The use of translation resources for external communication ensured messages reached wider audiences in the county.
- Resource sharing and PPE distribution to underserved populations.
- The county worked with several community providers and partners to help vulnerable community members with their basic needs including utility, wastewater, housing, and food assistance. Over 90 million dollars in COVID-19 relief funding was disbursed.
- Food distribution efforts engaged a variety of county and community agencies and resident volunteers. In addition to county staff, thousands of volunteer hours were provided to support food distribution efforts by faith-based, military, business, and community-based organizations.
- The spectrum of efforts to promote ‘Assistance from a Distance’ to those who are isolated and need the program most was successful.

³ The federal National Response Framework defines 31 core capabilities that in general must be accomplished in incident response. https://www.ready.gov/sites/default/files/2019-06/national_response_framework.pdf

- The Department of Emergency Management and Security (DEMS) cost recovery guide provided useful guidance to county agencies that allowed successful documentation of expenditures and the pursuit of cost recovery.

Areas for Improvement:

- Addressing COOP planning gaps, such as considerations for long-term operations, IT resiliency planning, and incorporating COOP into high-level decision-making processes.
- Adding strategic perspective to policy and decision-making.
- Establishing asset management strategies to support changes in the workforce environment based on telework.
- Streamlining leadership decision-making and approval processes in emergencies.
- Promoting understanding of the breadth of support and services offered by community partners, including the private sector, and coordinating with these partners.
- Managing the pace of policy and guidance dissemination to support reception and understanding of changes in how operations are to be modified.
- Improving agency processes for delivering messages and guidance to the county workforce, especially those in field operations roles without regular access to computers and email.
- Managing existing relationships with community organizations and coordinating interactions with those organizations.
- Adjusting hiring, recruitment, and retention strategies to position the county to be successful in the workforce environment that has evolved from COVID-19.
- Reducing variability in how agencies implemented health guidance. Rapidly changing guidance and details needed to implement recommendations contributed to this variability.
- Maintaining partnerships with business owners while managing the effects on the community (i.e., parking, noise, and hours of operation) was difficult.

Participating
Organizations

For complete listing of participating organizations see Appendix 5

Point of Contact

Seamus Mooney, Coordinator
Department of Emergency Management and Security
McConnell Public Safety and Transportation Operations Center
(MPSTOC), 4890 Alliance Drive, Suite 2200
Fairfax, VA 22030
571-350-1000
dems@fairfaxcounty.gov

This page intentionally left blank.

1. Introduction

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors requested an after-action review of Fairfax County's comprehensive response to COVID-19. This report is an evaluation of the Department of Emergency Management and Security (DEMS) coordination of the county emergency response system and county agency operational effectiveness, not an evaluation of public health decisions and actions. The intent is to identify areas of success and opportunities for improvement to enable Fairfax County to better prepare for and respond to future events.

2. History of the COVID-19 Pandemic in Fairfax County

The Fairfax County Health Department (FCHD) is the lead agency for infectious disease preparedness, monitoring, and response for Fairfax County. In response to the first confirmed case of COVID-19 in the United States, the FCHD activated its Incident Management Team (IMT) and the Health Department Operations Center (HDOC) on January 22, 2020, to prepare for anticipated impacts in the county. Through February and March 2020, COVID-19 cases spread throughout the country. FCHD and DEMS communicated periodically about activating the DEMS-managed Emergency Operations Center (EOC) but determined it was unnecessary at that time. DEMS continued to monitor the expansion of cases across the country and prepared for potential impacts locally. On March 8, 2020, the first COVID-19 case was confirmed in the Fairfax County Health District.

On March 12, 2020, Governor Northam declared a State of Emergency in the Commonwealth of Virginia to continue to prepare and coordinate the response to the potential spread of COVID-19. The Virginia Emergency Operations Center (VEOC) and the Virginia Emergency Support Team (VEST) were activated at this time. The following day, on March 13, 2020, President Trump declared the COVID-19 pandemic to be of sufficient severity and magnitude to warrant a nationwide emergency declaration for all states, tribes, territories, and the District of Columbia according to Section 501(b) of the Stafford Act. In response, every level of government—federal, state, tribal, territorial, and local—engaged in efforts to slow and stop the spread of COVID-19 through a multitude of initiatives, including stay-at-home orders, travel restrictions, use of personal protective equipment (PPE), and adherence to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines.

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors consented to a local emergency declaration effective March 17, 2020. Fairfax County Public Schools closed indefinitely on March 20, 2020. DEMS activated the EOC with a partial activation⁴ on March 24, 2020, as government-wide agency operations started to be impacted. Three days later (March 27, 2020), all Fairfax County government buildings closed to the public.

⁴ Partial activation provides for activation of select ICS positions that may be or will be engaged in the emergency situation; generally includes staffing all of the command and general staff positions and includes a robust planning section. See Section IV.A of the Fairfax County Emergency Operations Plan for more information.

On March 30, 2020, Governor Northam issued a Stay-at-Home Order, Executive Order 55. By March 31, 2020, the Virginia Department of Health reported widespread community transmission across the Commonwealth, and the next day, President Trump signed the Major Disaster Declaration for the Commonwealth of Virginia.

The effect of COVID-19 on government operations was swift and required an agile response. The county was challenged to prioritize operational functions and determine how to continue critical operations. Frequent meetings and communication at all levels of staff throughout the county were required to support this analysis and decision-making. Information changed extremely rapidly, and frequent communication was needed to keep everyone up to speed.

By late March, the county encouraged employees who could work from home to telework and worked extremely hard to provide laptops, connectivity, and systems access to allow employees to work remotely. Significant segments of the county's workforce do work that cannot be accomplished remotely and require an on-site presence. For employees who could not telework, the county implemented many protective actions to keep employees safe. These measures included staggered work shifts, temperature screenings, daily health checks, mask requirements, hand sanitizer distribution, installation of plexiglass, social distancing requirements, and installed signage with safety reminders. Many human resource policies were established in response to the evolving work dynamics, addressing telework, training compliance, and leave.

The county's activation of the EOC provided a central support and coordination organization for the countywide pandemic response. The county EOC provided Command, Operations (via the Human Services Branch Director), Planning, Logistics, and Finance/Administration Section structures for the response and interacted with the HDOC and IMT as the primary Operations Section structure. The EOC and HDOC collaboration throughout the response as an EOC to IMT structure provided both strategic and operational approaches to complex problems and the combined perspectives of emergency management and public health subject-matter experts.

One of the most significant actions from the EOC was the early development of a single point ordering⁵ (SPO) system to streamline logistics and resource management, including procurement, prioritization of supplies, and distribution efforts in coordination with the FCHD. The SPO established a process in which all resource requests for identified PPE items would be routed and tracked through the EOC using the Request for Assistance (RFA) board on WebEOC, the crisis information management software system. The roll out of the SPO during the COVID-19 response was the first of its kind for Fairfax County, and as such there were some hiccups in the beginning that were quickly resolved to make the process more effective and efficient for use by all county agencies. This centralized approach to logistics and resource management, especially given the nationwide PPE shortages and supply chain issues, was a huge success and enabled adequate PPE and supplies needed to continue county business operations and protect staff and residents.

⁵ See Fairfax County Resource Management and Logistics Standard Operating Procedure for the Logistics Single Point Ordering Policy.

The EOC also provided significant support for the overall response structure by managing countywide coordination calls, tracking costs and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) projects for reimbursement, and developing and distributing situation reports and EOC Action Plans, all to ensure documentation, information sharing, and coordination. EOC coordination calls allowed county agencies to communicate and share information and challenges regularly, further allowing for collaborative problem-solving and interpretation of information. Additionally, the EOC managed the use of WebEOC and the COVID-19 dashboard as tools to enhance situational awareness and the common operating picture.



The COVID-19 pandemic response required a significant increase in public messaging and communication as federal and state public health and emergency management officials continued to disseminate information. The nature of the virus and the continuous learning from the scientific community caused the information to change rapidly. In addition, many sources created confusion and an overwhelming amount of data for the community to digest. To ensure the most consistent, accurate, and timely messaging possible, the county activated its Joint Information Center (JIC). The JIC served as the main group for all county public information and communications officers to collaborate and coordinate on public messaging. Numerous messaging channels were used, including the county website, Fairfax Alerts, social media (including Ready Fairfax Twitter and Facebook), telephone systems, community outreach, hard copy flyer distribution, etc. Efforts were also in place to ensure cultural and language considerations, including translation services. This overall communication strategy and use of the JIC structure served its purpose of ensuring important messages were reaching the widest audience throughout Fairfax County and that no vulnerable and/or underserved populations were left uninformed.

Due to the cascading impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, many human services support aspects were established to support the community. These included but were not limited to, non-congregate sheltering, food distribution, donations management, volunteer management, and



other unmet needs assistance. The non-congregate sheltering program, called Quarantine, Protection, Isolation, and Decompression (QPID) hotels, was one of the most substantial new programs developed during COVID-19 to support human services needs and reduce the spread of COVID-19. Through a partnership of multiple agencies and with local hotels, the county ran six QPID hotel locations throughout the county for COVID-19 positive, COVID-19-exposed, and high-risk individuals that

did not have the means to quarantine or isolate themselves. These sheltering efforts included wrap-around services such as meals, healthcare, and mental health services.

County agencies, non-profit organizations, and community-based partners collaborated to ensure vulnerable populations received food throughout the county including community food pantries and county distribution of meals and services such as Meals on Wheels. The county donations management structure in coordination with Volunteer Fairfax was also leveraged throughout the pandemic for collecting and distributing PPE and supplies in the community. While PPE was the primary donation solicited, there were also basic hygiene items donated to support underserved populations and their increased needs as a result of the impacts from COVID-19. In addition, a Volunteer Reception Center (VRC) was utilized to support staffing for vaccination clinics. These human service functions, along with the QPID sheltering efforts, were critical in supporting the needs of Fairfax County residents beyond the typical pandemic response functions.

Throughout this time, the Department of Economic Initiatives (DEI) worked in collaboration with various county agencies and workgroups to support the private sector. Small businesses and non-profits were supported through the Small Business COVID-19 Recovery Microloan Fund, RISE grants, Non-profit Sustainability Grants, and the PIVOT small business recovery grant program, which DEI oversaw. Support was given to employment by implementing a job match program that moved employees without work to other agencies with surging demands. This program allowed the county to retain employees.

On May 15, 2020, Governor Northam outlined the phases to ease the state out of temporary COVID-19 restrictions in the “Forward Virginia” plan. Even as other parts of the state relaxed restrictions, Northern Virginia remained under the highest restrictions until early June 2020. It was not until July 1, 2020, when Governor Northam issued Executive Order 67 and Order of Public Health Emergency Seven that allowed Virginia to enter the third phase of the “Forward Virginia” plan. Most restrictions loosened in Fairfax County.

After re-opening efforts, the county’s elevated response posture was gradually scaled back to match the situation. The EOC was operational in response to the COVID-19 pandemic disaster for 56 operational periods, with an operational period lasting one week. The final EOC Action Plan concluded on May 14, 2021. This signaled a change from the partial activation level maintained throughout the pandemic to the typical daily monitoring that DEMS conducts.

Although the EOC activation ceased, DEMS and other agencies involved in the EOC structure continued to coordinate and support the ongoing re-opening efforts. DEMS maintained the SPO for logistics and resource management needs that arose as re-opening vaccine clinics and returning to normal business operations continued. Despite the re-opening efforts, the impacts of COVID-19 continue to effect residents, especially those in underserved populations. To address the various needs created by the disaster, the county continued non-congregate sheltering and other human services, including some QPID hotels, for the quarantine and isolation needs of the community. Many of these services and programs developed specifically for the response are still

being sustained to address issues that remain and unmet needs within the Fairfax County population.

Along with disaster response and recovery programs continuing, the county continues to focus more on establishing the “new normal” and the resumption of county business operations that were paused or modified during the pandemic. Telework schedules were modified to bring the workforce back to the office for a percentage of the week. Many agencies started returning programs and services that could not be delivered during the response.

Facilities were also gradually re-opened to the county workforce and the public where it was deemed appropriate and safe. In addition, the hybrid approach to program delivery and business operations was also utilized throughout many county agencies to ensure the continued success and efficiency of those operations. The Department of Information Technology (DIT) remains in a key role in enabling these hybrid approaches' success to internal and external meetings and other operations.

Executive Order 79 expired July 1, 2021, ending the state of emergency in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The Fairfax County declaration remained in effect and re-opening efforts continued, with in-person services becoming available in most government buildings. CDC guidelines continued to be observed. COVID-19 variants continued to evolve, and public health measures were adjusted as needed. At the end of December 2021, Fairfax County updated policies for isolation and quarantine, shortening periods and allowing those who were exposed or infected to return to work sooner while still maintaining a safe workplace with masking and social distancing.

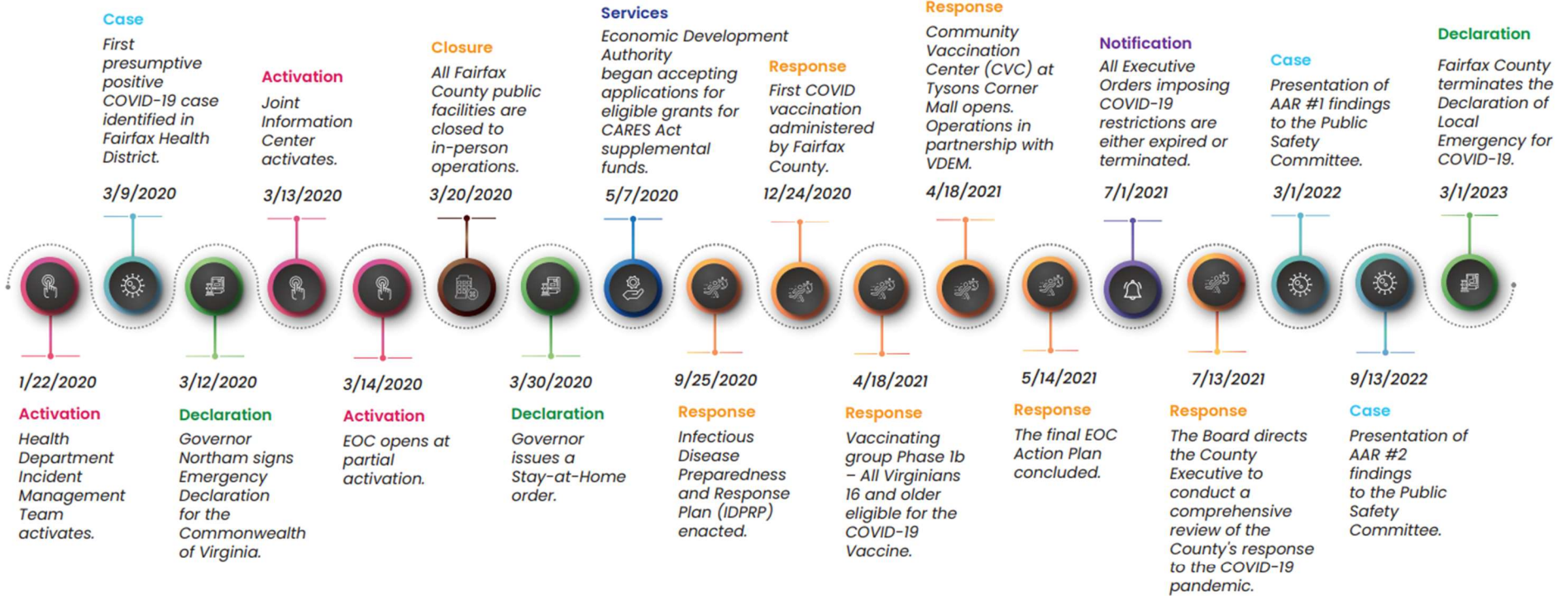
DEMS led the county-wide financial recovery effort related to the pandemic. COVID-19 related funding is the highest dollar amount of federal funding the county has ever managed. The existing cost recovery process was used to track the almost \$700 million in funding (received to date) from the federal government. Cost recovery work has continued into 2023.

On February 9, 2023, FEMA announced the public health emergency and the national emergency declaration will end on May 11, 2023. All eligible costs under the FEMA disaster declarations will continue to be eligible until May 11, 2023. Based on this knowledge, Fairfax County will end the local declaration on March 1, 2023.

3. Incident Timeline

The timeline on the following page highlights major actions, issues, and requests identified from the available documentation generated during the COVID-19 pandemic. A comprehensive incident timeline is provided in Appendix 4. The events are derived from event logs, situation reports, staff briefings, and email alerts and have been selected because they demonstrate the significant issues that the county was dealing with throughout the pandemic.

January 2020 - March 2023



Activation Notification
 Response PPE
 Case Declaration
 Closure

This page intentionally left blank.

4. Perspectives from the Deputy County Executives, the Chief Financial Officer, and the Chief Equity Officer

The Deputy County Executives, the Chief Financial Officer, and the Chief Equity Officer were asked to share their perspectives on the COVID-19 response efforts from their departments and agencies. They were asked to describe working through the response, assessing impacts, prioritizing essential government work, and serving county residents as the pandemic unfolded and evolved. Their viewpoints on what worked well and what could be improved to better respond in future emergencies are provided in this section.

HEALTH, HOUSING AND HUMAN SERVICES

Health Department

Department of Family
Services

Fairfax-Falls Church
Community Services
Board

Department of
Neighborhood and
Community Services

Department of Housing
and Community
Development

Fairfax County Public
Library

Fairfax County Park
Authority

Juvenile and Domestic
Relations District Court

Summary of the Health and, Housing and Human Services COVID-19 Response

Highlights

The COVID-19 pandemic created unprecedented health, social, and economic impacts for county residents, which the Health and Human Services (HHS) system addressed through cross-agency coordination and partnerships with community providers. Community providers played an instrumental role in the HHS response, distributing almost \$90 million in COVID-19 relief funding for food, rent, and utility assistance to residents.

When county buildings closed to the public, HHS agencies quickly pivoted to an “Assistance from a Distance” model for service delivery. Center-based programming was reimagined with virtual recreation, social, and enrichment activities for youth, families, and older adults. HHS agencies also developed new programs to address community needs, including the Supporting Return to Schools program for Fairfax County Public Schools students during distance learning as well as a food pantry delivery program that provided food to residents who had no transportation or were quarantined.

The HHS system was responsive to emerging needs by redeploying staff whose work locations or programs temporarily closed to other jobs such as contact tracing and food distribution. In addition, staff demonstrated adaptability by continually learning and implementing new and changing federal and state policy guidance for service delivery.

Significant Operational Improvements

Collaboration among HHS agencies and community partners has been essential during the pandemic. The Community Provider Strategy Team⁶ (CPST) was established for county agencies and community providers to meet regularly to strengthen coordination, share information, identify emerging needs, and address challenges. In addition, the Board of Supervisors and senior leadership were kept updated on service and programmatic changes in HHS agencies through recurring COVID-19 Fairfax County HHS Updates.



⁶ Originally called the Community Provider Coordination Team

Numerous COVID-19 data dashboards were developed to keep the community informed about case information, vaccination rates, and outbreaks. The Quarantine, Protection, Isolation, and Decompression (QPID) program was created and provided hotel rooms to individuals who tested positive, were exposed to the virus, or were high-risk and did not have the ability to quarantine or isolate appropriately without intervention. The HHS system made data-informed decisions to establish COVID-19 testing and vaccine clinics in areas with the greatest need.

The call volume for emergency basic needs and public assistance increased exponentially during the pandemic. HHS implemented enhanced technology solutions to address these concerns, including the upgrade of phone technology to allow for callers to request a call-back instead of remaining on hold, as well as the launching of a landlord portal for accessing rental assistance on behalf of the tenant. Additionally, clients could apply for public assistance online or by phone. Many processes put in place to access services while county buildings were closed have been beneficial to residents and have continued to be available even after buildings reopened to the public.

Challenges

With the pandemic's dynamic nature, challenges in the HHS system were inevitable. There was an exponential demand for emergency basic needs and public assistance, coupled with constantly changing federal and state policy guidance around eligibility, waivers, and flexibilities. Agencies had to navigate those issues with staff absences and vacancies due to pandemic leave, quarantine, and attrition. Additionally, the digital divide created challenges in serving residents who did not have access or the ability to use the internet. Although there has been significant COVID-19 relief funding to assist residents, there have been barriers in disseminating information to some community residents about how to access assistance programs.

During the current stage of the pandemic, HHS agencies are seeing increased mental health and substance use treatment needs. In addition, inflation and rising housing costs are impacting all households but disproportionately affecting vulnerable residents. The HHS system will continue using a coordinated approach to address emerging needs in the community to ensure a resilient future for all residents.

The Health Department, as the lead agency for pandemic response in Fairfax County, experienced significant impacts and challenges in its nearly three-year response to the pandemic. A separate after-action process focuses on Health Department impacts, strengths, and areas for improvement. Appendix 2 of this document provides the high-level findings of the Health Department's after-action process.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

- Police Department
- Fire and Rescue Department
- Department of Emergency Management and Security
- Department of Public Safety Communications
- Department of Animal Sheltering

Summary of the Safety and Security COVID-19 Response

Highlights

The COVID-19 pandemic had one of the most significant impacts on our community and public safety team that we have seen to date. In the face of initial uncertainty about COVID and the adversities all public safety faced, our front-line first responders, uniform and civilian staff, and volunteers worked tirelessly to protect our community.

Ultimately, the mitigation of COVID-19 was positively managed with the collaboration of all county agencies. Front-line personnel ultimately put themselves at the most risk to deliver services to our community, and they did so without hesitation. First responders had to consider themselves, their families, and

the public they cared for. Unfortunately, our public safety team lost two members during the pandemic, and we will never forget them and the other county employees and community members who lost their lives.

Significant Operational Improvements

Public safety agencies created significant improvements, both community-based and internally focused, to enhance responses and assist with service delivery.

The Police Department (FCPD) changed several external service delivery models to maximize technology resources while maintaining service delivery. The expanded utilization of the Citizen Reporting System (CRS) allowed calls for service to be reported without an officer responding to the scene for incidents when deemed appropriate. FCPD also increased the number of crisis intervention trained (CIT) officers to help meet the increased demand for mental health services.



The Fire and Rescue Department (FRD) collaborated with the Health Department to vaccinate homebound community members through in-home services to help keep our at-risk populations safe. FRD also implemented new building inspection processes to meet the needs of our business community. An electronic submission process for building plans was developed to continue promoting the growth and expansion of business and industry within the county.

The Department of Animal Sheltering saw an increased demand for services with a dramatic pandemic-related rise in pet adoptions. They transitioned to virtual services, including virtual appointments, to meet the increased demands.

Agencies collaborated in a synergistic manner to help each other and assist in the overall county response to the pandemic.

The Department of Emergency Management and Security (DEMS) provided overall coordination for the countywide response which resulted in 56 operational periods. They worked closely with the Health Department to manage the countywide community response. DEMS also worked with the Department of Purchasing and Materials Management (DPMM) to ensure personal protective equipment (PPE) was available for all our front-line workers.

The Sheriff's Office developed housing strategies to minimize the spread of COVID-19 at the Adult Detention Center.

The Department of Public Safety Communications split its resources between the primary dispatch center and the alternate center to minimize the spread of COVID-19 throughout the workforce, which could have reduced available staff and their ability to manage 911 emergencies.

The Public Safety Occupational Health Center (PSOHC) was responsible for providing vaccinations. Ultimately, they provided 7000 vaccines to help protect our public safety team.

Challenges

Staffing shortages plagued every agency, and public safety agencies were not immune to this. Fewer first responders were available for the increased calls for service. Despite these staffing challenges, everyone worked to fulfill their mission with minimal service delivery impacts.

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Department of Public
Works and Environmental
Services

Department of Planning
and Development

Department of
Transportation

Department of Code
Compliance

Department of Economic
Initiatives

Land Development
Services

Office of Environmental
and Energy Coordination

Summary of the Planning and Development COVID-19 Response

Highlights

The COVID-19 pandemic posed severe and unprecedented public service challenges as well as economic challenges for our local businesses. The planning and development departments responded swiftly and effectively to ensure that the needs of the public continued to be met.

When county buildings closed to the public, most departments were able to shift to teleworking and provide customer services electronically and via phone. However, essential front-line workers, such as those in the Department of Public Works and Environmental Services (DPWES) Solid Waste and Sewage Treatment Divisions, were not able to telework. Instead, they continued the county's Mission Essential Functions (MEFs) in person by following strict safety protocols (masking, social distancing, sanitation procedures, etc.). Nearly 65% of DPWES employees continued to work in person.

Public meetings, essential for continued land use review and approval, were swiftly shifted to a virtual format. On the economic front, the Department of Economic Initiatives (DEI)

worked closely with the Board of Supervisors to develop new programs to address business challenges, including the RISE grant (Relief Initiative to Support Employers) and PIVOT grant programs, which provided millions of dollars in grant funding to keep businesses solvent.

Significant Operational Improvements

Throughout the pandemic, the staff exhibited agile responses and innovative approaches to meeting the needs of the public. A major example of this was the immediate transition to 100% electronic permitting in Land Development Services (LDS) and most of the Department of Planning & Development's (DPD) services. Prior to COVID, LDS and DPD had an in-person Customer and Technical Service Center (CTSC) in the Herrity Building, where in-person transactions were handled and permits issued (approximately 70,000 each year). In place of the CTSC, a new call center was established, named the Customer Experience Team (CET). Staff was reassigned to address the significant increase in customer queries answered via phone, email, or MS Teams. Most building inspections were performed virtually with the inspector using apps such as



FaceTime, Zoom or Microsoft Teams; the inspector would direct the customer where to point the camera and what they needed to see. In instances where internet connectivity would not allow this, customers were directed to videotape their construction work and send it to LDS for review. An Emergency Ordinance was prepared by LDS and DPD staff and approved by the Board of Supervisors to allow restaurants, fitness centers, etc., to operate using safe social distancing, such as outdoor dining for restaurants.

Fairfax County Department of Transportation (FCDOT) quickly addressed the needs of the customers of the Connector Bus. Bus fares were suspended, bus protocols enforced (masking/social distancing), and bus routing adjusted due to reduced service, which was later restored.

The swift shift to virtual meetings allowed public officials, staff, and the public to continue their normal meeting protocols and to participate in a productive and uninterrupted format—more people engaged in virtual meetings than they had in person. Land use cases, transportation matters, etc., moved forward in timely manner through the Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals, and other boards and commissions.

Challenges

Given the pandemic's swift origin and subsequent closure of county buildings, challenges in all departments were inevitable. Many customers required extensive assistance from staff to help navigate the online permitting system in both LDS and DPD – and to some extent, DCC. The CET served as an essential tool in keeping land use and building permit reviews and approvals processed in a timely manner. DPWES implemented staggered work shifts, restricted or limited public access to facilities, altered times of operation for Solid Waste public drop-offs, etc. in order for staff to continue to work in person. All the Planning and Development departments have continued to work cooperatively and innovatively to meet ever-changing challenges.

ADMINISTRATION

Facilities Management
Department

Department of Cable and
Consumer Services

Department of Human
Resources

Office of Human Rights
and Equity Programs

Department of
Information Technology

Office of Public Affairs

Department of Vehicle
Services

Government Relations

Summary of the Fairfax County Government Administration Team COVID-19 Response

Highlights

The COVID-19 pandemic created unprecedented health, social, and economic impacts for county residents and for county employees. The pandemic required immediate changes in how Fairfax County conducts business, and county leadership made it clear the county would remain open, and residents would still have high expectations of their government that needed to be met. The departments within the Deputy County Executive (DCE) administration area were essential to pivoting, adapting, and providing the infrastructure, flexibility, and support for the county to continue normal business operations and provide essential services to the community.

Administrative teams from each department were responsible for supporting the Board of Supervisors and all boards, authorities, and commissions in pivoting to virtual meetings and ensuring the essential function of governance was uninterrupted; providing clear and concise communication to residents and employees in various formats and in ways that were relevant to the public health crisis; providing communication and guidance on how to navigate and access programs and services; responding to mandated changes in policy and process based on federal and state mandates; providing IT infrastructure, devices, virtual platforms, dashboards and apps to track and respond to public health related requirements and support for the transition to virtual, maximized telework and hybrid operations; ensuring that employees received the necessary information to address staff health, safety and risk management throughout the pandemic; and providing tools, information and flexibility for employees to safely continue operations and service delivery to the community.

Administration team departments collaborated and developed innovative, flexible programs and new approaches to adapt to ever-changing circumstances, created guidelines and procedures to ensure safe options for employees in the workplace, and implemented the necessary infrastructure for maximum flexibility. They focused on opportunities to increase safety and help alleviate uncertainty during a very uncertain time while laying the foundation to provide the essential support required to ensure continuity of operations.

Significant Operational Improvements

Changes made during the pandemic have the potential to reset expectations for future operations and the path forward. For example, the implementation of new IT applications, such as Microsoft Teams, Zscaler, and DocuSign, and the transition from desktops to laptops in support

of the county's transition to remote work and a more mobile workforce have permanently changed the way that we approach work.

During the pandemic, collaboration among agencies has been essential. As we strategically chart our course of action downward from the pandemic, workloads continue to increase and the collaboration, support, and leadership from administration team departments is an essential component to ensure the policy, guidance, technology, and systems are in place to be successful in meeting these demands. Enterprise agility requires the organization to shift and address new ways of working that seamlessly incorporate the lessons learned from the pandemic while cultivating a culture that embraces new business models and effectively adapts to change.

Challenges

With the pandemic's dynamic nature, challenges were inevitable. From the start, it was clear that the pandemic would impact mental health and overall well-being. LiveWell, benefits and Organizational Development and Training (OD&T) rose to the occasion, creatively providing support and resources to help us cope with this new reality. OD&T's continued focus was on resiliency, grit, and adaptability. In line with these themes, they developed and offered courses on resiliency, outward mindset, generational differences, conflict resolution, customer service, and civility in the workplace.

With counseling services in high demand, LiveWell contracted with the Cigna Employee Assistance Program to provide free onsite telephonic or virtual confidential sessions with two behavioral health therapists dedicated to Fairfax County employees for 40 hours a week. This was in addition to promoting the regular use of EAP. These supports continue to be necessary as we are tracking increased instances of employee complaints based on the mental and emotional health stressors that all employees have been operating under as they have balanced work and life challenges over the last two years. In addition, the county continues to adjust hiring, recruitment, and retention strategies to position the county to be successful in the workforce environment that has evolved from COVID-19.

During the current stage of the pandemic, we are seeing increased challenges in recruiting and retaining staff and are working to adapt our toolkit to provide compensation, and other HR strategies and solutions to effectively position the county to adapt and respond to this challenge. In addition, we are constantly monitoring and adapting to the impact of inflation, increasing fuel costs, and supply chain challenges on our ability to respond to our normal operational requirements as well as new priorities. The administrative team will continue to support our agency partners through communication, partnerships, and seeking solutions to address organizational and community needs to ensure that Fairfax County Government remains adaptable, resilient, and accessible.

We celebrate our successes over the past couple of years, and more importantly, looking back allows us to determine course corrections as we move forward.

FINANCE

Department of
Management and Budget

Department of Finance

Department of Tax
Administration

Retirement
Administration Agency

Department of
Procurement and
Material Management

Office of Internal Audit

Summary of the Financial Agencies COVID-19 Response

Highlights

The county's financial agencies were responsible for helping to steer the county through uncertain economic waters while ensuring that front-line employees had access to resources necessary to combat the pandemic in the community, both through direct public health efforts and support initiatives for residents who may be suffering financially.

While Health Department nurses were vaccinating residents, staff in the Coordinated Services Planning (CSP) group in the Department of Neighborhood and Community Services (NCS) were taking calls from residents needing food, utility, or rental assistance. The Department of Economic Initiatives (DEI) was establishing programs to assist businesses negatively impacted by the pandemic. The county's financial agencies were working behind the scenes to streamline processes and provide added

flexibility to ensure that new programs and initiatives could be implemented quickly and effectively. The Department of Procurement and Material Management (DPMM) helped manage the emergency procurement process to ensure that agencies were quickly able to access services and supplies to adequately respond to the pandemic, including personal protective equipment and disinfectants. The Department of Management and Budget (DMB) ensured that appropriations were in place so as not to hold up potential purchases of needed supplies, as some items were difficult to procure, and worked with agencies to secure stimulus funds to support these new initiatives. The Department of Finance (DOF) quickly worked to establish controls to allow agencies to implement digital authorizations on financial documents, given the increased use of teleworking. The Department of Tax Administration (DTA) provided considerable flexibility to taxpayers who may have been struggling because of the pandemic by implementing delayed payment deadlines and reducing late payment penalties.



As additional stimulus funds continue to be received, and with eligibility deadlines extending for several years, it is anticipated that much of the work the county's financial agencies have embarked upon since the start of the pandemic will continue for some time. Staff continue to work with the Board of Supervisors to allocate stimulus funds, with recommended uses focused more on long-term economic recovery than pure public health response. Budget recommendations continue to be made considering the pandemic's impact on residents,

particularly those in areas that have been disproportionately impacted. Programs initially implemented utilizing stimulus funds are being built into the county's baseline budget to prevent reliance upon one-time dollars for recurring expenses. Overall, the county's financial health has shown tremendous resilience and strength throughout the pandemic, bolstered by solid financial policies and prudent decisions by the Board and county leadership. It is anticipated that the county's response to any future events resulting in similar economic uncertainties will be well-informed by the lessons learned during the pandemic and will be met with the same flexibility, creativity, and resolve by county staff.

Significant Operational Improvements

In the spring of 2020, the county began receiving federal and state stimulus funds to help augment local funding for the pandemic response. To date, funding provided to the county totals over \$700 million, with each individual award maintaining its own spending guidance and reporting requirements. Management of these funds has required a thorough knowledge of these specific guidelines to weave funds together to maximize funding sources. Since April 2020, staff from DMB, DOF, DPMM, DEMS, and the County Attorney's office have met regularly to discuss the status of various awards, processes to allocate funds based on agency and Board requests, spending year-to-date and documentation requirements, and ongoing collaboration with front-line agencies. This tremendous effort has resulted in the successful implementation of several programs critical to the success of the county's pandemic response, including contact tracing, vaccination, and other public health programs; basic needs assistance for residents and shelter support for the county's homeless population; grants to non-profits and businesses hurt by the pandemic; and technology and equipment required for the transition to teleworking and virtual meetings. As many of these programs involved the distribution of funds to support residents and businesses, staff from Internal Audit were welcomed to examine procedures and ensure that resources were dispersed appropriately. Staff established regular communications with the Board of Supervisors and developed a model by which both staff and the Board could recommend initiatives for stimulus funding, allowing the county to react quickly to changing circumstances while keeping elected officials involved and informed. This model will certainly be utilized in the future, if appropriate when the application for and utilization of outside funds requires quick actions not typically accommodated by the county's normal processes.

Challenges

In addition to the management of new resources provided to assist with the pandemic response, DMB staff were responsible for ensuring that projections for the county's typical revenue streams were accurate and that the county's budget was aligned with the new economic outlook. Following the release of the County Executive's FY 2021 Advertised Budget in February 2020, which included significant investments in several county priorities based on anticipated revenue growth, the staff went back to rework and release a new proposal in April. This new budget significantly curtailed new investments and assumed flat revenue based on anticipated declines in a few revenue categories, offset by increases in Real Estate assessments that had already been established as of January earlier in the year. Additionally, recognizing how the pandemic was negatively impacting residents, as unemployment rates increased, proposed tax and fee increases were eliminated, and fees were reduced where possible. To be able to quickly adapt to

potential revenue changes, as the trajectory of the pandemic was uncertain, staff added a new Mid-Year Review process to provide an opportunity for the budgetary adjustments to be made to ensure that the budget remained in line with current projections.

CHIEF EQUITY OFFICER

The Chief Equity Officer provides overall management of the One Fairfax strategic framework by serving as the county's racial and social equity liaison, engaging stakeholders and partners, and advising and supporting the Board of Supervisors, executive leadership and department Leadership in shaping and directing policy and practice to create equitable opportunity for all Fairfax County residents.

Summary of the One Fairfax Central Team COVID-19 Response

Highlights

The One Fairfax Central Team leveraged the experiences and insights of the community and worked collaboratively with county agencies to develop tools and strategies to foster more inclusive communication and community engagement and to support the consideration of equity in county planning and decision-making. An overarching equity strategy to inform departmental action was developed in response to COVID-19 and was presented to the Board of Supervisors in May 2020. The One Fairfax Central Team supported the county's COVID-19 response and recovery efforts in a number of ways including; compiling an inventory of community stakeholders, supporting expansion of the county's language access capacity, meeting the needs of culturally and religiously diverse populations, ensuring populations not eligible for federal COVID-19 relief programs had access to cash assistance, supported digital access to services for residents, developed the COVID-19 vulnerability index GIS application, developed the vaccine equity strategy and stood up a vaccine equity strategy team, conducted an analysis of the telework and vaccine mandate policies, and developed the COVID-19 recovery index.

