



Beth Arthur  
Sheriff

## ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

### OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF

#### COURTHOUSE

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#### DETENTION FACILITY

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April 7, 2015

The Honorable Mary Hynes, Chair  
Arlington County Board  
2100 Clarendon Boulevard, Suite 300  
Arlington, Virginia 22201

Dear Ms. Hynes,

When the “new” Arlington County Detention Facility (ACDF) was being planned over 20 years ago, the decision was made to build a direct supervision model jail which was considered cutting edge at the time. Direct supervision combines two key elements—the physical design of a jail and an inmate management strategy—to significantly reduce the problem inmate behavior commonly seen in jails. As a direct supervision jail, the focus is on actively managing inmate behavior to produce a jail that is safe and secure for inmates, staff, visitors, and the community. When the direct supervision model was adopted, it was understood that a greater number of staff are required to operate the detention center in a safe and secure manner as well as providing a wide variety of programs in the Program Centers and work opportunities to ensure inmates time is spent productively. The Citizen Advisory Committee and Sheriff strongly supported this concept and the County Board endorsed building a Direct Supervision jail.

Deputies interact continuously with inmates in the housing units, actively supervising them to identify problems in their early stages. They use basic management techniques to prevent negative behavior and encourage positive behavior. Deputies assume control of the jail and establish a professional supervisory relationship with inmates. There are no barriers separating staff and inmates in the housing units.

In FY2012, budget concerns led the Sheriff’s Office to establish “phased lockdowns” in the ACDF. Phased lockdowns occur when staffing falls below minimum levels which can be a result of vacation, sick, training leave, FMLA, short term light duty requirements and emergency details. There are three different levels of lockdowns:

- Phase 1- occurs when staffing falls 25 percent below required minimum staffing during the day and 18.5 percent below minimum staffing at night. Phase 1 results

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in the program centers being shutdown, some inmate programs are cancelled and the visiting post deputy is reassigned to help in other sections of the facility.

- Phase 2 - occurs when staffing falls 28 percent below required minimum staffing during the day and 22.3 percent below minimum staffing at night. The additional impacts of Phase 2 are the cancellation of video arraignment and inmate programs.
- Phase 3 - occurs when staffing falls 31 percent below required minimum staffing during the day and 26 percent below minimum staffing at night. The additional impacts of Phase 3 are the cancellation of inmate visiting and inmate movement in the ACDF is limited to staff only.

Any level of Phased lockdowns erodes the basic concepts of direct supervision and creates a less safe and secure facility. Overtime is used to get staffing levels up to minimum levels. The phased lockdowns were intended to be temporary but we are now in year 4 and are seeing the negative effects on staff morale.

Starting this past fall, a staffing study, funded by the Arlington County Board was conducted by Rod Miller, a consultant with the National Institute of Corrections (NIC). Mr. Miller met with a divergent group of staff and a representative with DMF over 4 months to gather and analyze the workloads, security requirements and staffing levels in the Sheriff's Office. He used the nationally recognized Net Annual Work Hours (NAWH) model to determine the amount of staff needed for all the sections in the Sheriff's Office. NAWH represents the number of hours staff are actually available to work, based on the contracted number of hours per year (i.e. 40 hours per workweek x 52 weeks = 2,080 hours) minus the average number of hours off for each individual. As the attached Executive Summary indicates, the ACDF and the Courthouse are understaffed by a total of 31 Deputy positions (20 in the ACDF and 11 in the Courthouse) and 10 Sergeant positions for a total of 41 positions.

The County Manager has recommend \$450,000 be allocated to the Sheriff's Office for new positions in FY2016 (this equates to 5 Deputy Sheriff's). While this will have a minimal effect in relieving the number of lockdowns in the jail and provide some relief in the Courthouse, it must be stated that it will not have a large impact on the overtime costs.

The hiring process is very labor intensive and time consuming. Once an applicant passes the entry test, it takes 6 – 9 months to complete a background investigation. After being hired, a Deputy Sheriff must attend a 6 month law enforcement academy and complete 12 weeks of Field Training. As a result, it can be a full year from the date of hire until a deputy is working independently. The Sheriff's Office, over the next 3-5 years, has a number of staff either in or eligible for the DROP program as well as staff leaving for other opportunities which will continue to put us further behind.

At the moment, we are maintaining a full complement of staff, but the anticipated turnover will result in 10 -15 deputies attending the academy every 6 months. While the new hires are attending the academy it puts pressure on staffing in the Detention Facility and Courthouse, which is filled by overtime. Once the 5 additional positions are hired

and complete the academy and field training, they will be assigned proportionally to either the Detention Facility or the Courthouse, depending on where the greater need is at the time.

