

**ARLINGTON COUNTY FISCAL AFFAIRS ADVISORY COMMISSION  
REPORT TO THE COUNTY BOARD**

**FY2017 PROPOSED BUDGET**

BUDGET AREA:	<b>Department of Human Services (DHS)</b>
FAAC REVIEWERS:	<b>Michael Shea, Tenley Peterson, Kevin Yam</b>
DATE OF FAAC ACTION:	<b>March 15, 2016</b>

**FAAC Opinion**

FAAC commends DHS for continued work on improving its performance measurement plan, as evidenced by the numerous reports being updated annually and posted online. These reports could serve as a model for other departments.

Recent accomplishments to also be commended are the higher reimbursement rates for behavioral health services (an additional \$800K), the diversion of individuals to the Crisis Intervention Center *in lieu* of arrest, and the key role played by DHS in reducing homelessness, particularly among veterans. With respect to the Crisis Intervention Center, DHS measures show that in both FY14 and FY15 about 100 individuals were diverted in this way at reduced costs to the County.

Providing affordable housing remains an important goal for Arlington County and the support programs operated by DHS play a key role in progress towards that objective. Given the data and lessons learned from the Housing Study completed in 2015, it is important that the County Board weigh carefully the balance of base budget and one-time funding for Housing Grants, and act strategically to put housing support on a sustainable and effective path going forward.

<b>FAAC Recommendation #1</b>			
The FAAC recommends that the County Board adopt the Manager’s Proposed Budget for FY 2017 for the Department of Human Services.			
Vote:	Yes: 9	No: 0	Abstain: 0
Comment:			

<b>FAAC Recommendation #2</b>			
The FAAC recommends that the County Board direct the County Manager to work with DHS to continue to expand the number of Police Department officers with Crisis Intervention Training.			
Vote:	Yes: 9	No: 0	Abstain: 0

## FAAC Recommendation #2

Comment:	During a FAAC interview with the Sheriff's Department, staff noted that diverting those with mental health issues away from the jail, when appropriate, can be better for those in crisis as well as for the County's budget. DHS staff reiterated this point. Crisis Intervention Training requires a week of a uniformed officer's time. About 50-60 percent of the police force has received the training.
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### Future Considerations

FAAC remains interested in monitoring the budgetary and programmatic impact of the ongoing initiative to privatize the Volunteer Arlington program.

FAAC encourages DHS to continue to work closely with the Department of Technology Services so that the new EHR records system, to be acquired with CIP funding, is efficient, flexible, and compatible with systems elsewhere in the County government, and all State/Federal systems and requirements.