Significant Operational Improvements

Fairfax County supported and expanded the availability of testing and treatment. COVID-19 case data and the Fairfax County COVID-19 Vulnerability Index were used to identify temporary and standing sites for testing by county agencies and health safety-net partners. Those data sources and vaccination rates were used to target our engagement of key partners and inform the location of vaccine equity clinics.

The county engaged with sector and community leaders to better understand the unique situations facing county residents who were most at risk. This included meetings with Black and Hispanic community leaders and regularly convening non-profits that serve vulnerable residents. In addition, the FCHD Outreach and Navigation Teams are deeply embedded in cultural communities and to bring back community concerns for the county and our partners to address.

Communication with residents was conducted in various formats that were relevant to their life situations to ensure that they had the information and resources necessary to protect themselves and their families. The communications team was successful in their multi-cultural communications efforts, translation and interpretation activities, and other efforts to ensure

disparities were addressed and public messaging was effective and made the widest reach possible within the county.

Fairfax County connected residents to services and supports to mitigate the social and economic impacts of COVID-19. Many actions were taken for this part of the strategy, including 1) Coordinated Services Planning, which connected residents to resources for emergency food, shelter, clothing, healthcare, employment, financial assistance, and other essential needs; 2) enrolling patients without a medical home and providing ongoing comprehensive primary care services to persons in emergency shelters for Quarantine, Protection, Isolation/Decompression; 3) regularly convening non-profits who serve vulnerable residents through the Community Provider Strategy Team, and 4) ensuring populations not eligible for federal COVID relief programs had access to direct cash assistance through the Fairfax County Excluded Workers Program.

Cross-sector planning and partnerships were established to recognize that no single agency or sector could handle the complexity of the pandemic alone. The Chief Equity Officer convened a Vaccine Equity Strategy Team, which met to discuss strategies for vaccine equity and produced regular reports with data and information by population and geography. In addition, the One Fairfax Central Team compiled an inventory of community stakeholders for use countywide and produced the COVID-19 Recovery Index to inform the allocation of American Rescue Plan (ARPA) Funds.

Challenges

As the county addressed the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, we experienced the convergence of a public health crisis and an economic crisis and saw clear racial and ethnic disparities in the impacts the COVID-19 pandemic had on the community:

There were gaps in communications with the community, particularly those who do not speak English and those who distrust government about current conditions and where to get help and a need to establish trusted relationships for communication and to gather vital information. There was also a disproportionate representation of lower-income workers and people of color facing work interruption due to the implementation of containment strategies and unable to telework due to work demands and requirements. There was a need for the county to support residents in staying housed, staving off the threat of displacement due to the inability to pay rent, and maintaining utility services like water, gas, electricity, internet, and telephone for people unable to pay bills. The county also saw a need to ensure the ongoing viability of small businesses and non-profits providing critical services to vulnerable populations.

As the county prepares for future emergencies, the One Fairfax Central Team will continue to support staff and leadership to consider equity by identifying overall needs across the county and which groups are impacted most, and tailoring our response accordingly; using data to target interventions; developing ongoing relationships with community leaders; and improving internal coordination and information sharing around community engagement.

5. Government Operations

The COVID-19 pandemic required significant collaboration among agencies throughout Fairfax County to respond, overcome challenges, and continue operations.

MULTIAGENCY COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION

The magnitude of the pandemic tested the coordination capabilities of the county. The heightened coordination from county agency to the county agency, as well as from the response and command organizations, lent to the county's overall successes in response to COVID-19.

The activation of the county EOC by DEMS served as a central coordination group for the countywide response efforts, providing command, operations, planning, logistics, and financial support for the duration of the disaster. The HDOC served as the operational hub for the incident management team responsible for the public health leadership and response efforts during the pandemic. The EOC, working to support HDOC operations, provided coordination and an operational organization that addressed the needs of county residents and county agencies throughout the long-duration event.

County agencies also addressed challenges and gaps in response and business operations by increasing their coordination efforts. Throughout the county, it was common to see agencies, workgroups, committees, and other coordination bodies having regular meetings, weekly, daily, or sometimes multiple times a day, to tackle the issues at hand collaboratively. Some shared resources, joint problem-solving, and lending employees to other agencies for surge staff capabilities. Some areas for improvement are the connectivity and interoperability necessary to facilitate coordination effectively facilitate coordination and collaboration facilitate coordination and collaboration effectively.

CHANGES TO COUNTYWIDE PROGRAMS AND POLICIES

In addition to engaging in response to the pandemic, the county had to alter existing policies and develop new policies to adapt county business operations and services to the changing environment. This allowed agencies to test new ideas, policies, programs, and service delivery methods that they might not have thought of previously. The pressure of the pandemic brought an abundance of county employee creativity to the surface. This unique environment resulted in many lessons learned as to policy changes that worked well and can be continued and built upon further as well as those that did not work as well as desired and may need to be ceased or replaced.

Policy and program changes that occurred for Fairfax County government because of COVID-19 response ranged from human resources to health and safety, to information technology (IT) use policies, and many items in between. The transition to a virtual environment for many agency units was one of the most significant changes to county business operations that set in motion several policy and program adjustments necessary to respond to the disaster, continue operations, and maintain the health and safety of county staff and the community. Entire IT processes and systems changed to support departments that could telework. County agencies

adjusted service delivery to enable the continuation of critical programs and services to the community despite the restrictions inherent in the pandemic environment. As understanding of the COVID-19 virus developed, federal and state guidance and requirements were issued that had to be interpreted, addressed, and implemented in ways that best served Fairfax County. Policies to guide the health and safety of staff and community members were adjusted correspondingly. As a result of this time of constant change and adaptation, the county improved business models and policies, many of which will continue beyond the pandemic. This is particularly true of the IT advancements to enable the telework and hybrid models, as well as the virtual and hybrid delivery of county programs and services that now can reach a larger segment of the population.

Communication to County Employees

The initial response to COVID-19, from January 2020 through June 2020, was the most challenging and complex. The virus was first emerging, and governments worldwide and local jurisdictions reacted, working to understand the pandemic and its impacts as quickly as possible.

The transition to maximized telework brought with it a communications culture shift. New tools, systems, and protocols to ensure effective communication and collaboration were developed on the fly in the initial phase of the response and fine-tuned throughout the steady-state and new normal operations and continue today. Implementing Microsoft Teams as the primary virtual coordination system for the county was considered a significant success. While there were some challenges early on, Microsoft Teams made advancements along the way to support the latest methods of workplace communication being practiced worldwide. The county's transition from Citrix to Zscaler to enable teleworking staff access to county systems was also considered a significant success that enabled business operations and response to continue virtually.



A significant challenge for most of the county workforce was the overwhelming amount of information disseminated from all government levels. Especially during the initial response, there was a lot of communication lost or difficult to consume due to the frequency and high quantity of information being shared daily. In addition, ensuring that messages reached the entirety of the county workforce was often difficult, especially with language, literacy, and technology accessibility obstacles.

To maintain a successful level of internal communication capacity, many groups and agencies throughout the county also increased their frequency of communication as they adjusted to not being in person. The establishment of regular meetings with staff, leadership, the EOC coordination calls, and other meetings provided effective communication paths for the workforce in support of their activities. While there are still technological improvements to be

made in support of internal communication, such as with phone systems, community virtual access, and other adjustments to current systems, many of the advancements made during the pandemic are likely to remain for the long term.

Initial Response—January 2020 to June 2020

From January 2020 to early March 2020, the FCHD was prepared for the impacts of a novel virus, taking steps to put the county in as much of a proactive position as possible. In March 2020, the expanded response operations and increased multi-agency coordination led to the activation of the EOC, significantly increasing the involvement of many county agencies to support response and continuity of operations. This initial response phase is marked by several significant actions and complexities at the national, state, and local level, such as:

- Lack of a coordinated national response
- Complexities within the national, state, and local emergency declarations with respect to implementation
- Statewide stay-at-home order
- Nationwide personal protective equipment (PPE) shortage and supply chain disruptions
- Rapidly changing information about the virus
- Overwhelming information dissemination
- Staff shortages due to the evolving policies on eligibility for pandemic leave
- Emergent childcare challenges for county staff due to school closures
- Countywide transition to a maximized teleworking posture and virtual operations
- Challenging operational decisions for facilities-based and field-based staff with no virtual options
- Compensation and other HR policies to support staff who had to work overtime to meet the needs of the response
- Cascading effects of the pandemic
 - Reallocation of county funding to expand the social safety net and ensure adequate funding for COVID-19 governmental response
 - Data-driven identification of populations most affected
 - Suspension of evictions and utility cutoffs
 - Providing emergency food and financial support

The flexibility and adaptability of the county proved to be a strength as county agencies responded, adjusted operations, or temporarily paused programs. Many of the actions taken and decisions made in the early phase of the pandemic had never been done or anticipated before and required leadership and innovation, both of which were displayed throughout the county workforce. While many of the initial response actions taken were the best decisions made at the time, given the available information, there were still areas for improvement that could be identified and applied to planning for all hazards. Improvements to resource management, operational coordination, interoperability and communications, and equity considerations are just a few of the areas in which the county has identified opportunities to improve policies, plans,

and procedures for increased preparedness and more effective and efficient response in the future.

Steady-State and New Normal Operations—July 2020 to June 2021

After the initial operations phase during the first several months, the county shifted to a “new normal” for the next year, from July 2020 through June 2021. In this phase, the shift to telework had fully commenced, and hybrid delivery methods were being implemented. New policies and guidance around health and safety were being released, and the county continued to pivot to meet the needs of the pandemic environment. COVID-19 vaccine development and roll-out planning began. County agencies were well into their continuity of operations and were implementing new methods of conducting business and providing services to the community while also focusing on re-opening efforts. Significant response operations continued during this phase and were marked by the following new and continuing challenges:



- Executive Order enforcement and compliance
- Impactful county policy changes
- Extraordinary, long-duration FCHD response
 - Ongoing challenges to maintain staffing for expanding growth of response teams
 - Scaling testing operations
 - Planning for mass vaccination roll-out
 - Developing vaccine registration systems
 - Coordinating with state efforts to centralize vaccine registration and call center functions
 - Operating the call center
 - Emerging FCHD staff fatigue and mental health challenges

This phase of new response challenges and more steady-state operations revealed strengths and areas for improvement throughout county response and operations. Agencies were able to continually adjust their activities as they focused on re-opening and ramping up services that may have been paused, bringing staff back into the office, and continuing to work on improvements to the hybrid method of operations. This phase provided the county an opportunity to continue practicing flexible and creative operations outside of the heat of the initial response, testing out the applicability of new methods moving forward beyond the pandemic. Many of the innovative actions taken on the fly in the initial phase that proved successful were continued into the steady-state phase and, in some cases, improved even further. Hybrid programs and service delivery to the community remained a successful operational method necessary for the new regular operation. Hybrid methods also continued for internal county operations, along with IT advancements to provide the most effective and efficient tools and systems to support the county. Improvements that remain to be addressed and successes that continue to be

implemented in the steady-state phase may also continue beyond the pandemic for the benefit of the county in future responses.

Transition to More Normal Operations—July 2021 to December 2021

As the pandemic progressed, county government operations evolved from the “new normal” to “more normal” pre-pandemic operations while at the same time carrying over strengths and effective operating procedures implemented throughout the pandemic. July 1, 2021 is noted as the transition to more normal operations and was punctuated by the expiration of Executive Order 79, which ended the state of emergency in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Re-opening efforts continued throughout the county, with in-person services becoming available in most government buildings. CDC guidelines continued to be observed. In response to the surge in cases from the COVID-19 Delta variant, masking became required once more for employees and visitors, regardless of vaccination status, on August 9, 2021. During this time, government services continued to be offered online and by phone.



The Delta variant would prove to be a significant problem as restrictions started to relax while infections increased. This raised concerns as students were scheduled to return to in-person classes on August 23, 2021. To mitigate infections among adolescents aged 12 and older, Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) partnered with the Health Department to host vaccination clinics at select schools. On August 13, 2021, immunocompromised residents became eligible for a booster dose. On August 20, 2021, the county announced that all Fairfax County employees are required to be fully vaccinated or submit to weekly testing as a condition of employment. On November 2, 2021, the CDC announced that children ages 5-11 were eligible for the Pfizer vaccine. On November 19, 2021, the CDC expanded eligibility for booster shots to include all adults 18 years old and older. Beginning December 3, 2021, all libraries made available at-home test kits to protect residents ahead of the holidays. On December 27, 2021, in alignment with CDC guidelines, Fairfax County updated its policies for isolation and quarantine, shortening periods and allowing those exposed or infected to return to work sooner while maintaining a safe workplace with masking and social distancing.

FINANCIAL RECOVERY EFFORTS

The financial recovery effort related to the pandemic is the highest dollar amount of federal funding the county has ever managed. DEMS led the county-wide effort. The existing cost recovery process was used to track the almost \$700 million in funding (received to date) from the federal government. This cost recovery structure provided the county with a solid foundation for managing funds, but it had not been used for something of this scale. Most county agencies and departments are familiar with the process, which helped maximize cost recovery and allowed the county to redirect internal county funds for other COVID initiatives. The federal government sent most of the COVID-related stimulus funding directly to the county. This allowed the county

to immediately implement programs where other jurisdictions in Virginia had to wait for funds to be processed through the state. The lessons learned through administering such a large amount of money prompted DEMS to revise its Financial Recovery Plan. The revised plan will allow the county to manage funding more efficiently in the future.

6. Community Support during the COVID-19 Response

Fairfax County experienced many challenges, service expansions, and new opportunities with community support due to the COVID-19 pandemic environment. The pandemic caused adjustments and improvements across the board with the county's support to residents, non-profit partners, and private sector partners. In response to this disaster, the county changed how it communicated with these various groups. The county also made significant strides with new grant programs, limited programmatic funding, and financial support to these groups in support of residents impacted by the pandemic and non-profits and businesses that required additional support to continue operations and expand their service deliveries throughout the community.

COMMUNICATIONS TO COUNTY RESIDENTS

The COVID-19 pandemic drastically changed how the county communicated. External communication to county residents was a priority to re-enforce health and safety guidance, give advice and support to the local business community, and share information on accessing critical government services.

Fairfax County's public messaging and communication with the county residents throughout the pandemic also required many changes. The use of the Joint Information Center (JIC) as one of the central coordination bodies for developing and distributing public messaging was a general success of the response. With comprehensive information from various sources and the quickly changing guidance throughout the response, the JIC served to ensure the clearest, consistent, and timely messaging possible from the county. The county agencies also made efforts to ensure equity considerations in their public information strategy, including community listening and outreach, use of a multitude of communication channels, translation, language and culture considerations, and garnering feedback from various communities in the county. Because the pandemic highlighted and worsened many of the systematic equity issues in the community, the need to reach vulnerable and underserved populations was even more critical.

SUPPORT FOR COUNTY RESIDENTS

Evaluation of the support provided to county residents also looked at the entire review timeline outlined for this assessment—March 2020 through December 2021. The following section describes major programs representative of county support to residents.

Supporting Return to School

Neighborhood and Community Services (NCS) efforts included the Supporting Return to School (SRS) program, Camp Fairfax, and School Age Child Care (SACC). Camp Fairfax and SACC provided childcare for families where parents worked full-time. The SRS program provided full-day on-site programming for children in kindergarten through sixth grade residing in Fairfax County and the

City of Fairfax, Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m., starting September 8, 2020. It was offered at 37 Fairfax County Public Schools, including 35 elementary schools and the Key and Kilmer Centers. Enrollment was limited to maintaining physical distancing and health protocols. SRS was staffed by employees from the Fairfax County Office for Children, not Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) staff, and was not designed to replace virtual learning, but rather to support students by ensuring access the FCPS academic day, computer technical support, and meals (i.e., breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack). The SRS program concluded at the end of June 2021.

Assistance from a Distance

‘Assistance from a Distance’ was the phrase coined by DFS and later used by the county-at-large about any services that could continue in an alternate format to offer safety to residents. Any county agency that continued offering services either over the phone or virtually were described as Assistance from a Distance. This included services such as welfare checks, domestic violence education, site inspections, doctor visits, permitting and licenses, etc. DIT played a significant role



in the shift to virtual services, particularly in finding systems compliant with Health Insurance Portability and Accessibility Act (HIPAA) and Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) standards to provide telehealth options to residents. County staff who could not work due to the pandemic closure of their work location were repurposed to help support the Assistance from a Distance programs through services like meal and medication delivery and transportation.

Housing

Housing instability became an increasing problem throughout the pandemic, and the county took steps to mitigate damages and support county residents in coordination with the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) and NCS. The county’s eviction prevention response relied on their ability to coordinate and braid funding together where applicable to support those with needs. These efforts included:

- Federal and local rental subsidy programs helped house nearly 20,000 residents.
- Supported processes related to Emergency Rental Assistance; dispersed funding totaled more than \$65,000,000.
- Utilization of federal resources to provide emergency Quarantine, Protection, Isolation, and Decompression (QPID) hotel accommodations for more than 1,900 residents that met certain requirements.
- Steady growth of the active pipeline of affordable housing projects with more than 1,700 units in development.

The state and federal eviction moratorium was pivotal to keeping people in their homes. Assistance was provided to 47 first-time home buyers in purchasing new homes totaling more than \$11 million in transactions. In addition, there was a continued investment of local funds,

issuing bonds to assist in financing new development and preservation of affordable housing opportunities, and the dedication of additional public lands for affordable housing. These programs not only help mitigate the effects of the pandemic but will help with long-term housing efforts in the county.

Cultural Recreation

The county continued offering many cultural and recreational programs throughout the pandemic in coordination with the libraries, parks, community centers, and senior centers. Through Fairfax County Public Libraries (FCPL), a Spanish eBook/eAudiobook collection was published. FCPL also broadcasts virtual programming to the community. In July 2020, the Park Authority developed virtual fitness classes and began offering other virtual events. Community centers offered several programs and services virtually and worked to make programming



accessible and equitable. NCS, through the community centers, planned and implemented Therapeutic Recreation Services to provide opportunities for children and adults with disabilities. Community centers also provided virtual programs like scavenger hunts, trivia, and bingo, in addition, to drive-through events for holidays like Earth Day, July 4th, and a socially distanced trunk or treat for Halloween. The staff of community centers also served targeted communities by distributing supplies, school, art, etc.

Quality-of-life issues, such as community and human connections in place of in-person recreation, were recognized as a need, especially for senior community members. In March 2020, NCS began providing transport services to older adults due to the absence of the county bus service. As the pandemic progressed, senior centers would transition into centers for wellness checks, COVID testing, and vaccination. A virtual center was created for active adults, and additional virtual opportunities were offered to mitigate the social isolation of older adults. Some staff also made phone calls to seniors in the community to maintain connections while programs were scaled down or ceased.

SUPPORT TO NON-PROFITS

Food Operations

The county supported efforts to collect and distribute food donations with the help of NCS, the Department of Family Services (DFS), and community-based organizations. Food distribution was operationalized in partnership with NCS and DFS. When senior centers closed, meals provided in a congregate setting to seniors were no longer an option; therefore, the senior centers worked with DFS staff and contractors to deliver meals. The county created and supported a number of emergency food distribution opportunities community providers, houses of worship, FCPS and the business community. One effort utilized a variety of volunteers from the Fire Department, the Mormon Church, the military, and many other organizations totaling roughly 400-500

volunteers. Early on, there were plans to partner with organizations that specialized in food distribution and delivery, but these organizations became overwhelmed by the size of the response and had to withdraw. As a result of the opportunities and challenges during the pandemic with emergency food distribution, a cross-sector stakeholder committee has been created and an Emergency Food Assistance Response Plan is near completion. This plan specifically looks at ongoing partnerships among food providers and efforts to reduce barriers to accessing emergency food. This plan is complimentary to county emergency response plans.

Grant Funding

The county supported business and non-profit partners with grant funding opportunities during the pandemic. For the non-profit sector, this helped ensure that vital services they provide to the community could continue during a time of increased need. This financial support assisted businesses and non-profits with funds to support their vital ongoing operations. For non-profits, building on the county's existing Coordinated Services Planning model, funds were provided to expand their capacity to provide basic needs assistance on behalf of the county. This funding played a significant role in continuing foundational services to the community during a time marked by overall increased needs, challenges for the non-profit workforce, and the need for innovative approaches to service delivery for the health and safety of workers, volunteers, and the community.

Grant opportunities were sourced from stimulus funds received from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act Coronavirus Relief Fund including, Emergency Rental Assistance 1 & 2, and the American Rescue Plan (ARPA) Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (CSLFRF), as well as other funds that the county received for pandemic response purposes. The following highlights grant funding to businesses and non-profits via CARES and ARPA to support their continued operations and sustainability:

- The county allocated \$16,836,300 towards the PIVOT Business Recovery Grant Program to businesses and non-profits in food services, lodging, retail, art organizations, museums, and historical sites for assistance with the economic impacts of the pandemic.
- The county allocated \$5,026,704 in CARES funding towards the Non-profit Sustainability Program to assist with the increasing demand for services from the community. Non-profits in the following areas could apply for this funding: Financial Stability, Food and Nutrition, Literary/Educational Attainment, Health, Housing, Positive Behaviors, and Healthy Relationships, and/or Support/Community/Social Networks.
- The county allocated \$3,430,000 in ARPA funding towards the Active and Thriving Community Grants Program to small businesses and non-profits for assistance with childcare programs, community-based programs providing key health and human services, youth programs in athletic organizations, out-of-school time programs for youth grades K-12, and outdoor community pools owned by Homeowners Associations (HOAs), Community Associations, and Apartments/Condominiums, as well as community membership-based pools.

- The county allocated \$7,095,000 in ARPA funding towards the 2022 Non-profit Sustainability Grants program for non-profit organizations that provide critical social safety net services. This is an extension of the Non-profit Sustainability Grants program started in 2020 using CARES funding.

The following highlights grant funding support to non-profits via CARES and ARPA funds specifically designed for the expansion of direct client services (food, housing, and utility assistance) as of November 2022:

- The county allocated over 90 million dollars for the provision of basic needs supports to community-based organizations through CARES \$21 million, CDBG \$7 million and \$65 million in Emergency Rental Assistance 1 & 2. Funds were awarded to existing Coordinated Services Planning (CSP) providers for assistance to meet the following community needs: rent, mortgage, security deposits, housing fees (late, condo, HOA, etc.), utilities, and prescription assistance.
- The county had allocated over 6,000,000 of ARPA funding towards the Food Access Program, to date, \$3.3 million of which has been disbursed to 22 houses of worship and 26 community-based organizations to bolster food service infrastructure for the community.

SUPPORT TO PRIVATE SECTOR

Evaluation of the support county agencies provided to the private sector looked at the entire review timeline outlined for this assessment from January 2020 through December 2021. The following section describes programs included in private sector support, including grants, adjustments to permitting processes, and employment.

DEI Business Grants

Multiple groups worked in coordination with the Department for Economic Initiatives (DEI) to support the private sector, including, but not limited to, the Fairfax County Economic Development Authority (FCEDA), Department of Information and Technology (DIT), Department of Emergency Management and Security (DEMS), and the Business Continuity Group. Each group played a unique role in the response. FCEDA launched and led an Economic Recovery Framework for business retention and economic competitiveness. As part of this process, FCEDA convened Economic Recovery Forums with more than 15 county agencies to discuss implementation and tracking. DEMS ensured PPE and other supplies were on hand for the eventual return of staff to county offices. In coordination with the Business Continuity Group, DEI convened a group of county and business support entities to identify needs and responses and to share best practices.

Multiple areas fell under the responsibility of DEI in support of county businesses. DEI oversaw the \$1 million Small Business COVID-19 Recovery Microloan Fund and transitioned that to a revolving loan fund. They developed, promoted, managed the Fairfax RISE: COVID-19 Small Business and Non-Profit Relief Grant Program. RISE grants were crucial in supporting small businesses and non-profit organizations, distributing \$52.6 million in grants to 4,809 small

businesses. DEI also developed, promoted, and oversaw the \$25 million PIVOT small business recovery grant program to support the businesses most impacted by the pandemic. DEI also led the county's business communication and outreach, including the following:

- Monitoring and updating the COVID-19 business webpage.
- Answering business questions via emails and phone calls.
- Designing and mailing business resource postcards to approximately 30,000 businesses.

Finally, DEI convened a business continuity working group to coordinate partners across the county to respond to the COVID-19 crisis impacting the local business community.

Permits and Code Enforcement

Land Development Services (LDS) and the Department of Code Compliance (DCC) worked closely with DEMS and DIT to ensure operations would continue. DEMS supplied and distributed PPE, while DIT provided laptops and another tech to ensure that department employees could work remotely. DCC and LDS moved operations to a hybrid, then fully virtual setting, allowing agency operations to continue safely. DCC continued with virtual site inspections of indoor facilities and conducting in-person field visits.



Following the Governor's declaration of a state of emergency, DCC leadership established the essential function of the agency and personnel who would support the coordination of the emergency response team. On March 20, 2020, the interim telework protocol was established. More safety precautions were implemented on March 25, 2020, including drop box plans for documents, allowing staff to receive cases via email, and no interior inspections. Less than a quarter of the staff came into the office.

Employment

Efforts to maintain employment for county staff and their ability to do their jobs required support from multiple internal and external partners. These partners include the Department of Human Resources (DHR), DEI, DEMS, DIT, and the Northern Virginia Chamber of Commerce. DHR has been on the frontlines ensuring employees were aware of the multitude of health and safety measures and resources available to support them during the pandemic. DIT supported the distribution of laptops to allow for remote work and retaining employees.

The events affecting employment took place as follows:

- March 27, 2020 - Fairfax County closed all county facilities to the public.
- March 2020 - Job program developed connecting employees without work with agencies experiencing surging demand.

- March 2020 - Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) passed and was implemented on April 1, 2020.
- April 1, 2020 - Emergency Paid Sick Leave (EPSL) and Family Expanded Medical Leave (FEMLE) were introduced.
- July 2020 - Department of Labor (DOL) pushes out mandatory training for new infectious disease prevention standards.
- October 1, 2020 - County implements new paid family leave program.
- December 31, 2020 - EPSL and FEMLE expire.

There were several policies and procedures put in place to not only retain county employees but to keep them safe. The Job Match Program moved employees without work to other demanding agencies. The county provided two weeks of administrative leave to employees with COVID-19 related absences, including lack of work, childcare, quarantine, or illness. A new type of administrative leave—*Admin Leave-Pandemic*—was created, and four additional weeks were added for six weeks. DHR, in partnership with senior management, significantly revised the existing telework policy to provide comprehensive details for the new work environment. The Department of Planning and Development (DPD) adapted staff work shifts and developed capabilities to meet telework demands placed on the county quickly. DPD adopted department telework policies for each work unit. The DEMS Training and Exercise program provided just-in-time training to county employees brought in from other agencies to support EOC logistics operations.

7. Capabilities Analysis—Strengths, Areas for Improvement, and Recommendations for Moving Forward

The National Response Framework⁷ outlines core capabilities that are the activities that generally must be accomplished in incident response. No core capability is the responsibility of any one party or single level of government, and interdependencies exist among many core capabilities. Organizing observations from an after-action review by the associated core capability helps link identified strengths, opportunities, and recommendations for improvement to national guidance and helps track progress through incidents and exercises over time.

The categories listed below were selected as pivotal to the COVID-19 response and are used to organize identified strengths and areas for improvement:

- Planning
- Logistics and Supply Chain Management
- Operational Coordination
- Infrastructure

⁷ There are 15 core capabilities aligned with the Response mission area.
https://www.ready.gov/sites/default/files/2019-06/national_response_framework.pdf

- Operational Communications
- Special Focus: Equity

Strengths identify actions that went very well or resources that proved valuable given the circumstances of the pandemic. For some strengths, opportunities are highlighted to recommend how these elements can be incorporated into standard procedures to support success in future responses—areas for improvement highlight where the county can be more effective. A recommendation associated with areas for improvement is a way to improve the process and prevent the same issue from occurring in future response efforts.

The Fairfax County Corrective Action Program (FC-CAP) manages areas for improvement documented during exercises and real-world events. Corrective actions are the specific activities that need to occur to address the recommendations. The county works to address these corrective actions to improve resiliency. Once the AAR is complete, DEMS uploads its associated Improvement Plan into the FC-CAP to document, track, and manage the corrective actions.



PLANNING

Core Capability Description: Conduct a systematic process engaging the whole community as appropriate in the development of executable strategic, operational, and/or tactical-level approaches to meet defined objectives.

Strengths

The following are identified strengths:

Strength 1: There was effective collaboration and coordination across county agencies and throughout the planning process. Agencies considered the EOC to have successfully included other county agencies in decision-making processes during the COVID-19 response. This response also resulted in staff becoming more comfortable and confident in making critical decisions quickly, even in lower staff ranks. Staff had opportunities to gain experience and learn the processes and flexibility required in disaster response.

Strength 2: Many county agencies found their Continuity of Operations (COOP) plans to help respond to COVID-19 and were able to effectively implement COOP concepts to continue mission essential functions, continue normal operations, and deliver critical services to the community.

Strength 3: The FCHD Incident Management Team identified several items that lent to their success. Maintaining a robust department-level Incident Management Team, investing in regular training for incident response staff, and standardizing the use of the Incident Command System all contributed to the FCHD's ability to coordinate the COVID-19 response. New practices also contributed to a successful response. Personnel from DEMS and the National Capital Region

Incident Management Team (NCR IMT) provided surge support to the FCHD Incident Management Team during the initial response phase of COVID-19. This new collaboration resulted in improved resource tracking, financial tracking and procurement, logistics tracking and operational coordination, and opportunities to cross-train staff in emergency response topics. In addition, the HDOC Planning and Logistics Sections successfully coordinated to stand up adequate communication and knowledge-sharing processes and regular meetings that were key for the response.

Opportunity: This highlights the importance of continued collaboration and investment in IMT infrastructure to support disaster response needs. It is recommended that a standing county-level Incident Management Team be established to allow more agencies to train staff, provide continual real-world experience, and poise the county to respond as a team to the full breadth of potential emergencies in Fairfax County. These successes also provide the opportunity to continue to develop and maintain relationships between various responding organizations.

Strength 4: The Donations Management Annex to the County Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) was successfully implemented during the pandemic response. The adaptability built into the plan and previously exercised supported success in the response. Roles and responsibilities were updated early in response to make the plan more practical, and realistic. The coordinating agencies were changed from DEMS and Volunteer Fairfax to Volunteer Fairfax and Neighborhood and Community Services (NCS) as co-leads to reflect these agency roles more accurately.

Strength 5: Necessary equipment and supplies were available and procured for ready deployment to support the county's response. The inventory of respirators, PPE, medical supplies, and other products maintained by the FCHD and public safety agencies were critical to the county's response in the early months of the pandemic when supply chains were disrupted.

Opportunity: Document the successful processes used and establish a standard protocol for future events where supply issues exist. This strength also highlights the importance of maintaining critical supplies (e.g., PPE, medical supplies, equipment, and supplies necessary to provide emergency response services to the public in community settings) in a steady-state ready to deploy on short notice.

Strength 6: Board and county leadership's flexibility allowed agencies to implement plans and pivot operations to meet the changing needs of the pandemic. For example, the transition to telework went smoothly due to pre-existing telework policies, various pilot programs specific to virtual operations being tested, and significant infrastructure and technology investments by the Board.

Opportunity: Continue to be forward-looking with the potential development of new programs and plans related to telework that may better position county agencies for future disaster response.

Strength 7: Initial response for ordinances, permitting, code, and the business process went well due to a pilot project with an electronic plan review that could be ramped up quickly to go electronic.

Strength 8: Land Development Services went 100% online in three weeks. LDS was already planning to transition to an online system in 2022 and was able to take additional steps to ensure that that transition happened sooner. Early hurdles related to training were ultimately resolved, with most customers now knowing the online system. In-person visits dropped from 2,000 per month to 50 per month. Of approximately 200,000 inspections a year, many are now done virtually.

Strength 9: Telehealth increased community member engagement in services for sexual abuse and/or violence support due to a perceived increase in privacy for the client.

Strength 10: The DEMS cost recovery guide provided helpful guidance to county agencies that allowed successful documentation of expenditures and the pursuit of cost recovery.

Areas for Improvement

The following areas require improvement:

Area for Improvement 1: While implementing COOP plans was a recognized success for some agencies, gaps in current COOP planning templates need to be addressed, including specific guidance for long-term operations, IT resiliency planning, and incorporation of COOP into high-level decision-making processes.

Reference: County agency Continuity of Operations (COOP) plans; IT resiliency planning; Department of Human Resources (DHR) definitions/policies regarding essential personnel

Analysis: COOP planning methods have traditionally been focused on short-term operations and individual facility evacuations, lacking the assumptions and structures necessary for long-term operations, a major shift to the virtual environment, and simultaneous countywide impacts such as was seen in response to COVID-19. COOP planning is inconsistent across county agencies, as not every department has full-time staff dedicated to emergency preparedness and planning efforts. There is also insufficient authority given to the countywide Continuity Program lead to ensure agencies are keeping plans up-to-date and that continuity is considered in high-level meetings and policy development.

Recommendation: Update all county COOP plans and the county COOP plan template to address long-term virtual operations, including adjustments made during the pandemic response, and recognize emergency service personnel and essential personnel definitions in alignment with DHR policy and the Office of the County Attorney (OCA) guidance. Incorporate individual and family preparedness for employees in county COOP planning efforts. Ensure IT remains a critical part of COOP planning efforts. Plans should recognize the key role technology will likely play in any situation where COOP activation is required. Give more authority to the COOP program and incorporate continuity perspectives in leadership decision-making discussions.

Area for Improvement 2: Opportunities to augment, amplify, and maximize staffing in response to COVID-19 were missed.

Reference: COOP staffing plans, Fairfax County EOP, DHR policies and procedures

Analysis: As signatories to the county EOP, department and agency heads commit to dedicating resources (i.e., people, systems, equipment, facilities, consumable items, etc.) to help the county

through extreme circumstances. In the face of the pandemic, no mechanism existed for rapid reassignment of county staff to other agencies for extended periods. Requests for staff to augment the EOC were not always able to be filled, leaving important positions unfilled and too few people managing too many missions. The lack of adequate staffing resources hampered the effectiveness of FCHD response early on until contract surge staff could be brought in.

In addition to those directly responding to the emergency, pandemic response placed heavy demands on internal support services, including IT, Human Resources, and Finance. The county staff specialists responsible for the following vital response elements carried an extremely heavy burden: technology deployment, training requirements, health protective measures, leave policies, and federal funding receipt, allocation, and disbursement. Workloads increased by nearly 50% for some, with no or minimal increase in staff. Core administrative capabilities required to keep government operations functional took extraordinary initiative, collaboration, creativity, and long hours to keep on top of ever-changing information and requirements. Employees' personal commitment to putting in extra time to figure out what was needed to keep things running, then making those operational elements reality is what allowed Fairfax County to successfully navigate the first months of the pandemic then transition into a stabilized work environment.

Available pandemic leave was a tremendous benefit to many, but those who continued to work took on more of the workload and tasks they normally would not be responsible for. All the issues outlined here caused significant challenges in bringing the full strength of the county workforce to bear in the response to the pandemic. Lessons learned from the COVID-19 response can guide understanding of the level of effort, anticipated workload, and staffing support needed to successfully continue functioning as a county government without risk of staff fatigue, burnout, and resignation.

Recommendations:

Note: This Area for Improvement consolidates multiple observations related to staffing the response to maximize support and share the workload. Numerous recommendations are outlined to address discrete elements identified during the review.

1. Evaluate agency COOP plans to assess staffing for mission essential functions to identify areas where a significant increase in staffing may be needed. Plans for continuing government operations in emergency situations need to be evaluated to determine if administrative services are adequately captured in COOP plans at the executive level, not just at the agency level.
2. Establish a policy designation and mechanism that allows for rapid reassignment of county personnel across agencies/roles to improve emergency response staffing. There is a need to build understanding and staff capability to respond in any situation.

3. Continue progress on developing emergency-related leave for employees to have equitable access and usage and so that continuity and workload is maintained.
4. Evaluate EOC staffing since current DEMS personnel cannot staff all the positions outlined as necessary in response. Prioritize the development of EOC bench depth that pulls from countywide agencies.
5. Identify the ability of the county to maintain contracts and mutual aid agreements that would support rapid deployment of surge staff to various agencies in an emergency.
6. Departments with lead or support roles in emergency response should consider developing internal emergency response resources, including a department IMT, and reviewing/revising agency COOP plans to contemplate use in these settings (by way of using pre-identified mission essential functions as a framework for how to reduce services to offer more resources to an emergency response).

Area for Improvement 3: There were gaps in policies related to the needs of individuals working on the response.

Reference: DHR policies, County COOP

Analysis: Policy gaps noted as faced by staff working the response included inability to access the leave offered, failure to get other county staff for long-term deployments, safety needs that needed to be met, pay/overtime rules that do not consider extraordinary hours worked above a regular workday in an emergency response.

Recommendation: Review DHR policies using the pandemic workload as a reference point to identify improvements to better support response staff. Identify strategies to sufficiently support the people engaged in response, recognizing their engagement in the response comes with limitations in using resources available to non-response staff.

