

Emergency Preparedness Advisory Commission (EPAC) Charter

Introduction. The Arlington Emergency Preparedness Advisory Commission (Arlington EPAC or “EPAC”) is created as an advisory body by the County Board of Arlington County, Virginia. It will act as the overarching emergency preparedness advisory group to coordinate the efforts of a Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC), as well as Emergency Medical Services and the Citizen Corp Council. The Commission is created in recognition that preparedness efforts must be collaborative and, when confronted with a crisis, the community must respond as a system in order to ensure the greatest service to those in need.

Mission. The EPAC will provide policy advice to the County Board on Arlington’s emergency preparedness and ability to respond. To ensure that Arlington is a safe, well-prepared and resilient place to live, work, and visit, EPAC will be a community forum focused on coordinating and integrating the efforts of Arlington’s schools, civic, commercial, service communities, as well as other government agencies located in Arlington with County, state and federal emergency preparedness organizations.

Functions and Scope. The EPAC shall carry out the following functions:

1. Recommend to the County Board measures to integrate community groups, businesses and individual citizen activities with government emergency planning activities.
2. Review and advise the County Board on Arlington County emergency preparedness planning.
3. Coordinate the functions of a Local Emergency Planning Committee in compliance with SARA Title III, the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act of 1986.
4. Participate, as appropriate, with the Planning Commission’s Site Plan Review Committees and Long Range Planning Committee. Provide policy recommendations as may be appropriate to guide emergency preparedness and safety issues in the overall consideration of long range plans and site plans.
5. Review and advise the County Board on budget planning related to emergency preparedness and response.
6. Provide a periodic forum for community input to local emergency planning, mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery activities.

Staffing. The County Manager shall designate staffing for the EPAC and its constituent committees.

Membership. The EPAC shall be comprised of twelve Commission members who shall be appointed for three-year terms by the County Board to serve at the pleasure of the County Board :

- 7 members - appointed by County Board (including liaisons to other advisory commissions and committees as appropriate)
- 1 member – representing the Arlington Chapter, American Red Cross
- 1 member – representing the Civic Federation
- 1 member – representing the Chamber of Commerce or Arlington NVBIA/NAIOP
- 1 member – representing the Arlington School Board
- 1 member – representing Virginia Hospital Center – Arlington

In addition, local, state or federal organizations with an interest in Arlington emergency preparedness may, upon request, receive notice of meetings and designate a liaison (non-voting) to EPAC.

Responsibilities. Members are expected to perform their duties and responsibilities relating to Arlington's identification of preparedness needs and planning for response to a wide array of emergencies that the County could face. The EPAC shall keep the County and community leadership apprised of issues and actions regarding the preparedness and resilience of Arlington to potential natural and man-made disasters. The Commission will self-monitor its activities and progress in fulfilling this mission.

Chair and Committees. A Chair shall be designated by the County Board. The group will choose the Vice Chair. The EPAC may create committees, as necessary, to accomplish specific Commission missions and the Chairman shall appoint committee leadership. Committee membership may include persons who are not on the Commission.

Meetings. The EPAC will meet at least quarterly. All meetings will be conducted in accordance with applicable laws, including FOIA. All meetings shall be open to the public, minutes will be taken and all minutes will be available for public review.

Reporting. The EPAC will provide recommendations to the County Board about preparedness goals. The EPAC will submit annual reports to the County Board about County preparedness.