

How the County Communicates to Its Residents

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OLO Report 2023-3

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OLO Report 2023-3

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

February 28, 2023

As part of the Customer Service Initiative, this Office of Legislative Oversight (OLO) report responds to the Council's request to complete an inventory of Montgomery County Government departments' outgoing communications, including traditional and social media. This report reviews County-wide outgoing communication trends; summarizes departments' communication methods and strategies; and reviews the overall communications policies for three local jurisdictions.

County Communication

The County Government uses both traditional and social media-based communication strategies. For this communication inventory, OLO grouped departments based on their level of interaction with the public:

- **High Interaction** – departments that communicate with all County constituents on a continuing basis. Includes Police, Health and Human Services, and Libraries.
- **Specialized Interaction** – departments that communicate with specific, targeted groups on a regular basis. Includes Procurement, Human Resources, and Finance.
- **Limited Interaction** – departments that rarely communicate directly with constituents. Includes County Attorney, General Services, and Merit System Protection Board.

TEBS and PIO

Two departments, Technology and Enterprise Business Systems (TEBS) and the Public Information Office (PIO) provide communication support and services to all other County departments. For example, TEBS supports GovDelivery, the County email subscription service and provides production and content management on County's cable channel. The PIO helps create and distribute press releases, posts items on social media, and assists with advertising buys on multiple media platforms.

Departments' Communication Structure and Staff

County departments are responsible for their own communication efforts (with assistance from TEBS and the PIO). OLO found that County departments accomplish their communications responsibilities using dedicated staff, contracted staff, and/or staff who also have other non-communications duties. The table below shows that of the 51 departments studied, 18 departments have dedicated staff (59 positions and \$8.0 million budgeted). Departments are grouped by their level of interaction with the public.

Type of Staff	High	Specialized	Limited
Contract & Other Duties		(1) AGR	
Dedicated	(5) ABS, CC, DHCA, MCFRS, PIO	(3) PRO, SAO, OHR	
Dedicated & Contract	(3) DEP, DOT, POL		
Dedicated, Contract, & Other Duties	(2) HHS, REC		
Dedicated & Other Duties	(5) BOE, Consumer Protection, CUPF, OCP (Main), Permitting		
Other Duties	(11) ANM, CEX, MCPL, OCP (Gilchrist), OCP (Volunteer), RS (BCC), RS (Eastern), RS (Mid-County), RS (SS), RS (Upcounty), SHF	(4) COR, FIN, Human Rights, OEMHS	(17) BOA, Circuit Court, CFW, DGS, EC, MCERP, MSPB, OCA, OGM, OIG, OIR, OLO, OLR, OMB, ORESJ, OZAH, TEBS

Communication Methods

The following tables summarize the methods used by all County departments to communicate with the public. Overall, most departments in the three interaction groups utilized publications to disseminate information, with the high interaction departments using numerous methods. For social media, most departments with high levels of interaction with the public have numerous social media accounts while those departments with limited interaction do not.

Traditional Media Use

High (26)	% of Depts.	Specialized (8)	% of Depts.	Limited (17)	% of Depts.
Publication	88.5%	Handout	87.5%	Publication	88.2%
Handout	84.6%	Publication	75.0%	Handout	47.1%
Calendar	84.6%	Press Release	62.5%	Calendar	47.1%
Newsletter	88.5%	Calendar	50.0%	Newsletter	23.5%
Subscription	88.5%	Subscription	37.5%	Press Release	23.5%
Press Release	69.2%	Newsletter	25.0%	Subscription	5.9%
TV	26.9%	TV	12.5%	TV	5.9%
Blog	26.9%	Blog	0.0%	Blog	5.9%
Podcast	11.5%	Podcast	0.0%	Podcast	5.9%

Social Media Use

High (26)	% of Depts.	Specialized (8)	% of Depts.	Limited (17)	% of Depts.
Facebook	92.30%	Facebook	75.00%	Facebook	17.60%
Twitter	80.80%	Twitter	75.00%	Twitter	17.60%
YouTube	65.40%	YouTube	75.00%	YouTube	17.60%
Instagram	65.40%	Instagram	37.50%	Instagram	11.80%
Nextdoor	50.00%	LinkedIn	37.50%	LinkedIn	11.80%
Flickr	26.90%	Nextdoor	25.00%	Nextdoor	5.90%
LinkedIn	15.40%	Flickr	0.00%	TikTok	5.90%
TikTok	11.50%	Pinterest	0.00%	Flickr	0.00%
Pinterest	7.70%	TikTok	0.00%	Pinterest	0.00%