Area for Improvement 4: A refinement in the county service delivery mechanisms is needed. The success in continuing government functions during the pandemic required an immense amount of staff time, especially from an IT perspective in keeping all the infrastructure advances current and operational.

Reference: Budget and staffing plans; public education

Analysis: The long-term duration of the pandemic lent to the public's expectations that the heightened operational levels, including additional services and programs provided to the community as well as alternate and virtual methods of delivery, will continue beyond the pandemic. With the current budget and staffing levels, the push to continue functions and to operate at this increased level continuously is not sustainable.

Recommendation: Evaluate pandemic operations and determine what "new normal" operations are reasonable. Conduct analysis on function improvement, including the budget and staff requirements to sustain this level of operations, as well as how other jurisdictions provide services, and decide if changing the delivery model is plausible or if an expanded investment is in

the best interest of county operations moving forward, then adjust the budget and staffing accordingly.

Area for Improvement 5: In the initial response phase, there were challenges with syncing the HDOC and EOC planning efforts and establishing EOC processes and battle rhythm, as they operated as two separate processes.

Reference: Department Operations Center (DOC)/EOC, Planning Section checklists

Analysis: At the outset of the response, all available FCHD staff fully coordinated the public health response. As such, the FCHD did not have staff available to provide an in-person representative in the EOC. EOC liaisons to the FCHD could not work from the HDOC in the earliest days of the response due to the visual sharing of personal/patient health information in the room. Microsoft Teams and other virtual coordination tools were not as prevalent in the early weeks of the response and were not used as effectively to coordinate between the HDOC and the EOC as they would come to be used throughout the pandemic. These factors contributed to leaving the EOC in a reactive state rather than being able to provide a strategic perspective and anticipate response needs. Necessary coordination points between the Planning Sections of the IMT and EOC structure were not recognized until later in the response. Upon activation of the Virtual EOC, the FCHD staffed its Liaison Officer as the EOC representative for the duration of the EOC's activation.

Recommendation: DEMS, FCHD, and other departments designated as a Coordinating Agency in the EOP should explore modes of communication and coordination between the EOC and DOCs as alternatives to in-person coordination when in-person staffing EOC staffing is not possible.

Area for Improvement 6: County policy and decision-making during the response were developed to get to the next step instead of a long-term strategy. While some of the policies were the best option at the time, repeating them for future events may not necessarily be as successful.

Reference: County policies developed during COVID-19 pandemic

Analysis: The nature of the pandemic forced rapid decision-making and policy development.

Recommendation: Assess major decisions made and policies developed for applicability beyond the pandemic, as well as consideration of equity, and codify decisions and policies that can be reused in the future in emergency procedures.

Area for Improvement 7: Challenges existed with continuity of government in the virtual environment as it relates to the Board of Supervisors and Boards, Authorities, and Commissions (BACs), specifically with the operational limitations in statute. The limitations were less on the IT side and more on what was statutorily allowed. IT would have been capable of supporting BAC operations earlier. Still, the subject matter of meetings was not authorized by statute, and critical analysis was required to determine what was legally permitted.

Reference: Statute specific to BACs

Analysis: Legal limitations hampered the ability of some of the BACs to meet and continue operations in the virtual environment during the early stages of the pandemic.

Recommendation: Determine whether changes need to be made to statute to ensure necessary flexibility and ability of BACs to continue operations in virtual environments.

Area for Improvement 8: More robust planning for agency roles in donations management is needed to make the system more efficient.

Reference: Donations Management Annex, County EOP

Analysis: Agencies not traditionally engaged in donations management, like the Police Department, assumed a role as a donations collection location. Coordination with the Police Department for donations management was initially inefficient due to multiple locations and multiple points of contact within one department.

Recommendation: Incorporate Police Department roles and lessons learned into Donations Management Annex planning and consider what other agencies may be able to play a role in donations management. Ensure documentation of process improvements made during the pandemic with points of contact and location management.

Area for Improvement 9: Existing pandemic planning was at a high framework level. Each agency required actionable strategies and tactics that could be implemented in response to the COVID-19 pandemic for its operations.

Reference: County Pandemic Plan

Analysis: The county pandemic plan, updated for the previous pandemic of H1N1 influenza, was not reflective of the full breadth, scope, and scale of the impacts a novel respiratory virus would have on the government and the community. There was not enough time at the outset of the pandemic to update the document, especially with daily-changing information on the virus and the emergency response demands of emergency planners. Lack of specificity related to strategies, tactics, and policy adjustments to support county response left much to be developed on the fly during the COVID-19 response.

Recommendation: Develop a more comprehensive county pandemic plan based on COVID-19 lessons learned. Ensure countywide education and awareness of the plan and roles and responsibilities as necessary.

Area for Improvement 10: Staff burnout and mental health strain were significant challenges as the prolonged duration and sustained high workload of the response to the pandemic resulted in hardships for employees.

Reference: Employee assistance resources, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) support services

Analysis: Public health and emergency services staff have endured harassment, threats, and generally negative community sentiment throughout the pandemic. This long-duration experience has been traumatic for a significant portion of the staff. Trauma experienced at the individual level was amplified by the overall staffing shortages the county experienced. Even with the surge in staffing, there was not enough personnel to provide staff with time off, especially those in crucial emergency services roles. This burnout and its cascading impact were also applicable to volunteer populations supporting the county's response operations.

Recommendation: Evaluate expansion of employee assistance resources, like those utilized by public safety agencies, for critical incident stress management.

Area for Improvement 11: Many of the challenges faced on a day-to-day basis in traditional congregate sheltering were also present with non-congregate sheltering, such as inadequate services for mental health needs.

Reference: Sheltering plans/procedures

Analysis: The implementation of non-congregate sheltering at such a large scale for the first time during the pandemic came with unique challenges for wrap-around services. Not only were some of the challenges faced in a traditional congregate sheltering setting also present but, in some cases, amplified by the isolation/quarantine aspect of the non-congregate sheltering operations. Additional layers of complexity for wrap-around sheltering services, especially mental health services, were faced due to the nature of the non-congregate sheltering model.

Recommendation: Update sheltering operations and procedures for houseless populations as appropriate to address the need for mental health services and other wrap around services in both congregate and non-congregate settings. Ensure relationships and agreements with organizations that provide these wrap-around services are established and maintained.

Area for Improvement 12: There was no pre-existing plan to distribute food with the new policies and health and safety measures.

Reference: Food distribution plans and procedures

Analysis: The pandemic environment brought many and frequently changing health and safety measures and guidance. Plans for food distribution before the pandemic did not address how operations would be conducted in a pandemic with new and changing health and safety guidance. Organizations working on food distribution had to be reactive to public health policies, having no basis for this new operating environment in the existing plans.

Recommendation: Incorporate planning assumptions into food distribution plans and procedures to address operating in a pandemic environment and coordinate with public health on updated guidance during an emergent public health situation.

Area for Improvement 13: Food distribution plans did not outline solutions for leftover food from distribution events.

Reference: Community organization's resources

Analysis: Due to various reasons, any food distribution event during the pandemic could have leftover food at the end of the event. To avoid wasting leftover food, being able to reroute the food to a community partner that could take in the food would have been the best option; however, a current list of organizations that could support this type of ask was not established, causing delays in managing leftover food.

Recommendation: Update planning to include options to handle left-over resources following distribution events.

Recommendation: Establish a list of partner organizations throughout the community that have ability to take in food at short notice as well as ability to pick it up from events.



LOGISTICS AND SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT

Core Capability Description: Deliver essential commodities, equipment, and services in support of impacted communities and survivors, including emergency power and fuel support, as well as the coordination of access to community staples. Synchronize logistics capabilities and enable the restoration of impacted supply chains.

Strengths

The following are identified strengths:

Strength 1: The county quickly supported enhanced safety measures for the workforce, including supplying PPE and cleaning supplies, enhanced cleaning protocols, social distancing measures, signage, plexiglass, contact tracing, virtual communication methods, and other safety protocols.

Opportunity: This success provides an opportunity to document and prepare for the new safety measures developed for COVID-19 response to ensure rapid deployment and implementation in future pandemics.

Strength 2: The Fairfax County local emergency declaration on March 17, 2020, and the Fairfax County purchasing resolution were foundational for the county's ability to respond, receive essential resources, and establish contracts. The Purchasing Agent's authority to pursue emergency procurement with a local emergency declaration minimized the need for competition and allowed for a more rapid pursuit of goods and services. Without that mechanism, logistics support of the response would have been hampered significantly.

Strength 3: The development and implementation of the countywide single point ordering (SPO) system early in the pandemic and the coordination with the EOC Logistics Section for resource needs were successes. Being the first time the SPO was implemented, improvements were made as the roll-out occurred to increase the effectiveness for the response.

Opportunity: Adjust planning to trigger SPO implementation early when a complex, multi-agency, or long-term response is anticipated.

Strength 4: The ability to transition staff to telework and IT support in providing the necessary infrastructure and equipment to staff worked well. Procurement was also critical in supporting the resource needs for the transition to the virtual environment. The ability to telework also helped the county's overall health and safety goals for employees and the community.

Strength 5: The support that county agencies received from the FCHD coordinating safety walkthroughs of facilities, providing guidance, and addressing issues that arose at sites was vital in ensuring individuals' health and safety at county facilities.

Opportunity: Continuation of the partnership with and guidance from the FCHD for health and safety concerns at facilities can be used beyond COVID-19 response for various other threats and hazards the county faces that require health considerations.

Strength 6: FCHD, and to a lesser extent Fire and Rescue and Police, had a robust on-hand supply of various health resources that allowed the county to overcome supply chain issues with PPE, cleaning supplies, hand sanitizer, etc. for FCHD and overall county operations. There was the capacity to provide thousands of respirators and other PPE to long-term care facilities, nursing homes, and assisted living facilities, which were hard hit at the beginning of the pandemic and unable to procure PPE themselves. Many county departments also noted that PPE and supplies were readily available to them.

Opportunity: Based on this success, the county government should determine the degree to which it might maintain a supply of commonly used items for overall preparedness, including a robust stock of PPE and other response materials.

Strength 7: The processes for management of resources for the Quarantine, Protection, Isolation, and Decompression (QPID) hotel operations were a success. Spreadsheets were used for the initial vetting of hotel locations to ensure a potential location met all logistical requirements to support the operation. A map of all QPID hotel locations was also developed to help identify what hotel is closest, what the capacity was, how much room was available, etc., for efficient placement of individuals.

Opportunity: The need to rapidly develop non-congregate shelter plans and processes provided the opportunity for significant logistical improvements to shelter operations. The development of this plan can serve as a solid foundation for additional shelter planning and operations for the county.

Strength 8: In the rollout of the SPO process, DEMS relied on WebEOC to successfully gather and process requests for resources from the initial request through the procurement process. Efforts to explain and train county staff on the request for assistance (RFA) process in WebEOC were successful and proved a useful tool for tracking agency requests.

Opportunity: Evaluate the single-RFA-per-agency WebEOC policy to identify opportunities to better support Coordinating Agencies.

Strength 9: Because of the unprecedented nature of this event, there was significant federal funding available that was used to expand IT infrastructure.

Opportunity: Incorporate the new IT needs and costs for county operations into overall county budget planning.

Strength 10: Fairfax County is the only jurisdiction in the state that still maintains the waiver from FEMA for reimbursement of non-congregate sheltering under the Public Assistance program. The county went direct to FEMA for this instead of through the state, and it has provided an additional level of flexibility.

Areas for Improvement

The following areas require improvement:

Area for Improvement 1: Tracking equipment moved from county facilities as people transitioned to remote work early in the response.

Reference: Asset management procedures

Analysis: There was not an existing asset management system at the time many county employees took equipment home during the transition to telework. The Service Now system was not operational quickly enough to allow for proper asset management.

Recommendation: Revise or establish an asset and technology management and tracking policy to support the new normal of hybrid telework/in-office.

Area for Improvement 2: Coordination on solicitation and distribution of donations.

Reference: Donations Management Annex, County EOP; public messaging

Analysis: A lack of clarity around donations confused the public and inefficiencies in the county's donations management and distribution processes. Restrictions on what PPE could be used by county government versus what could be given to the public created challenges for distribution efforts.

Recommendation: Incorporate coordination with the public messaging/communications functions into the Donations Management Annex. Identify a centralized coordination mechanism for all donations so that donations are equitably distributed.

Area for Improvement 3: Evaluation of the tools and funding necessary for the county workforce to continue county agency operations and serve residents in complex work environments.

Reference: Technology planning; budget planning

Analysis: Without the right technology resources, the county's business operations could be negatively impacted, especially with the increased reliance on technology and expectations of virtual options for services and programs.

Recommendation: County agencies should assess and determine what devices are appropriate for organizational positions based on the possible need to continue county operations in a maximized virtual environment. For positions that are not adaptable to virtual operations, identify the technology needed to keep those job sites or field staff connected to county systems for critical communication and reporting requirements. The assessment should determine who needs laptops, who needs to transition from a desktop to a laptop, who needs headsets, etc.

Area for Improvement 4: Coordination between the EOC Logistics Section and the Department of Purchasing and Material Management (DPMM) for inventory management and identifying resources could be further improved.

Reference: Inventory management system

Analysis: The lack of a comprehensive inventory management system hampers resource management and distribution efforts, making the system unorganized. There is a lack of visibility into what is in the warehouse, tracking orders, and knowing when shipments are received and accounted for. The use of spreadsheets for order tracking was not effective, and inventory

information was often not shared. The inventory management aspect of warehouse operations remains a gap.

Recommendation: Collaborate with a cross-county, inter-agency team to define requirements for a comprehensive inventory management system and explore solutions that meet county needs. Requirements to consider relate to ordering, receiving, and distribution of inventory, as well as visibility and information sharing across systems. Procurement and implementation of the system should be a priority moving forward.

Area for Improvement 5: Online opportunities for residents to apply for services are significant, but there is a gap in tenants' ability to apply online for rental assistance.

Reference: NCS online customer portals

Analysis: Currently, the protocol for residents to receive assistance is inadequate. Tenants have to call to coordinate with NCS for applications for services. The current method of handling these applications is not providing the most effective, efficient process, nor is it allowing for the best customer service to the residents.

Recommendation: Ensure equitable online resources are established and maintained to support better service delivery. **Note: a tenant online portal has been developed, and the landlord portal established during the pandemic will continue.*



OPERATIONAL COORDINATION

Core Capability Description: Establish and maintain a unified and coordinated operational structure and process that appropriately integrates all critical stakeholders and supports the execution of core capabilities.

Strengths

The following are identified strengths:

Strength 1: Frequent communication and updates were successful for coordination and collaboration throughout the COVID-19 response. As part of the response, county agencies increased the number of coordination meetings, both internally and with partner organizations, to facilitate a better-coordinated response. An example is the interagency EOC calls, frequent Senior Management Team meetings, and the HR Supervisors' calls.

Strength 2: The county job matching program for reassigning staff to fill gaps and provide surge staff support was a significant success.

Opportunity: Build upon the successes of the ad-hoc county job matching program, based on a new county policy, to provide increased opportunities to address the many staffing challenges during future disasters.

Strength 3: Some employees were given flexibility in their work schedule, including their hours, staggered shifts, telework, and field time, which provided the county the ability to maintain

critical services. Management of expectations to supervisors that employee workdays would not be the usual 8-5 was also a success in utilizing the workforce.

Opportunity: The increased flexibility and adaptability of the county regarding the workforce to meet the needs of the pandemic could be applied to other staffing and disaster challenges to best use staff to achieve missions.

Strength 4: Collaboration with the FCHD worked well, especially with direct communication from an FCHD liaison, regular calls and presentations to agency staff, protocol updates and guidance, and a partnership for messaging.

Opportunity: The use of FCHD Liaison Officers could be replicated as a model for other county agency liaisons to be used for various disasters.

Strength 5: Public Works and Environmental Services field personnel maintained critical infrastructure facilities and services, including wastewater operations, wastewater collection infrastructure maintenance and repair, and solid waste collection throughout the pandemic, thus maintaining a healthy living environment for community members.

Strength 6: The establishment of non-congregate shelters, referred to as Quarantine, Protection, Isolation, and Decompression (QPID) hotels, for our most vulnerable residents provided significant opportunities to expand shelter capabilities and capacities with countywide partners.

Opportunity: Establishing non-congregate shelters for the COVID-19 pandemic provided significant opportunities to expand shelter capabilities and capacities with countywide partners. These improvements and new developments could be documented in existing sheltering plans to be utilized as needed in future responses.

Strength 7: Many agencies note the ability to continue their normal operations, often as a mix of in-person and virtual operations, also known as "assistance from a distance," throughout the pandemic, especially the provision of human services and programs, as a significant success.

Opportunity: The successes that agencies had in continuing their everyday operations and providing services to the community provide an opportunity to codify methods used in their continuity of operations plans.

Strength 8: The creativity of the staff and the empowerment to make decisions and pivot quickly was a success. Many agencies increased their virtual capacity for providing programs, delivering programs in new and innovative ways, reaching more of the community, and increasing their operations' effectiveness. For example, Land Development Services (LDS) rapidly migrated to a fully online permitting process and pivoted quickly to use readily available virtual applications to ensure the construction industry could continue functioning.

Strength 9: The creation of an ad-hoc Workforce Protection Group (WFPG) to address many issues affecting staff in the pandemic environment. The team's collaboration was a significant success in addressing workforce health and safety and risk management issues throughout the pandemic.

Opportunity: Formalize policies and procedures for the WFPG, including authorities, membership, scope, roles, and responsibilities. Integrate the WFPG into COOP and emergency planning to ensure activation in future events.

Strength 10: The partnership between DEMS, NCS, Department of Family Services (DFS), and FCHD was very successful for donations management efforts, as FCHD was an arm the community, and DEMS supported the logistics coordination.

Opportunity: This successful partnership provides an opportunity to institutionalize the coordination model for future donation management efforts with a health component.

Strength 11: Many county agencies were working across jurisdictions with regular coordination and collaboration to share operational information and best practices. The Fairfax County Park Authority regularly met with the Northern Virginia regional partners to ensure consistency in operations and share lessons learned. Benchmarking was done with other parks agencies across the country as part of the National Parks Association group coordination.

Opportunity: Coordination with regional and national partners and counterparts can be incorporated into standard operating procedures to ensure benchmarking occurs in future disasters.

Strength 12: Fairfax County has a robust finance tracking system with processes and procedures for financial recovery. The established mechanisms could flex and support the reception, management, and disbursement of the various pandemic funding sources. Finance specialists collaborated to understand the scope and limitation of funds, as defined by the funding source, and supported the cost-recovery process. Cost recovery efforts submitted to FEMA for reimbursement as of 9/21 total \$35,772,987. Preliminary Projects remain open-ended, and amendments to additional costs are still to be submitted.

Opportunity: A new Financial Recovery Guide has been developed by DEMS to guide and support effective and efficient cost recovery efforts. All agencies should designate staff to learn the financial recovery roles and responsibilities to support future events.

Strength 13: The Department of Management and Budget (DMB) tracked COVID-19-related monies and ensured funding went to the right program. Budget/Financial staff issued comprehensive monthly updates on the status of Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) funds, American Rescue Plan (ARPA) Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery (CSLFRF) funds, and other funds that the county applied for and received for use related to the pandemic.

Strength 14: The county established innovative programs to directly assist small businesses, engaged with and shared information with the business community, and established a framework for economic recovery.

- Small Business COVID-19 Recovery Microloan Fund
- Fairfax Relief Initiative to Support Employers (RISE): COVID-19 Small Business and Non-Profit Relief Grant Program

- Economic Recovery Framework for business retention and economic competitiveness
- PIVOT small business recovery grant program business continuity working group

Strength 15: The Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority (FCRHA) and Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) took steps to help mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 by suspending evictions at FCRHA properties, suspending terminations in the HCD program, suspending restrictions on rent decreases, and allowing more flexibility with late rent payments for some time.

Strength 16: Collaboration with the Northern Virginia regional partners to ensure consistency in recreational operations and share lessons learned. County Parks trails remained open throughout the pandemic, beginning in May 2020. Outdoor park resources led re-opening efforts, including golf courses, parking lots, community gardens, tennis courts, racquetball courts, skate parks, disk golf, equestrian rings (outdoor), and boat launches.

Strength 17: Office for Children (OFC) and NCS established Supporting Return to Schools (SRS) to provide support for children's active and engaged learning during the Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) virtual academic day. SRS was provided at 37 FCPS locations.

Strength 18: The shift to virtual library programming was successful and provided access to community members beyond each branch service area. Virtual programming was particularly successful for people with disabilities.

Strength 19: FCPS provided free and -and-go meals for students throughout Fairfax County. Adults could purchase breakfast and lunch meals for a small fee. In total, roughly 400 total sites were identified and provided multiple services.

Strength 20: Fairfax County and FCPS developed a searchable map that showed community food distribution sites, including FCPS grab-and-go locations, community meal distribution sites, food pantries, and other related services.

Strength 21: Management of QPID hotels data was successful by adding all hotels in Fairfax County to a map enabling awareness as to what hotel was closest, what the capacity was, and how much room was available. This helped keep people close to their homes. Demographic tracking related to the hotels was also done to determine what segments of the population were being targeted successfully.

Strength 22: The county coordinated successfully with partners in the continuum of care group to get the most vulnerable individuals into QPID shelters first and decompress emergency shelters for increased social distancing.

Strength 23: The county worked with several community providers and partners to help vulnerable community members with their basic needs including utility, wastewater, housing, and food assistance. Over 90 million dollars in COVID-19 relief funding was disbursed. The county

worked with several partners to help low-income families pay household bills. DPWES worked with NCS to provide relief to over 3,500 households for utility, wastewater, and water bills. This required outreach in many different languages. Approximately 1.5 million dollars were credited for those services.

Strength 24: Food distribution efforts engaged a variety of county and community agencies and resident volunteers. In addition to county staff, thousands of volunteer hours were provided to support food distribution efforts by faith-based, military, business and community-based organizations.

Strength 25: Timeliness for processing eviction-prevention cases was analyzed regarding how long it took to enter the system and get rent payment. Delays were related to receipt of proper documentation during the application process. To address this issue, NCS partnered with a non-profit (e.g., provided funding) to help residents find the documents they needed to apply successfully. NCS continues to assess to see if the program worked, recognize the problem-solving mechanisms employed to assess a problem, understand the factors, and identify elements they can influence to address the problem and improve things.

Areas for Improvement

The following areas require improvement:

Area for Improvement 1: Leadership decision-making and approval processes in emergencies can be streamlined.

Reference: EOC Command Section procedures

Analysis: For most of the event, the Senior Policy Group (SPG) call occurred after the EOC call, which delayed getting senior decision-maker input on essential questions. SPG calls held before the EOC calls, outlining high-level direction to guide the EOC, would help mitigate this issue. SPG operations during the pandemic have not followed the processes outlined in the county EOP. This is driven by what the County Executive needed from the senior leaders in the county for the pandemic.

Recommendation: Work with the County Executive and the Deputy County Executives to understand why the SPG operated differently during the pandemic compared to other incidents. Determine what the SPG should look like and how the EOC should be engaged to support efficient and timely decision-making during an emergency. Explore what they learned in COVID-19, then adjust the EOP organizational structure and coordination processes to reflect the new dynamics.

Area for Improvement 2: There is a need to educate the county workforce on the roles of government, the private sector, non-profits, and other partners in the donation management process. Coordination is needed with the county and the private sector to leverage resources and determine how they fit into emergency response.

Reference: Donations Management Annex, County EOP

Analysis: The total county donations management effort is not as robust as it could be without improved collaboration across sectors.

Recommendation: Identify community partners that may have a role in donations management for the county. Conduct donations management training with these stakeholders to update the Donations Management Annex.

Area for Improvement 3: Incorporating IT leadership into the organizational management structure for incident response would help ensure consistency in evaluation and understanding of the technology posture and alignment of technology priorities with response priorities.

Reference: IT plans/procedures; IT Disaster Recovery Planning

Analysis: IT personnel within county agencies (200+ staff) currently operate separately from DIT instead of in a coordinated, streamlined structure. This works well in day-to-day operations but creates challenges during emergency events. In a response of this nature, the agency IT lead should report to the responding agency Incident Commander, and DIT should fall in as a supporting role to ensure that initiatives required by the response happen. Throughout the pandemic, this did happen, and DIT became incredibly supportive. But DIT had no existing experience or organizational framework that allowed them to fill this role rapidly.

Recommendation: DIT should take the lead in planning how to operate as the centralized command agency during emergencies that require significant IT response and support. This planning should include defining communication and coordination with agency-specific IT teams to support systems recovery and/or implementation priorities. This should include connecting with Coordinating Agencies to regularly test and exercise IT disaster recovery prioritization and the DIT Disaster Recovery plans. DIT should develop an organizational framework defining centralized roles and engagement with Coordinating Agencies and the larger county emergency management system. DIT participation in exercises and IMT training would benefit the entire county.

Area for Improvement 4: Increased coordination is needed with the food collection community due to rising food insecurity. A better description of a clearinghouse process for future emergency food distributions is required.

Reference: Emergency Support Function (ESF) 6 - Mass Care, Housing, and Human Services Annex within county EOP

Analysis: Without a central point for food collection coordination for the county, response to the issue of food insecurity will be hampered.

Recommendation: Fully define and codify the emergency food distribution process. Document in appropriate plans and procedures.

Area for Improvement 5: Volunteer management should be coordinated to promote collaboration between groups and agencies with a unified command component.

Reference: Volunteer Management Annex

Analysis: Volunteer operations were happening in silos, and not everyone knew what others were doing. The lack of command structure for the volunteer management effort resulted in inefficiencies in using volunteers during the pandemic response.

Recommendation: Utilize the updated Volunteer Management Annex in the EOP to educate and train stakeholders on the new structure. Identify how volunteer activities related to the emergency will be coordinated in different situations.

Area for Improvement 6: Accountability was difficult for some agencies to track when using the current county policy software/application system as it assigns staff to jobs but does not tell the supervisor where they are assigned. Some staff members showed up, but some were not showing up for jobs as they were supposed to.

Reference: Technology for work assignment and/or tracking and procedures

Analysis: The county software/application system's functionality created accountability tracking difficulties for agencies using the app.

Recommendation: Assess use of technology for work assignments and/or tracking and whether it can support the level of accountability necessary for operations.

Area for Improvement 7: Hiring, recruitment, and retention are some of the most significant challenges for the county moving forward. For example, a significant culture shift to telework has accelerated, and the county could face difficulties with hiring and retention, especially as the private sector moves ahead of the culture shifts.

Reference: DHR practices/policies

Analysis: A decrease in staffing levels would negatively impact the ability of the county to continue operations, both day-to-day and during emergencies.

Recommendation: Determine how the county will approach the shift in workplace culture to ensure staffing levels are not negatively impacted.

Area for Improvement 8: The county faced challenges closing QPID hotels.

Reference: Sheltering/housing transition plans and procedures

Analysis: Some QPID hotel clients, particularly homeless individuals, resisted leaving the hotel once their isolation/quarantine period was complete. It was important for case managers to engage individuals regarding housing plans early on, as housing became much more complex, and few options were available during the pandemic. It should be noted however, housing shortages were not a problem created by the pandemic but rather exacerbated by the pandemic. The Department of Housing and Community Development worked with the County Attorney's office to determine what the closure of the shelters would look like. Letters were sent to residents every 15 days leading up to closure with notice. Staff had to work with the Police Department for issues with people refusing to leave.

Recommendation: Ensure appropriate integration of case managers as early as possible when shelters are open to leverage housing plans and resources for individuals in need.

Recommendation: Codify any shelter closure policies/procedures developed during the QPID operations to be used in similar future sheltering situations where residents may be hesitant or refuse to leave the facilities.

Area for Improvement 9: There was variability in how agencies implemented health guidance. Rapidly changing direction and details needed to implement guidance contributed to this variability.

Reference: County-wide policies, adherence to guidance

Analysis: Because the nature of the Health Department’s health and safety measures came in the form of guidance and not mandates, there were inconsistencies in how county agencies followed the guidance. Some agencies followed Health Department recommendations and did not deviate, while others decided not to follow Health Department guidance. Given that the entities all served the same community, this was creating confusion for staff and customers/clients. For example, when playgrounds opened to schools, it was recommended that playgrounds were not to be used by school childcare programs.

Recommendation: Evaluate potential countywide frameworks for ensuring consistent application of health guidance across all departments during public health emergencies.

Area for Improvement 10: Coordination between local, state, and federal government rental assistance funding was a significant challenge.

Reference: Rental assistance processes

Analysis: Coordination between state and local processes for federal rental assistance funding (an opportunity in which Fairfax County opted-in to receive through a direct federal allocation) was a challenge as the state and local systems were not integrated through their respective technology systems as well as having different processes existed at each level. There was also no incentive for the state to coordinate directly with the localities that opted into this federal opportunity. This created confusion for landlords receiving money from both the county and the state.

Recommendation: Assess the existing processes for rental assistance funding implementation to identify areas for increased coordination and/or alignment with state and federal processes for more efficient delivery.



INFRASTRUCTURE

Core Capability Description: Stabilize critical infrastructure functions, minimize health and safety threats, and efficiently restore and revitalize systems and services to support a viable, resilient community.

Strengths

The following are identified strengths:

Strength 1: IT facilitated the implementation of all the new technology, as well as the security and other systems necessary for a successful telework operation countywide. The implementation of county laptops, devices, and new platforms in support of telework were successes. Remote access was significantly improved.

Strength 2: The virtual environment allowed for increased communication throughout the county, which has added strength to many departments. County agencies have increased inter-

office collaboration and communication with virtual staff meetings, workgroups, virtual chat features, document sharing, and other functionalities provided by IT tools.

Opportunity: The improved coordination because of the virtual environment and associated tools can be replicated throughout all county business operations for increased communications.

Strength 3: The use of DocuSign software was a significant strength for remote document processing and has also cut down paper usage. Internal Audit is to standardize the county's e-signature process to further improve consistency in these processes.

Strength 4: Management of the donations inventory data was initially a challenge as county staff is not allowed to use Google applications, but the donations management volunteers used Google Sheets. WebEOC for inventory is not a sufficient system due to access restrictions. The transition to using the EOC Teams group for inventory was much more effective and made the donations management information more widely available. Using the EOC Teams group also solves accessibility issues for donations management partners as it allows for guests and can be used for any incident/event.

Opportunity: The successful use of a new system for donations management during the pandemic provides an opportunity to codify these improved methods in donations management planning for future response.

Areas for Improvement

The following areas require improvement:

Area for Improvement 1: Continue to address interoperability issues between those working in-person and those teleworking.

Reference: Telework policies; IT tools and systems

Analysis: While many employees received the action to a virtual environment, there were some issues with the hybrid work model requiring technology adjustments, primarily connectivity for those working remotely and handling documents between remote and in-person staff, as some records could not be accessed at home and had to be hard copies due to legal requirements. There will likely be an increased hybrid approach, which will require technology improvements to ensure connectivity and the ability to continue operations.

Recommendation: Identify and invest in technology advancements necessary to support hybrid approaches to county programs and services. Update policies to reflect standard approaches to technology use and communications tools approved for county agencies to ensure consistency across the enterprise.

Area for Improvement 2: Refine the distribution process for IT equipment to employees who will be changing working locations (on-site to telework) to avoid delays in the continuity of operations.

Reference: IT policies

Analysis: Early on, DIT had devices prepared and ready for county staff, but there were challenges with staff picking them up due to COVID-19 concerns, being spread out around the

county, etc. There is a lack of ability to have devices sent to staff at their homes tracked and requiring a signature.

Recommendation: Update IT policies to allow for devices to be sent to employees at their homes with tracking and signature required in order to reduce staff time required to pick-up/deliver devices.

Area for Improvement 3: Some call centers experienced various issues caused by the number of calls. The inability to forward calls to cell phones prevented staff from working virtually.

Reference: County phone infrastructure

Analysis: With the shift to a virtual environment, many agencies experienced drastic increases in phone call traffic that, for some, is still sustained. Without an adequate phone system to support this increase, operations will continue to be slowed down.

Recommendation: Assess the current phone infrastructure and updates needed and/or new systems needed to support increased phone traffic for county agencies. Long-term solutions should be identified and implemented as well as integrating other platforms like Teams.

Area for Improvement 4: Significant challenges existed for employees who work in the field, do not have regular computer access, or were not used to using the technology systems needed for required training.

Reference: Required training policies

Analysis: The requirement for every employee to complete virtual training created challenges with training staff that does not have computer access due to the nature of their work. A portion of the county's workforce were faced with significant challenges trying to meet requirements or gain necessary access to the virtual environment.

Recommendation: Develop alternative methods and/or additional support mechanisms for employees without regular computer/internet access and training to complete requirements.

Area for Improvement 5: New federal leave categories were very complex making tracking the multiple Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) leave types challenging for Human Resources.

Reference: HR leave management strategies

Analysis: The lack of checks and balances in the system regarding the leave codes caused additional burdens and required significant time for HR personnel to manage manually.

Recommendation: Assess Human Resources leave management strategies to identify if changes are needed to support interpretation and implementation of new leave types during an emergency.

Area for Improvement 6: Before the pandemic, there was a lack of appetite for deploying new IT tools that enable general virtual operations. Maximized telework was not an operational posture embraced by county leadership. As virtual operations became necessary, the swift pivot to using virtual tools left a void in user knowledge about how these tools work. Training on how to use new IT tools is one of the biggest hurdles that the county had to address and continues to address today.

Reference: IT training; staffing planning

Analysis: The significantly increased workload for county IT throughout the pandemic limited DIT's ability to provide adequate training on new IT tools for the county workforce.

Recommendation: Identify training gaps and develop and provide increased training opportunities on county approved IT to better prepare for potential future events.

Area for Improvement 7: Some of the traditional EOC tools, such as WebEOC, dashboards, resource requesting, etc., created challenges and caused DEMS to rethink how incident management tools are used in emergency response. DEMS also identified that WebEOC was not used as well as it could have been from a planning perspective to support EOC and county operations.

Reference: EOC procedures

Analysis: Challenges with the effectiveness of EOC tools can slow down the EOC processes and overall county response.

Recommendation: Assess the current EOC tools in place in conjunction with users external to DEMS, and determine whether updates and/or new tools are necessary to better support EOC processes.

Area for Improvement 8: Evaluate the process for approval of IT technologies to ensure the rapid deployment of devices.

Reference: Review process for new technology

Analysis: The nature of the pandemic response, with such a significant focus on telework and virtual operations and reliance on technology advancements, was slowed by review processes rather than efficiently facilitated to support county operations.

Recommendation: Create an expedited procurement process to use during emergency incidents. As part of this effort, evaluate the established procurement process to identify mechanisms and processes that should be adjusted to support swift action. The process should include guidelines for when the expedited process may be used.



OPERATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS

Core Capability Description: Ensure the capacity for timely communications in support of security, situational awareness, and operations by all means available, among and between affected communities in the impact area and all response forces.

NOTE: Due to the pandemic evolving over time and being a long duration event, the decision was made to capture communications observations under the Operational Communications core capability even as some of the content in the section is reflective of the core capability, Public Information and Warning. The Public Information and Warning Core Capability is defined as: Deliver coordinated, prompt, reliable, and actionable information to the whole community through the use of clear, consistent, accessible, and culturally and linguistically appropriate methods to effectively relay information regarding any threat or hazard, as well as the actions being taken and the assistance being made available, as appropriate.

Strengths

The following are identified strengths:

Strength 1: There was a high frequency of meetings which allowed for rapidly changing information to be shared more efficiently within and countywide across agencies. Many groups and agencies implemented regular meetings or coordination calls, sometimes daily or weekly, depending on the needs at the time. This was a highly effective communications mechanism for regular guidance, updates, question-and-answer opportunities, and operational coordination. The use of various communications platforms to enable this communication in the virtual environment and enhance cross-agency coordination was also a strength. Tools such as Microsoft Teams, ZOOM, and WebEOC facilitated coordination, document sharing, and meetings to support overall county response operations.

Opportunity: Regular communication between various groups and agencies throughout the response to the pandemic and the use of technology to facilitate this provides a best practice to be continued through virtual operations as well as other disasters the county may face.

Strength 2: The establishment of the Joint Information Center (JIC) successfully provided the mechanism for countywide communicators to assess and pivot communication strategy based on feedback from the community. JIC operations and coordination led to educational publications received well by community members. The JIC released messages quickly and through various channels, such as the website, telephone systems with automated messages, social media, and staff handing out hard copy information to reach the public countywide.

Opportunity: Successful implementation of the JIC for a significant, ongoing incident provided lessons learned and best practices for rapid messaging. There is an opportunity to utilize messaging methods developed and used during COVID-19 for other emergencies.

Strength 3: The COVID-19 email box established to answer staff questions was great success for organizing the number of emails coming in from across the county agencies and is continuing to be used.

Opportunity: General email boxes used to streamline communication and answering of county staff questions could be replicated for other threats and hazards that rise to a significant level, such as this pandemic.

Strength 4: Multilingual staff was leveraged for translating purposes as it related to communication within the county to non-English speaking employees and external communication to the public.

