

PUBLIC RELATIONS

DESCRIPTION

The Public Relations Department directs the County's public communications efforts and increases awareness and understanding of Henrico County Government activities for the County's residents, businesses, news media, and others. Working with County agencies and officials, the Department creates and implements print, video, and graphic communications targeted to a variety of audiences. Activities include news releases, media advisories, news conferences, photography, graphic design, Henrico County Television (HCTV), media relations, news tracking, agency consultation, website news maintenance, audiovisual presentation services, streaming Board of Supervisors meetings, event planning, and managing social media including the county's official Instagram, X, Facebook, Nextdoor, and YouTube channel.

OBJECTIVES

- To tell the story of Henrico County through social media, print, and video productions.
- To provide County agencies with effective support and technical assistance in crisis consultation, media relations, and promotion of their programs and services.
- To establish and maintain contacts with news media representatives to ensure accurate coverage of County activities.
- To create crisis and emergency communication plans.
- To enhance the visibility of Henrico County as a desirable place to live, work, and enjoy leisure hours.
- To disseminate information to County residents through print publications, feature video productions, HCTV message boards, social media, the news media, the County website, and other available platforms.

ANNUAL FISCAL PLAN SUMMARY

Description	FY24 Actual	FY25 Original	FY26 Approved	Change 25-26
Personnel	\$ 2,160,435	\$ 2,119,872	\$ 2,890,362	36.3%
Operation	311,097	345,477	354,097	2.5%
Capital	1,700	-	300	0.0%
Sub -Total	\$ 2,473,232	\$ 2,465,349	\$ 3,244,759	
Interdepartmental Billings*	0	(59,602)	(63,406)	6.4%
Total	\$ 2,473,232	\$ 2,405,747	\$ 3,181,353	32.2%

Personnel Complement 20 18 ** 24 *** 6

*Reflects a 2/3 reimbursement for one position (1/3 Public Works; 1/3 Public Utilities) assigned to Public Relations which is reflected in the Public Relations Personnel Complement

**Two Public Relations Specialists moved to the Department of Outreach and Engagement for FY25

***Two Public Relations Specialists and a Senior Public Relations Specialist moved from Police while a Media Manager was moved from Fire. Also a Television Producer/Director and a Senior Public Relations Specialist were added.

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PERFORMANCE MEASURES

	FY24	FY25	FY26	Change 25-26
Workload Measures				
Facebook Posts	500	562	500	(62)
Instagram Posts	405	460	500	40
Videos Produced	186	312	300	(12)
Media Contacts Made	7,708	10,087	12,000	1,913
News Releases	103	112	120	8
Photos Taken/Distributed	4,738	7,042	8,000	958
All Social Media Followers	46,524	50,592	55,000	4,408

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

The department's budget for FY26 is \$3,181,353. This is a \$775,606, or 32.2% increase from the last fiscal year. This increase was driven mostly by the personnel component and is a result of three positions being moved from Police to Media Services, one position being moved from Fire to Media Services, one new Television Producer/Director position, 1 new Senior Public Relations Specialist position, and increasing salary and related benefits costs. Operation funding of \$8,620 was moved from the police budget alongside with the three positions. Capital also was moved from police in the total of \$300. No Operating or Capital budget was moved from Fire. FY25 saw the funding for two Public Relations Specialists moved from Public Relations to the newly created Department of Outreach and Engagement.

The department is separated into two divisions: Public Relations and Media Services.

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The Public Relations component of the budget for this fiscal year is \$1,322,199 and reflects a decrease of \$79,596 or 5.7% compared to the previous fiscal year. The decrease is because of the movement of 1 Assistant Director position to Media Services.

The employees in the Public Relations office focus on media relations and public awareness of County policies, programs, and services via coverage in print and broadcast news media, and through various publications such as news releases, departmental brochures, and other print materials. Public Relations is also responsible for social media, including the County's official X, Facebook, Instagram, and Nextdoor accounts, photography, graphic design, HCTV message board bulletins, and event planning.

MEDIA SERVICES

The Media Services component of the budget for this fiscal year is \$1,859,154, reflecting an increase of \$855,202, or 85.2% from the previous fiscal year. Part of this increase was the position of Assistant Director being moved from Public Relations to Media Services. Four positions previously in Public Safety agencies were incorporated into Media Services budget. Two Public Relations Specialists and a Senior Public Relations Specialist were transferred from Police while a Media Manager was transferred from Fire. Media Services also saw a Television Producer/Director position

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and a Senior Public Relations Specialist added to its personnel complement. Also, some of the personnel increase can be attributed to increasing salaries and benefits. Operating increased by \$8,620 which was acquired from the police budget to cover the new positions. Capital also increased by \$300

The employees in the Media Services office serve as video production and media support staff, telling the story of Henrico County through feature and documentary programming and video news releases. Media Services offers other County agencies assistance with promotion of their programs and services through video productions. The office maintains and develops content for the Henrico County Government channel on YouTube.com, provides streaming video coverage of Board of Supervisors meetings, provides live streaming coverage of press conferences and other select county events, and is also responsible for producing programs and operating HCTV.

For this fiscal year, the Public Relations Department will continue providing the same quality and level of service. The department will continue to assist agencies with media and public information needs, will be available to disseminate information during crisis situations, will write and produce various publications, will live-stream every Board of Supervisors meeting, will assist with special projects, and will produce new, original programming for HCTV and the Henrico County Government YouTube channel.

DEPARTMENTAL HIGHLIGHTS

Public Relations recently acquired four employees from the divisions of Police and Fire creating a new branch of PR, Public Safety Media Relations. Through this new division, PR is responsible for all current communications initiatives existing in Police and Fire. The long-term goal of this effort is to manage public safety communications for Police, Fire, Sheriff's Office, 911 and Emergency Management.

Public Relations is also adding a new Board of Supervisors liaison position. The goal of this position is to assist supervisors with district-specific communications, creating more direct access for supervisors to reach their constituents. For example, the liaison will manage the planning and execution of district town hall meetings; support the preparation of remarks and talking points; and facilitate other communications and constituent-relations efforts, as needed by supervisors.