Outgoing Communication Themes

- Several high interaction departments with multiple audiences have multiple social media accounts. Some departments post department-specific communications on the County Government's main social media accounts because those accounts have a significant number of followers.
- Departments use different communications mediums to target different populations. In general, departments reported that they utilized Facebook to communicate to older residents, Instagram to communicate to younger residents, and Twitter to quickly get information out.
- Some populations still prefer traditional media/handouts and do not rely solely on social media communications.
- Many departments distribute key communications to community group networks – through nonprofits, faith-based organizations, and neighborhood groups.

OLO interviewed local jurisdictions about their communication policies. Howard and Frederick Counties, operate in a similar way to Montgomery County. Fairfax County, however, has a more centralized approach – while each department is responsible for its own communication, all social media accounts must be approved and are monitored by the Office of Public Affairs.

For a complete copy of OLO-Report 2023-3, go to:
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/OLO/Reports/CurrentOLOReports.html>

Introduction

Government communication can be defined as “all the activities of public sector institutions and organizations that are aimed at conveying and sharing information.”¹ Creating a strong identity and message through communication allows government to provide the public with adequate information on priorities, policies, and programs and can also contribute the public’s trust of the government. Today, governments have more tools than ever to communicate to residents including print, television, online media, and social media.

In 2021, the Montgomery County Executive formed the Customer Service Initiative (CSI) to “ensure that every person who interacts with Montgomery County Government has a positive experience.”² It has three goals:

- 1) Establishing a County customer service governance structure to enhance and coordinate a unified resident customer service experience;
- 2) Positioning resident experiences as a mechanism to prioritize initiative workplans; and
- 3) Implementing cohesive and equitable customer service solutions through process improvement, technology, and measuring performance.³

As part of the CSI, the County aimed to inventory all incoming and outgoing communication methods for all County Government departments. Executive staff was tasked with completing an inventory of all incoming communication sources and OLO was tasked with completing an inventory of all outgoing communications.

Therefore, for this report, OLO completed an inventory and summarized how each County department communicates with constituents, including both traditional and social media. The Council also asked OLO to conduct research on the communication policies and strategies of local jurisdictions. The report is organized as follows:

- **Chapter 1 – County-wide Outgoing Communication Trends:** summarizes the communication methods used across County Government departments, including traditional and social media;
- **Chapter 2 – Department Summaries:** provides a one-page summary of each department’s communication methods, strategies, and links to their social media sites; and
- **Chapter 3 – Communications in Local Jurisdictions:** reviews the overall communication policies for three local jurisdictions: Fairfax County (VA); Frederick County (MD); and Howard County (MD).

Methodology. Office of Legislative Oversight (OLO) staff members Blaise DeFazio and Kristen Latham conducted this study, with assistance from Karen Pecoraro and Leslie Rubin. To prepare this report, OLO gathered information through online research, document reviews, data analysis, and interviews with staff from all County departments and several local jurisdictions.

OLO received a great level of cooperation from everyone involved in this study. OLO appreciates the information shared and the insights provided by all who participated. In particular, OLO thanks the following Executive and Legislative Branch staff:

¹ https://dictionnaire.enap.ca/dictionnaire/docs/definitions/definitions_anglais/government_communication.pdf

² [FY23 Operating Budget Packet for Office of the County Executive](#), by Costis Toregas, May 13, 2022, page 5.

³ Guide to the Customer Service Initiative, November 2021.