Opportunity: The focus on translation resources for various languages spoken in the county is a practice that can be continued for both day-to-day and disaster communications, internal and external, to ensure the messages the county shares are accessible to all individuals.

Strength 5: Communications with the approximately 90 Boards, Authorities, and Commissions (BACs) was managed through the BAC liaisons. This enabled swift, clear, and concise communications that weaved in guidance from multiple agencies, including items such as

templates, flow charts, FAQs, legal guidance, IT, budget guidance, etc., all in one communication path.

Opportunity: This successful communication method for BACs can be implemented for other disasters when a large amount of information is being shared from many sources for a streamlined approach.

Strength 6: Communication regarding eligible populations for shelter occurred through a wide variety of community partners (e.g., federally qualified healthcare centers, non-profits, core homeless service providers, Emergency Support Function 6—Mass Care partners, referrals for non-homeless, community services board, NCS, DFS, COVID-19 Call Center, etc.). The broad range of partners sharing the message ensured the wide distribution of information.

Strength 7: The county leveraged FCPS communications networks as a conduit to get information out to parents through wellness calls, parent liaisons, some virtual mentoring, social media, and email distribution lists. A lot of information was successfully passed along through school communities.

Strength 8: The use of media to promote ‘Assistance from a Distance’ to those who are isolated and need the program most was successful. The county used staff and volunteers to go into communities to pass out information and share it with clientele. Also, materials were translated into the top six languages spoken.

Strength 9: NCS staff were successful in direct client communications to help people get connected to additional resources.

Areas for Improvement

The following areas require improvement:

Area for Improvement 1: Expand the county’s capability to communicate with all residents regardless of access to technology.

Reference: External communication procedures, tools, and systems

Analysis: With the shift to virtual operations, there were both pros and cons for external communications. Some communities were reached better through the virtual methods. Yet, some could not be reached virtually, creating inequities in public messaging that had to be addressed through other methods.

Recommendation: Evaluate how to provide better two-way communication with county residents. Examine the results of the 311⁸ pilot as part of this evaluation.

Area for Improvement 2: Issues existed with communication reaching the workforce out in the field that does not have regular access to email communications. Information was not always passed along efficiently by the supervisor.

⁸ 311 is a non-emergency phone number that people can call to find information about services, make complaints, or report problems like graffiti or road damage. 311 is not currently available in Fairfax County.

Reference: Internal communication procedures

Analysis: With many policy changes occurring throughout the pandemic, it was difficult for agencies to ensure that all messaging made it throughout the workforce.

Recommendation: Develop and provide alternative methods of communication with the purpose of reaching the entire county workforce, given the communications and technology constraints of some field operations and frontline employees.

Area for Improvement 3: Communications between operations centers should be more efficient and coordinated.

Reference: EOC and DOC procedures

Analysis: The lack of established coordination meetings and mechanisms resulted in less direct and consistent communications between the HDOC and the EOC. In the initial response phase, there were challenges with synchronizing the HDOC and EOC efforts and establishing EOC processes and battle rhythm, as there was no representation for the health department in the EOC. The lack of communication and meetings caused delayed responses to the county's COVID support.

Recommendation: DEMS, FCHD, and other departments designated as Coordinating Agencies in the EOP should explore modes of communication and coordination between the EOC and DOCs. DEMS and FCHD need to work together on how to be more forward looking and planning for what was coming, not what has happened, and to be more engaged with the EOC.

Area for Improvement 4: Notifying positive COVID-19 cases due to restrictions on the health information that could be shared posed a challenge with identifying outbreak information. The FCHD could not disclose certain outbreak information for health privacy reasons and guided this issue.

Reference: Virginia Code, HD IMT Procedures

Analysis: Restrictions on sharing COVID-19 case information caused a lack of trust in the workforce and issues for agencies trying to coordinate health and safety measures in response to outbreak information. Some agencies opted not to follow the guidance, which caused confusion and anxiety for employees since there was no consistency in information sharing (or not sharing).

Recommendation: Review FCHD guidance to agencies regarding case notifications to determine where statements regarding guidance compliance can be strengthened or added. Assess and revise templates for employee education on public health measures to include an explanation of how the FCHD is legally limited in sharing information on cases of infection while underscoring how safety measures (e.g., masking, social distancing, handwashing, and cleaning) protect against infection.

Area for Improvement 5: The FCHD was challenged to address questions and requests for interpretation of guidance from county agencies and the Board of Supervisors. The FCHD attempted to prioritize the requests for information in the most efficient way, but as recommendations frequently changed, it was a struggle to support agencies that wanted confirmation from the FCHD on what the new guidance meant for their staff and their operations.

Reference: Internal policy communication procedures

Analysis: The FCHD and the Office of Public Affairs published factual and guidance information in many forms and delivered advice directly via meetings. Some agencies, staff, and partners were uncomfortable or able to apply the guidance to their work circumstances. Due to many repeat questions on policy guidance, the FCHD was stretched thin trying to meet the needs of all the county departments using a more personalized approach.

Recommendation: Evaluate FCHD agency liaison staffing expectations to determine if that role is adequately staffed. Assess position responsibilities to identify mechanisms, procedures, or tools to streamline the effort to respond to requests for assistance during a health-related emergency.

Area for Improvement 6: It was challenging to gather the operational status of county agencies to support priority setting and decision-making relative to government operations.

Reference: Continuity of Government Plan and Agency COOP Plans

Analysis: There is no established process or mechanism to gather this information when COOP plans are activated. Before the pandemic, county agency COOP plans did not plan for a scenario where all agencies would implement COOP operations. As such, no coordinating processes exist to gather and compile information to share with county leadership. Having a cross-sectional view of the agency operating status would benefit leadership decision-making.

Recommendation: Coordinate with the Deputy County Executives to determine what information on the status of agency operations is valuable for them to know in an emergency. With this understanding, leverage the COOP Coordinator's group to identify a process to gather this information. Considerations could include the trigger for reporting (e.g., is there a need for a declaration of a COOP emergency to trigger information sharing), essential elements of information to be reported, mechanisms or technology tools for reporting agency status information, the timeline or deadline for reporting, and the frequency of reporting.

Area for Improvement 7: Frequent information updates on HHS services and basic needs that were disseminated to the Board of Supervisors through numerous methods did not always reach Board members in a timely fashion.

Reference: Internal communication processes

Analysis: Up-to-date incident response information was not getting to the Board members promptly. Board members were hearing from constituents about wait times and the time it took to get funding. Meanwhile, the members did not receive the appropriate updates when NCS made many upgrades to the process. This put Board members in a position to respond to the communities' concerns without the correct details about issues. NCS shared information with the BOS regularly, as well as produced a high-level monthly briefing for the supervisors, but they did not always get/read the message.

Recommendation: Continue 'Friday Briefing' with the Board Offices in future incidents; establish criteria for adjusting frequency.

Area for Improvement 8: Maintaining partnerships with business owners while managing the effects on the community (i.e., parking, noise, and hours of operation) was difficult.

Reference: External/public communication processes

Analysis: During the pandemic, the county made significant efforts to support local businesses as they were drastically impacted by stay-at-home orders and health and safety measures. Some of the efforts to improve opportunities for the business community (i.e., hours of operation, outdoor dining, changes to parking, etc.) had unintended effects on the community that residents were not satisfied with.

Recommendation: Improve communication throughout the community when new policy changes occur to support business operations to mitigate concerns.

Area for Improvement 9: External communication of food distribution events could have been improved.

Reference: External/public communications processes; food distribution procedures

Analysis: There was the inconsistent turnout at various food distribution events. If it was not adequately advertised ahead of time, there was not a great turnout. Established events received consistent turnout. Limited media outreach, advertising events, and connecting food with people.

Recommendation: Establish public communications and advertising standard operating procedures for food distribution to ensure multiple methods of communication are used to reach a wider audience.

Area for Improvement 10: Support to clients navigating county services and assistance needs to be maintained beyond the pandemic.

Reference: HD and NCS staffing

Analysis: During the pandemic, the number of clients needing assistance with county services and basic needs increased and will likely remain significant for the time following the pandemic. The Health Department's Family Assistance Workers, Community Health Workers, and NCS's Service Navigation Support Team were vital for maintaining support and communication with the community during the pandemic.

Recommendation: Continue to support county and community-based organization's efforts to provide service navigation for basic needs through direct client service navigation, information sharing and county/community collaborative networks. If possible, maintain and expand the level of staff to assist clients with navigation of basic needs and other services such as the HD's Family Assistance Workers and Coordinated Services Planning. and NCS's Service Navigation Support Team. Keep the level of staffing for Community Health Workers who are well positioned to communicate with the community in their language/culture.



SPECIAL FOCUS: EQUITY

Equity is not a core capability identified by FEMA as a function needed to respond effectively to an emergency. However, Fairfax County passed the One Fairfax Policy and is committed to considering equity in all planning and decision-making – to intentionally, comprehensively, and systemically explore, understand, and work to dismantle barriers that may create gaps in opportunity. In emergency preparedness, response, and recovery, applying an equity lens to the

after-action review moves the county forward in embracing the 'whole community' philosophy underpinning planning efforts.

An overarching equity strategy to inform departmental action was developed in response to COVID-19 and was presented to the Board of Supervisors in May 2020. The equity strategy included the following elements: supporting the expanded availability of testing and treatment; engaging sector and community leaders to understand the unique situations facing residents most at risk; communicating with residents in various formats and in ways that are relevant to their life situations to ensure they have the information and resources necessary to protect themselves and their families; connecting residents to services and supports to mitigate the social and economic impacts; and fostering cross-sector planning and partnerships, recognizing no single agency or sector can handle this complex situation alone.

Strengths

The following are identified strengths:

Strength 1: The expansion of testing at temporary and standing sites for county agencies and health safety net partners was based on case data and the COVID-19 Vulnerability Index.

Opportunity: The use of data is essential to identifying communities most impacted by COVID-19. Data should be used in future events to ensure that response is targeted to the population and the population and geographic areas most affected.

Strength 2: Sector and community leaders were engaged to understand the unique situations facing most at-risk residents. This included town hall meetings with Black and Hispanic community leaders and regular contact with the Community Provider Coordination Team, a convening of non-profits who serve vulnerable residents. In addition, FCHD Outreach Team members deeply embedded in cultural communities brought community concerns back and addressed them.

Opportunity: Since not all populations experienced the pandemic the same way, it was essential to understand community leaders' needs and concerns so that the county could respond accordingly. Developing ongoing relationships with community leaders facilitates information exchange during emergencies.

Strength 3: County agencies communicated with residents in various formats and ways relevant to life situations to ensure that residents had the information and resources necessary to protect themselves and their families. The communications team was successful in their multicultural communications efforts, translation activities, and other efforts to ensure disparities were addressed and public messaging making the county's widest reach possible.

Opportunity: Communications methods and messaging development during the pandemic response can be used as a foundation for communication during future incidents. A central point of contact (POC) to coordinate the needs would be helpful in future incidents.

Strength 4: Residents were connected to services to mitigate the social and economic impacts of the pandemic through cross-departmental collaboration and health safety net providers.

Examples include Coordinated Services Planning (CSP), which connected residents to resources for emergency food, shelter, clothing, healthcare, employment, financial assistance, and other essential needs; enrolling patients without a medical home and providing ongoing comprehensive primary care services to persons in emergency shelters for Quarantine, Protection, Isolation/Decompression; and regularly convening non-profits who serve vulnerable residents through the Community Provider Coordination Team.

Opportunity: While the county always provides health and human services, needs become more acute during a pandemic. Coordinating between departments and community partners to understand and address these needs requires coordination.

Strength 5: Various agencies adapted operations and service delivery models to meet the needs of residents. Some examples include “Assistance from a Distance,” remote court hearings, and the Equity Customer Coordinator role for permitting.

Opportunity: Each department can and should adapt its operations and service delivery models to meet residents’ needs.

Strength 6: Resource sharing and PPE distribution to underserved groups.

Opportunity: Continued collaboration and resource sharing with these providers will ensure underserved populations’ resource needs are addressed.

Strength 7: Targeting of testing and communities most heavily impacted was based on case data and the COVID-19 Vulnerability Index.

Opportunity: The use of data is essential to identifying communities most impacted by COVID-19. Data should be used in future events to ensure that response is targeted to the population as a whole and to populations and geographic areas most affected.

Areas for Improvement

The following areas require improvement:

Area for Improvement 1: Internal and external communication about how the emergency affects different populations, and parts of the county can be improved.

Reference: One Fairfax efforts

Analysis: While some data was provided on the FCHD website by zip code and race/ethnicity, information about why there were differences in outcomes was lacking.

Recommendation: Describe who is affected and why in internal and external communications and target response efforts accordingly.

Area for Improvement 2: Equity data should be a consideration in decision-making for continuity of operations, emergency preparedness, response, and recovery across the county per the One Fairfax Policy.

Reference: One Fairfax efforts

Analysis: Considering equity (e.g., benefits and burdens of decisions) is a new way of thinking for some departments, and it can be challenging to incorporate during an emergency. It involves

considering overall needs across the county and at the same time, considering which groups are impacted most and tailoring strategies accordingly.

Recommendation: Provide leadership and department staff with equity tools and materials to reference for decision-making and planning throughout the emergency to ensure that equity is considered. Make equity part of plans referenced during an emergency.

Area for Improvement 3: Managing existing relationships with community organizations and coordinating interactions can be challenging. There were no established methods for sharing information about community organizations across agencies.

Reference: One Fairfax efforts

Analysis: The One Fairfax Team worked with agencies to compile information on existing contacts with community organizations; it was used as a resource for county staff to reach organizations and populations in the county and to give the team a sense of where there were gaps.

Recommendation: Agencies chiefly responsible for community engagement should establish mechanisms for coordinating and sharing information to improve coordination around community engagement.

Area for Improvement 4: Identify approaches to closing the communication and services gap created by switching to virtual services delivery.

Reference: Alternative IT and communications methods; COOP plans

Analysis: An immediate gap existed with the transition to an entirely virtual environment at the beginning of the pandemic. There was inequity in virtual access, as not all people the county serves had internet or computer access, which excluded some groups of people from county services and programs until workarounds and other methods could be developed. COOP plans did not adequately consider inequities created by stopping services and programs or continuing them in new ways.

Recommendation: Define access as it relates to providing services to community residents, then determine and develop alternative communication and infrastructure approaches needed to reach a wider audience throughout Fairfax County.

8. Surveys Summaries

Surveys were used to gather data during the after-action review process. Surveys were crafted for four targeted audiences:

- County agency employees
- County residents
- Private sector businesses and individuals interacting with county agencies in support of business operations
- Non-profit and non-governmental organizations collaborating with the county in support of the COVID-19 response

A summary of responses to key questions in each survey is outlined in this section. Survey questions are provided in Appendix 5—Report Methodology.

COUNTY AGENCY EMPLOYEES SURVEY RESPONSES SUMMARY

Employees were asked to participate in a 12-question survey to gather information on the county's response to COVID-19. The survey was available to all county employees. 2,540 responses were received. A summary of responses follows.

Where did you do your work?

Most respondents, 60%, did their work in a hybrid format of in-person and telework, while only 31% worked entirely in-person.

Type of work

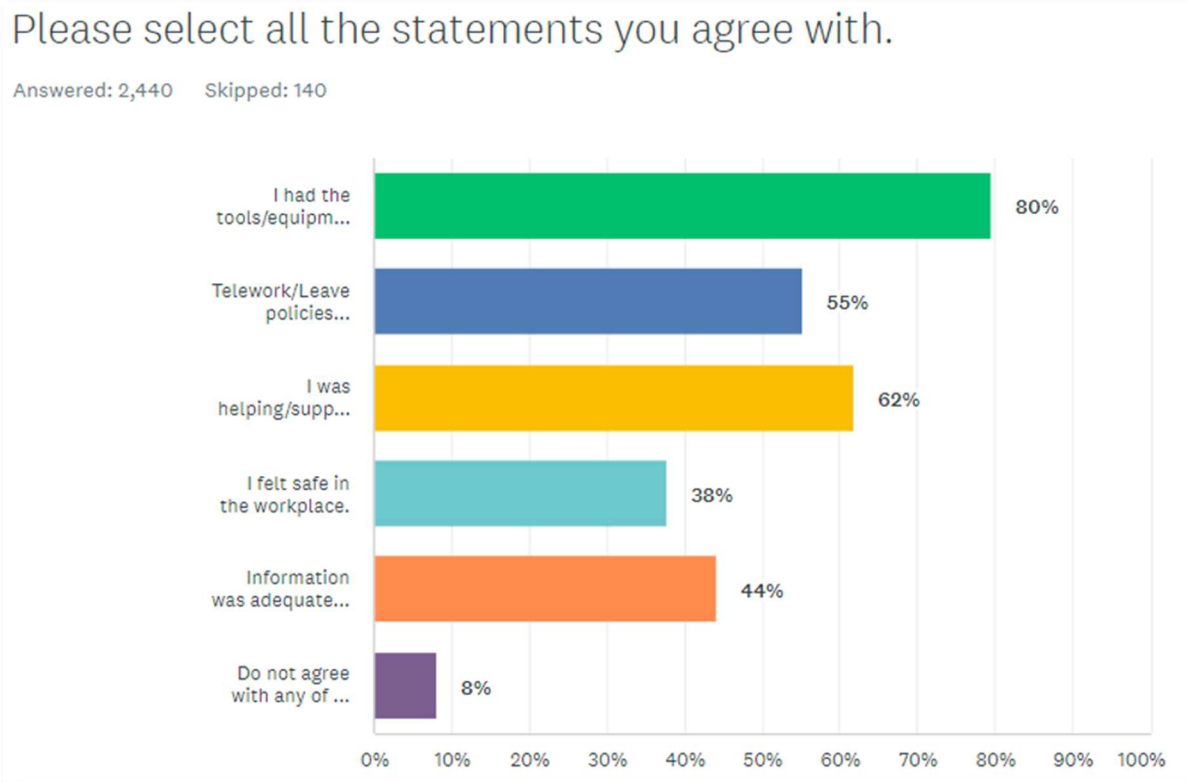
The responses were quite varied in the type of work that respondents do. 86% responded that they do most of their work on the computer. Only 21% of respondents are field-based employees, and only 3% said most of their work was without a computer.

Did your duties change due to COVID-19?

Most respondents, 63%, said that their duties remained the same as before the pandemic. Though the responsibilities remained the same, an overwhelming number of employees stated that their workload had increased. Because of COVID-19, they have had to take on additional tasks and responsibilities. Many employees also shared that how they do their work has changed. Employees expressed that while their duties are the same, they are now doing those duties while at a greater risk of getting sick. A final theme among employee comments was that now they must deal with policies constantly changing, which can be difficult.

“The core part of our job did not change but we had to make a change in our processing (number of units sent, additional lines of traffic, event semantics) all we impacted by the pandemic. We had to increase our workload by a significant amount due to staffing shortages. We had to create a new level of emergency staffing just to cover these shortages.”

“Our department had to maintain exact same operations as prior to the pandemic, in addition to handling increased workload due to the higher number of emergency calls, manning a second location in order to lower risk of transmission, and having lower staffing due to positive cases and quarantining. “



Work Sentiments

For this question, respondents were asked to select all the statements they agreed with based on these statements:

- I had the tools/equipment needed to complete my job.
- Telework/Leave policies were flexible enough to meet the needs of my family.
- I felt like I was helping/supporting our community.
- I felt safe in the workplace.
- Information provided was adequate and timely.
- I do not agree with any of the above statements.

Most respondents, 80%, felt that they had the tools/equipment they needed to complete their job. Some employees expressed that they received a county laptop too late, and others stated they did not have sufficient PPE when required. Less than half, only 38%, of employees felt and currently feel safe in the workplace. Employees expressed that the main reason for this was the change in the telework policy in October 2021. While 55% of employees said that the telework/leave policies were flexible enough to meet the needs of their family, many said that they were referring to the initial telework policy and they desired for it to go back to what it was. An overwhelming number of comments asked for the Telework policy to be 100% or more flexible. Employees ask to be trusted to get their work done, and many argue that they are more productive at home and morale is higher with greater telework. With the rise of Omicron cases, employees do not feel safe going into the office. Only 44 % of respondents said that the information provided was adequate and timely, but many admitted that this was due to the

nature of the pandemic and not the county's fault. Respondents said there was confusion over changing policies.

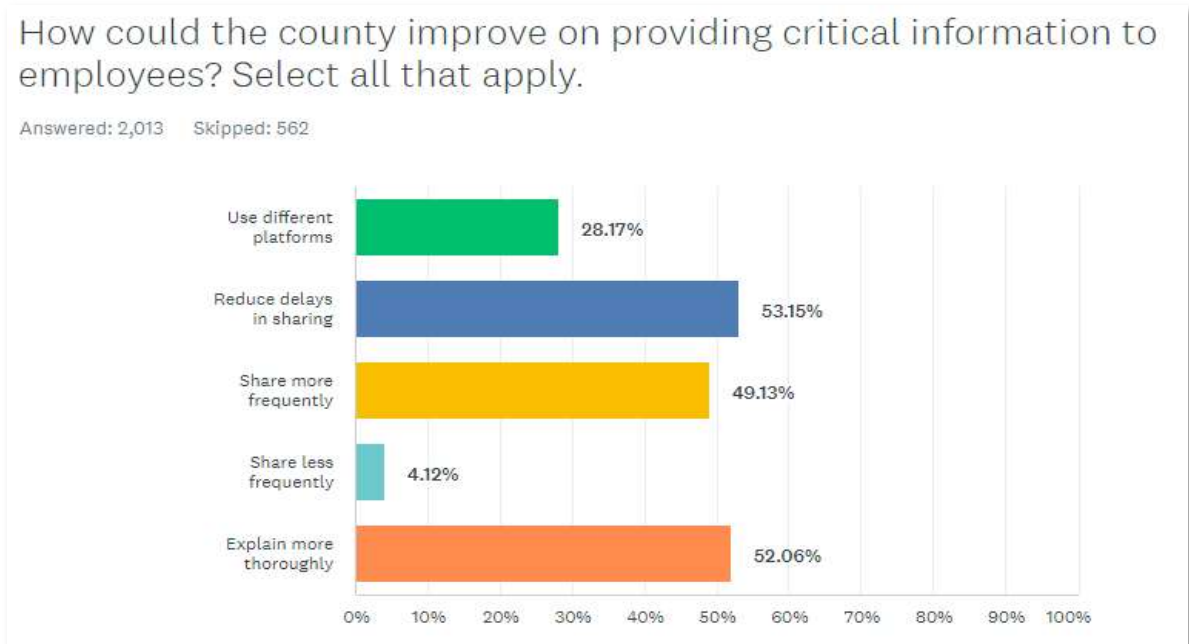
“Up until Oct 2020, telework policy during the pandemic was wonderful. The current stipulations on the 60% telework is extremely stressful at some points, in that some situations outside of COVID-19 are occurring and people are not allowed to telework when they have full plates and the ability to do the work, but the policy is preventing that. This is causing additional stress on the individual and on the team. It would benefit the employee and their team members and clients if managers or division director level could approve for these exceptions.”

“The teleworking option has been so helpful to help me feel safer and more efficient in doing my job, both for COVID-19 reasons and weather reasons. However, I do not understand why one cannot telework if they are found to be COVID-19 positive and are feeling well enough to telework. I do not feel that we have good enough PPE for the population we work with (we work with a medically fragile and unvaccinated population) I also feel that the county policies around COVID-19 exposure if an employee is vaccinated do not protect my clients or coworkers.”

Were you able to access critical information regarding policies, requirements, benefits, etc., during the pandemic?

Most survey respondents, 77%, were able to access the information, and 21% of respondents had some access. Only 2% of respondents were unable to access critical information. Many respondents said they could access information through virtual means such as email, Teams, and Zoom. For those who found accessing critical information challenging, some common themes were that information was inconsistent, overwhelming, and not timely. Respondents found that the way the different agencies interpreted information and enforced policies was inconsistent particularly the leave and mask policies. Due to the nature of the pandemic, information kept changing; it was hard to keep up with the changes, and sometimes they received the information too late. Respondents expressed that they wish there had been more communication and transparency around COVID-19 cases and exposure within the office.

“I often had access to the information that I needed but it was often incomplete and/or late. There were other times where staff were waiting for direction, and I had no information to give. Directives quite frequently changed before we could implement the previous.”



How could the county improve on providing critical information to employees?

Many respondents felt that the county and their agency did a decent job of providing them with critical information. They thought that using multiple platforms contributed to the success of information sharing. 53% of respondents suggested reducing the delays in sharing, 49% indicated sharing more frequently, and 52% recommended explaining more thoroughly. Respondents commented that they desire to explain why certain decisions were made by leadership. Other suggestions included having one designated employee page to check for new updates and using social media for quick updates. Respondents said that there was an overwhelming amount of information coming at them every day from many sources and having it more centralized would have been easier. Many respondents stated that while they received information, they still had questions and did not understand everything. Some respondents expressed that having their manager disseminate the information in a small group setting worked well because it allowed them to ask questions and discuss how the information applied to their daily lives.

“Due to the volume and frequency of COVID-19 information provided to staff via email and text, housing all information via SharePoint in an organized manner would be very helpful. Then there is one place everyone can check to make sure they're receiving the latest information and past information they may have missed. Also, when explaining policies, please do so in a more concise fashion. The conversational tone with overuse of words creates a lot of confusion. Just bulleted lists with simple sentence structures are most effective. The recent snowstorm along with telework and leave policy due to the inclement weather was unclear regarding telework (e.g., "eligible" could mean that anyone who is permitted to telework is required to telework, but it could also mean only people who are approved to telework need to telework and others do not need to work and have a day off).”

Rate your level of agreement with the following statement: My agency was able to fulfill its goals or objectives from the start of the pandemic through June 2021

75% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with this statement, while only 8% disagreed, and 16% were neutral. While many felt that their agency fulfilled its goals, an overwhelming number of respondents believe it was done so at the expense of staff. Burnout is a huge issue as staff had to take on additional responsibilities on top of their regular jobs, and staffing vacancies exacerbated this. Respondents expressed that the staffing issues have caused morale to drop significantly. Many respondents commented that the ability to 100% telework allowed them to continue to fulfill their agency's goals and objectives. Not all work could be done virtually, and many field workers felt that they got "left behind." They did not always feel protected out in the field, and some respondents felt it was unfair that they did not receive the same leave policies that in-office staff were given.

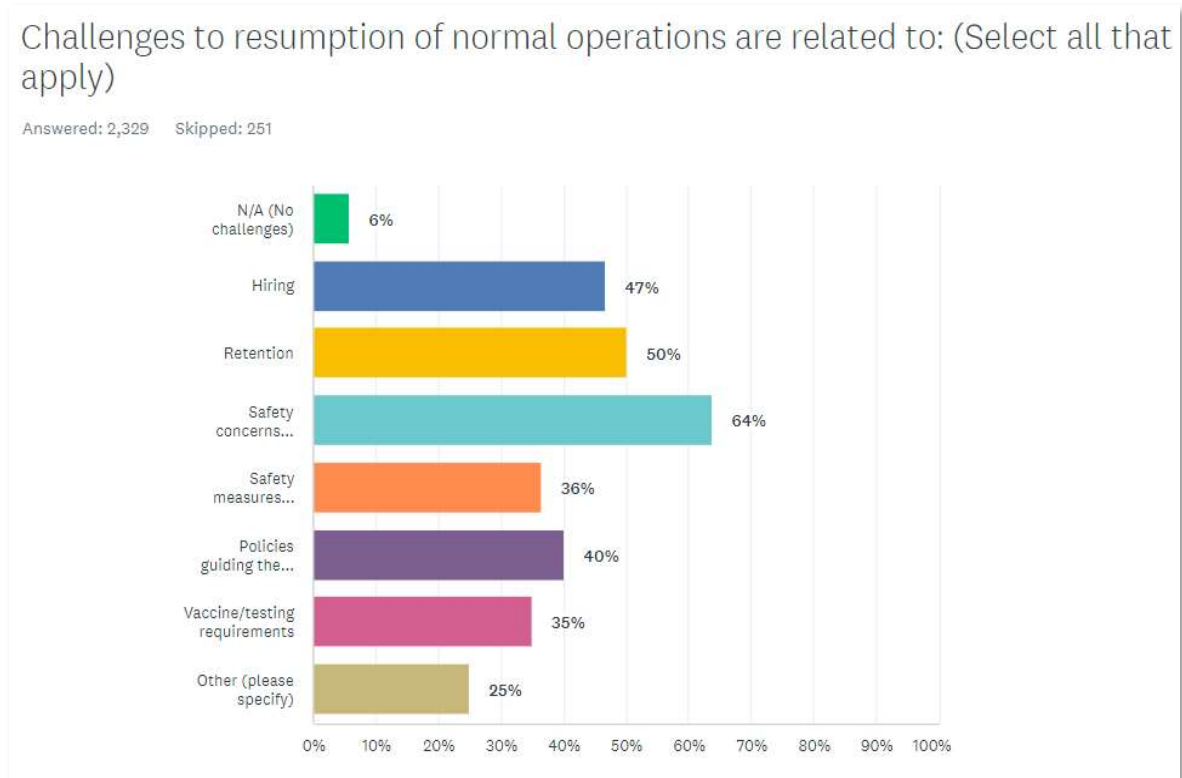
"We have managed to fulfill goals and objectives, but at the cost of the employees themselves as we work longer hours and overtime to make up for staffing issues largely due to COVID-19."

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement: My organization continues to face pandemic-related challenges as normal operations are resuming.

74% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed with this statement, while only 9% disagreed, and 17% were neutral. There were over 500 comments on this question, and the comments revealed a tense and stressed workforce. A common theme from the comments was that most workers desire to telework, believing the county's new telework policy is too rigid. Respondents said they are more efficient at home and teleworking also helps relieve issues with family care and responsibilities they have at home. Many respondents were confused as to why the county changed the telework policy in October 2021 because there are still many COVID-19 cases and new variants. They expressed that they do not feel safe in the office and feel there is no need to go to the office when they can do everything from home.

Another theme that arose was that respondents' workload has increased, and many are facing burnout. Between people being out of work due to COVID-19, quarantining, and staffing shortages, some respondents said their workload had doubled, and others tripled. A handful of respondents are frustrated that the public and coworkers, do not follow mask mandates, then another handful of respondents are frustrated with the mandates. There is also frustration that policies are not the same for all (vaccinated and unvaccinated).

"We are facing staffing shortages and many staff are on leave due to illness (many related to COVID-19). This puts a great deal of strain on the people that are still working. Furthermore, there are less supports available to staff who are sick. They must either work while they aren't feeling well or take their leave (or just not get paid if they don't have enough leave). This is in sharp contrast to all of the options that were available at the start of the pandemic."



What are the challenges to resumption of normal operations related to?

The highest percentage of respondents, 64%, selected safety concerns regarding the resumption of on-site work as a challenge to the resumption of normal operations. The second highest percentages were hiring and retention at 47% and 50%. This question received over 500 comments, and many echoed the remarks of the previous question. A common theme was the frustrations with the current telework policy, with respondents desiring more flexibility and more days at home. Respondents argued that when the telework policy changed, there was no input from the workforce, and many desired to give their feedback before decisions are made. Respondents also believe the current telework policy dissuades potential employees from working for the county. It was reiterated in the comments that there is frustration with the inequality in policy between the vaccinated and unvaccinated. For the staff who cannot telework, they desire more protection in place i.e., higher plexiglass, more masks, and more testing for everyone. A major theme for this question was that respondents desire compensation for all the extra work they have had to do. They also feel the county is not offering a competitive enough compensation package to attract new employees to fill all the vacancies.

“I believe that the County needs to recognize that not only has the agency changed but the world has changed. It would be to the counties advantage to embrace the changes and develop new innovative approaches to doing our work and servicing the community. Going back to a "Normal" way going business is not very smart. The county has a unique opportunity to be very progressive and out of the box thinkers.”

Share one success in how your agency, or the county, responded during the pandemic?

An overwhelming success was the initial telework policy- many respondents specified the 100% telework policy. Respondents liked the flexibility that telework provided; it allowed them to continue their work without interruption and increased productivity and morale, and many said it made them feel safer. Another frequently mentioned success was the transition to a virtual environment. Assistance from a Distance was frequently mentioned. The ability to get laptops out, transition meetings to virtual through Zoom and Teams and virtually offering services to the community were highlighted. Another joint success mentioned was how the county provided masks, signs, and the rollout of vaccines. Many respondents did feel safe because of these measures that the county took.

“The telework flexibility was the biggest help during the pandemic. I was able to complete all my work and tasks remotely without issues, and it increased the quality of my work/life balance.”

“Our program came together and did an excellent job of working safely and remotely while still providing "assistance from a distance" for our clients. There was virtually no break in service, and we proved that most of our work could be done remotely and with the flexibility we were afforded prior to the telework limits that were imposed in the fall of 2021.”

Recommend one improvement that would help your agency, or the county in general, be better prepared for future emergencies?

The most mentioned improvement was the return to the initial telework policy, pre-October 2021. Respondents cited increased flexibility and the fear of being in the office as reasons for this desired change. Respondents want there to be flexible in decision-making at the agency level. Another common improvement suggested was addressing staffing shortages. Respondents suggested improving the telework policy and compensation package to help with recruitment and retention. Another common improvement was directed at communication issues. Respondents suggested more timely, clear, and transparent messaging from the county to staff.

While many employees said the county did a good job providing PPE and with signage, there were over 100 comments identifying areas for improvement with health and safety measures. Some suggestions were greater availability of testing for both the vaccinated and unvaccinated, better enforcement of public health measures, and improved cleaning protocols in buildings.

“Allow for flexibility in telework policies (i.e., changing telework days within the week) or not require medical paperwork to telework after exposure or mild COVID-19 symptoms.”

“I believe that variations of the COVID-19 virus are here to stay and may become more transmissible. I would recommend that our government stay in step with the science to protect our communities’ safety. Safety should now include testing, vaccination/boosters and facemasks that are available without cost or restriction.”

COMMUNITY INPUT SURVEY

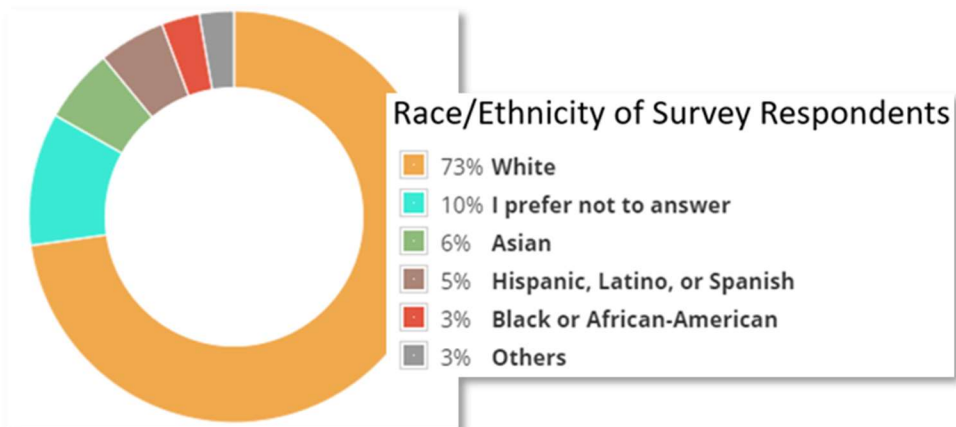
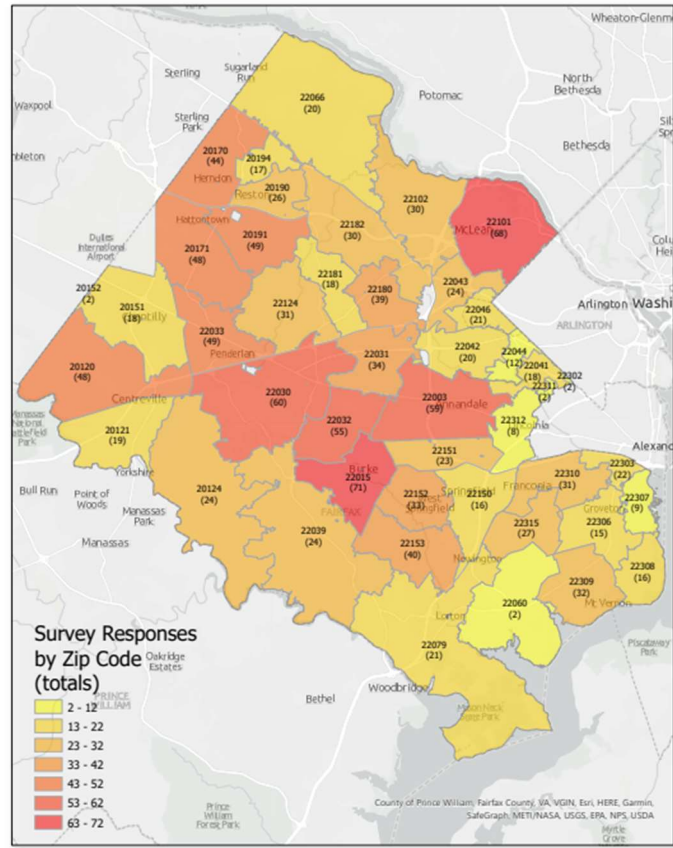
Fairfax County sought feedback from community members that interacted with county government staff, services, and resources during the pandemic.

