

# LIBRARY

## DESCRIPTION

The Henrico County Public Library (HCPL) provides informational, educational, and reading resources to residents of all ages. Library services include professional information staff who expertly answer customer questions, a comprehensive and timely materials collection, programming for children, teens, and adults, computer classes and digital media creation, book discussion groups, resources for job seeking assistance, and more. The library provides mobile library services to daycare centers and retirement communities and participates in community outreach events. HCPL is known for its high standard of customer service, responsive collection, and attractive and well-equipped facilities.

The library offers in-person and online services through 681 public workstations, loanable laptops and wireless hotspots, and other devices embedded in libraries across the county. The library provides Internet access, web-based Library Catalog searching, Microsoft Office software, digital media creation tools, and electronic information resources. Wifi is available at all public library locations. The Library catalog, ebook downloads, and research databases are available to access online, any time, from anywhere. HCPL is a resource for every resident, supporting and adapting to ever-evolving community needs.

## OBJECTIVES

- To provide customers with a positive library experience that meets their needs and expectations and that enriches community life.
- All libraries will be welcoming and engaging places that provide accessibility and an array of spaces to meet the community’s growing needs.
- Residents will be offered a responsive, relevant, and diverse collection that is available in a timely manner.
- Libraries will offer services and programs that reach out to Henrico County’s changing population in ways that respond to diverse community needs.

## FISCAL YEAR 2025 SUMMARY

Annual Fiscal Plan				
Description	FY23 Actual	FY24 Original	FY25 Approved	Change 24 to 25
Personnel	\$ 16,349,564	\$ 19,052,770	\$ 20,112,745	5.6%
Operation	4,282,171	4,616,911	4,769,211	3.3%
Capital	326,717	200,000	207,700	3.9%
Total	<u>\$ 20,958,452</u>	<u>\$ 23,869,681</u>	<u>\$ 25,089,656</u>	<u>5.1%</u>
Personnel Complement	228	227	227	0

## PERFORMANCE MEASURES

	FY23	FY24	FY25	Change 24 to 25
<b>Workload Measures</b>				
Digital/E Circulation	1,110,462	1,143,776	1,189,527	45,751
Library Cards Issued	19,676	20,660	21,899	1,239
Meeting Room Attendance	174,414	200,576	230,663	30,087
Physical/Print Circulation	2,436,383	2,558,202	2,686,112	127,910
Program Participation	120,839	126,881	134,494	7,613
Public Computer Sessions	170,333	180,553	193,192	12,639
Questions Answered	417,977	422,157	426,378	4,221
Total Circulation	3,546,845	3,724,187	3,910,397	186,210
Visits	1,338,271	1,378,419	1,433,556	55,137
Website Visits	3,706,895	3,743,964	3,781,404	37,440
WiFi Connections	2,718,681	2,990,549	3,349,415	358,866

## BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

The Department's budget for FY25 totals \$25,089,656 representing an increase of \$1,219,975, or 5.1 % from the previously approved budget. The personnel component has increased by \$1,059,975 to reflect an increase in employee salaries and benefits. The operating component of the budget has increased by \$152,300 to address the increased costs in maintenance and repairs, printing and binding, electric services, refuse services, telecommunication, and education and training. Capital Outlay has increased by \$7,700 for the costs of furniture replacement.

## DEPARTMENTAL HIGHLIGHTS

HCPL service to the public continues to grow and with strong support from the County and a dedicated community of readers, library staff have been able to provide innovative, inclusive, and attentive programming. HCPL service is receiving national recognition. The library is a valued and essential resource to Henrico residents and adds to their quality of life. HCPL is deepening its engagement with the community and building on its solid foundation of excellence.

## STAFF AND FACILITIES

### North Park Branch Library Children's Area Refresh

The children's area of the North Park Branch Library was refreshed in October 2023 with new paint, colorful carpet, bright shelving, toys, and two computer work and play stations. The well-received project was accomplished with library maintenance funds and was managed in-house by library staff.

### Fairfield Library Solar Installation

Fairfield Area Library has become HCPL'S second solar project, in addition to Libbie Mill Library, with panels installed, modules completed on Fairfield's roof in October, and interconnection taking place in December. HCPL continues to prioritize sustainability.