Agriculture

Jacqueline Arnold

Alcohol Beverage Services

Jocelyn Rawat

Melissa Romeo

Animal Services

Maria Anselmo

Board of Appeals

Jessica Ainsworth

Shaila Kelkar

Barbara Jay

Board of Elections

Gilberto Zelaya

Circuit Court

Kara Hawkins

James Sheridan

Commission for Women

Jodi Finkelstein

Community Engagement Cluster

Merlie Deynes

Carmen Kaarid

Yvette Torres

Community Partnerships (Gilchrist)

Julien Labiche

Community Partnerships (Main)

Shawn Ellis

Diane Vu

Community Partnerships (Volunteer)

Faith McNeill

Community Use of Public Facilities

Evelin Chavez

Dan Deteau

Ron Maxson

William Polman

Consumer Protection

Eric Friedman

Maurice Valentine

Patricia Vitale

Correction and Rehabilitation

Kaye Beckley

Janet Quarcoo

County Attorney

John Markovs

County Council

Sky Brandt

Carolyn Chen

Sonya Healy

Costis Toregas

Emergency Management & Homeland Security

Chuck Crisostomo

Kristina Laboy

Employee Retirement Plans

Kevin Killeavy

Environmental Protection

Cindy Marie Pena

Ethics Commission

Erin Chu

Finance

James Babb

Michael Coveyou

Dennis Hetman

Fire & Rescue Service

Beth Anne Nesselt

Peter Piringer

General Services

Angela Dizelos

Michael Yambrach

Grants Management

Rafael Murphy

Health and Human Services

Mary Anderson

Shawn Brennan

Housing and Community Affairs

Lorraine Driscoll

Human Resources

Melanie Mason

Human Rights

James Stowe

Inspector General

Francisco De Rosa

Intergovernmental Relations

Melanie Wenger

Labor Relations

Jennifer Harling

Management and Budget

Crystal Brockington Sallee

Sarah Dickinson

David Gottesman

Natasha Wilkerson

Corey Orlosky

Merit System Protection Board

Janice Curtis

Permitting Services

Marilena Bajan

Sonya Burke

Juliana DeSouza

Linda Kobylski

Ehsan Motazed

Police

Shiera Goff

Jordan Satinsky

Procurement

Grace Denno

Bethany Manimbo

Public Information

Neil Greenberger

Barry Hudson

Public Libraries

Jaime Flores

Maddie Hines

Regina Holyfied-Jewett

Racial Equity and Social Justice

Tiffany Ward

Carmen Berrios Martinez

Recreation

Regional Service Office (Bethesda-Chevy Chase)

Thomas Dant

Peter Fosselman

Regional Service Office (Eastern)

Jewru Bandeh

Regional Service Office (Mid-County)

Luisa Cardona

Regional Service Office (Silver Spring)

Jacob Newman

Regional Service Office (Upcounty)

Gregory Wims

Sheriff

James Johnson

State's Attorney

Lauren DeMarco

Technology and Enterprise Business Solutions

Varun Chudiwale

Christopher Daniel

Mitsuko Herrera

Derrick Kenny

Victoria Lewis

Danielle Melton

Marjorie Williams

Transportation

Emily DeTitta

Zoning & Administrative Hearings

Lynn Robeson Hannan

Other Jurisdictions

Alexandra Bressani, Howard County (MD)

Jeremy Lasich, Fairfax County (VA)

Vivian Laxton, Frederick County (MD)

Chapter 1. County-wide Outgoing Communication Trends

The Council asked the Office of Legislative Oversight (OLO) to inventory the multiple ways County departments/offices are communicating with constituents, which includes social media and traditional communications such as newsletters, press releases, and email subscriptions. To fulfill this task, OLO researched department/office websites, their respective social media accounts, and interviewed department staff who handle communications. This chapter presents department-wide outgoing communications trends.

This chapter is organized as follows:

- **Section A**, Data Collection and Analysis Methodology;
- **Section B**, County Communications Facilitators: Public Information Office (PIO) and the Department of Technology and Enterprise Business Solutions (TEBS); and
- **Section C**, County-Wide Outgoing Communications Trends.

A. Data Collection and Analysis Methodology

To get a better understanding of the outgoing communications for County departments/offices, OLO began by researching the websites for each County-funded department and office listed on the County's "[Departments and Agencies](#)" page. OLO included any department or office that was listed as an independent entity. For example, although the Commission for Women is part of the Community Engagement Cluster department, it is listed separately, and it was treated as its own independent entity for this report.¹ For simplification purposes, departments or offices will be referred to as "departments" throughout the report.