The survey was available online from June 13 to July 13, 2022. It could be translated within the survey tool to all major languages used in the county. Hardcopy surveys were available at public libraries, including translated versions in the county's eight most commonly used languages.

The survey was promoted on fairfaxcounty.gov, social media, and with posters in county facilities. 2,148 people provided input via the Community Input survey. Responses were received from every zip code within Fairfax County.

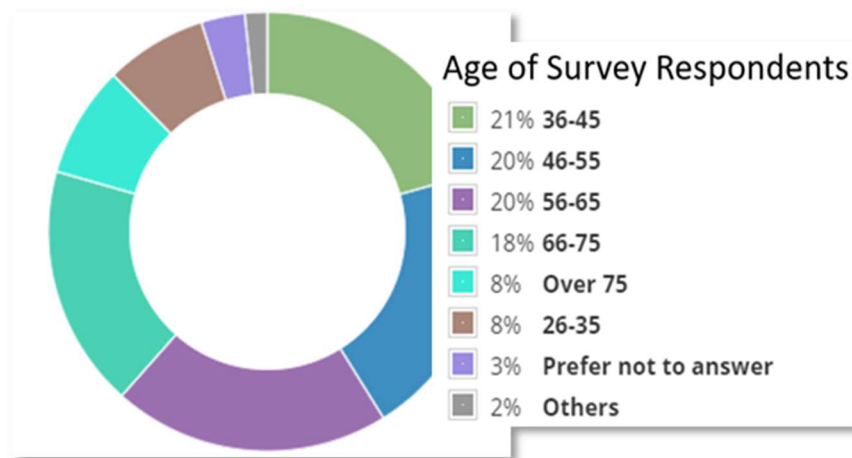
Survey Participant Demographics

Survey respondents were primarily white, making up 73% of all respondents. This was followed by 6% Asian, 5% Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish, 3% Black or African American, 2% other, <1% American Indian or Alaska Native, <1% Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and 10% of respondents preferred not to answer.



The ages of community members who responded to the survey were evenly distributed from 36-75. Each age range in this spectrum had around 20% of the total responses. The 26-35 age range

represented 8% of responses, and the Over 75 age range also represented 8% of the responses. A total of 5% selected Other or Prefer not to answer.



Most respondents speak English at home, making up 93% of survey respondents, with only 3% speaking another language (mostly Spanish), and 3% prefer not to answer.

Interactions with Fairfax County Government Services

Of the 2,148 responses, 68% indicated someone in their household accessed services or received assistance from Fairfax County during the pandemic from January 2020 through December 2021.

How easy was it to access Fairfax County Services to support economic opportunities during the pandemic?

There were 187 responses and 57% of respondents said it was easy to access services while 43% had some challenges. Common comments on the challenges were that it was hard to get ahold of anyone as offices did not seem fully staffed, and it was hard to get answers or timely help. Also, it wasn't easy had programs shut down.

How easy was it to access cultural and/or recreational services during the pandemic?

This question had 864 responses; again, 57% said it was easy to access services, and 44% had difficulties. Complaints included the closure of facilities, understaffed departments, and not having materials available from the libraries for children.

How easy was it to access services that could only be provided by the Fairfax County government during the pandemic?

907 residents responded to this question, and 62% said it was easy to access services, with only 10% of respondents experiencing significant challenges in accessing services and 28% experiencing minor challenges. Complaints dealt with having difficulty getting information; residents said it was hard to contact someone or get their email answered. The website did not have the answers they were looking for, and they did not get called back when they left a message. Another challenge was not having their trash/recycling picked up for some weeks.

How easy was it to access Fairfax County environmental services during the pandemic?

Of 542 responses, 66% said it was easy to access services, while 34% said they had minor or major challenges. The complaints were about trash and/or recycling not always being picked up as scheduled.

How easy was it to access Fairfax County services to support residents facing vulnerability during the pandemic?

This question received 185 responses; only 36% of respondents had an easy time accessing services, while 29% faced minor challenges, and 35% faced major challenges. Some challenges included not getting questions answered, understaffed departments, and the lack of services.

How easy was it to access Fairfax County COVID-19 services during the pandemic?

Of 1,091 responses, 62% had an easy time accessing services, and 38% faced some challenges. Some challenges included confusion around contact tracing, difficulty getting information and getting the correct information, and long call wait times.

How easy was it to access Fairfax County Health* and Human Services during the pandemic?****non-COVID-19 related services***

Of 204 responses, 54% had an easy time accessing services, while 46% experienced some challenges. Like previous questions, most challenges had to do with long waits on the phone. Another challenge was confusion about getting an appointment.

How easy was it to access Fairfax County services related to housing and neighborhood livability during the pandemic?

This question only received 71 responses, and it was divided 50/50. 50% of people had an easy time accessing services, but 20% faced minor, and 30% faced significant challenges. Some challenges included getting information about affordable housing and obtaining housing assistance.

How easy was it to access Fairfax County lifelong learning and education* services during the pandemic?****Not Fairfax County Public School-related***

Of 506 responses, 64% of respondents found it easy to access services, while 36% had some challenges. The complaints revolved around the libraries being closed for so long and the book quarantine policy making it hard to know what was available.

How easy was it to access Fairfax County mobility and transportation services during the pandemic?

This question received 180 responses, and 62% of respondents had an easy time accessing services, while 38% faced some challenges. Some comments about the challenges experienced revolved around the difficulties for people with disabilities in using the sidewalks or the availability of a ride program, as well as challenges in getting metro cards renewed.

How easy was it to access Fairfax County safety and security services during the pandemic?

Of 265 responses, 82% had an easy time accessing services, with only 18% experiencing some challenges. The complaints included a lack of police presence in giving speeding and reckless driving tickets and difficulty in reporting online harassment.

Information on Changes to Fairfax County Services**How was the quality of information provided by Fairfax County on changes to services during the pandemic?**

58% of respondents felt that the level of detail was appropriate and valuable. 52% thought that the information was easy to understand. 52% felt that the information was easy to find. 41% thought that there were clear directions on how to access services. 38% thought that changes were shared promptly, and 14% had other reactions to the quality of services. The “other” responses were mostly that respondents felt that information was difficult to find and understand.

“You could find what you were looking for online but it took a lot of steps to get to what you wanted/needed.”

“They needed to be a bit clearer & carefully worded so public wouldn’t misread things or misunderstand but most info relating directly to FX CO Gov was pretty well done. I would have liked to see better information given regarding vaccine availability for people, PCR testing locations etc. Many struggled in locating services for that. I had no problem accessing all other services through Fairfax County Gov or understanding the info given. I think in some cases they needed to provide further info but otherwise did well.”

As Fairfax County made changes to how services were delivered during the pandemic, where did you find the best information on these changes?

28% of respondents used the Fairfax County Government website, 27% used Fairfax Alerts, 24% used direct communication from the county (phone, email, mail), and 4% used other methods. Some of the other platforms used include social media (Facebook and Twitter), Board of Supervisors (BOS) communications, local news outlets, and surrounding jurisdictions.

Feedback on the Overall Response**Were there any changes to the delivery of Fairfax County government services that were implemented due to the pandemic that you found particularly helpful?**

Respondents felt that while the online services were beneficial, they could still be improved upon to make them more streamlined and understandable. The move to virtual services for many county agencies was well received. Text alerts were another service that respondents responded positively towards.

What changes to the delivery of Fairfax County government services would you like to continue or change in the future?

Some of the recurring sentiments from residents include the issues surrounding delays in trash and recycling pickup, closures and limited access to libraries and community centers, and the closure of schools. Respondents also would like to see the continuation of the virtual services offered by the county. Frequent updates, specifically on social media, were another added benefit provided by the county.

“Ability to have contactless pick up of library books - though I don’t need this now. That was a huge help for our family. Not having access to the library during early pandemic days was depressing.”

“Improvements to working with school system to manage contact tracing was critical. Wish the county health dept had led that much more - wasn’t school’s responsibility to do this public health work. Students and working families suffered from poor planning and implementation of this by county health dept.”

“Your frequent updates to social media during the pandemic have been helpful. The pandemic is far from being over.”

BUSINESSES SURVEY RESPONSES SUMMARY

Fairfax County sought feedback from businesses to understand what programs they accessed from county agencies and how they affected business operations. Agencies specifically examined were:

- Department of Planning and Development
- Land Development Services
- Department of Economic Initiatives
- Department of Code Compliance

The survey was available online from June 13 to July 13, 2022. It could be translated within the survey tool to all major languages used in the county. Hardcopy surveys were available at public libraries, including translated versions in the county's eight most commonly used languages. The survey was promoted on fairfaxcounty.gov, social media, and with posters in county facilities. 147 responses were received. The questions and associated responses are outlined below.

Interactions with the Department of Planning and Development (DPD)

Which of the Department of Planning and Development (DPD) programs or services did you utilize?

Of the 146 individuals surveyed, only 15% of respondents interacted with DPD at some level. Of those that utilized the services of DPD, almost half (43%) used them for various permits, including food trucks, home-based businesses, noise waivers, etc. Following permits were zoning applications, rezonings, plan amendments, architectural reviews, and interpretations.

How would you have been impacted if you did not have access to these programs or services from DPD?

DPD services had a largely positive impact on the individuals and businesses that utilized them. Respondents noted that without the various DPD services offered, 48% of their operations would have been negatively impacted, and 24% of their operations would have been forced to cease together. 29% of respondents stated that operations would not have been impacted without the services of DPD.

Were communications with DPD clear and concise?

Communications with DPD were viewed as primarily favorable, with 65% of respondents agreeing that communications were clear and concise. 35% disagreed with that sentiment, with some stating that, at times there were competing messages coming from DPD.

Please rate your interactions with DPD during any of the time frames that you interacted or engaged with them. March 2020 to August 2020, September 2020 to February 2021, March 2021 to August 2021, and September 2021 to March 2022.

Experiences with DPD from March 2020 to August 2020 varied in satisfaction. 47% were either satisfied or very satisfied, and 36% were either unsatisfied or very unsatisfied. From September

2020 to February 2021, satisfaction ratings improved to 53%, which held steady in the following timeframe from March 2021 to August 2021. Satisfaction slightly regressed from September 2021 to March 2022, with only 41% satisfied or very satisfied.

As the pandemic progressed, did you observe any changes that you felt improved operations for the programs or services you were receiving from DPD?

Most of the respondents did not observe any changes they felt improved operations. There was one comment stating that the virtual work and coordination made DPD more effective.

“DPD is extremely effective in the remote/hybrid work environment. The ability to hold virtual meetings with staff and share screens to review projects is really helpful and much appreciated.”

Are there any improvements that could be made to enhance your experience with DPD programs or services?

67% of respondents did not have any suggestions to enhance their experience, but the constructive suggestions are as follows:

“We are an electrical contractor generally focused on providing EV charging equipment. It would be wonderful if Fairfax County would streamline the application process within Condominium Buildings.”

Interactions with Land Development Services (LDS)

Between March 2020 and March 2022, did you utilize or engage with Land Development Services? Which Land Development Services (LDS) programs or services did you utilize?

Only 10% of respondents interacted with LDS. 30 respondents used LDS services. The breakdown of services used are as follows: 8 utilized site inspections, 6 utilized building/trade permit applications, 6 utilized building/trade permit plan review, 5 utilized site plan review, 5 utilized building/trade permit inspections, and 3 utilized site plan applications.

How would you have been impacted if you did not have access to these programs or services?

LDS services had a largely positive impact on the individuals and businesses that utilized them. 29% of those that used their services would have been negatively impacted without them, and 43% would have had to cease operations without these services.

Were communications with LDS clear and concise?

64% of respondents felt that communications with LDS were clear and concise. The two critiques of communications are regarding specific problems that individuals had interacting with LDS:

Please rate your interactions with LDS during any of the time frames that you interacted or engaged with them. March 2020 to August 2020, September 2020 to February 2021, March 2021 to August 2021, and September 2021 to March 2022.

From March 2020 to August 2020, interactions with LDS were generally positive, with 60% satisfied. From September 2020 to February 2021, satisfaction slipped slightly to 50%.

Satisfaction levels rebounded from March 2021 to August 2021 from March 2021 to August 2021, returning to 60%. Interactions with LDS from September 2021 to March 2022 were still viewed mostly favorably at 50%.

As the pandemic progressed, did you observe any changes that you felt improved operations for the programs or services you were receiving from LDS?

33% of respondents felt that they observed changes that improved the operations of LDS. The main improvement was the move to virtual services, which proved effective and continues to be. This allowed for adequate services and timely responses from LDS.

Are there any improvements that could be made to enhance your experience with LDS programs or services?

There were only a handful of suggestions on improving LDS programs and services that seem to be regarding specific instances, including permitting for EVs and property drainage.

Interactions with the Department of Economic Initiatives

Between March 2020 and March 2022, did you utilize or engage with the Department of Economic Initiatives? This includes RISE grants, PIVOT grants, and the microloan program. Which of the Department of Economic Initiatives (DEI) programs or services did you utilize?

6% of respondents said they interacted with DEI. Of those respondents, 5 used RISE grants, 2 used PIVOT grants, 1 used the microloan program, and 2 used other DEI programs.

How would you have been impacted if you did not have access to these programs or services?

Of those that utilized DEI programs, all their businesses would have been negatively impacted without them. 57% of businesses would have been negatively impacted in some way, and 43% of businesses would have had to cease operations entirely.

Were communications with DEI clear and concise?

57% of respondents felt that communications with DEI were clear and concise. Respondents felt some issues may have served as roadblocks, including the documentation needed to secure some of the grants.

“Rules were cumbersome and created roadblocks. The webinars could have been managed better as many were not on mute. The process for approval was slow, and we were nervous to spend the much-needed money before approval as I know many businesses were not approved.”

Please rate your interactions with DEI during any of the time frames that you interacted or engaged with them. March 2020 to August 2020, September 2020 to February 2021, March 2021 to August 2021, and September 2021 to March 2022.

Respondents were the most satisfied in the first-time frame from March 2020 to August 2020, with only 14% of respondents unsatisfied. The following three time periods were about the same, with 28% of respondents remaining unsatisfied throughout.

Are there any improvements that could be made to enhance your experience with DEI programs or services?

The main improvements noted were expediting the approval of grants and expanding access to programs for low-income individuals, particularly section 8 housing.

Interactions with the Department of Code Compliance

Between March 2020 and March 2022, did you utilize or engage with the Department of Code Compliance? This includes investigation of complaints related to outdoor storage, multiple occupancy, property maintenance, un-permitted construction, and other zoning and building code violations.

92% of respondents did not engage with DCC, 6% did engage with DCC, and 2% were not sure.

Which of the Department of Code Compliance (DCC) programs or services did you utilize?

Of the respondents that did engage with DCC, 3 utilized property maintenance services, 1 used unpermitted construction services, and 4 used other services, including zoning and building code violations and inspections.

How would you have been impacted if you did not have access to these programs or services from DCC?

Most of those that utilized DCC services would have been negatively impacted without them. 40% of their operations would have been negatively impacted, and 20% of operations would have ceased, with 40% not being impacted.

Were communications with DCC clear and concise?

Of those that responded, 60% felt that communications with DCC were clear and concise.

Please rate your interactions with DCC during any of the time frames that you interacted or engaged with them. March 2020 to August 2020, September 2020 to February 2021, March 2021 to August 2021, and September 2021 to March 2022.

From March 2020 to August 2020, engagements with DCC were the most favorable, with only 20% unsatisfied. The following 3 time periods were equally less favorable than the first, with 25% of respondents very unsatisfied.

As the pandemic progressed, did you observe any changes that you felt improved operations for the programs or services you were receiving from DCC?

None of the respondents observed any changes that improved operations, with one respondent stating that DCC was already helpful.

Are there any improvements that could be made to enhance your experience with DCC programs or services?

One constructive recommendation was to improve DCC operations by enforcing code compliance violations more swiftly.

COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS SURVEY RESPONSES SUMMARY

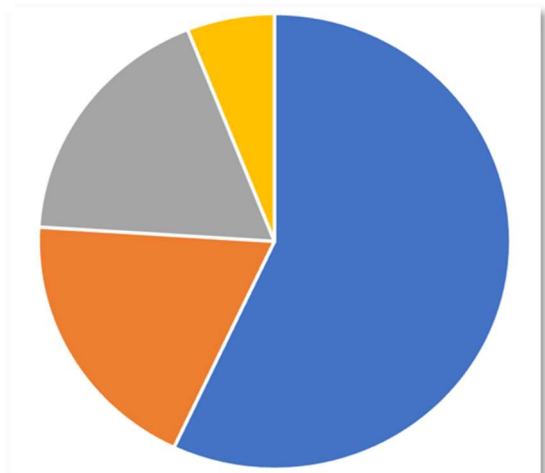
Fairfax County surveyed community-based organizations to evaluate county services and information sharing. Community-based organizations, non-governmental organizations, faith-based organizations, houses of worship, and groups identified as “other” community-based organizations were surveyed. The services and programs specified for evaluation had donation coordination, financial aid, health access to residents, and food access.

The online survey link was sent directly to Community Provider Coordination Team members and was available from June 13 to July 13, 2022. It could be translated within the survey tool to all major languages used in the county. 70 responses were received. The questions and associated responses are outlined below.

Which category best describes the type of organizations you represent?

57% of respondents represented a community-based organization/non-governmental organization, 19% represented a Faith-based organization, and 18% a House of worship. Only 6% answered other.

- Community-based organization/Non-governmental organization
- Faith-based organization
- House of worship
- Other
- Business



Please select the option below that best describes your affiliation with the organization.

Most respondents, 63%, represented organizational leadership, 27% were an organization employee, and 9% were a volunteer.

Please consider all of your experiences over the past two years with the County. Using a scale from “very dissatisfied” to “very satisfied”, how satisfied are you with the following services?

	Very Dissatisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Neither Dissatisfied or Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Donation Coordination		9%	30%	22%	39%
Financial Support to Residents	4%	13%	23%	15%	45%
Health Access for Residents		6%	15%	35%	44%
Food Access for Residents	2%	4%	24%	35%	35%

Donations Coordination: Fairfax County's distribution of donated items (e.g., masks, PPE, and other personal care items) to non-profit partners, for purposes of making them available to community members.

61% of respondents replied positively, either somewhat or very satisfied, while only 9% were dissatisfied. 30% responded that they were neutral, neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

Financial Support to Residents: Fairfax County's engagement with non-profit partners to distribute funds through a variety of Emergency Financial Assistance programs (e.g., CARES, Emergency Rental Assistance, Community Development Block Grant.)

Most respondents, 60%, said they were either very satisfied or somewhat satisfied, 17% were neutral, and only 17% were dissatisfied.

Health Access for Residents: Fairfax County's engagement with non-profit partners to support health access and outreach events (e.g., COVID testing efforts, vaccine outreach, vaccine clinics).

Most respondents were satisfied. 44% of respondents were very satisfied, and 35% were somewhat satisfied. Only 6% said they were dissatisfied, while 15% were neutral.

Food Access for Residents: Fairfax County's coordination of food delivery efforts to include marketing to neighborhoods, working with non-profits to promote food delivery options, delivering food to homebound individuals, etc.

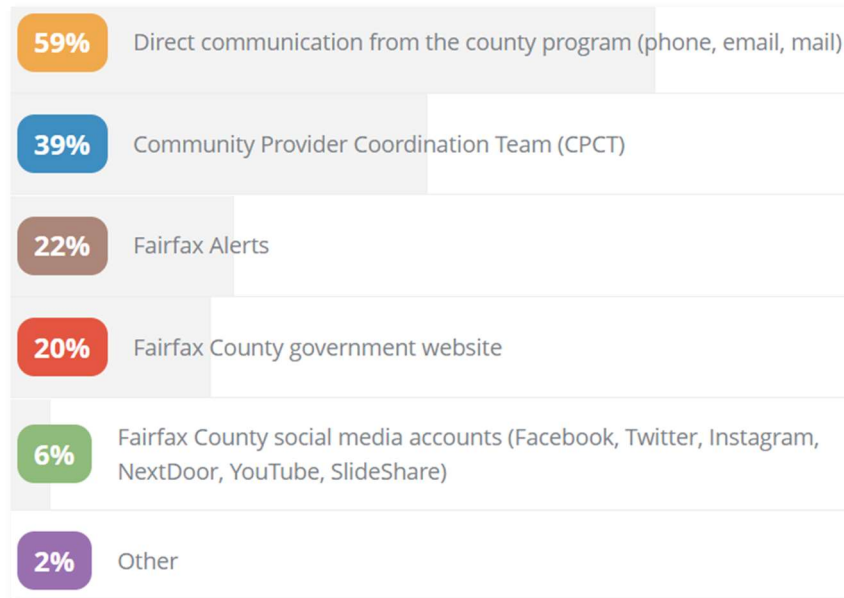
70% of respondents were satisfied in some way, with 35% answering very satisfied and 35% answering somewhat satisfied. 6% of respondents were dissatisfied.

Organization that indicated they worked as part of any county/community-based/houses of worship collaborative effort during the pandemic were asked to rate the overall effectiveness of the collaboration using a scale of "Poor" to "Excellent"

50% of respondents rated the collaboration as excellent, 38% thought it was good, 9% said satisfactory, and only 3% thought it was poor.

As Fairfax County made changes to how services were delivered during the pandemic, where did you find the best information on these changes?

Most respondents, 59%, found out through direct communication from the County program either through phone, email, or mail. 39% found out through the Community Provider Coordination Team (CPCT). 22% found out through Fairfax Alerts, 20% through the Fairfax County government website, 6% through the Fairfax County social media outlets, and 2% said other.



How was the quality of information provided by Fairfax County on changes to services during the pandemic? (Select all that apply)

Over half of respondents said the detail in the information given was appropriate and valuable, it was easy to understand, and changes were shared promptly. 42% thought there were clear directions on accessing services, and 31% thought the information was easy to find.

Please share a specific area of success as it relates to the partnership and functions conducted between your organization and Fairfax County during the pandemic.

This question received 32 comments. 10 respondents commented that they appreciated the CARES funding given out by the County. Many comments discussed how well the communication and coordination was between the County and their organization. One respondent found the webinars on vaccination rollout very helpful, and another said the communication was a success.

“County information was shared at church events and through church communications.”

“The Nurse practitioners were so kind and quick to respond to us when needed.”

Please share a specific area for improvement as it relates to the partnership and functions conducted between your organization and Fairfax County during the pandemic.

This question received 27 comments, and many comments fell into two main categories: funding and communication. Six respondents said more, or continued funding would be helpful for their organization. 13 comments had to do with communication; a few comments said communication from the County was too slow, one comment wanted to be more included in decision-making, and another suggested better communication with the community, specifically non-English speakers.

“Needed to advertise to the public that these services were available.”

"Fairfax needs to better understand what our organization is."

"I feel that if the whole picture is shared, we are able to understand more clearly what the expectation and "goals" were for each area."

Additional Comments (optional)

This question received 5 comments - 3 were an area for improvement, and 2 were positive. The positive comments were grateful for working with the County and thanked them for their work.

"Overall it seems that the changes in staffing in the county have presented challenges that impacted CBOs and indirectly residents. This occurred nationally as well in terms of the great resignation/retirement so it is my hope that the county is working on hiring and training so that CBOs can do the needed work to serve residents in a timely manner. On the other hand, in the Access division of NCS (CSP and Fastran) people were re-deployed really well while certain services weren't needed, and others were."

"We were overwhelmed by clients who were unable to access rental assistance, even if qualified. They reported no answers after an hour+ wait time, denials with no reason given, etc."

"The contracting process was very slow, especially when additional CARES or ERA funds were added on to the existing contracts."

This page intentionally left blank.

APPENDIX 1—ACRONYMS/TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Acronym/Term	Definition
ARPA	American Rescue Plan
BAC	Boards, Authorities, and Commissions
BOS	Board of Supervisors
CARES Act	Coronavirus Aid Relief, and Economic Security Act
CC	County Clerk
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CESF	Coronavirus Emergency Supplemental Funding
CET	Customer Experience Team
CHW	Community Health Workers
CIP	Capital Improvement Program
CIT	Crisis Intervention Trained
COOP	Continuity of Operations
CPCT	Community Provider Coordination Team
CPST	Community Provider Strategy Team
CRS	Citizen Reporting System
CSB	Community Services Board
CSLFRF	Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery
CSP	Coordinated Services Planning
CTSC	Customer and Technical Service Center
CVC	Community Vaccination Center
DEMS	Department of Emergency Management and Security
DCE	Deputy County Executive
DCLS	Virginia Division of Consolidated Laboratory Services
DCC	Department of Code Compliance
DEI	Department of Economic Initiatives
DFS	Department of Family Services
DHR	Department of Human Resources
DIT	Department of Information Technology
DMB	Department of Management and Budget
DOC	Department Operations Center
DOF	Department of Finance
DOL	Department of Labor
DPD	Department of Planning and Development
DPSC	Department of Public Safety Communications
DPWES	Department of Public Works and Environmental Services
DPMM	Department of Purchasing and Material Management
DSG	Data and Surveillance Group
DTA	Department of Tax Administration

Acronym/Term	Definition
EOC	Emergency Operations Center
EOP	Emergency Operations Plan
EPSL	Emergency Paid Sick Leave
ESF	Emergency Support Function
FC-CAP	Fairfax County Corrective Action Program
FCDOT	Fairfax County Department of Transportation
FCEDA	Fairfax County Economic Development Authority
FCHD	Fairfax County Health Department
FCPD	Fairfax County Police Department
FCPL	Fairfax County Public Libraries
FCPS	Fairfax County Public Schools
FCRHA	Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FEML	Family Expanded Medical Leave
FFCRA	Families First Coronavirus Response Act
FRD	Fire and Rescue Department
HCD	Department of Housing and Community Development
HDIT	Health Department Information Technology
HDOC	Health Department Operations Center
HHS	Health and Human Services
HIPAA	Health Insurance Portability and Accessibility Act
HOA	Homeowners Association
IAP	Incident Action Plan
IMT	Incident Management Team
IPHI	Institute for Public Health Innovation
IT	Information Technology
JIC	Joint Information Center
LDS	Land Development Services
MEF	Mission Essential Function
MPSTOC	McConnell Public Safety and Transportation Operations Center
NCR IMT	National Capital Region Incident Management Team
NCS	Neighborhood and Community Services
OCA	Office of the County Attorney
OD&T	Organizational Development and Training
OFC	Office for Children
OPA	Office of Public Affairs
PHE	Public Health Emergency
POC	Point of Contact
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
PSOHC	Public Safety Occupational Health Center

Acronym/Term	Definition
PTSD	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
QPID	Quarantine, Protection, Isolation, and Decompression
RISE	Relief Initiative to Support Employers
RFA	Request for Assistance
SACC	School Age Child Care
SITREP	Situation Report
SPG	Senior Policy Group
SPO	Single Point Ordering
SRS	Supporting Return to Schools
VAWA	Violence Against Women Act
VCCS	Virginia Community College System
VDH	Virginia Department of Health
VEOC	Virginia Emergency Operations Center
VRC	Volunteer Reception Center
WFPG	Workforce Protection Group

This page intentionally left blank.

APPENDIX 2—HEALTH DEPARTMENT AAR SUMMARY

The Fairfax County Health Department (FCHD) is the lead agency for infectious disease preparedness, monitoring, and response for Fairfax County. In response to the first confirmed case of COVID-19 in the United States, the FCHD activated its Incident Management Team (IMT) and the Health Department Operations Center (HDOC) on January 22, 2020, to prepare for anticipated impacts in the Fairfax Health District, which includes Fairfax County, the City of Fairfax and the City of Falls Church, and the towns of Clifton, Herndon, and Vienna. Through February and March 2020, COVID-19 cases spread throughout the country, and on March 8, 2020, the first COVID-19 case was confirmed in the Fairfax County Health District.

The Health Department's response to COVID-19 was unprecedented. This dedicated team, which at its peak numbered over 1,000 staff, contractors, and volunteers, worked tirelessly for the communities they live in and serve. During this prolonged response, FCHD faced numerous challenges while coordinating a vast array of logistically complex and resource-intensive interventions that involved cooperation and collaboration with government agencies, community partners, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and multiple Federal Government entities.

The unprecedented response includes:

- Activation of the IMT for 864 days from January 22, 2020, to June 3, 2022.
- Reassignment of nearly 100% of FCHD personnel to COVID-19 response efforts.
- Reduction in Health Department services to adequately staff the department's COVID-19 response operations.

The response to COVID-19 has emphasized the importance of enhancing relationships among county agencies, increasing opportunities for engagement with community partners and the public, and continuously improving capabilities to prepare for, respond to, recover from, and mitigate future public health emergencies. This report details the efforts made during the COVID-19 response on these fronts.

With the declaration of a Public Health Emergency (PHE) on January 31, 2020, the federal government began implementing public health measures to safeguard the American public. Governor Northam issued a State of Emergency declaration for Virginia on March 12, 2020, and the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors voted unanimously on March 17, 2020, to declare a local state of emergency in Fairfax County. A National Emergency Declaration under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Stafford Act) was issued on March 13, 2020. It was declared a major disaster by President Trump on April 2, 2020. As of December 18, 2022, confirmed case counts indicated that COVID-19 had infected more than 257,666 Fairfax County residents, with COVID-19 leading to the deaths of more than 1,718 Fairfax County residents, as reported on the Fairfax County Health Department COVID-19 dashboard. While the Health Department officially reports confirmed cases of COVID-19, the number of COVID-19 cases in the Fairfax Health District was likely much higher.

The scale and duration of COVID-19 response operations proved challenging to Health Department and Fairfax County staff. The Department conducted extensive public health response operations across the Fairfax Health District to protect the health and safety of the community, coordinated with Fairfax County and the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) on policy and other vital issues, and supported local government and community partners. The Department simultaneously worked to preserve its internal workforce from illness and endeavored to keep the public informed at every step.

This summary captures critical strengths and areas for improvement.

Key Strengths	
1	The Fairfax County Health Department's ability to adapt was critical to the success of the COVID-19 response.
2	Health Department employees demonstrated versatility and dedication during the pandemic response. Fear and concern for personal safety among staff and their families apparent among many of the staff who reported on-site throughout the response. Staff who were not deployed continued to provide essential services for residents with limited resources and staff.
3	Health Department staff implemented strict health and safety protocols for residents and staff of skilled nursing facilities in recognition that these individuals were at higher risk for COVID-19 complications and transmission. This work was recognized in August 2021, when the National Association of Counties selected Fairfax County Health Department as a "County Best Practice model" for their work in preventing large-scale COVID outbreaks.
4	The Health Department has fostered key relationships with diverse community stakeholders for over two decades. These relationships proved essential in distributing timely, accurate, culturally, and linguistically appropriate COVID-19 prevention and other pertinent medical information.
5	ICS planning activities worked well during the response. Notable successes include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activation and deactivation of Health Department staff • Development and production of Incident Action Plans (IAPs) and Situation Reports (SITREPs) • Demonstration of staff adaptability to meet the response's ongoing, sometimes sudden, demands. • Effective operational processes pertaining to public health practices, including containment, isolation and quarantine, lab testing, and mass vaccination operations • Onboarding, training, and management of a temporary large-scale public health workforce that included hundreds of contractors and volunteers. • Supportive and engaged community partnerships • Successful collective efforts among the entire incident command team
6	The Logistics Section developed creative solutions to complex challenges by ensuring that space, supply, and staffing needs were met in a fiscally responsible manner.

Key Strengths	
7	The partnership between the Health Department's Division of Laboratory Services and the Virginia Division of Consolidated Laboratory Services (DCLS) was invaluable. It was instrumental in Fairfax County's rapid ability to operationalize COVID-19 testing in the health district. After four weeks of planning and preparation, the department completed DCLS validation and began to provide communitywide testing in COVID-19 testing.
8	Division of Laboratory Services staff absorbed the additional volume of COVID-19 testing over and above other testing routinely provided by the health department.
9	Through strategic partnerships, the Health Department established a large response organization of trained public health professionals to supplement the county workforce.
10	The Institute for Public Health Innovation (IPHI), in partnership with FCHD, trained 100 Community Health Workers (CHWs) to assess the needs of individuals in isolation following a positive COVID-19 test or quarantine following exposure. Residents served by the CHWs related to resources (e.g., food assistance, utility assistance) that would allow them to complete isolation or quarantine. The National Association of County and City Health Officials awarded the Health Department a 2022 Gold Innovative Practice Award for this work.
11	In coordination with both Health Department Information Technology (HDIT) and County Department of Information Technology (DIT) staff, the Data and Surveillance Group (DSG) developed county-wide and internal dashboards to consolidate data feeds to analyze and visualize data. These dashboards allowed the Health Department to provide timely, data-driven, actionable guidance to policymakers and daily updates to the IMT, Health Department leadership, and the Communications Team.
12	The Health Department Call Center and its dedicated staff were invaluable asset to the community, providing real-time guidance and answers to residents' questions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total Calls to the Call Center between 02/26/2020 and 12/18/2022: 633,500.
13	The Health Department's emergency planning and readiness allowed for the largest mass vaccination campaign in the state, administering over 2,807,515 million doses and fully vaccinating 80% of all Fairfax residents.
14	The Health Department's vaccine campaign included substantial focus on equity, conducting vaccine equity clinics for underserved and high-risk community members, addressing vaccine hesitancy, connecting residents with vaccine resources and appointments, and engaging with community-based organizations to expand communication and outreach. The Health Department was recognized for this equity work with a 2022 Model Practice Award from the National Association of County and City Health Officials.
15	The Health Department's outreach and coordination with private medical providers facilitated greater access to vaccines in the community.

Areas for Improvement	
1	The prolonged, traumatic, and arduous COVID-19 response profoundly affected the mental health of staff and highlighted an opportunity for proactive mental health program planning and ongoing departmental support.
2	The FCHD COOP plan was not designed for a multi-year-long response and therefore had limited utility as a guide for decision-making in response to a global pandemic. The department was also required to make operational decisions about service delivery balanced against the public health interest in mitigating the spread of disease within worksites and service delivery sites, also not envisioned by the COOP plan.
3	Public health staffing and organizational structures are not designed for multi-year large-scale field operations and complex administrative, financial, and logistical support while maintaining essential public health services.
4	Supply chain constraints challenged response operations in several ways, including laboratory operations and COVID-19 testing, availability of personal protective equipment (PPE) for responders, and medical supplies for the mass vaccination campaign, requiring options for alternate requisition.
5	The purchasing process within the FCHD IMT and the County's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) structure lacked strong, prescribed, and fundamental budgetary and financial coordination and oversight, requiring additional time and labor to ensure accurate accounting during the response.
6	COVID-19 data received by VDH was problematic and unreliable, creating additional work for department staff, impacting the timeliness of results, and potentially risking the accuracy of state data.
7	The Call Center staff experienced verbal hostility, abuse, and vilification from angry callers. There was no formal stress management process in place to provide staff with support. This is a process embedded in many commercial call centers and public safety agencies where such exposure is common.
8	Public messaging was a complex process driven by a shifting array of challenges including evolving science and frequently changing public health guidance, public pressure for updated information in a variety of formats, venues, and languages, the politicization of pandemic issues, vaccine hesitancy, and limited resources.
9	The science of epidemiology and its application to disease case and outbreak investigations is challenging to conduct at a large-scale with limited public health resources. Staff performing case and contact investigations (also known as "contact tracing") require advanced professional knowledge, skillsets, real world experience, systems access, and credentials that are difficult and time-consuming to replicate at scale.

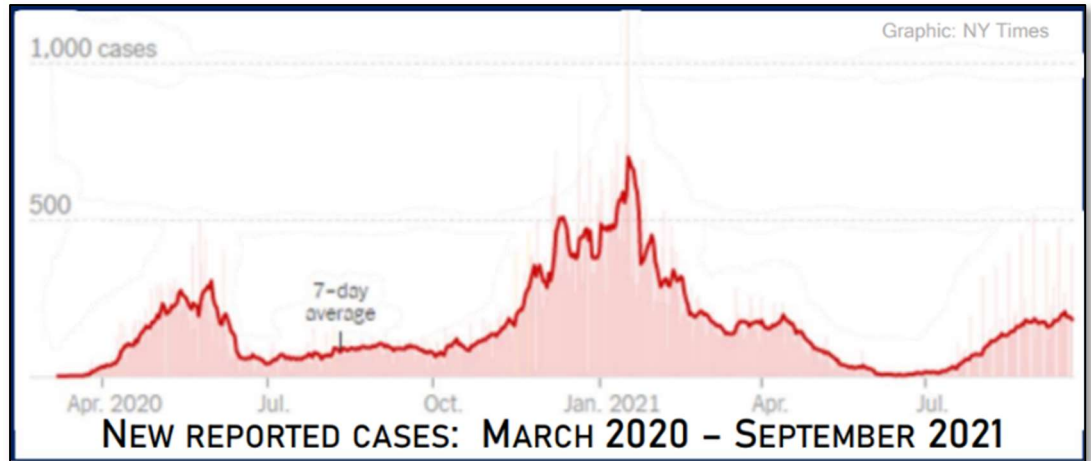
The COVID-19 pandemic and prolonged emergency response have changed public health landscape within the Fairfax County community and across the nation. As the COVID-19 pandemic evolved, new and unforeseen challenges required creative resourcing and solutions and broad and varied partnerships in the community, business, and government sectors. Public health organizations and funding entities should invest in expanding capabilities and resources

to mount future large-scale public health emergency responses. Fairfax County Health Department will continue to assess and identify best practices, areas for improvement, and opportunities to innovate creative and modern solutions.

