

# EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND SECURITY CALENDAR YEAR 2024 EQUITY IMPACT PLAN



**Leadership Sponsor: Seamus Mooney, Coordinator**

**Equity Lead(s): Sulayman Brown, Deputy Coordinator; Moriah Kitaeff, Access and Functional Needs Planning Specialist**

**Departmental Equity Guiding Statement:** The Department works to protect the lives, environment, and property of Fairfax County residents from emergencies and disasters by leading and coordinating the county's emergency preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery efforts.

**Context:** Fairfax County Department of Emergency Management and Security has seen that not all communities within Fairfax County are equally prepared for natural or man-made disasters. Hurricane Katrina is a perfect example of the type of emergency management response that Fairfax County needs to learn from, as a what not to do. During Hurricane Katrina, response was largely insufficient, resulting in unnecessary deaths and danger – particularly for those who were unable to evacuate due to financial restrictions. It is the mission of this department to ensure that the lack of organization that took place during Hurricane Katrina never has the chance to happen within Fairfax County. The Federal Emergency Management Agency, or FEMA, is working hard in the 2022-2026 Strategic Plan to expand its approach to agency readiness and national preparedness by instilling equity as a foundation of emergency management. By instilling equity as a foundation of emergency management and striving to meet the unique needs of underserved communities, the emergency management community can work to break this cycle and build a more resilient nation.

It is important that all county residents are prepared, regardless of the language they speak, financial status, or other variables that could make it more of a challenge to receive emergency information or resources. Fairfax County residents with less financial security are affected more than others during natural disasters, or other kinds of emergencies, as they are not always able to evacuate or prepare to the level of someone who has more financial security. The County is aware of this disparity, and states in the 2023 Revised Fairfax Countywide Strategic Plan that work is being done to better understand the dynamics of opportunity and vulnerability within the county. The better the understanding, the better work that can be done to progressively address the barriers residents are facing. DEMS uses the data source provided by the Fairfax County Department of Management and Budget, that powered by the U.S. Census Bureau, goes in depth into not only things such as poverty rates throughout Fairfax County, but also allows for interactive mapping of the parts of the County to ensure that DEMS resources are used in the most efficient manner. This includes educating parts of Fairfax County that has a higher rate of being uninsured, on the importance insurance, and how insurance can save money for individuals and families in the long run.

The Department also sees the importance of security staff sensitivity when residents come into the building and interact with staff and wants to proactively ensure that all residents are welcomed and safe walking into county facilities. Contracted security staff are often one of the first faces to be seen when one walks into a county building, and because of that, it is

important that all contracted security working with Fairfax County work to ensure that no matter which government building they are in, they work to ensure a welcoming and safe environment for all who come through the doors. Security staff sensitivity helps in avoiding biases and stereotypes. An equitable approach ensures that individuals are not unfairly targeted based on their race, gender, religion, or any other characteristic.

**System-Level Infrastructure:**

- Better understanding of Community Based Organization (CBO) resources as well as inter-departmental resources

Increased relationship with partner government agencies that actively work with CBOs, allowing these partners to be SME in the guidance of CBO information/inventory.

To ensure that it is clear on the importance of CBOs being a first line of support when it comes to emergency situations. A better knowledge of each organization's capabilities and usual supply inventories would allow for a more accurate planning process. A more accurate planning process can in turn ensure that all people within Fairfax County are being accurately cared for and supported in an equitable manner.

- Will work with other departments to help improve in these areas
  - Department of Family Services
  - Department of Human Resources
  - Fairfax County Health Department
  - Neighborhood and Community Services
- To better carry preparedness message across the county.

Every individual, no matter their financial capability, can increase emergency preparedness in one way or another. The agencies listed below can help facilitate the message throughout the County. At this time, this mission is barred due to the lack of affordable and easily accessible translation and interpretation services available for community engagement events. It is difficult for the Department of Emergency Management and Security to reach certain islands of inequity within Fairfax County without the ability to effectively communicate with the community that is struggling. DEMS would appreciate assistance with surpassing this language barrier.

- Department of Public Works and Environmental Services
- Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department
- Fairfax County Police Department
- Office of Public Affairs

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## DEPARTMENT GOALS

**Goal 1:** Increase emergency preparedness levels throughout Fairfax County.

**One Fairfax Area(s) of Focus:** 6. Community and public safety that includes services such as fire, emergency medical services, police, health, emergency management and code enforcement that are responsive to all residents so that everyone feels safe to live, work, learn, and play in any neighborhood of Fairfax County.

**Countywide Strategic Plan Community Outcome Area(s):** Empowerment and Support for Residents Facing Vulnerability (ESRFV)

**Relationship to Countywide Strategic Plan Strategies/Metric(s):**

Strategy ESRFV 1. Develop targeted marketing and outreach strategies, in coordination with community-based partners, to proactively engage residents facing vulnerabilities.

Actions	Stakeholders	Resources/ Supports	Responsible Parties	Timeline	Performance Measures
1a. Comparing of preparedness survey data of 2022 versus 2023	Community Engagement Committee, NCS, DFS, OPA, FCPD, FRD	Preparedness survey yearly data, staff, time.	Community Engagement Manager, Access and Functional Needs Planning Specialist	1/2024-12/2024	Data compared year to year by place and population

**Goal 2:** Continue to learn and improve from past emergency management events.

**One Fairfax Area(s) of Focus:** 6. Community and public safety that includes services such as fire, emergency medical services, police, health, emergency management and code enforcement that are responsive to all residents so that everyone feels safe to live, work, learn, and play in any neighborhood of Fairfax County.

**Countywide Strategic Plan Community Outcome Area(s):** Efficient and Effective Government (EEG)

**Relationship to Countywide Strategic Plan Strategies/Metric(s):**

Strategy EEG. 6: Expand capacity to meaningfully engage the community in places that are accessible and in ways that consider needs, traditions, and values of diverse ethnic, racial, and cultural groups

Actions	Stakeholders	Resources/ Supports	Responsible Parties	Timeline	Performance Measures
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**2a.** Partner with county agencies using the emergency notification system for the sheltering of unhoused residents in extreme weather events.

All Fairfax County agencies that have access to the emergency notification system

Internal technical staff

Assistant Coordinator of Technical Services

1/2024 – 12/2024

Better partnership with the Fairfax County Office to Prevent and End Homelessness to have better utilization of the notification system for messaging to the unhoused population, and participating agencies in regard to heating and cooling operations.

## Goal 3: Increase security staff sensitivity.

**One Fairfax Area(s) of Focus:** 17. Policies that prohibit all forms of discrimination under Federal and State law in county and school system activities, and ensure that all practices provide fair treatment for all employees, contractors, clients, community partners, residents, and other sectors who interact with Fairfax County including higher education, business, nonprofit, faith, philanthropy, and civic.

**Countywide Strategic Plan Community Outcome Area(s):** Safety and Security (SS)

**Relationship to Countywide Strategic Plan Strategies/Metric(s):**

Strategy SS 8. Develop and implement risk-reduction programs to prevent or mitigate the loss of life, property and resources associated with emergencies and other disasters within the community

Actions	Stakeholders	Resources/ Supports	Responsible Parties	Timeline	Performance Measures
<b>3a.</b> Increase opportunities for equity and sensitivity training for contract security staff	DEMS	DEMS security division and training and exercise division	Director of Security, County Security Manager	1/24-12/24	More equity training within Thursday morning trainings, and will ensure equity training is in yearly Thursday training for county staff as well as contracted security, to better support racial and social

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equity/vulnerable  
communities.

Department Director's Signature: 