In the fall of 2022 OLO partnered with the County Executive's Customer Service Initiative (CSI) team to collect data from departments via Excel spreadsheets. As part of the CSI, Executive Branch staff aimed to collect data on department's incoming communication (communication received from residents) while OLO was tasked with collecting data on outgoing communication (communication to residents). In response, OLO and Executive staff combined data collection efforts. Data were collected through the departments' completion of an Excel sheet "survey" that asked departments to summarize communication channel types, links, whether the communication was outgoing or incoming, number of followers/subscribers, future communications plans, and staff responsible for communications.

Finally, OLO performed over 75 interviews with the departments and offices to further understand their outgoing communications plans, staff setup, and future plans, among other items.

¹ The Community Engagement Cluster department was not identified as an independent entity because its offices function separately, as seen on its website, which solely contains links to its separate offices.

B. County Communications Facilitators: Public Information Office and the Department of Technology and Enterprise Business Solutions

When OLO interviewed departments, it became apparent that both the Public Information Office (PIO) and the Department of Technology and Enterprise Business Solutions (TEBS) facilitate outgoing communications for other departments. This section describes how the two departments support other County departments' outgoing communications.

Public Information Office. The PIO's mission is to provide timely, accurate, and effective communication with the public through: mass media; social media; internet; presentations; publications and graphics; cable television programming; and telephone and electronic requests for information and assistance.² The PIO is structured with three areas: public relations (press releases and social media); production (photography, video content, graphic design, electronic signboards, cable, and social media); and the MC311 call center (responding to service requests and social media). *Note: because this project focuses on outgoing communication, MC311 was not included because its core purpose is responding to incoming communication.*

Excluding the MC311 call center, the PIO has the following 18 dedicated communications positions:

Public Relations (includes Director's Office)

Director of Public Information
Management Leadership Service (MLS) Manager II (3)
Program Manager
Public Information Officers (6)
Senior Executive Administrative Aide
Visual Information Specialists (3)

Web Content and Graphic Management

Information Technology Specialist
Visual Information Specialists (2)

Source: FY23 Approved Personnel Complement

Within the current staff³, one Public Information Officer focuses on speeches, press releases, statements, and social media, while another focuses on Latinx media, outreach, and translation of press releases and graphics. One MLS Manager II focuses on outreach to the media and general communications about County efforts. The other active MLS Manager II edits press releases and announcements and is the editor-in-chief of the weekly County newsletter.

² [FY23 Approved Operating Budget](#).

³ There are currently multiple vacancies in the PIO, including four Public Information Officers and one MLS Manager II.

The PIO provides the following services to departments: creating and distributing press releases; creating and posting items on social media – especially when departments are using the central Montgomery County Government accounts; handling and coordinating media requests; assisting with advertising buys on television, radio, and other media; and producing videos. However, departments have complete control when creating and posting on their own social media accounts (they do not have complete control if they use the central Montgomery County Government accounts).

The PIO serves all County departments with communication needs but focuses more on smaller departments who do not have dedicated communications staff. Larger departments such as Fire and Rescue Services, Police, and Recreation have their own dedicated public information officers, issue their own press releases, and mostly operate independently from the PIO. However, larger departments, like Health and Human Services, only have one active dedicated communication position and PIO assists with needed services. When there are cross-departmental issues, the PIO will coordinate communications. The PIO also conducts bi-weekly meetings with communications staff in all departments including dedicated communications staff, contractors, and staff who work on communications in addition to other job duties.

Department of Technology and Enterprise Business Solutions. TEBS enables and enhances departments' communications mainly through two programs:

Office of Digital Transformation

- ***County Websites*** – redesigns websites for departments; creates shortcuts or redirects to external websites; conducts accessibility audits; creates content for smaller departments; maintains the social media directory list (with input from departments); supports GovDelivery, the County email subscription service; supports online calendars; supports “upcoming events” on calendars, allows people to sign up; provides Google search for websites; supports the Info-center, a tool to manages press releases, speeches, testimony, media advisors, and alert information.
- ***dataMontgomery*** – administers [posting of 350 department data sets](#) from every Executive department, along with a few legislative departments; staff will work with departments on an annual publishing plan, determining which data should be public and the best way to provide it to residents.
- ***Geographic Information Systems (GIS)*** – creates custom maps for departments; creates and maintains GIS databases; performs geo-spatial analysis; and creates and maintains GIS data layers.