This page intentionally left blank.

APPENDIX 3—FAIRFAX COUNTY COVID-19 RESPONSE HIGHLIGHTS

The Fairfax County Health Department Incident Management Team and the Health Department Operations Center were activated in January 2020 to support response efforts. The Fairfax County Emergency Operations Center was activated in March 2020 to provide a centralized coordination entity for the county enterprise.



- The initial response phase lasted from January 2020 to June 2020. Emergency declarations, stay-at-home orders, PPE shortages, continuity of operations, and the transition to maximized virtual operations and telework all occurred during this phase.
- After the first six months, the response transitioned into a “new-normal” of county operations from July 2020 to June 2021. In this phase, the county focused on re-opening paused programs and services, returning to in-person and hybrid work postures, and responding to the pandemic's effects.
- From July 2021 through December 2021, county operations continued to settle into the “new normal” operations. The COVID-19 virus continued to evolve and circulate with new variants causing increases in positive cases throughout the county. Businesses, community organizations, and individuals continued to adjust operations and interactions based on risk assessments.

The lengthy COVID-19 response significantly tested the county’s emergency response infrastructure as well as the ability of the county to continue normal business operations and services to the community. The comprehensive timeline in Appendix 4 outlines key events in the response.

400

In the first six weeks the Health Department hired four hundred contracted staff

356,427

Masks Used

Translation

Information was translated into **7** different languages

4,000 laptops were purchased in 2020 to support continuity of operations during COVID-19

4,578,100

Nitrile/Vinyl Gloves Used

2,188

clients served at quarantine, protection, isolation, decompression (QPID) hotels

After Action Review Process:

Forty-two county agencies developed and shared internal after action reports outlining detailed agency-specific information on the COVID-19 response. These reports were reviewed to identify trends in successes and challenges. Qualitative data was then collected through facilitated information-gathering sessions (i.e., hotwash meetings), interviews, and survey tools. 1,010 people participated in hotwash meetings, which were facilitated discussions of what occurred in the response with the intent to identify what worked well and what needed improvement. 2580 employees responded to the internal survey. 2148 responded to the community input survey. 147 responses to the business survey and 70 to the community-based organizations survey. This feedback also was considered in developing the assessment of the county's response.

Accessibility to County Services

Respondents were asked how easy it was to access services based on community outcome areas.

- 90% had little or no difficulty accessing county government services.
- 89% had little or no difficulty accessing the county's COVID-19 services.



Business Reliance on County Services

Business respondents were asked how necessary access to county services was during the pandemic.

- 71% (on average) indicated operations would have ceased or been negatively affected without access to county services.

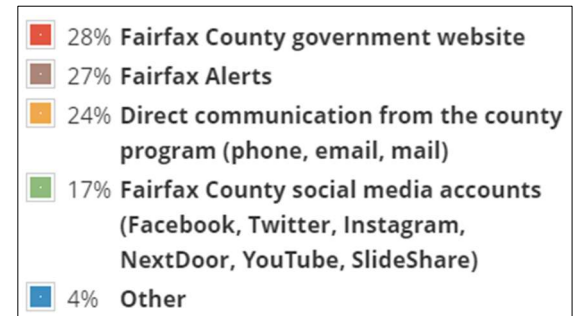
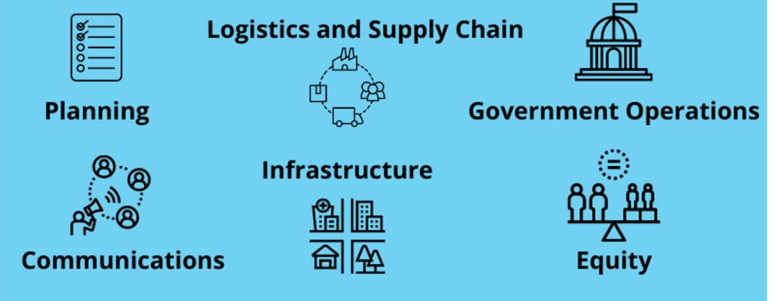
Quality of Collaboration

- Community-based organizations working with the county to support vulnerable communities negatively affected by COVID-19 restrictions were asked to rate the collaboration.
- 97% rated collaborative efforts with the county as satisfactory or better.

Effectiveness of Communication

As Fairfax County changed how services were delivered, and residents found the best information from a various source. More than 50% of respondents found the information provided by Fairfax County on changes to services during the pandemic was useful, had an appropriate level of detail, easy to understand, and easy to find.

ANALYSIS OF THE COUNTY'S RESPONSE IS ORGANIZED USING THESE CATEGORIES:



Grant Funding

The county supported non-profit partners and local businesses with grant funding during the pandemic. This funding played a significant role in continuing foundational services to the community during a time marked by overall increased needs, challenges for the non-profit workforce, and the need for innovative approaches to service delivery for the health and safety of workers, volunteers, and the community. The following highlights grant funding support to non-profits and businesses as of November 2022:

The following highlights grant funding to businesses and non-profits via CARES and ARPA to support their continued operations and sustainability:

- \$16,836,300 to the PIVOT Business Recovery Grant Program
- \$5,026,704 in CARES funding towards the Non-profit Sustainability Program.
- \$3,430,000 in ARPA funding towards the Active and Thriving Community Grants Program.
- \$7,095,000 in ARPA funding towards the 2022 Non-profit Sustainability Grants (extending the Non-profit Sustainability Grants program started with CARES funding).

The following highlights grant funding support to non-profits via CARES and ARPA funds specifically for the expansion of direct client services (food, housing, and utility assistance):

- Over \$90,000,000 for the provision of basic needs supports to community-based organizations through CARES (\$21 million), CDBG (\$7 million) and Emergency Rental Assistance 1 & 2 (\$65 million).
- Over \$6,000,000 of ARPA funding towards the Food Access Program, to date, \$3.3 million disbursed to 22 houses of worship and 26 community-based organizations to bolster food service infrastructure for the community.

Observations from the Supervisors Office Meetings

Strengths

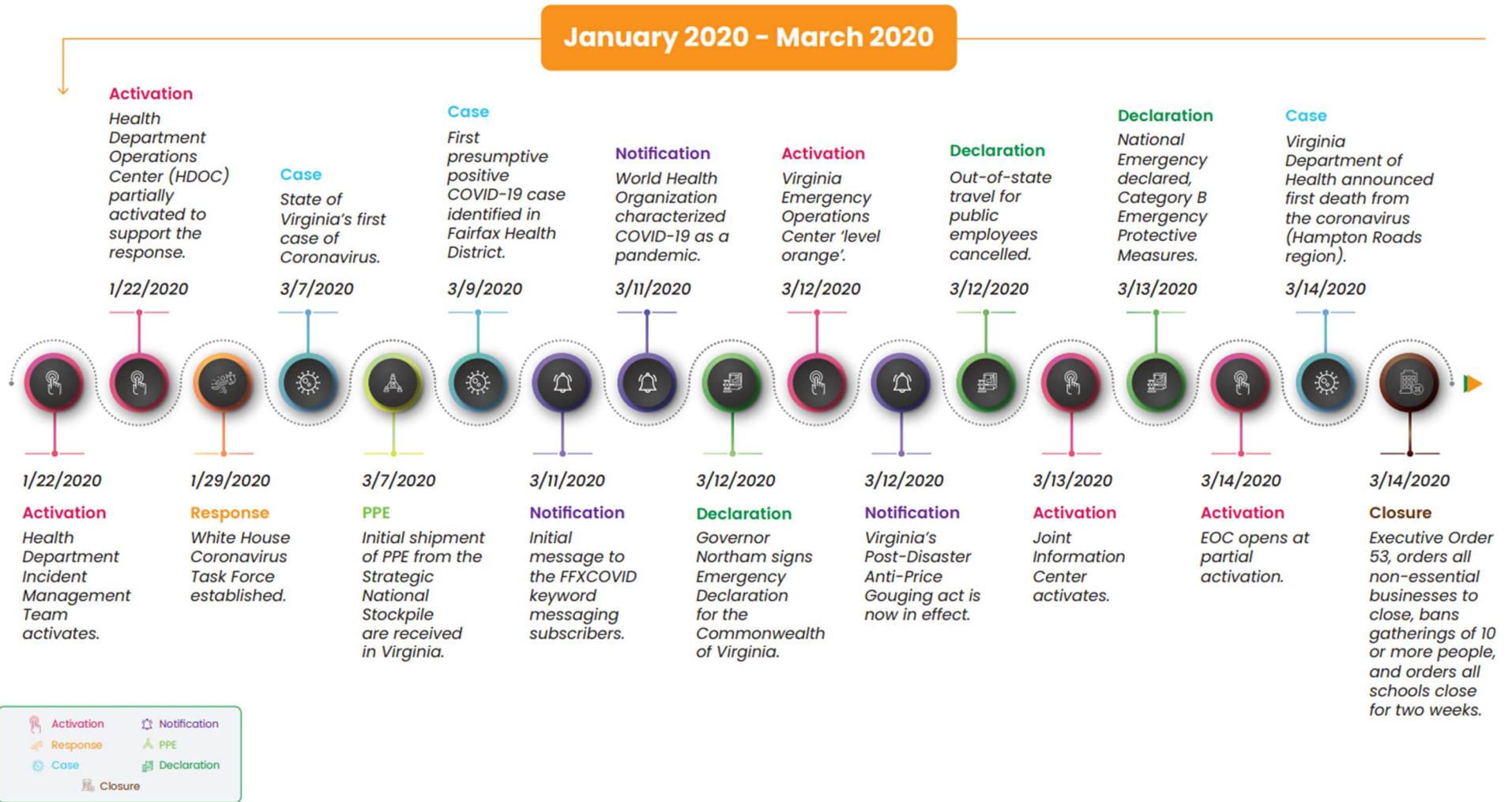
- Internal communications were excellent. The blog centralized a lot of information for county residents.
- Establishing the processes and technology to allow people to testify to the board remotely was a major success and will continue moving forward.
- Operationally, the county process for grants and microloans allowed money to get out quickly.
- In certain settings, COVID-related changes to operations actually made things better than pre-COVID.
- A strength was flexibility in supporting businesses, but it is important that the county go deeper with those efforts and have a better template for the type of response timing for implementing support.

Areas for Improvement/Recommendations

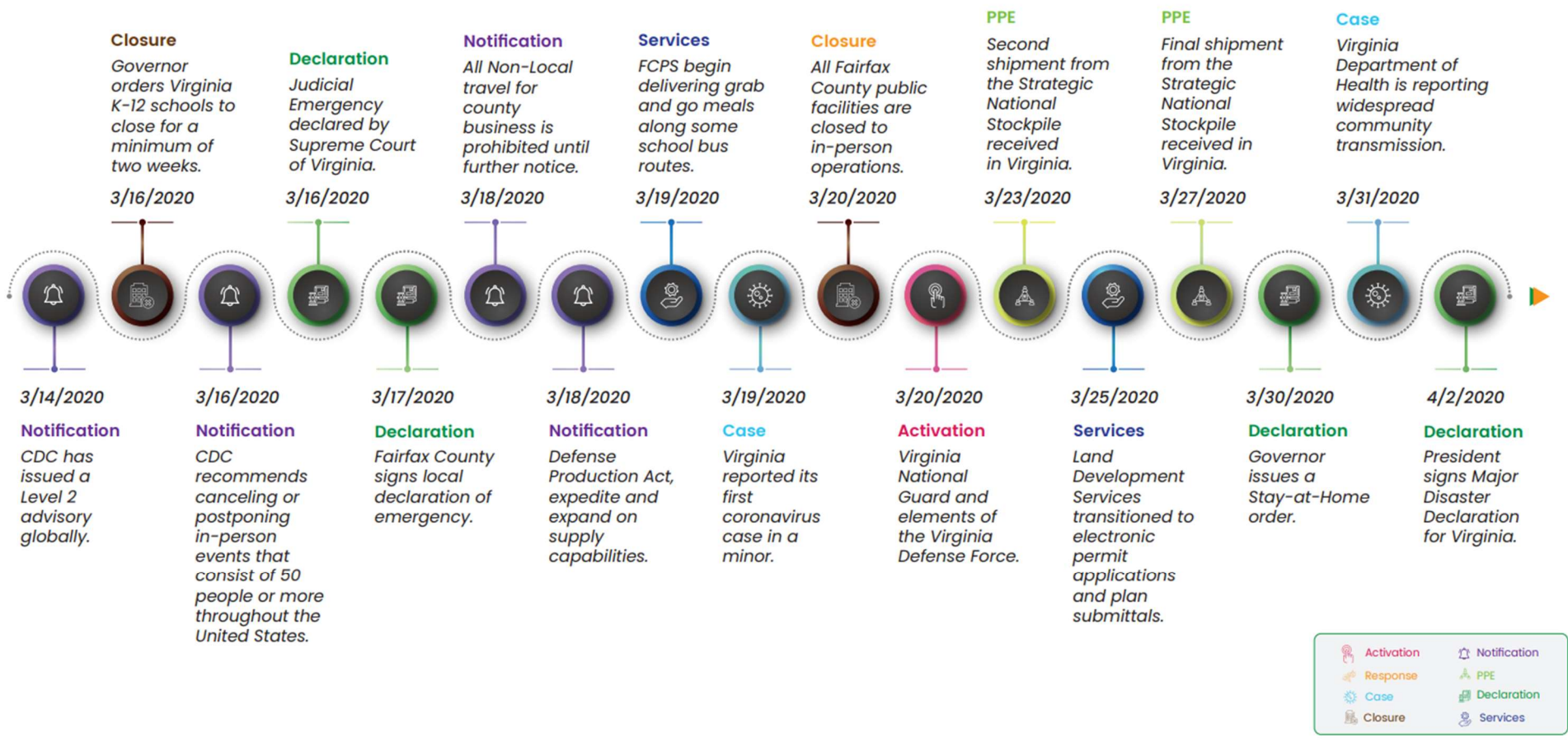
- The protection of employees, particularly those in the field who cannot work remotely, needs to be a priority for any future incident and to improve the resilience of our employees.
- Regionally, Fairfax County worked well with Northern Virginia Partners, and the county should continue to build on that.
- Need to make sure community-based organizations continue to be viable and can provide their services, as they are crucial to the county response.
- The dashboard was a good communication tool that helped people find information for themselves.
- Challenges of January 18, 2021, online vaccine registration.

This page intentionally left blank.

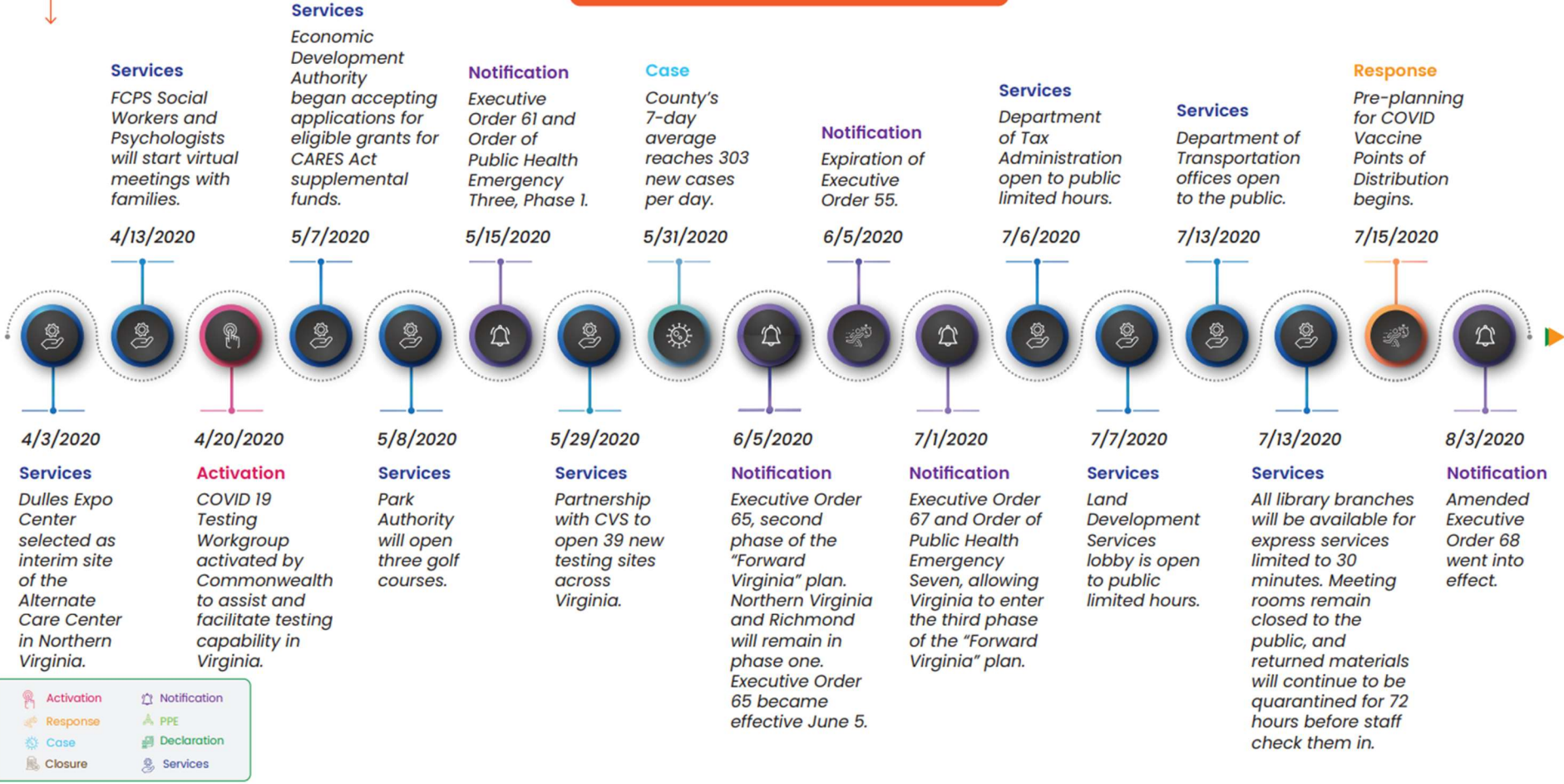
APPENDIX 4—COMPREHENSIVE TIMELINE



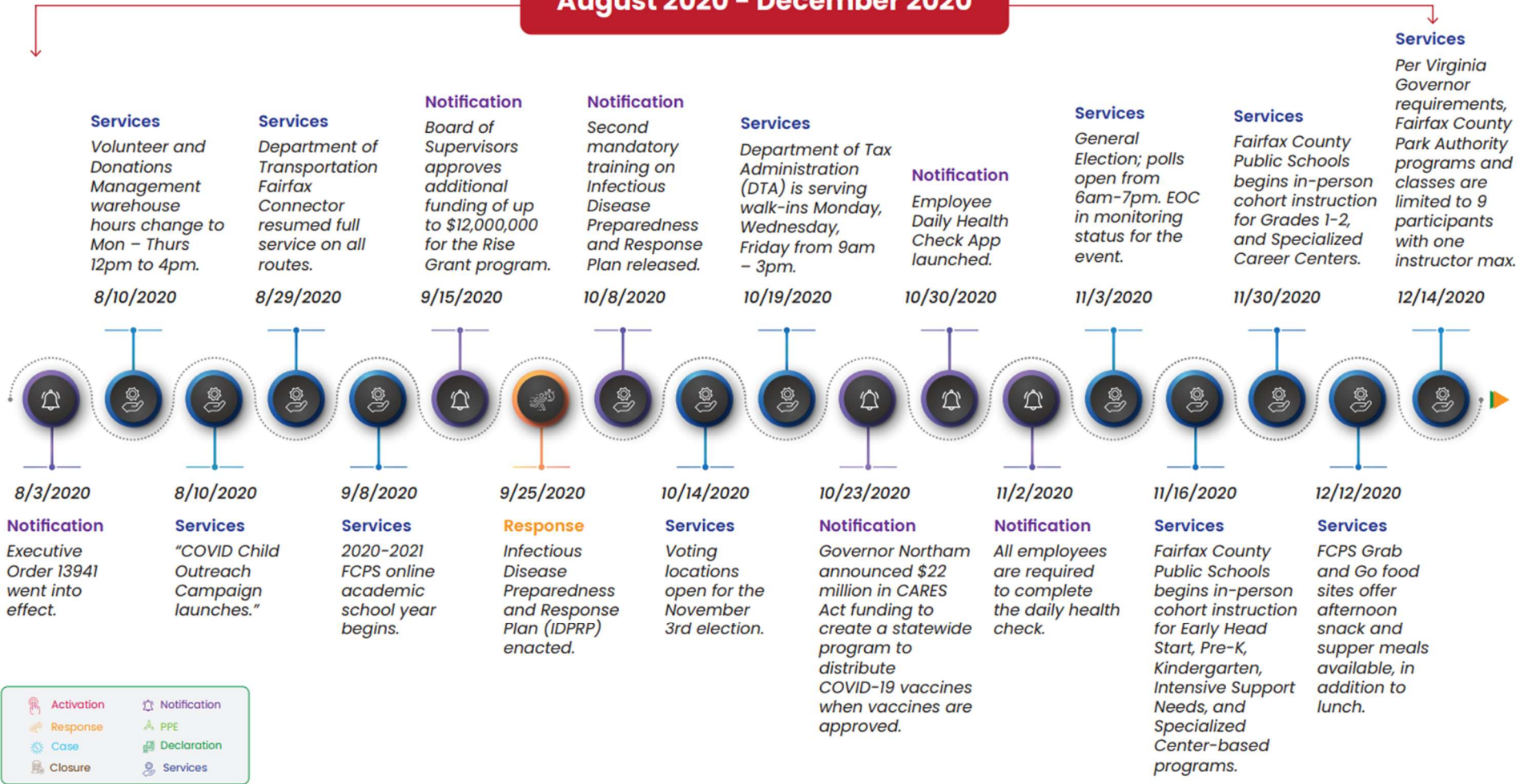
March 2020 - April 2020



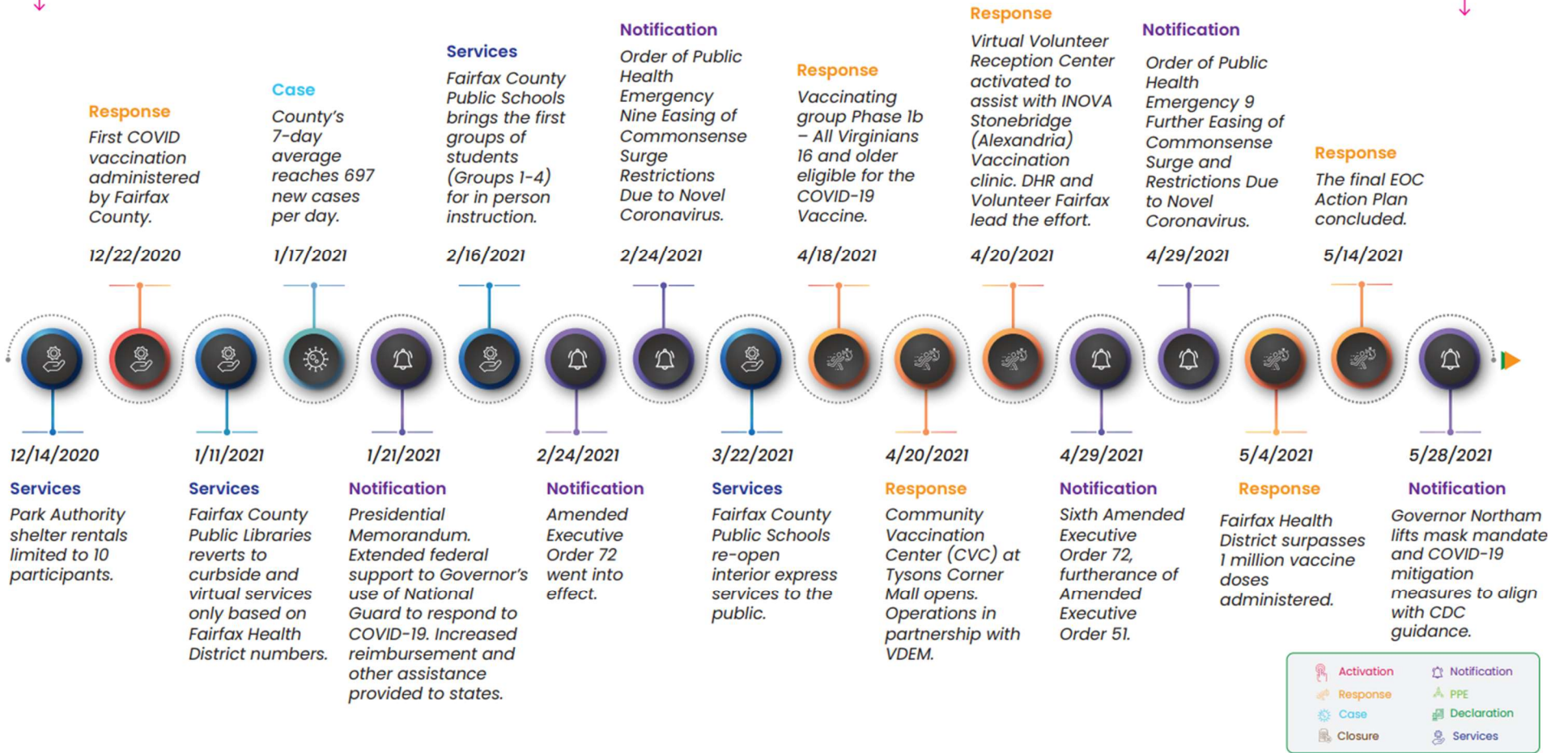
April 2020 - August 2020



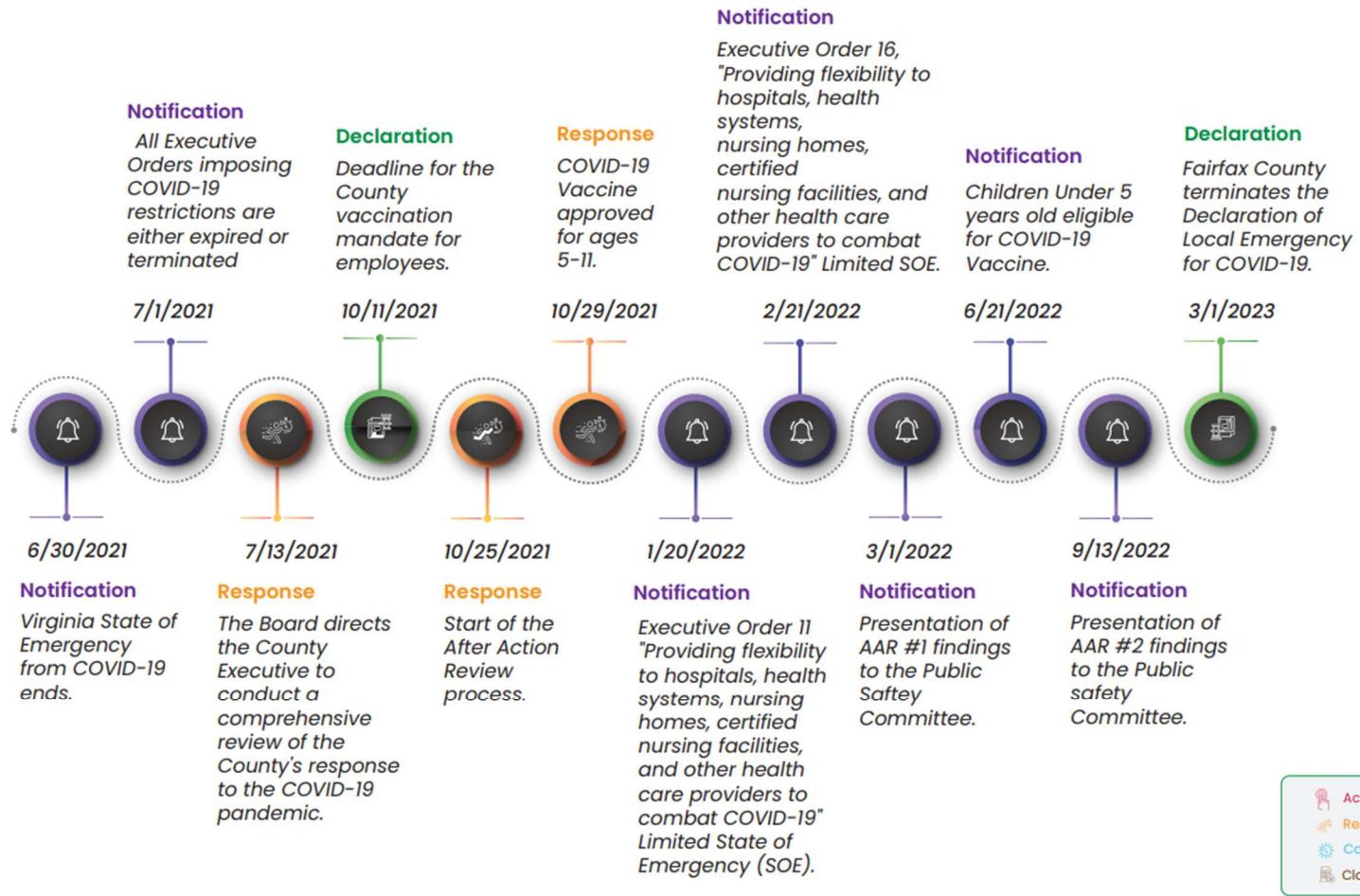
August 2020 - December 2020



December 2020 - May 2021



June 2021 - March 2023



APPENDIX 5—REPORT METHODOLOGY

The information in this report focused on Fairfax County response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The information collected was derived from individuals and organizations that were identified as stakeholders through the Department of Emergency Management and Security. The information was gathered through a series of facilitated hotwash meetings held virtually with targeted stakeholder groups, as well as interviews of select individuals and a county employee focused survey. The contractor also reviewed agency-submitted after-action reports to gain insight into agency operations. Other documents reviewed for the report included, but were not limited to, plans and policies, incident action plans, situation reports, Board of Supervisors actions, and other documentation.

STAKEHOLDERS IN THE REVIEW

Representatives from the following organizations/groups participated in hotwash meetings during this project:

Hotwash meetings – 1,010 participants

- Board of Supervisors' Offices
 - Chairman McKay's Office
 - Supervisor Alcorn's Office
 - Supervisor Foust's Office
 - Supervisor Gross's Office
 - Supervisor Herrity's Office
 - Supervisor Lusk's Office
 - Supervisor Palchik's Office
 - Supervisor Smith's Office
 - Supervisor Storck's Office
 - Supervisor Walkinshaw's Office
- Circuit Court
- Clerk Services
- Community Emergency Response Team
- Community Provider Strategy Team
- Community Services Board
- County Agency Equity Leads
- County Attorney
- County Executive's Office
- Department of Cable and Consumer Services
- Department of Clerk Services
- Department of Code Compliance
- Department of Economic Initiatives

- Department of Emergency Management and Security
- Department of Family Services
- Department of Finance
- Department of Finance - Risk Management
- Department of Human Resources
- Department of Human Resources - Human Resources Managers/ Leads Group
- Department of Human Resources - Organizational Development and Training
- Department of Human Resources Management Team
- Department of Information Technology
- Department of Information Technology - Agency Leads
- Department of Management and Budget
- Department of Planning and Development
- Department of Public Works and Environmental Services
- Department of Purchasing and Material Management
- Deputy County Executive Administration
- Deputy County Executive Financial Agencies
- Deputy County Executive Human Services
- Deputy County Executive Planning and Development
- Deputy County Executive Public Safety
- Facilities Management Department
- Fairfax County Health Department
- Fairfax County Health Department - Medical Reserve Corps
- Fairfax County Park Authority
- Fairfax County Police Department
- Fairfax County Public Library
- Fairfax County Public Schools
- Fire and Rescue
- Fire Marshal's Office
- General District Court
- Health and Human Services
- Human Resources Leads Group
- Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court
- Land Development Services
- Neighborhood and Community Services
- Neighborhood and Community Services - Senior Centers
- Office of Public Affairs
- Office of the County Attorney
- Office of the Sheriff
- One Fairfax
- Volunteer Fairfax

Representatives from the following organizations participated in interviews during this project:

- Department of Emergency Management and Security
- Department of Finance
- Continuity Program
- Neighborhood and Community Services
- Office to Prevent and End Homelessness

Survey Participants

County Agency Employees Survey

Surveys available to all county employees – 2,540 responded

Employees from the following county agencies responded to the survey during this project:

- Circuit Court
- Civil Service Commission
- Board Offices
- Boards, Authorities, and Commissions
- Department of Animal Sheltering
- Department of Cable & Consumer Services
- Department of Clerk Services
- Department of Code Compliance
- Department of Economic Initiatives
- Department of Emergency Management and Security
- Department of Family Services
- Department of Finance
- Department of Housing & Community Development
- Department of Human Resources
- Department of Information Technology
- Department of Management and Budget
- Department of Neighborhood and Community Services
- Department of Planning and Development
- Department of Procurement and Material Management
- Economic Development Authority
- Facilities Management Department
- Fairfax County Park Authority
- Fairfax County Police Department
- Fairfax County Public Library
- Fairfax County Public Schools
- Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board
- Fire and Rescue Department
- General District Court
- Health Department
- Internal Audit
- Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court
- Land Development Services
- McLean Community Center
- Office of Elections
- Office of Emergency Management
- Office of Energy and Environment
- Office of Human Rights and Equity Programs
- Office of Public Affairs
- Office of Strategy Management
- Office of the Commonwealth Attorney
- Office of the County Attorney
- Office of the County Executive

- Department of Public Safety Communications
- Department of Public Works and Environmental Services
- Department of Tax Administration
- Department of Transportation
- Department of Vehicle Services
- Office of the Sheriff
- Office to Prevent and End Homelessness
- Police Auditor
- Reston Community Center
- Retirement Administration Agency
- Volunteer Fairfax

Community Input COVID-19 Survey

Survey available online and in hard-copy at FCPL – 2,148 responses received

Businesses COVID-19 Survey

Survey available online and in hard-copy at FCPL – 147 responses received

Community-based Organizations COVID-19 Survey

Sent directly to Community Provider Strategy Team members – 70 responses received

FAIRFAX COUNTY AGENCY EMPLOYEES SURVEY QUESTIONS

Agency

1. What County agency do you represent? **Answer required*

Work Environment

2. Where did you do your work?
 - Telework
 - In-Person
 - Hybrid of teleworking and in-person
3. Select all that reflect your work:
 - Majority of work is office based
 - Majority of work is field based
 - Majority of work requires computer access
 - Majority of work does not require computer access
 - Standard business hours
 - Non-standard hours/Shift work

Changes in Responsibilities

4. Did your duties change due to COVID-19?
 - No, they are the same as before the pandemic
 - Somewhat changed (less than 50% of duties changed)
 - Significantly changed (more than 50% of duties changed)
 - Completely changed (100% different than before)

Comments Box

Support Provided by the County

5. Please select all the statements you agree with.
 - I had the tools/equipment needed to complete my job.
 - Telework/Leave policies were flexible enough to meet the needs of my family.
 - I felt like I was helping/supporting our community.
 - I felt safe in the workplace.
 - Information provided was adequate and timely.
 - I do not agree with any of the above statements.

Comments Box

Information Sharing and Accessibility

6. Were you able to access critical information regarding policies, requirements, operations, benefits, etc. during the pandemic?
 - Yes, I had access to the information I needed.
 - No, I did not have access to the information I needed.
 - I had access to some of the information I needed.

Comments Box
7. How could the county improve on providing critical information to employees? Select all that apply.
 - Use different platforms
 - Reduce delays between information development and distribution
 - Share information more frequently

Share information less frequently
 Explain the information more thoroughly
 Comments Box

Agency Success

8. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement:

My agency was able to fulfill its goals or objectives from the start of the pandemic through June 2021.

Strongly agree
 Agree
 Neutral
 Disagree
 Strongly disagree
 Comments Box

Returning to Normal Operations

9. County operations have been transitioning to a more normal status since the middle of 2021. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement:

My organization continues to face pandemic-related challenges as normal operations are resuming.