## **Work and Play Stations at All Libraries**

Thanks to the generosity of Meta and the Friends of Henrico County Public Library, all library locations will have Computer Work and Play Stations in 2024. The popular computer stations for caregivers and small children went viral after being custom produced as part of the design of the new Fairfield Library.

## **Staff Development, Leadership Training, and Career Development Plan**

Staff Development Days this year focused on “Wellness: Refresh, Recharge, Renew”. County staff and community partners provided presentations and interactive exercises on employee wellness and healthcare benefits, the environment and native plants as pathways to wellness, and guided meditation, among other topics.

Twenty-one library staff are participating in the Leadership Henrico program; nine are participating in the County’s Emerging Leaders program (ELCP) and three employees graduated from ELCP this year, all having cultivated wider skillsets and networks that will benefit their careers and the library system. Several are expected to complete their Career Development Plan, being cross trained in multiple public service areas to increase the strength of the library’s workforce. County training and conferences for staff increased this year. Library Conference scholarships were also awarded to seven staff with the support of the Friends of the Henrico Library.

## **Achievement Awards**

HCPL was awarded 5 Stars from Library Journal, the highest possible rating, in the 2022 Star Libraries Index. One of just 11 libraries nationally of its size to receive 5 stars, HCPL was the only library system in the state to receive the highest rating. The library received an honorable mention for the Jerry Kline Community Impact prize, an award that recognizes libraries for exceptional community engagement, strong cooperation with local government, promotion of social cohesion, and institutional resilience. In April, HCPL received the Innovation in Government award from Virginia Commonwealth University’s L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs as part of their 16th Excellence in Virginia Government Awards. The Innovation in Government Award recognizes the recipient’s innovative work that has resulted in increased efficiency, effectiveness, or other improvements that affect how a government entity supports and delivers services to its constituents. HCPL was recognized for its innovative, first-of-its-kind “Work and Play Stations”.

HCPL received three NACo (National Association of Counties) awards for service to youth in the past year. These awards were for Open Book with Meg Medina, a book discussion program for tweens in partnership with the Newbery Award-winning author; Teen Role Playing Games at the library, in which teen patrons can participate in interactive and literacy-boosting games like Dungeons and Dragons with librarians and their peers; and for Anime Club at Highland Springs High School, a library outreach partnership program with Henrico County Public Schools. This was led by Fairfield Area Library staff that has engaged an average of 90 student attendees per session.

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## **PROGRAMS AND SERVICES**

### **Literacy, Youth, and Family Programs**

Helping to prepare young children for school is a core role of HCPL. During the past year, libraries hosted 2,034 storytimes to a total audience of 50,096. In addition, 922 individuals participated in the 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten reading challenge and 45 children completed the monumental goal of reading 1,000 books.

The 2023 Summer Reading Challenge ran from June 15 to August 15 and engaged over 4,100 patrons, along with a total attendance of 28,206 at library programs. The Summer Reading theme was All Together Now, which was used to boost meaningful engagement through interactive displays and activities.

One feature of the Summer program this year was an annual system-wide teen event called Fandomonium. This day-long event was arranged and presented by teen services library staff and volunteers at the Fairfield Area Library on Saturday, June 24<sup>th</sup>. It drew in 595 attendees of all ages who enjoyed exploring their favorite fandoms and learning about ongoing pop culture library programs like Dungeons and Dragons gaming and anime clubs.

Teens are encouraged to read books through the 100 Books Before Graduation program. Since this initiative launched in late 2022, a total of 681 teens have participated and 30 have logged their 100 books, reaching their goal.

### **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

HCPL continues to prioritize Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, understanding that being an inclusive and accessible resource is fundamental to the success of public library service. Over the past year, staff have held programs and created book displays celebrating diverse identities during commemorative months. The library partnered with the Asian American Society of Central Virginia to promote All Henrico Reads and to host a moving panel discussion, “Portraits of Immigrant Voices”, to discuss the varied experiences of panelists who immigrated to Central Virginia from different countries across Asia. The event had over 30 attendees and offered sometimes painful, sometimes uplifting, and always powerful experiences to contextualize the Asian experience in Henrico. The Library’s Equitability Task Force continues to produce ideas for making the library more inclusive in its policies and services. The IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access) committee is prioritizing accessibility in its work this year, working to enhance the library experience for disabled and neurodiverse patrons.

