



Fiscal Affairs Advisory Commission
Report to the County Board

FY 2022 Proposed Budget Board Report

Budget Area:	Department of Human Services (DHS)
FAAC Reviewers:	Gillian Burgess, Brian Marroquin, Alex Cumana
Date of FAAC Action:	March 11, 2021

FAAC Opinion:

The Commission greatly appreciates the work of DHS to lead Arlington County’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic. While DHS had to shift its service delivery over the last year, the Department continued to deliver services to the neediest in Arlington throughout the challenging circumstances. DHS continued some in-person services and were front-line workers in the pandemic. DHS led direct public health response, including testing, tracing and vaccine distribution, as well as the social safety net services, such as eviction prevention and managing the COVID hotline. The Department continued to develop ways to deliver services and adjust as it evaluated the new service methods.

Related to this, FAAC recognizes the Department’s efforts to address food insecurity in Arlington, including hiring a Food Security Coordinator, which is proposed to be made a permanent position.

FAAC also recognizes the extensive work DHS has been doing on racial equity for last 3 years, including the Racial Equity Advancement Partners (REAP) program and more data disaggregation to determine who benefits from DHS services and who does not. FAAC Recommendation #1			
The FAAC recommends that the County Board adopt the Manager’s Proposed Budget for FY 2022 for the Department of Human Services.			
Vote	Yes: 9	No: 1	Abstain:
Comments	Opponent because too much of an expansion in COVID year; even though they do a fabulous job.		

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Future Considerations:

- FAAC encourages DHS to include and prioritize equity in its pandemic response and particularly to improve equity in vaccine distribution, taking into account available data, such as the social vulnerability index from the Census.
- FAAC encourages DHS to continue its efforts towards more equitable service delivery and communication.
- FAAC encourages DHS to implement the recommendations from the Police Practices Group related to the prevention of mental health crises.
- FAAC encourages DHS to coordinate with APS to evaluate outcomes for in-school services, including whether the current model of having both nurses and aids, and the provision of behavioral health and social work services provides quality service in a cost-effective manner.
- FAAC encourages DHS to incorporate equity into its performance measures and evaluate performance measures in terms of community need and not only measures of workload.