Strongly agree
 Agree
 Neutral
 Disagree
 Strongly disagree
 Comments Box

Challenges in Returning to Normal

10. Challenges to resumption of normal operations are related to: (Select all that apply)

N/A (No challenges)
 Hiring
 Retention
 Safety concerns regarding resumption of on-site work
 Safety measures required in county facilities
 Policies guiding the safe return to work
 Vaccine/testing requirements
 Other (please specify)

Areas of Success

11. Share one success in how your agency, or the county as a whole, responded during the pandemic.

Opportunities for Improvement

12. Recommend one improvement that would help your agency, or the county in general, be better prepared.

COMMUNITY INPUT SURVEY QUESTIONS

Participant Details

1. What is your zip code?
2. Are you a Fairfax County employee?
 - Yes
 - No
3. What is Your race/ethnicity?
 - White
 - Black or African American
 - Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish
 - Asian
 - American Indian or Alaska Native
 - Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - Other
 - I prefer not to answer
4. What is the main language spoken at home?
 - English
 - Spanish (Latin American)
 - Korean
 - Vietnamese
 - Chinese/Mandarin (Simplified Chinese)
 - Amharic
 - Urdu
 - Arabic
 - Other
 - Prefer not to answer
5. What is your age?
 - Under 18
 - 18-25
 - 26-35
 - 46-55
 - 56-65
 - 66-75
 - Over 75
 - Prefer not to answer

Interactions with Fairfax County Government Services

6. Did you or someone in your household access services or receive assistance from Fairfax County at any point during the pandemic from January 2020 through December 2021?
Services and assistance can include permits, licenses, inspections, voting, taxes, community centers, parks and recreation, transportation assistance, libraries, planning and zoning, public meetings, commissions and councils, food assistance, housing

assistance, child and adult protective services, public safety services, health services, etc.

Yes

No

Assessment of Service Access

Cultural and Recreational Opportunities

7. Did you or someone in your household engage with any county cultural or recreational opportunities?

For example, visiting recreation centers, community centers, senior centers, trails, or taking park classes, etc.

Yes

No

8. How easy was it to access cultural and/or recreational services during the pandemic?

For the purpose of this survey, access is defined as the ability to connect with county personnel or county systems to complete a task.

Easy to access services

Minor challenge in accessing services

Major challenge in accessing services

9. Please describe any major challenges in accessing cultural or recreational services.

Economic Opportunity

10. Did you or someone in your household work with the county on anything related to economic opportunity?

This could include permits, licensing, inspections, land use, planning, etc.

Yes

No

11. How easy was it to access Fairfax County services to support economic opportunities during the pandemic?

Easy to access services

Minor challenge in accessing services

Major challenge in accessing services

12. Please describe any major challenges in accessing services related to economic opportunity.

Effective and Efficient Government

13. Did you or someone in your household interact with Fairfax County for services that are the responsibility of local government?

This includes family/community licenses or certificates, courts (General, Circuit, Juvenile/Domestic relations) and legal services, advisory boards, committees, councils, public testimony, taxes (real estate, personal property, business), voting, elections, etc.

Yes

No

14. How easy was it to access services that could only be provided by the Fairfax County government during the pandemic?

- Easy to access services
- Minor challenge in accessing services
- Major challenge in accessing services

15. Please describe any major challenges in accessing services that can only be provided by county government

Environment

16. Did you or someone in your household access Fairfax County environmental services?

For example, recycling, trash, stormwater management, wastewater management, noise issues, environmental hazards, etc.

- Yes
- No

17. How easy was it to access Fairfax County environmental services during the pandemic?

- Easy to access services
- Minor challenge in accessing services
- Major challenge in accessing services

18. Please describe any major challenges in accessing environmental services

Empowerment and Support for Residents Facing Vulnerability

19. Did you or someone in your household access Fairfax County services supporting residents facing vulnerability?

- Yes
- No

20. How easy was it to access Fairfax County services to support residents facing vulnerability during the pandemic?

- Easy to access services
- Minor challenge in accessing services
- Major challenge in accessing services

21. Please describe any major challenges in accessing services that support residents facing vulnerabilities.

Covid-19 Services

22. Did you or someone in your household access Fairfax County services specific to Covid-19?

- Yes
- No

23. How easy was it to access Fairfax County Covid-19 services during the pandemic?

- Easy to access services
- Minor challenge in accessing services
- Major challenge in accessing services

24. Please describe any major challenges in accessing county services related to Covid-19

Health

25. Did you or someone in your household access Fairfax County health* and human services?

* Non Covid-19 related health services. This includes emergency shelters, eviction, food assistance, adult day care, health clinics, immunizations, maternal/child health, emergency mental health, domestic violence services etc.

Yes

No

26. How easy was it to access Fairfax County health* and human services during the pandemic?

*Non Covid-19 related health services

Easy to access services

Minor disruption in accessing services

Major disruption in accessing services

27. Please describe any major challenges in accessing health* and human services from the county.

*Non Covid-19 related health services

Housing and Neighborhood Livability

28. Did you or someone in your household access housing and neighborhood livability services?

This includes property rentals, affordable housing programs, blighted properties, housing discrimination, and animal and wildlife protection, etc.

Yes

No

29. How easy was it to access Fairfax County services related to housing and neighborhood livability during the pandemic?

Easy to access services

Minor challenge in accessing services

Major challenge in accessing services

30. Please describe any major challenges in accessing services related to housing and neighborhood livability.

Lifelong Learning and Education

31. Did you or someone in your household access Fairfax County learning and education* services

*This question does not include Fairfax County Public School services. This includes library programs and events, book and media lending, public computer access, adult and community education, etc.

Yes

No

32. How easy was it to access Fairfax County lifelong learning and education* services during the pandemic?

*This question does not include Fairfax County Public School services

Easy to access services

Minor challenge in accessing services

Major challenge in accessing services

33. Please describe any major challenges in accessing lifelong learning and education* services

*This question does not include Fairfax County Public School services

Mobility and Transportation

34. Did you or someone in your household engage with any Fairfax County mobility and transportation services during the pandemic?

This includes commuter services, Fairfax Connector, transportation for older adults, disability/paratransit transportation, discount transportation, active transportation programs (self-propelled, mostly human-powered travel including walking, biking, rolling (scooter, wheelchair, stroller), hiking, running, and riding, etc.

Yes

No

35. How easy was it to access Fairfax County mobility and transportation services during the pandemic?

Easy to access services

Minor challenge in accessing services

Major challenge in accessing services

36. Please describe any major challenges in accessing mobility and transportation services

Safety and Security

37. Did you or someone in your household engage with any Fairfax County safety and security services during the pandemic?

This includes 9-1-1, Law Enforcement, Fire and Rescue, Emergency Medical Services, and Emergency Management.

Yes

No

38. How easy was it to access Fairfax County safety and security services during the pandemic?

Easy to access services

Minor challenge in accessing services

Major challenge in accessing services

39. Please describe any major challenges in accessing safety and security services.

Information on Changes to Fairfax County Services

40. As Fairfax County made changes to how services were delivered during the pandemic, where did you find the best information on these changes?

Direct communication from the county program (phone, email, mail)

Fairfax County government website

Fairfax Alerts

Fairfax County social media

Other

41. How was the quality of information provided by Fairfax County on changes to services during the pandemic? (select all that apply)

Information was easy to find

Information was easy to understand

The level of detail was appropriate and useful

There were clear directions on how to access services

Changes were shared in a timely manner
Other

Feedback on the Overall Response

- 42. Were there any changes to the delivery of Fairfax County government services that were implemented due to the pandemic that you found particularly helpful?
- 43. What changes to the delivery of Fairfax County government services would you like to continue or change in the future?

COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS SURVEY QUESTIONS

Community Organization Information

1. Which category best describes the type of organizations you represent?

- Community-based organization / non-governmental organization
- Faith-based organization
- House of worship
- Business
- Other

2. Please select the option below that best describes your affiliation with the organization

- Organizational Leadership
- Employee
- Volunteer
- Other

3. Please consider all of your experiences over the past two-years with the County. Using a scale from “very dissatisfied” to “very satisfied”, how satisfied are you with the following services?

Donations Coordination: Fairfax County’s distribution of donated items (e.g., masks, PPE, and other personal care items) to non-profit partners, for purposes of making them available to community members.

- Very Dissatisfied
- Somewhat Dissatisfied
- Neither Dissatisfied or Satisfied
- Somewhat Satisfied
- Very Satisfied

Financial Support to Residents: Fairfax County’s engagement with non-profit partners to distribute funds through a variety of Emergency Financial Assistance programs (e.g., CARES, Emergency Rental Assistance, Community Development Block Grant.)

- Very Dissatisfied
- Somewhat Dissatisfied
- Neither Dissatisfied or Satisfied
- Somewhat Satisfied
- Very Satisfied

Health Access for Residents: Fairfax County’s engagement with non-profit partners to support health access and outreach events (e.g., COVID testing efforts, vaccine outreach, vaccine clinics).

- Very Dissatisfied
- Somewhat Dissatisfied

Neither Dissatisfied or Satisfied
 Somewhat Satisfied
 Very Satisfied

Food Access for Residents: Fairfax County's coordination of food delivery efforts to include marketing to neighborhoods, working with non-profits to promote food delivery options, delivering food to homebound individuals, etc.

Very Dissatisfied
 Somewhat Dissatisfied
 Neither Dissatisfied or Satisfied
 Somewhat Satisfied
 Very Satisfied

4. Did your organization work as part of any county/community-based/houses of worship collaborative effort during the pandemic?

Yes
 No

5. Using a scale of "poor" to "Excellent" please answer the following question.
 How would you rate the overall effectiveness of the collaboration?

Poor
 Fair
 Satisfactory
 Good
 Excellent
 N/A

6. As Fairfax County made changes to how services were delivered during the pandemic, where did you find the best information on these changes?

Direct Communication from the county program (phone, email, mail)
 Fairfax County government website
 Fairfax Alerts
 Fairfax County social media accounts (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, NextDoor, YouTube, Slideshare)
 Community Provider Coordination Team (CPCT)
 Other

7. How was the quality of information provided by Fairfax County on changes to services during the pandemic? (Select all that apply)

Information was easy to find
 Information was easy to understand
 The level of detail was appropriate and useful
 There were clear directions on how to access services
 Changes were shared in a timely manner

Other

8. Please share a specific area of success as it relates to the partnership and functions conducted between your organization and Fairfax County during the pandemic.

9. Please share a specific area for improvement as it relates to the partnership and functions conducted between your organization and Fairfax County during the pandemic.

10. Additional Comments (optional)

BUSINESSES SURVEY QUESTIONS

Interactions with the Department of Planning and Development (DPD)

1. Between March 2020 and March 2022, did you utilize or engage with the Department of Planning and Development?

This includes zoning applications, permits (food trucks, home-based businesses, noise waiver's, short-term lodging, accessory living unit, wetlands, etc)

Yes

No

Not Sure

2. Which of the Department of Planning and Development (DPD) programs or services did you utilize?

Zoning applications

Permits (food trucks, home-based businesses, noise waivers, short-term lodging, accessory living unit, wetlands, etc)

Rezoning

Architectural Review Board

Comprehensive plan amendments

Interpretations

Other

3. How would you have been impacted if you did not have access to these programs or services from DPD?

Operations would have ceased

Operations would have been negatively impacted

Operations would not have been impacted

4. Were communications with DPD clear and concise?

Yes

No (please explain)

5. Please rate your interactions with DPD during any of the time frames that you interacted or engaged with them. For any time frame you did not engage or interact, please select not applicable.

How would you rate your experience with DPD from March 2020 to August 2020? (County limited in person. Operations for the public, and most government services and programs were transitioned to a virtual environment, if possible)

Very unsatisfied

Unsatisfied

Neither satisfied or dissatisfied

Satisfied

Very Satisfied
Not applicable

How would you rate your experience with DPD from September 2020 to February 2021? (Government services and programs continued in a mostly virtual environment.)

Very unsatisfied
Unsatisfied
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied
Satisfied
Very Satisfied
Not applicable

How would you rate your experience with DPD from March 2021 to August 2021? (Government services and programs continued in a hybrid system.)

Very unsatisfied
Unsatisfied
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied
Satisfied
Very Satisfied
Not applicable

How would you rate your experience with DPD from September 2021 to March 2022? (Government services and programs continued in a hybrid system.)

Very unsatisfied
Unsatisfied
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied
Satisfied
Very Satisfied
Not applicable

6. As the pandemic progressed, did you observe any changes that you felt improved operations for the programs or services you were receiving from DPD?

Yes (Please list)
No

7. Are there any improvements that could be made to enhance your experience with DPD programs or services?

Yes (Please list)
No

Interactions with Land Development Services (LDS)

8. Between March 2020 and March 2022, did you utilize or engage with Land Development Services?

This includes building/trade permit applications, building/trade permit plan review, site plan applications, site plan review, parking tabulations, code modification, building/trade permit inspections, site inspections.

- Yes
- No
- Not Sure

9. Which of Land Development Services (LDS) programs or services did you utilize?

- Building/trade permit applications
- Building/trade permit plan review
- Site plan applications
- Site plan review
- Parking tabulations
- Code modifications
- Building/trade permit inspections
- Site inspections
- Other

10. How would you have been impacted if you did not have access to these programs or services?

- Operations would have ceased
- Operations would have been negatively impacted
- Operations would not have been impacted

11. Were communications with LDS clear and concise?

- Yes
- No (Please explain)

12. Please rate your interactions with LDS during any of the time frames that you interacted or engaged with them. For any time frame you did not engage or interact, please select not applicable.

How would you rate your experience with LDS from March 2020 to August 2020? (County limited in person. Operations for the public, and most government services and programs were transitioned to a virtual environment, if possible)

- Very unsatisfied
- Unsatisfied
- Neither satisfied or dissatisfied
- Satisfied
- Very Satisfied
- Not applicable

How would you rate your experience with LDS from September 2020 to February 2021? (Government services and programs continued in a mostly virtual environment.)

- Very unsatisfied
- Unsatisfied
- Neither satisfied or dissatisfied
- Satisfied
- Very Satisfied
- Not applicable

How would you rate your experience with LDS from March 2021 to August 2021? (Government services and programs continued in a hybrid system.)

- Very unsatisfied
- Unsatisfied
- Neither satisfied or dissatisfied
- Satisfied
- Very Satisfied
- Not applicable

How would you rate your experience with LDS from September 2021 to March 2022? (Government services and programs continued in a hybrid system.)

- Very unsatisfied
- Unsatisfied
- Neither satisfied or dissatisfied
- Satisfied
- Very Satisfied
- Not applicable

13. As the pandemic progressed, did you observe any changes that you felt improved operations for the programs or services you were receiving from LDS?

- Yes (please list)
- No

14. Are there any improvements that could be made to enhance your experience with LDS programs or services?

- Yes (Please list)
- No

Interactions with the Department of Economic Initiatives

15. Between March 2020 and March 2022, did you utilize or engage with the Department of Economic Initiatives?

This includes RISE grants, PIVOT grants, and the microloan program.

- Yes
- No

Not Sure

16. Which of the Department of Economic Initiatives (DEI) programs or services did you utilize?

- RISE grants
- PIVOT grants
- The microloan program
- Other, please list

17. How would you have been impacted if you did not have access to these programs or services?

- Operations would have ceased
- Operations would have been negatively impacted
- Operations would not have been impacted

18. Were communications with DEI clear and concise?

- Yes
- No (Please explain)

19. Please rate your interactions with DEI during any of the time frames that you interacted or engaged with them. For any time frame you did not engage or interact, please select not applicable.

How would you rate your experience with DEI from March 2020 to August 2020? (County limited in person. Operations for the public, and most government services and programs were transitioned to a virtual environment, if possible)

- Very unsatisfied
- Unsatisfied
- Neither satisfied or dissatisfied
- Satisfied
- Very Satisfied
- Not applicable

How would you rate your experience with DEI from September 2020 to February 2021? (Government services and programs continued in a mostly virtual environment.)

- Very unsatisfied
- Unsatisfied
- Neither satisfied or dissatisfied
- Satisfied
- Very Satisfied
- Not applicable

How would you rate your experience with DEI from March 2021 to August 2021? (Government services and programs continued in a hybrid system.)

- Very unsatisfied
- Unsatisfied
- Neither satisfied or dissatisfied
- Satisfied
- Very Satisfied
- Not applicable

How would you rate your experience with DEI from September 2021 to March 2022? (Government services and programs continued in a hybrid system.)

- Very unsatisfied
- Unsatisfied
- Neither satisfied or dissatisfied
- Satisfied
- Very Satisfied
- Not applicable

20. As the pandemic progressed, did you observe any changes that you felt improved operations for the programs or services you were receiving from DEI?

- Yes (please list)
- No

21. Are there any improvements that could be made to enhance your experience with DEI programs or services?

- Yes (Please list)
- No

Interactions with the Department of Code Compliance

22. Between March 2020 and March 2022, did you utilize or engage with the Department of Code Compliance?

This includes investigation of complaints related to outdoor storage, multiple occupancy, property maintenance, un-permitted construction, and other zoning and building code violations.

- Yes
- No
- Not Sure

23. Which of the Department of Code Compliance (DCC) programs or services did you utilize?

- Investigation of complaints related to outdoor storage
- Multiple Occupancy
- Property maintenance
- Unpermitted construction
- Other zoning and building code violations

24. How would you have been impacted if you did not have access to these programs or services from DCC?

- Operations would have ceased
- Operations would have been negatively impacted
- Operations would not have been impacted

25. Were communications with DCC clear and concise?

- Yes
- No (Please explain)

26. Please rate your interactions with DCC during any of the time frames that you interacted or engaged with them. For any time frame you did not engage or interact, please select not applicable.

How would you rate your experience with DCC from March 2020 to August 2020? (County limited in person. Operations for the public, and most government services and programs were transitioned to a virtual environment, if possible)

- Very unsatisfied
- Unsatisfied
- Neither satisfied or dissatisfied
- Satisfied
- Very Satisfied
- Not applicable

How would you rate your experience with DCC from September 2020 to February 2021? (Government services and programs continued in a mostly virtual environment.)

- Very unsatisfied
- Unsatisfied
- Neither satisfied or dissatisfied
- Satisfied
- Very Satisfied
- Not applicable

How would you rate your experience with DCC from March 2021 to August 2021? (Government services and programs continued in a hybrid system.)

- Very unsatisfied
- Unsatisfied
- Neither satisfied or dissatisfied
- Satisfied
- Very Satisfied
- Not applicable

How would you rate your experience with DCC from September 2021 to March 2022? (Government services and programs continued in a hybrid system.)

- Very unsatisfied
- Unsatisfied
- Neither satisfied or dissatisfied
- Satisfied
- Very Satisfied
- Not applicable

27. As the pandemic progressed, did you observe any changes that you felt improved operations for the programs or services you were receiving from DCC?

- Yes (please list)
- No

28. Are there any improvements that could be made to enhance your experience with DCC programs or services?

- Yes (Please list)
- No

This page intentionally left blank.

APPENDIX 6—IMPROVEMENT PLAN

COVID-19 AAR 1 Improvement Plan

The Improvement Plan is based on the observations, analysis, and recommendations identified during the after-action review process and captures actions to address recognized issues, assigns responsibility, and sets completion targets (e.g., Short: 3-9 months; Mid: 9-18 months; and Long: 18-24 months or longer)

Tracking #	Core Capability	Area for Improvement	Recommendation	Responsible Organization(s)	Completion Target (Short - Mid – Long)	Strategic Plan Community Outcome Areas
2022-CoV19-P1-001	Planning	While the implementation of COOP plans was a recognized success for some agencies, gaps in current COOP planning templates need to be addressed, including specific guidance for long-term operations, IT resiliency planning, and incorporation of COOP into high-level decision-making processes.	Update all county COOP plans and the county COOP plan template to address long-term virtual operations, including adjustments made during the pandemic response, and recognized emergency service personnel and essential personnel definitions in alignment with DHR policy and the Office of the County Attorney (OCA) guidance. Incorporate individual and family preparedness for employees in county COOP planning efforts. Ensure IT remains a critical part of COOP planning efforts. Plans should recognize the key role technology will likely play in any situation where COOP activation is required. Give more authority to the COOP program and incorporate continuity perspectives in leadership decision-making discussions.	Continuity Program, DIT, DHR, RM	Mid	Effective and Efficient Government
2022-CoV19-P1-002	Planning	Opportunities to augment, amplify, and maximize staffing in the response to COVID-19 were missed. Note: This Area for Improvement consolidates multiple observations	Evaluate agency COOP plans to assess staffing for mission essential functions to identify areas where a significant increase in staffing may be needed. Plans for continuing government operations in emergency situations need to be evaluated to determine if administrative	Agency leaders, COOP planners, County Continuity Program Manager	Long	Effective and Efficient Government

Tracking #	Core Capability	Area for Improvement	Recommendation	Responsible Organization(s)	Completion Target (Short - Mid – Long)	Strategic Plan Community Outcome Areas
		related to staffing the response to maximize support and share the workload. Multiple recommendations are outlined to address discrete elements identified during the review.	services are adequately captured in COOP plans at the executive level, not just at the agency level.			
2022-CoV19-P1-003	Planning	There were gaps in policies as it related to the needs of individuals working the response.	Review HR policies using the pandemic workload as a benchmark to identify improvements to better support response staff. Identify strategies to sufficiently support the people engaged in response, recognizing their engagement in the response comes with limitations in using resources available to non-response staff.	DHR in lead. Bring in key players in response, including RM	Mid	Effective and Efficient Government
2022-CoV19-P1-004	Planning	A refinement in the county service delivery mechanisms is needed. The success in continuing government functions during the pandemic required an immense amount of staff time, especially from an IT perspective in keeping all the infrastructure advances current and operational.	Evaluate pandemic operations and determine what ‘new normal’ operations are reasonable. Conduct analysis on function improvement, including the budget and staff requirements to sustain this level of operations, as well as how other jurisdictions provide services, and decide if changing the delivery model is plausible or if an expanded investment is in the best interest of county operations moving forward, then adjust the budget and staffing accordingly.	DMB	Mid for analysis Long for funding and staffing changes	Effective and Efficient Government
2022-CoV19-P1-005	Planning	In the initial response phase, there were challenges with synchronizing the HDOC and EOC planning efforts and establishing EOC processes and battle rhythm, as they were operating as two separate processes.	DEMS, FCHD, and other departments designated as a Coordinating Agency in the EOP should explore modes of communication and coordination between the EOC and DOCs as alternatives to in-person coordination when in-person staffing EOC staffing is not possible.	DEMS, HDOC, DPMM, Any agency that has a DOC	Long	Effective and Efficient Government

Tracking #	Core Capability	Area for Improvement	Recommendation	Responsible Organization(s)	Completion Target (Short - Mid – Long)	Strategic Plan Community Outcome Areas
2022-CoV19-P1-006	Planning	County policy and decision making during the response was developed just to get to the next step, as opposed to long-term strategy. While some of the policies were the best option at the time, repeating them for future events may not necessarily be as successful.	Assess major decisions made and policies developed for applicability beyond the pandemic, as well as consideration of equity, and codify decisions and policies that can be reused in the future in emergency procedures.	DEMS, FCHD	Long	Effective and Efficient Government
2022-CoV19-P1-007	Planning	Challenges existed with continuity of government in the virtual environment as it relates to the Board of Supervisors and Boards, Authorities, and Commissions (BACs), specifically with the operational limitations in statute. The limitations were less so on the IT side and more so on what statutorily was allowed. IT would have been capable of supporting BAC operations earlier, but the subject matter of meetings was not allowed by statute, and critical analysis was required to determine what was legally allowed.	Determine whether changes need to be made to statute to ensure necessary flexibility and ability of BACs to continue operations in virtual environments.	OCA, Clerk Services, legislative affairs	Mid (due to long approval process)	Effective and Efficient Government
2022-CoV19-P1-008	Planning	More robust planning for agency roles in donations management is needed to make the system more efficient.	Incorporate Police Department roles and lessons learned into Donations Management Annex planning and consider what other agencies may be able to play a role in donations management. Ensure documentation of process improvements made during the pandemic	DEMS, DHR (Karen Fuentes), NCS, FCPD, DPMM, Volunteer Fairfax	Short	Effective and Efficient Government

Tracking #	Core Capability	Area for Improvement	Recommendation	Responsible Organization(s)	Completion Target (Short - Mid – Long)	Strategic Plan Community Outcome Areas
			with points of contact and location management.			
2022-CoV19-P1-009	Planning	Existing pandemic planning was at a high, framework level. Each agency required actionable strategies and tactics that could be implemented in response to the COVID-19 pandemic for their own operations.	Develop a more comprehensive county pandemic plan based on COVID-19 lessons learned. Ensure countywide education and awareness of the plan and roles and responsibilities as necessary.	FCHD	Long	Effective and Efficient Government
2022-CoV19-P1-010	Planning	Staff burnout and mental health strain were significant challenges as the prolonged duration and sustained high workload of the response to the pandemic resulted in hardships on employees.	Evaluate expansion of employee assistance resources, like those utilized by public safety agencies, for critical incident stress management.	DHR	Mid	Effective and Efficient Government, Health
2022-CoV19-P2-011	Planning	Many of the challenges faced on a day-to-day basis in traditional congregate sheltering were also present with non-congregate sheltering, such as inadequate services for mental health needs.	Update sheltering operations and procedures for houseless populations as appropriate to address the need for mental health services and other wrap around services in both congregate and non-congregate settings. Ensure relationships and agreements with organizations that provide these wrap-around services are established and maintained	Department of Family Services; CSB, NCS, ESF 6 workgroup agencies	Mid	Empowerment for Residents Facing Vulnerability, Housing and Neighborhood Livability
2022-CoV19-P2-012	Planning	There was no pre-existing plan on how to distribute food with the new policies and health and safety measures.	Incorporate planning assumptions into food distribution plans and procedures to address operating in a pandemic environment and coordinate with public health on updated guidance during an emergent public health situation.	DFS, NCS, Health Department (as a cooperating agency)	Mid	Empowerment for Residents Facing Vulnerability, Housing and Neighborhood Livability

Tracking #	Core Capability	Area for Improvement	Recommendation	Responsible Organization(s)	Completion Target (Short - Mid – Long)	Strategic Plan Community Outcome Areas
2022-CoV19-P2-013	Planning	Food distribution plans did not outline solutions to deal with left-over food from distribution events.	Update planning to include options to handle left-over resources following distribution events. Establish a list of partner organizations throughout the community that have ability to take in food at short notice as well as ability to pick it up from events.	NCS, Office to End Homelessness	Mid	Empowerment for Residents Facing Vulnerability, Housing and Neighborhood Livability
2022-CoV19-P1-014	Logistics and Supply Chain Management	Tracking equipment that was moved from county facilities as people transitioned to remote work early in the response.	Revise or establish an asset management policy and technology management and tracking policy to support the new normal of hybrid telework/in-office.	DIT, DHR (for telework policy)	Mid	Effective and Efficient Government
2022-CoV19-P1-015	Logistics and Supply Chain Management	Coordination on solicitation and distribution of donations.	Incorporate coordination with the public messaging/communications functions into the Donations Management Annex. Identify a centralized coordination mechanism for all donations so that donations are equitably distributed.	DEMS, NCS, PD, DPMM, OPA, FCHD, Grants compliance team, Volunteer Fairfax	Mid	Effective and Efficient Government, Empowerment for Residents Facing Vulnerability
2022-CoV19-P1-016	Logistics and Supply Chain Management	Evaluation of funding necessary to provide the right tools to the county workforce and enable them to county agency operations and serve residents in complex work environments.	County agencies should assess and determine what devices are appropriate for organizational positions based on the possible need to continue county operations in a maximized virtual environment. For positions that are not adaptable to virtual operations, identify the technology needed to keep those job sites or field staff connected to county systems for critical communication and reporting requirements. The assessment should determine who needs laptops, who needs to transition from a desktop to a laptop, who needs headsets, etc.	Agency leaders, Agency IT, DIT, DPMM	Long	Economic Opportunity, Effective and Efficient Government

Tracking #	Core Capability	Area for Improvement	Recommendation	Responsible Organization(s)	Completion Target (Short - Mid – Long)	Strategic Plan Community Outcome Areas
2022-CoV19-P1-017	Logistics and Supply Chain Management	Coordination between the EOC Logistics Section and the Department of Purchasing and Material Management (DPMM) for inventory management and identifying resources could be further improved.	Collaborate with a cross-county, inter-agency team to define requirements for a comprehensive inventory management system and explore solutions that meet county needs. Requirements to consider relate to ordering, receiving, and distribution of inventory, as well as visibility and information sharing across systems. Procurement and implementation of the system should be a priority moving forward.	DEMS, DPMM, DIT, with inter-agency system stakeholders	Mid for requirements ; Long for procurement and implementation	Effective and Efficient Government
2022-CoV19-P2-018	Logistics and Supply Chain Management	Online opportunities for residents to apply for services are significant, but there is a gap in tenants being able to apply online for rental assistance.	Ensure equitable online resources are established and maintained to support better service delivery. <i>*Note: a tenant online portal has been developed and the landlord portal established during the pandemic will continue.</i>	NCS, Housing	On-going for monitoring program.	Housing and Neighborhood Livability
2022-CoV19-P1-019	Operational Coordination	Leadership decision-making and approval processes in emergencies can be streamlined.	Work with the County Executive and the Deputy County Executives to understand why the SPG operated differently during the pandemic as compared to other incidents. Determine what the SPG should look like and how the EOC should be engaged to support efficient and timely decision-making during an emergency. Explore what they learned in COVID-19, then adjust the EOP organizational structure and coordination processes to reflect the new dynamics.	DEMS, COOP team, CE Office	Short for executive group work; Mid for EOP update	Effective and Efficient Government
2022-CoV19-P1-020	Operational Coordination	There is need to educate the county workforce of the roles of government, private sector, non-profits, and other partners in the	Identify community partners that may have a role in donations management for the county. Conduct donations	DEMS, Volunteer Fairfax, MCS, DPMM, OPA	Mid	Effective and Efficient Government

Tracking #	Core Capability	Area for Improvement	Recommendation	Responsible Organization(s)	Completion Target (Short - Mid – Long)	Strategic Plan Community Outcome Areas
		donation management process. Coordination is needed with the county and the private sector to leverage resources and determine how they fit into emergency response.	management training with these stakeholders to update Annex.			
2022-CoV19-P1-021	Operational Coordination	Incorporating IT leadership into the organizational management structure for incident response would help ensure consistency in evaluation and understanding of the technology posture, and alignment of technology priorities with response priorities.	DIT should take the lead in planning how to operate as the centralized command agency during emergencies that require significant IT response and support. This planning should include defining communication and coordination with agency-specific IT teams to support systems recovery and/or implementation priorities. This should include connecting with Coordinating Agencies to regularly test and exercise IT disaster recovery prioritization and the DIT Disaster Recovery plans. DIT should develop an organizational framework defining centralized roles and engagement with Coordinating Agencies and the larger county emergency management system. DIT participation in exercises and IMT training would benefit the entire county.	DIT, DEMS	Long	Effective and Efficient Government
2022-CoV19-P1-022	Operational Coordination	Due to increasing food insecurity, increased coordination is needed with the food collection community. Better define a clearinghouse process for future emergency food distributions.	Fully define and codify the emergency food distribution process. Document in appropriate plans and procedures.	FCPS, NCS, DFS, OPA	Mid	Empowerment for Residents Facing Vulnerability

Tracking #	Core Capability	Area for Improvement	Recommendation	Responsible Organization(s)	Completion Target (Short - Mid – Long)	Strategic Plan Community Outcome Areas
2022-CoV19-P1-023	Operational Coordination	Volunteer management should be coordinated to promote collaboration between groups and agencies with a unified command component.	Utilize the updated Volunteer Management Annex in the EOP to educate and train stakeholders on the new structure. Identify how volunteer activities related to the emergency will be coordinated in different situations.	DEMS, Volunteer Fairfax, DHR, and Coordinating Agencies	Long	Housing and Neighborhood Livability
2022-CoV19-P1-024	Operational Coordination	Accountability was difficult for some agencies to track when using the current county policy software/application system as it assigns staff to jobs but does not tell the supervisor where they are assigned. Some staff members showed up, but some were not showing up for jobs as they were supposed to.	Assess use of technology for work assignment and/or tracking and whether it is capable of supporting the level of accountability necessary for operations.	DIT	Mid for individual apps; Long for holistic review of all applications	Effective and Efficient Government
2022-CoV19-P1-025	Operational Coordination	Hiring, recruitment, and retention are some of the most significant challenges for the county moving forward. As an example, a significant culture shift to telework that has accelerated and the county could face difficulties with hiring and retention, especially as the private sector moves ahead of the culture shifts.	Determine how the county will approach the shift in workplace culture to ensure staffing levels are not negatively impacted.	DHR	Long	Effective and Efficient Government
2022-CoV19-P2-026	Operational Coordination	The county faced challenges closing QPID hotels.	Ensure appropriate integration of case managers as early as possible when shelters are open to leverage housing plans and resources for individuals in need. Codify any shelter closure policies/procedures developed during the QPID operations to be used in similar	Department of Housing; ESF 6 agencies	Short	Housing and Neighborhood Livability

Tracking #	Core Capability	Area for Improvement	Recommendation	Responsible Organization(s)	Completion Target (Short - Mid – Long)	Strategic Plan Community Outcome Areas
			future sheltering situations where residents may be hesitant or refuse to leave the facilities.			
2022-CoV19-P2-027	Operational Coordination	There was variability in how agencies implemented health guidance. Rapidly changing guidance and details needed to implement guidance contributed to this variability.	Evaluate potential countywide frameworks for ensuring consistent application of health guidance across all departments during public health emergencies	Health Department, Senior County Leaders (for policy discussion of framework); Workforce Protection Group; HR, OPA - for employee communication effort	Mid	Health
2022-CoV19-P2-028	Operational Coordination	Coordination between local, state, and federal government rental assistance funding was a significant challenge.	Assess the existing processes for rental assistance funding implementation to identify areas for increased coordination and/or alignment with state and federal processes for more efficient delivery.	NCS, HCD	Mid	Housing and Neighborhood Livability, Effective and Efficient Government
2022-CoV19-P1-029	Infrastructure	Continue efforts to address Interoperability issues between those working in-person and those teleworking.	Identify and invest in technology advancements necessary to support hybrid approaches to county programs and services. Update policies to reflect standard approaches to technology use and communications tools approved for county agencies to ensure consistency across the enterprise.	DIT; CAO, DHR, and Finance (re: legal requirements for hard copies); Continuity Program (for IDing access issues)	Mid	Effective and Efficient Government

Tracking #	Core Capability	Area for Improvement	Recommendation	Responsible Organization(s)	Completion Target (Short - Mid – Long)	Strategic Plan Community Outcome Areas
2022-CoV19-P1-030	Infrastructure	Refine the distribution process for IT equipment to employees who will be changing working locations (on-site to telework) to avoid delays in continuity of operations.	Update IT policies to allow for devices to be sent to employees at their homes with tracking and signature required in order to reduce staff time required to pick-up/deliver devices.	DIT	Mid - for policy work	Effective and Efficient Government
2022-CoV19-P1-031	Infrastructure	Call centers experience various issues caused by the number of calls. The inability to forward calls to cell phone prevented staff from working virtually.	Assess the current phone infrastructure and updates needed and/or new systems needed to support increased phone traffic for county agencies. Long-term solutions should be identified and implemented as well as integrating other platforms like Teams.	DIT	Mid	Effective and Efficient Government
2022-CoV19-P1-032	Infrastructure	Significant challenges existed for employees that work in the field, do not have regular access to computers, or were not used to using the technology systems needed for required training.	Develop alternative methods and/or additional support mechanisms for employees without regular computer/internet access and training to complete requirements.	DHR, DEMS, Fire/Rescue	Short	Effective and Efficient Government
2022-CoV19-P1-033	Infrastructure	New federal leave categories were very complex, which made tracking the multiple Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) leave types a challenge for Human Resources.	Assess Human Resources leave management strategies to identify if changes are needed to support interpretation and implementation of new leave types during an emergency.	DHR, DMB-FBSG	Mid	Effective and Efficient Government
2022-CoV19-P1-034	Infrastructure	Before the pandemic, there was a lack of appetite for deploying new IT tools that enable widespread virtual operations. Maximized telework was not an operational posture embraced by county leadership. As virtual operations became necessary, the swift pivot to using virtual tools left a void in	Identify training gaps and develop and provide increased training opportunities on county approved IT to better prepare for potential future events.	DIT, HR, then agencies with Identified gaps.	Long; On-going as systems continue to brought online.	Effective and Efficient Government