### **Adult Programming**

Inspired by Richmond-area murals, local artist Hamilton Glass worked with community members at the Tuckahoe, Libbie Mill, and Varina libraries, creating a series of three multi-panel acrylic paintings. Each piece reflects one aspect of the mission of Henrico County Public Library – to promote reading and lifelong learning, connect people with the information they need, and enrich community life.

A wide variety of author visits helped drive enthusiastic readers to Henrico libraries. From bestselling author Jamie Ford headlining All Henrico Reads, to the 35 local authors who participated in the Henrico Community Authors Showcase program, all made special connections with the community. Additional author events included Robert O’Connell (*Team America: Patton, MacArthur, Marshall, Eisenhower, and the World They Forged*), Dr. Ryan K. Smith (*Death and Rebirth in a Southern City: Richmond’s Historic Cemeteries*), and Rachel Beanland (*The House Is on Fire*). In total, over 1,500 people attended author events in 2023.

This year in August, HCPL launched the “Blast from the Past” Book Club with Henrico Recreation and Parks, where a group discussed engaging historical fiction and nonfiction books on-site at six Henrico historic sites with expert staff. The Summer also featured a special quilting program series for adults including collaborative art installations at several locations, a documentary screening, quilting craft programs, presentations from area quilters, and a lecture on Virginia Quilt Trails.

In partnership with Keep Henrico Beautiful, the library welcomed over 100 individuals to seven community workshops that covered topics like attracting birds to backyards, vermicomposting, and the Capital Trees effort to make Henrico a greener place to live. The Land Lovers series is a favorite among both seasoned home landscapers and those just discovering their green thumbs.

## **All Henrico Reads**

The 2023 author event was held at J.R. Tucker High School on March 30, 2023 with internationally bestselling author Jamie Ford, presenting his new novel, *The Many Daughters of Afong Moy*, which has been optioned for a TV series, debuted on the NYT Bestseller list, and was selected as a Today Show Read With Jenna pick.

All Henrico Reads 2024, in long-standing partnership with Henrico County Public Schools and the Friends of Henrico County Public Library, took place in March at the new Henrico Sports and Events Center and featured bestselling author and producer Cheryl Strayed, who discussed her 2012 memoir *Wild*, a years-long bestseller and the inaugural pick for Oprah's Book Club 2.0 that was adapted into an Academy Award-nominated film. Strayed is also the author of *Tiny Beautiful Things*, adapted into a popular streaming series on Hulu for which Strayed served as producer.

## **Voting**

Six of HCPL's nine physical locations are actively involved in supporting voting in the county. Fairfield, Gayton, North Park, and Libbie Mill Libraries serve as voting precincts. Tuckahoe and Varina both have drop-off ballot boxes available to the public. Varina Library serves as an early voting office site, one of three in the county.

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## **OUTREACH**

### **Outdoor and Community Events**

The library's Outreach Division continues to expand participation in county events and in connecting with the community beyond library buildings. In FY 23, there were 75 events and 11,222 interactions. A new Youth Services Outreach Librarian position in FY23 has further bolstered outreach for children. HCPL participated in Henrico Day at Virginia Union University and Virginia State University by sharing information about HCPL and career opportunities. HCPL Outreach strongly supported Henrico County Public Schools with regular visits at the Oak and also with Family Engagement visits. HCPL created a library display space in the new Regency Adult Education for HCPS' CTE. Library Outreach was a key player in a new initiative along with the Henrico Police Division and Recreation and Parks, "Henrico United," in reaching youth with fun activities. Outreach was present at Dorey Park Farmer's Market, Juneteenth, Pridefest, Sandston Parade, and many other events this year increasing visibility and encouraging families and the public to enjoy and utilize HCPL.

### **Mobile Library Service**

Via HCPL's Sprinter van outreach vehicle, library staff provided service to 29 stops, with 25 in Senior Center lobbies and four deposit collections. Aspire West End was added as a new stop in October 2022 and Milestone Health was added as a deposit collection in November 2022.