As a result, the 5 additional positions will have an impact on our staffing levels, but it will take at least one year to see that impact. Funding 5 additional Deputy Sheriff's positions is a good first step to help ensure the Sheriff's Office is no longer operating in any phased lockdowns. But, how do we proceed in ensuring additional deputy positions are added each fiscal year to get us up to an adequate number of staff? What is the plan for the future?

c: J. Walter Tejada, Vice Chair  
Jay Fisette, Member  
Libby Garvey, Member  
John Vihstadt, Member  
Barbara Donnellan, County Manager

### Arlington County Detention Facility

ACDF is seriously understaffed. Chronic shortages cause deployment to consistently fall below needed levels, as defined by the current staffing plan. Inadequate staffing has caused managers to develop "minimum" staffing levels that barely provide for safety and security, and which require many basic programs and services to be curtailed. Staffing resources are so low that it has been difficult to sustain even the minimum requirements.

The current ACDF relieved staffing plan requires 253,192 deputy hours annually (143.00 FTE). The minimum staffing levels reduce requirements to 232,140 hours (131.03 FTE). When staffing levels fall lower than minimums, emergency lockdowns and callbacks for overtime are authorized. (223,380 hours, 126.2 FTE). *Actual deployment* in 2014 was 217,853 hours (123.04 FTE). These calculations are summarized in Figure A below.

Figure A: 2014 Relieved ACDF Coverage Hours and FTEs

2014 Relieved Deputy Hours and FTEs	Annual Dep. Hours	FTEs
Staff Needed	253,192	143.00
Available Staffing	232,140	131.11
Emergency Lockdown Authorized	223,380	126.22
Actual Deployment	217,853	

Actual deployment fell 35,339 hours below the requirements of the current staffing plan (-13.96%, -20.00 FTE rounded). Figure B illustrates annual hours.

Figure B: 2014 Relieved ACDF Coverage Hours and FTEs



One of the primary causes of this shortfall is found in the Net Annual Work Hours (NAWH) and Shift Relief Factor (SRF) calculations that were used in recent years. The 2014 staffing plan assumed that each ACDF Deputy would deliver 1,889.17 scheduled hours on post per year. The consultant's NAWH calculations produced 1,770.57 annual hours—**118.6 hours less per deputy per year**. Put another way, ACDF Deputies delivered 6.7% less regular hours than predicted.

Current staffing practices pose serious risks of harm to staff, inmates, and the public. ACDF is operating on borrowed time- employees have worked hard to manage the risk, but there is only so much they can do. Worse, current inadequate deployment levels require excess overtime because the number of full time deputies on the roster is too low. Overtime levels exacerbate the risk.

Simply put, the supply of deputies must be increased to deliver sufficient regular work hours to consistently meet minimum requirements, and to eventually achieve and sustain deployment levels that are called for in the staffing plan.

### **Courthouse**

The design of the Arlington County Courthouse frustrates effective and efficient security. As a result, there are no efforts to secure the building outside of court operating hours. This worsens safety and security deficiencies.

The facility effectively separates court operations from the public, but this makes it more difficult to supervise inmates and to provide security in public areas. Court policies increase risks. Attorneys are allowed to meet with inmate clients in courthouse lockups before, during, and after court. Changing this practice would require commitments from judges, the Defense Bar Association, the Commonwealth Attorney's Office, and the Sheriff's Office.

There are no relieved security posts in the facility; the budget does not allow deputies to be replaced when they do not report for a scheduled shift. Current court and courthouse security practices and staffing are inadequate and create serious risks of harm for all parties. Court Security does not have sufficient staffing to patrol the public access areas while the Courthouse is open for business. This is another safety and security weakness that needs to be addressed.

The proposed staffing plan would provide relief for deputies and sergeants, providing a consistent workforce. A security post is added, providing supervision for public areas for 12 hours every weekday, and two deputy posts are added to provide effective supervision of inmates in the courthouse lockups.

The budget impact of the proposed changes are summarized in Figure C.

Figure C: Budget Impact of Proposed Changes- Courthouse

1. Convert to relieved Court Security deputies	5.7 deputies
2. Convert to relieved Court Security sergeants	0.6 sergeants
3. Add deputy post to patrol public areas, 12 hours/day	2.0 deputies
4. Add two deputies to supervise lockups, 8 hours/day	2.6 deputies
<b>Total (rounded)</b>	<b>11 Positions</b>

### **Summary**

**Increasing safety and security in the Arlington County Detention Facility and the Courthouse requires an additional 31.0 deputy positions. An additional 10 sergeant positions are also needed to improve staff supervision. Adding these positions to the budget will increase the security of both operations and will reduce deputy overtime.**