Tracking #	Core Capability	Area for Improvement	Recommendation	Responsible Organization(s)	Completion Target (Short - Mid – Long)	Strategic Plan Community Outcome Areas
		user knowledge about how these tools work. Training on how to use new IT tools is one of the biggest hurdles that the county had to address and continues to address today.				
2022-CoV19-P1-035	Infrastructure	Some of the traditional EOC tools, such as WebEOC, dashboards, resource requesting, etc., created challenges and caused DEMS to rethink how incident management tools are used in emergency response. DEMS also identified that WebEOC was not used as well as it could have been from a planning perspective to support EOC and county operations.	Assess the current EOC tools in place in conjunction with users external to DEMS and determine whether updates and/or new tools are necessary to better support EOC processes.	DEMS and partners; Fire-Rescue, DIT, DPMM for logistics system	Mid	Effective and Efficient Government
2022-CoV19-P1-036	Infrastructure	Evaluate the process for approval of IT technologies to ensure the rapid deployment of devices.	Create an expedited procurement process to use during emergency incidents. As part of this effort, evaluate the established procurement process to identify mechanisms and processes that should be adjusted to support swift action. The process should include guidelines for when the expedited process may be used.	DIT, DPMM	Mid-Long	Effective and Efficient Government
2022-CoV19-P1-037	Operational Communications	Expand the county’s capability to communicate with all residents regardless of access to technology.	Evaluate how to provide better two-way communication with county residents. Examine results of the 311 pilot as part of this evaluation.	Assuming 3-1-1 system recommendations OPA, DPSC, DIT	Long	Empowerment for Residents Facing Vulnerability
2022-CoV19-P1-038	Operational Communications	Issues existed with communication reaching the workforce out in the field that does not have regular	Develop and provide alternative methods of communication with the purpose of reaching the entire county workforce	OPA, DHR	Mid	Effective and Efficient Government

Tracking #	Core Capability	Area for Improvement	Recommendation	Responsible Organization(s)	Completion Target (Short - Mid – Long)	Strategic Plan Community Outcome Areas
		access to email communications. Information was not always passed along efficiently by the supervisor.	given the communications and technology constraints of some field operations and frontline employees.			
2022-CoV19-P1-039	Operational Communications	Communications between Operations centers should be more efficient and coordinated.	DEMS, FCHD, and other departments designated as Coordinating Agencies in the EOP should explore modes of communication and coordination between the EOC and DOCs. DEMS and FCHD need to work together on how to be more forward looking and planning for what was coming not what has happened and to be more engaged with the EOC.	DEMS, DPH	Mid	Effective and Efficient Government
2022-CoV19-P1-040	Operational Communications	Notification of positive COVID-19 cases due to restrictions on health information that could be shared posed a challenge with identifying outbreak information. The FCHD could not disclose certain outbreak information for health privacy reasons and provided guidance about this issue.	Review FCHD guidance to agencies regarding case notifications to determine where statements regarding guidance compliance can be strengthened or added. Assess and revise templates for employee education on public health measures to include an explanation of how the FCHD is legally limited in sharing information on cases of infection, while underscoring how safety measures (e.g., masking, social distancing, handwashing, and cleaning) protect against infection.	FCHD	Short	Health
2022-CoV19-P1-041	Operational Communications	The FCHD was challenged to address questions and requests for interpretation of guidance from county agencies and the Board of Supervisors. The FCHD attempted to prioritize the requests for information in the most efficient way, but as recommendations frequently changed it was a	Evaluate FCHD agency liaison staffing expectations to determine if that role is adequately staffed. Assess position responsibilities to identify mechanisms, procedures, or tools to streamline the effort to respond to requests for assistance during a health-related emergency.	FCHD	Mid	Health

Tracking #	Core Capability	Area for Improvement	Recommendation	Responsible Organization(s)	Completion Target (Short - Mid – Long)	Strategic Plan Community Outcome Areas
		struggle to support agencies that wanted confirmation from the FCHD on what the new guidance meant for their staff and their operations.				
2022-CoV19-P1-042	Operational Communications	It was challenging to gather the operational status of county agencies to support priority setting and decision making relative to government operations.	Coordinate with the Deputy County Executives to determine what information on the status of agency operations is valuable for them to know in an emergency. With this understanding, leverage the COOP Coordinator’s group to identify a process to gather this information. Considerations could include the trigger for reporting (e.g., is there a need for a declaration of a COOP emergency to trigger information sharing), essential elements of information to be reported, mechanisms or technology tools for reporting agency status information, the timeline or deadline for reporting, and the frequency or reporting.	Continuity Program, DEMS	Short	Effective and Efficient Government
2022-CoV19-P2-043	Operational Communications	Frequent information updates on HHS services and basic needs that were disseminated to the Board of Supervisors through numerous methods did not always reach Board members in a timely fashion.	Continue ‘Friday Briefing’ with the Board Offices in future incidents; establish criteria for adjusting frequency.	NCS	Short	Effective and Efficient Government
2022-CoV19-P2-044	Operational Communications	Maintaining partnerships with business owners while managing the effects on the community (i.e., parking, noise, and hours of operation) was difficult.	Improve communication throughout the community when new policy changes occur to support business operations to mitigate concerns.	DEI, OPA, Permitting	Mid	Housing and Neighborhood Livability

Tracking #	Core Capability	Area for Improvement	Recommendation	Responsible Organization(s)	Completion Target (Short - Mid – Long)	Strategic Plan Community Outcome Areas
2022-CoV19-P2-045	Operational Communications	External communication of food distribution events could have been improved.	Establish public communications and advertising standard operating procedures for food distribution to ensure multiple methods of communication are used to reach a wider audience.	NCS, OPA, other agencies/groups with capacity to push information out through their networks.	Mid	Empowerment for Residents Facing Vulnerability
2022-CoV19-P2-046	Operational Communications	Support to clients navigating county services and assistance needs to be maintained beyond the pandemic.	Continue to support county and community-based organization's efforts to provide service navigation for basic needs through direct client service navigation, information sharing and county/community collaborative networks. If possible, maintain and expand the level of staff to assist clients with navigation of basic needs and other services such as the HD's Family Assistance Workers and Coordinated Services Planning. and NCS's Service Navigation Support Team. Keep the level of staffing for Community Health Workers who are well positioned to communicate with the community in their language/culture	Human Service agencies DCE, DFS, NCS, HD	Long	Empowerment for Residents Facing Vulnerability
2022-CoV19-P1-047	Equity	Internal and external communication about how the emergency is affecting different populations and parts of the county can be improved.	Describe who is affected and why in internal and external communications and target response efforts accordingly.	OPA, HD	Short-Mid	Empowerment for Residents Facing Vulnerability
2022-CoV19-P1-048	Equity	Equity data should be a consideration in decision making for continuity of operations, emergency preparedness,	Provide leadership and department staff equity tools and materials to reference for decision making and planning throughout the emergency to ensure that equity is	One Fairfax, All agencies for continuity, DEMS for	On-going	Empowerment for Residents Facing Vulnerability

Tracking #	Core Capability	Area for Improvement	Recommendation	Responsible Organization(s)	Completion Target (Short - Mid – Long)	Strategic Plan Community Outcome Areas
		response, and recovery across the county per the One Fairfax Policy.	considered. Make equity part of plans referenced during an emergency.	emergency planning, Continuity Program		
2022-CoV19-P1-049	Equity	Managing existing relationships with community organizations and coordinating interactions can be challenging. There were no established methods for sharing information about community organizations across agencies.	Agencies chiefly responsible for community engagement should establish mechanisms for coordinating and sharing information in order to improve coordination around community engagement.	OPA, NCS, FCHD	Short	Empowerment for Residents Facing Vulnerability, Effective and Efficient Government
2022-CoV19-P1-050	Equity	Identify approaches to close the communication and services gap created with the switch to virtual services delivery.	Define access as it relates to providing services to community residents, then determine and develop alternative communication and infrastructure approaches needed to reach a wider audience throughout Fairfax County.	Access - Cable and Consumer Literacy, Digital Access and Literacy Team	Long	Effective and Efficient Government

This page intentionally left blank.

Reference 1: Fairfax County Board of Supervisors COVID-19 Actions

Date	Action	Link
March 10, 2020	Update on Coronavirus provided to Board of Supervisors by Dr. Gloria Addo-Ayensu and Dr. Benjamin Schwartz	March 10 BOS Summary
March 17, 2020	Board of Supervisors holds emergency special meeting; Board of Supervisors adopts resolution consenting to a Local State of Emergency declaration effective March 17, 2020	March 17 BOS Summary
March 24, 2020	Board Adopts written policy governing participation by electronic communication of board members in Public Meetings	March 24 BOS Summary (Agenda Item A-1)
March 24, 2020	Board Adopts Emergency Uncodified Ordinance to Establish Methods to Assure Continuity in Fairfax County Government and Conduct of Board of Supervisors Meetings during the Novel Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) Emergency	March 24 BOS Summary (Agenda Item A-2)
March 24, 2020	Board Approves Resolutions to extend the deadline to file Personal Property Taxes (to June 1) and Real Estate Taxes (to August 28)	March 24 BOS Summary (Agenda Item A-9)
March 24, 2020	Chairman McKay announces the closure of all Fairfax County Government buildings to the public beginning March 27 at 5pm	March 24 BOS Summary (Board Matter)
March 31, 2020	Board of Supervisors approves the use of \$1.85 million in funding from the Commonwealth Transportation Funds from the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation to offset Fairfax Connector cost and lost revenue in FY 2020	March 31 Budget Committee site
April 14, 2020	Board of Supervisors delays Budget-related public hearings, originally scheduled for April 14-16, 2020, to April 28-30, 2020, due to release of <i>FY 2021 Updated Budget Proposal in Response to the Coronavirus Pandemic</i> on April 7, 2020	April 14 BOS Summary (Agenda Item 30)
April 14, 2020	Board of Supervisors approve Supplemental Appropriation Resolution AS 20214 for the Department of Family Services to accept \$396,208 in grant funding from the Virginia Community College System (VCCS) for the Virginia Rapid Response COVID-19 Business Support Initiative	April 14 BOS Summary (Agenda Item Admin 2)
April 14, 2020	Board of Supervisors establishes Fairfax County Small Business COVID-19 Recovery Microloan Fund totaling \$2,500,000	April 14 BOS Summary (Agenda Item A-6)

Date	Action	Link
April 14, 2020	Board of Supervisors adopts Emergency Uncodified Ordinance to Extend the Validity of Certain Development Approvals to Assure Continuity in Fairfax County Government during the Novel Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Emergency	April 14 BOS Summary (Agenda Item A-8)
April 14, 2020	Board of Supervisors adopts uncodified ordinance to establish methods to assure continuity in Fairfax County Government and conduct meetings of Boards, Authorities, and Commissions, and Regional Interjurisdictional Public Bodies within Fairfax County Government during the Novel Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Emergency	April 14 BOS Summary (Agenda Item A-9)
April 14, 2020	Board of Supervisors adopts uncodified ordinance to establish methods to assure continuity in Fairfax County Government and conduct of Board of Supervisors Meetings during the Novel Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) Emergency; repealed/replaced emergency ordinance adopted on March 24, 2020.	April 14 BOS Summary (Agenda Item 16)
May 12, 2020	Board of Supervisors authorizes establishment of a COVID-19 small business and non-profit relief grant program, Fairfax Relief Initiative to Support Employers (Fairfax RISE), totaling \$25,000,000	May 12 BOS Summary (Agenda Item A-4)
May 12, 2020	Board of Supervisors adopts uncodified ordinance to establish methods to assure continuity in Fairfax County Government and conduct meetings of Boards, Authorities, and Commissions, and Regional Interjurisdictional Public Bodies within Fairfax County Government during the Novel Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Emergency; repealed/replaced emergency ordinance April 14, 2020	May 12 BOS Summary (Agenda Item 10)
May 12, 2020	Board of Supervisors adopts Emergency Uncodified Ordinance to Extend the Validity of Certain Development Approvals to Assure Continuity in Fairfax County Government during the Novel Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Emergency; repealed/replaced emergency ordinance adopted on April 14, 2020	May 12 BOS Summary (Agenda Item 11)
May 28, 2020	Board Adopts Emergency Ordinance that would temporarily permit the expanded use of outdoor space for outdoor dining and for outdoor fitness and exercise activities when the County moves into Phase One of the Governor's Reopening Plan	May 28 BOS Summary (Agenda Item 3)
June 2, 2020	Board receives updates on the FY 2020-21 revenue impact of the Coronavirus Pandemic and the status of CARES stimulus funding and discusses options to reduce penalties for late tax payments	June 2 Budget Committee site

Date	Action	Link
June 2, 2020	Board discusses impact of COVID-19 pandemic on economy with the Fairfax County Economic Development Authority	June 2 Joint Meeting with Economic Development Authority site
June 9, 2020	Board approves Supplemental Appropriation Resolution AS 20243 for the Department of Family Services to accept \$2,141,122 in grant funding from Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services to address the COVID-19 Pandemic for programs administered by the Area Agency on Aging	June 9 BOS Summary (Agenda Item Admin 5)
June 16, 2020	Board receives update on Fairfax RISE program during Economic Initiatives Committee	June 16 Economic Advisory Commission site
June 23, 2020	Board requests that staff create a Housing Partnership Pledge, develop new guidelines for Emergency Rental Assistance, and explore flexibilities the county may have in its programs for emergency rental assistance	June 23 BOS Summary (Agenda Item 5)
June 23, 2020	Board Approves Supplemental Appropriation Resolution AS 20247 for the Department of Family Services to accept grant funding from Virginia Department of Social Services in the amount of \$874,520 which will be used to provide emergency food assistance	June 23 BOS Summary (Agenda Item Admin 10)
June 23, 2020	Board of Supervisors adopts ordinance reducing the late payment penalty ordinance for Real Estate and Personal Property Taxes for Tax Year 2020	June 23 BOS Summary (Agenda Item 12)
June 30, 2020	Board of Supervisors receives update from DIT on agency's response to COVID-19	June 30 Information Technology Committee site
June 30, 2020	Board of Supervisors Health and Human Services Committee receives COVID-19 Response and Planning Update from Dr. Gloria Addo-Ayensu and Dr. Benjamin Schwartz; Chief Equity Officer Karla Bruce provides update on addressing the disproportionate impacts of COVID-19 on marginalized communities in Fairfax County	June 30 Health and Human Services Committee site
July 14, 2020	Board requests that staff provide the Board with a plan and resource request to speed up the County's Coordinated Services Planning hotline, as a result of increased demand for the services	July 14 BOS Summary (Agenda Item 14)
July 14, 2020	Board requests that staff work with Fairfax County Public Schools to identify ways to meet childcare services when schools reopen	July 14 BOS Summary (Agenda Item 15)

Date	Action	Link
July 14, 2020	Board of Supervisors approves Supplemental Appropriation Resolution AS 21010 for the Fairfax County Police Department to accept grant funding from the US Department of Justice for Coronavirus Emergency Supplemental Funding (CESF) grant in the amount of \$402,297	July 14 BOS Summary (Agenda Item Admin 9)
July 14, 2020	Board of Supervisors authorizes additional \$20,000,000 to expand the Fairfax RISE (COVID-19 small business and non-profit relief) grant program	July 14 BOS Summary (Agenda Item A-3)
July 14, 2020	Board adopts uncodified ordinance to provide a method to assure continuity in Fairfax County Government during the Novel Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Emergency by temporarily approving outdoor dining and outdoor fitness and exercise activities subject to certain conditions, thereby suspending any requirement for individualized approvals of such activities; repeals the emergency uncodified ordinance on the same subject, which was adopted on May 28, 2020	July 14 BOS Summary (Agenda Item 30)
July 21, 2020	Economic Advisory Commission receives updates on Economic Recovery Programs, including Federal Paycheck Protection, Fairfax County Microloan, and Fairfax RISE programs, and an introduction to Economic Recovery Framework goals	July 21 Economic Advisory Commission
July 28, 2020	Board directs staff to work with the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging and the Fairfax Area Commission on Aging to develop a COVID-19 Response Plan for Older Adults to be brought back to the Board for discussion and approval	July 28 BOS Summary (Agenda Item 16)
July 28, 2020	Board of Supervisors approves Supplemental Appropriation Resolution AS 21013 for the Department of House and Community Development to accept a second allocation of grant funding from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development in the amount of \$6,581,782	July 28 BOS Summary (Agenda Item Admin 7)
July 28, 2020	Board of Supervisors approves Supplemental COVID-19 (CARES Act) grant funding from US Department of Health and Human Services in the amount of \$627,468 associated with the Head Start, Early Head Start, and Early Head Start Child Care Partnership and Expansion grants	July 28 BOS Summary (Agenda Item Admin 10)
September 15, 2020	Board of Supervisors allocate \$19.6 million of the County's Coronavirus Relief Funds to support FCPS	September 15 BOS Summary (Item #5)
September 15, 2020	Board of Supervisors authorizes additional \$12,000,000 to expand the Fairfax RISE (COVID-19 small business and non-profit relief) grant program	September 15 BOS Summary (Action Item 11)

Date	Action	Link
September 22, 2020	Board receives update during Legislative Committee regarding General Assembly activities and laws enacted, including pandemic response topics	September 22 Legislative Committee site
September 22, 2020	Board receives update during Health and Human Services Committee on the Health, Housing, and Human Services response and challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic	September 22 Health and Human Services Committee site
September 22, 2020	Board receives update during Budget Committee on FY 2020 Carryover and Stimulus funding	September 22 Budget Committee site
September 29, 2020	Board authorizes advertisement of a public hearing, to be held on October 20, 2020, to consider amendments to the uncodified emergency ordinance, previously approved regarding temporarily approving outdoor dining and outdoor fitness and exercise activities, to allow tents to be partially or completely closed	September 29 BOS Summary (Item #8)
October 6, 2020	Board approves comments to be sent to the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority's Proposed FY 2021 Budget Amendments and Service Reductions caused by the COVID-19 Pandemic	October 6 BOS Summary (Action Item 2)
October 6, 2020	Board adopts Uncodified Emergency Ordinance to provide a method to assure continuity in Fairfax County Government during the COVID-19 Emergency, as authorized by Virginia Code § 15.2-1413, by approving temporary County-operated hypothermia prevention shelters and authorizing a streamlined process for approving Temporary Use Modifications in response to the emergency	October 6 BOS Summary (Action Item 3)
October 13, 2020	Economic Advisory Commission and the Board receives update on Economic Recovery Framework and the preliminary findings. Board also receives update on the impacts of COVID-19 on the Fairfax County hospitality sector	October 13 Economic Advisory Commission site
October 20, 2020	Board adopts amendments to an uncodified ordinance to provide a method to assure continuity in Fairfax County Government during the Novel Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Emergency by temporarily approving outdoor dining and outdoor fitness and exercise activities subject to certain conditions, thereby suspending any requirement for individualized approvals of such activities	October 20 BOS Summary (3:30 Public Hearing Item 2)
October 27, 2020	Board receives update during Legislative Committee regarding General Assembly activities, budget amendments, and laws enacted, including pandemic response topics	October 27 Legislative Committee site

Date	Action	Link
November 10, 2020	Board receives update during Economic Initiatives Committee on Fairfax RISE Grant program. Board also receives an update on and discusses Economic Recovery Framework	November 10 Economic Initiatives Committee site
November 17, 2020	Board receives presentation by Kate Hanley, Secretary of the Electoral Board, on Election Year 2020, highlighting changes made due to the COVID-19 pandemic	November 17 BOS Summary (Item #3)
November 17, 2020	Board authorizes the Department of Neighborhood and Community Services to apply for and accept grant funding from the Virginia Department of Education Child and Adult Care Food Program and Summer Food Service Program	November 17 BOS Summary (Admin Item 4)
November 17, 2020	Board adopts Uncodified Emergency Ordinance to provide a method to assure continuity in Fairfax County Government during the COVID-19 Emergency, as authorized by Virginia Code § 15.2-1413, by approving temporary County-operated hypothermia prevention shelters and authorizing a streamlined process for approving Temporary Use Modifications in response to the emergency, and to repeal the Emergency Uncodified Ordinance on the same subject, which was adopted on October 6, 2020	November 17 BOS Summary (3:00 Public Hearing)
November 24, 2020	Board receives update during Legislative Committee regarding upcoming General Assembly and Congressional sessions and their expected pandemic response legislation	November 24 Legislative Committee site
November 24, 2020	Board receives update during Health and Human Services Committee on eviction prevention and intervention	November 24 Health and Human Services Committee site
November 24, 2020	Board of Supervisors hosts Joint Budget Policy Committee Meeting with Fairfax County School Board discussing budgetary impacts of pandemic and budget forecast for upcoming fiscal year	November 24 Joint Budget Policy Committee Meeting site
December 1, 2020	Board adopts its 2021 Legislative Program for the Virginia General Assembly and approves the County's 117 th Congress Federal Legislative Strategy and Principles, which have focuses on COVID-19 impacts	December 1 BOS Summary (Item #4 - 2:00 p.m. Adoption)
December 1, 2020	Board supports the municipal utilities applications of municipalities located within Fairfax County to the COVID-19 Municipal Utility Relief Fund Program and directs staff to continue to develop a program to administer the Program funds in accordance with state and federal law	December 1 BOS Summary (Item #7)

Date	Action	Link
December 1, 2020	Board adopts COVID-19 Response Plan for Older Adults and directs the County Executive and staff to begin implementing the short-term initiatives that address the issues of wellness, social isolation, and lack of technology access affecting older adults	December 1 BOS Summary (Item #20)
December 1, 2020	As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, Board directs staff to review the Consolidated Community Funding Pool with a specific focus on the basic needs of housing and food supports and to return to the Board with recommendations for process improvements	December 1 BOS Summary (Item #18)
December 1, 2020	Board approves Supplemental Appropriation Resolution AS 21161 for the Department of Family Services to accept grant funding in the amount of \$1,500,000 from the Virginia Community College System for the Re-Employing Virginian (REV) Educational Vouchers	December 1 BOS Summary (Admin Item 9)
December 1, 2020	Board approves Supplemental Appropriation Resolution AS 21167 for the Health Department to accept grant funding in the amount of \$500,000 from the Virginia Department of Health for the COVID-19 Mass Vaccination Campaign	December 1 BOS Summary (Admin Item 11)
December 1, 2020	Board approves Supplemental Appropriation Resolution AS 21173 for the Health Department to accept grant funding in the amount of \$230,000 from the Virginia Department of Health for COVID-19 Immunization Planning	December 1 BOS Summary (Admin Item 12)
December 1, 2020	Board approves Supplemental Appropriation Resolution AS 21174 for the Office of Elections to accept grant funding in the amount of \$1,431,950 from the Center for Tech and Civic Life in support of the November 2020 Presidential Election	December 1 BOS Summary (Admin Item 13)
December 8, 2020	Board holds joint work session with General Assembly delegation to discuss upcoming legislative session	December 8 BOS/General Assembly Legislative Work Session
January 12, 2021	Board receives briefing and discusses Mass Vaccination Registration System during Information Technology Committee meeting	January 12 Information Technology Committee site
January 12, 2021	Board of Supervisors holds Budget Policy Committee Meeting discussing budgetary impacts of pandemic, hazard pay, stimulus, and budget forecast for upcoming fiscal year	January 12 Budget Policy Committee Meeting site
January 22, 2021	Board Legislative Committee discusses General Assembly legislation under consideration, including pandemic response bills	January 22 Legislative Committee site

Date	Action	Link
January 26, 2021	Board receives General Assembly legislation update and adopts Report noting items under consideration, including pandemic response bills	January 26 BOS Summary (Item #4)
January 26, 2021	Board discusses and requests that staff come before the Board later to discuss the county's vaccination strategy	January 26 BOS Summary (Item #9)
January 26, 2021	Board directs staff to draft a letter to the County's Congressional delegation showing support for President Biden's proposed American Rescue Plan, which was proposed in response to the pandemic	January 26 BOS Summary (Item #10)
January 26, 2021	Board announces and directs staff to publicize information about extending the real estate and vehicle tax relief deadlines, in response to hardships caused by the pandemic	January 26 BOS Summary (Item #11)
January 26, 2021	Board directs staff to explore a possible disposal program and/or a public information campaign to help residents understand the importance of proper PPE disposal and to research potential innovations or recycling methods of PPE	January 26 BOS Summary (Item #12)
January 29, 2021	Board Legislative Committee discusses General Assembly legislation under consideration, including pandemic response bills	January 29 Legislative Committee site
February 2, 2021	Board Health and Human Services Committee discusses vaccine distribution	February 2 Health and Human Services Committee site
February 5, 2021	Board Legislative Committee discusses General Assembly legislation under consideration, including pandemic response bills	February 5 Legislative Committee site
February 9, 2021	Board receives General Assembly legislation update and adopts Report noting items under consideration, including pandemic response bills	February 9 BOS Summary (Item #4)
February 9, 2021	Board approves hazard pay for eligible employees deemed in a high or very high risk COVID-19 exposure position	February 9 BOS Summary (Item #9)
February 9, 2021	Board directs staff to identify funds for a potential one-time bonus for employees and further asks staff to analyze the various leave programs implemented since the start of the pandemic to determine what, if any, programs should be provided to employees who were unable to take advantage of the previous leave programs based on the requirements of their jobs during the pandemic	February 9 BOS Summary (Item #10)
February 9, 2021	As a result of the budget constraints due to the pandemic, the Board requests that a letter be written to the Governor requesting that a local match in funding for teacher pay raises/bonuses be suspended	February 9 BOS Summary (Item #11)

Date	Action	Link
February 9, 2021	Board directs the County Executive to write a memo to the Board, sharing available current quantitative and qualitative data on mental health for the youth population to help prepare the County in supporting students in this pandemic and the future return to school	February 9 BOS Summary (Item #13)
February 9, 2021	Board directs the County Executive to have staff develop and implement whatever software is needed to automatically send via text and/or email weekly updates to those on the vaccine registration list, and directs the County Executive to implement a process of communicating regular updates to those registrants with information like what is included in the weekly updates that are sent via text and/or email	February 9 BOS Summary (Item #16)
February 9, 2021	Board directs staff to work with the Economic Development Authority to develop and evaluate funding for recommendations for targeted relief and recovery grants and/or programs to support Fairfax County businesses and non-profits identified in the Framework as having been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 and the related public health mitigation measures	February 9 BOS Summary (Item #17)
February 12, 2021	Board Legislative Committee discusses General Assembly legislation under consideration, including pandemic response bills	February 12 Legislative Committee site
February 19, 2021	Board Legislative Committee discusses General Assembly legislation under consideration, including pandemic response bills and state budget	February 19 Legislative Committee site
February 23, 2021	Board receives General Assembly legislation update and adopts Report noting items under consideration, including pandemic response bills	February 23 BOS Summary (Item #3)
February 23, 2021	County Executive presents the proposed FY22 and FY23 Multi-Year Budget Plan	February 23 BOS Summary (Item #5)
February 23, 2021	Board approves AS 21263 for the Department of Neighborhood and Community Services to accept funding from the U.S. Department of the Treasury for the Emergency Rental Assistance program, in the amount of \$34,463,869. Funding will allow the County to continue providing financial assistance, including back and forward rent and utility payments, and other housing expenses	February 23 BOS Summary (Admin Item #9)
March 2, 2021	Board Health and Human Services Committee receives presentations on COVID-19 update and COVID-19 vaccine equity strategy	March 2 Health and Human Services Committee site
March 2, 2021	Board's Budget Committee meets with the School Board to discuss the FY22 Budget	March 2 Budget Committee site
March 9, 2021	Board receives General Assembly legislation update and adopts Report noting items that had passed, including pandemic response bills	March 9 BOS Summary (Item #4)

Date	Action	Link
March 9, 2021	As a result of the budget constraints due to the pandemic, the Board requests that a follow-up letter be written to the Governor requesting that a local match in funding for teacher pay raises/bonuses be suspended	March 9 BOS Summary (Item #10)
March 16, 2021	Board receives update and discusses economic framework, a proposed implementation plan, and impacted business support	March 16 Economic Initiatives Committee site
April 6, 2021	Board receives update during Budget Policy Committee on FY 2021 Third Quarter Review and Stimulus Update	April 6 Budget Policy Committee Meeting site
April 13, 2021	Board approves Supplemental Appropriation Resolution AS 21281 for the Department of Family Services to accept grant funding from the Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services in the amount of \$346,360 for supplemental nutrition programs administered as part of the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging	April 13 BOS Summary (Admin Item #10)
April 13, 2021	Board authorizes the Department of Neighborhood and Community Services to apply for an accept grant funding from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services for supplemental funding associated with Head Start/Early Head Start and Early Head Start Child Care Partnership and Expansion Grants for cost-of-living adjustment	April 13 BOS Summary (Admin Item #12)
April 13, 2021	Board approves a First Amendment to Memorandum of Understanding between the Community Business Partnership and the Board of Supervisors to administer the Fairfax County Small Business COVID-19 Recovery Microloan Program	April 13 BOS Summary (Action Item #4)
May 4, 2021	Board adopts Fiscal Year 2022 Budget Plan	May 4 BOS Summary (Agenda Item 1)
May 11, 2021	Board holds joint meeting with Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board (CSB) which included discussion on the impact of COVID-19 on services	May 11 BOS/CSB Joint Meeting site
May 11, 2021	Board holds joint meeting with the Fairfax County Economic Development Authority (FCEDA) which included discussion on the impact of COVID-19 on small and diverse businesses, unemployment rates, office vacancy rates, and the county's Economic Recovery Framework	May 11 BOS/EDA Joint Meeting site
May 18, 2021	Board approves Supplemental Appropriation Resolution AS 21302 for the Department of Family Services to accept grant funding from the Virginia Community College System for the VOIA Dislocated Worker COVID-19 Disaster Recovery Grant in the amount of \$500,000	May 18 BOS Summary (Admin Item 10)
May 18, 2021	Board directs staff to implement a plan to assist the hospitality industry in any development review and	May 18 BOS Summary (Item #4)

Date	Action	Link
	permitting that they require so they can move through the process swiftly and efficiently	
May 27, 2021	Board and School Board hold joint Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Working Group Meeting which included an update from Fairfax County Public Schools on stimulus funds	May 27 Joint BOS/School Board CIP Working Group Meeting site
June 1, 2021	Economic Advisory Commission and the Board receives a briefing from Virginia Restaurant, Lodging, and Travel Association regarding reinventing and rehiring in the hospitality industry	June 1 Economic Advisory Commission site
June 8, 2021	Board approves Supplementation Appropriation Resolution AS 21304 for the Health Department to accept grant funding from the Virginia Department of Health for COVID-19 response activities in the amount of \$3,674,745	June 8 BOS Summary (Admin Item 7)
June 8, 2021	Board authorizes the creation of PIVOT Business Recovery Grant Program in the amount of \$25,000,000	June 8 BOS Summary (Action Item 6)
June 8, 2021	Board holds Public Hearing and approves Supplementation Appropriation Resolution AS 21318 to adjust the FY 2021 Revised Budget Plan to reflect Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds received through the American Rescue Plan in the amount of \$111,447,319	June 8 BOS Summary (3:30pm Public Hearing)
June 15, 2021	Board's Information Technology Committee receives briefing on Digital Access and Literacy Workgroup and broadband service in the county	June 15 Information Technology Committee site
June 15, 2021	Board's Older Adults Committee receives briefing on COVID-19 Response Plan for Older Adults Initiatives	June 15 Older Adults Committee site
June 22, 2021	Board approves Supplemental Appropriation Resolution AS 213219 for the Health Department to accept grant funding from the Virginia Department of Health for contract tracing and laboratory testing activities related to the COVID-19 Pandemic in the amount of \$36,761,962	June 22 BOS Summary (Admin Item 3)
June 22, 2021	Board approves Supplemental Appropriation Resolution AS 21314 for the Department of Neighborhood and Community Services to accept grant funding from the US Department of the Treasury for the Emergency Rental Assistance Program in the amount of \$35,100,967	June 22 BOS Summary (Admin Item 4)
June 22, 2021	Board approves Supplemental Appropriation Resolution AS 21320 for the Health Department to accept grant funding from Virginia Department of Health for COVID-19 epidemiology contract support in the amount of \$109,497	June 22 BOS Summary (Admin Item 5)
June 22, 2021	Board directs staff to authorize a Public Hearing on July 27, 2021, to modify previously adopted uncodified	June 22 BOS Summary (Board Matters Item 6)

Date	Action	Link
	ordinances enacted because of the COVID-19 Pandemic related to the hospitality industry	
June 22, 2021	Board directs staff to prepare and disseminate information about the locations and availability of School Age Child Care (SACC) programs for the upcoming school year	June 22 BOS Summary (Board Matters Item 9)
June 29, 2021	Board receives update on stimulus funding during Budget Policy Committee	June 29 Budget Policy Committee site
June 29, 2021	Board's Health and Human Services Committee receives briefing on COVID-19 Eviction Prevention and Basic Needs Response	June 29 Health and Human Services Committee site

Reference 2: Virginia COVID-19 Related Executive Orders

The Governor of Virginia issued the Executive Orders listed below in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. These Executive Orders directly impacted Fairfax County's response and government continuity operations.

Executive Order 51

- Declaration of a State of Emergency Due to Novel Coronavirus
- Effective March 12, 2020
- Amended May 26, 2020, to extend declaration of a State of Emergency Due to Novel Coronavirus

Executive Order 52

- Extension of increases in hospital bed capacity in response to novel coronavirus
- Effective March 20, 2020
- Amended June 22, 2020, to extend increases in hospital bed capacity in response to novel coronavirus

Executive Order 53

- Temporary restrictions on restaurants, recreational, entertainment, gatherings, non-essential retail businesses, and closure of K-12 schools due to novel coronavirus
- Cessation of all official travel outside of Virginia by state employees
- Effective March 23, 2020
- Amended April 15, 2020, to include increased flexibility for inter-state commuters and essential personnel and the extend the expiration date of the order

Executive Order 55

- Temporary stay at home order due to novel coronavirus
- To reinforce the Commonwealth's response to COVID-19 and in furtherance of Executive Orders 51 (March 12, 2020) and 53 (March 23, 2020)
- Effective March 30, 2020

Executive Order 61

- Order of Public Health Emergency 3
- Phase 1 of easing certain temporary restrictions due to COVID-19, amends Executive Order 55
- Restaurants, dining establishments, food courts, breweries, microbreweries, distilleries, wineries, and tasting rooms may operate deliveries, take-out, outdoor dining, and beverage services if all guidelines can be met
- Farmers markets may open if all guidelines can be met
- Brick and mortar retail may open to 50% capacity if all guidelines can be met
- Fitness and exercise facilities may open for outdoor activities if all guidelines can be met

- Personal care and grooming services may reopen if all guidelines can be met
- Campgrounds may reopen if all guidelines can be met
- Indoor shooting ranges may open if all guidelines can be met
- Effective May 15, 2020
- Amended May 19, 2020; May 28, 2020; June 2, 2020

Executive Order 62

- Order of Public Health Emergency 4
- Jurisdictions temporarily delayed from entering phase one in Executive Order 61, and permitted to remain in phase zero
- Directive applies to the whole Northern Virginia Region
- Effective May 12, 2020
- Amended May 14, 2020, to include the City of Richmond and the County of Accomack

Executive Order 63

- Order of Public Health Emergency 5
- Requirement to wear face covering while inside buildings
- Effective May 29, 2020

Executive Order 65

- Phase two easing of certain temporary restrictions due to COVID-19, excluding the City of Richmond and the Northern Virginia Region
- Easing of business restrictions if all updated guidelines can be met
- Effective June 5, 2020
- Amended June 9, 2020, to include the City of Richmond and the Northern Virginia Region starting June 12, 2020

Executive Order 67

- Order of Public Health Emergency 7
- Phase three easing of certain temporary restrictions due to COVID-19
- Effective July 1, 2020
- Amended August 21, 2020
- Amended November 23, 2020, to match Order of Public Health Emergency 8, due to all five health regions reporting a positivity rate over 5% and an increase of hospitalizations by more than 35% in four weeks

Executive Order 68

- Order of Public Health Emergency 8
- Additional restrictions on the eastern region due to COVID-19
- No alcoholic beverage shall be sold, consumed, or possessed on premises after 10:00 p.m. in any restaurant, dining establishment, food court, brewery, microbreweries, distilleries, wineries, or tasting rooms

- Effective July 31, 2020
- Amended August 3, 2020, to include closure of all dining and congregation areas in restaurants, dining establishments, food courts, breweries, microbreweries, distilleries, wineries and tasting rooms between the hours of 12:00 a.m. and 5:00 a.m. Delivery and take-out may continue during this time.

This page intentionally left blank.

Reference 3: Federal COVID-19 Related Proclamations and Executive Orders

The President of the United States issued the following Proclamations and Executive Orders to facilitate the national response to the pandemic.

COVID-19 National Emergency Proclamation

- President Trump constitutes the COVID-19 outbreak in the United States constitutes a national emergency
- Effective March 1, 2020
- Proclamation grants emergency authority to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to temporarily waive or modify certain requirements of the Medicare, Medicaid, and State Children's Health Insurance programs throughout the duration of the public health emergency

Executive Order 13909

- Prioritizing and allocating health and medical resources to respond to the spread of COVID-19
- Allocation of materials, services and facilities deemed necessary or appropriate to promote national defense is delegated to the Secretary of Health and Human Services may identify additional specific health and medical resources that meet the criteria of personal protective equipment and ventilators
- Effective March 18, 2020

Executive Order 13910

- President Trump delegated to the Secretary of Health and Human Services authority to prevent hoarding of health and medical resources necessary to respond to the spread of COVID-19 within the United States
- Effective March 23, 2020

This page intentionally left blank.