Office of Broadband Programs

- ***Montgomery Connects*** – distributes laptops to low-income communities and partners with community organizations who send texts and emails to their clients about computer and broadband subsidy programs. TEBS plans to use email addresses of computer recipients to make them aware of available digital skills trainings and similar opportunities.
- ***Community Engagement*** – provides the bridge through which government information meets with various communications amplification/distribution technologies. This includes cable television technical management, remote/onsite live streaming, website creation/content management, social media outreach, video production, podcast production/distribution, and other, often innovative, approaches to supporting government information efforts.
- ***Broadband, Cable, and Franchise*** – through [ultraMontgomery](#), implements MoCoNet, the County's residential broadband network at affordable housing developments, and implements public Wi-Fi (with 10 outdoor locations and plans to expand to another 30).

Also, since the COVID-19 pandemic began in 2020, TEBS has been instrumental in helping departments distribute information out to residents. TEBS manages and supports the County COVID portal, which includes emails and Short Message Service (SMS).

Due to TEBS' role facilitating County departments' communications, it is an outlier among administrative departments (departments that service other County departments) with a high number of social media accounts. TEBS has 16 social media accounts: seven on Facebook, two on Instagram, five on Twitter, and two on YouTube.

Spotlight: County Customer Service Initiative

PIO, TEBS, and the Office of Community Partnerships are key members of the County Executive's current Customer Service Initiative (CSI), which focuses on how residents request services from departments (incoming communication) and how the County responds to provide the best customer experience. According to the County Executive's Office, CSI was "formed to ensure that every person who interacts with Montgomery County Government has a positive experience,"⁴ The three goals of CSI are: 1) establishing a County customer service governance structure to enhance and coordinate a unified resident customer service experience; 2) positioning resident experiences as a mechanism to prioritize initiative workplans; and 3) implementing cohesive and equitable customer service solutions through process improvement, technology, and measuring performance.⁵ Effective correspondence to residents is essential to provide the best customer experience for residents to ensure they get what they ask for and are satisfied with the interaction.

CSI is led by the Deputy Chief Administrative Officer (Initiative Sponsor) and the dataMontgomery Project Manager (Initiative Coordinator). An Oversight Committee governs CSI and includes members from the County Executive's Office, the Office of Management and Budget, TEBS, the Office of Community Partnerships, and rotating departments. The initiative also has three committees performing the work – Process Improvement and Planning, Data Analysis and Reporting, and Technology.⁶

C. County-wide Outgoing Communications Trends

This section examines differences and patterns in communication channels between departments including social media, traditional media, and communications staffing. For analytical purposes, OLO divided the departments into three groups based on their outgoing communication levels: high interaction, specialized interaction, and limited interaction:

- **High Interaction** – departments that communicate with constituents across the County on a constant basis. These departments are mostly operational departments or departments that provide direct service to residents. An example would be the Department of Police.
- **Specialized Interaction** – departments that communicate with specific, targeted groups on a regular basis. An example is the Office of Human Resources, which is primarily an administrative department serving other County departments but has a significant amount of communication with County job applicants.
- **Limited Interaction** – departments that rarely communicate directly with constituents. These are mainly administrative departments that serve other County departments. An example would be the Office of the County Attorney.

⁴ [FY23 Operating Budget Packet for Office of the County Executive](#), by Costis Toregas, May 13, 2022, page 5.

⁵ Guide to the Customer Service Initiative, November 2021.

⁶ Ibid.

Table 1. Departments Categorized by Outgoing Communication Interaction Levels

High	Alcohol Beverage Services	Montgomery County Fire & Rescue Services
	Animal Services and Adoption Center	Montgomery County Public Libraries
	Board of Elections	Office of Community Partnerships (Gilchrist)
	Community Use of Public Facilities	Office of Community Partnerships (Main)
	County Council	Office of Community Partnerships (Volunteer)
	County Executive's Office	Office of Consumer Protection
	Department of Environmental Protection	Public Information Office
	Department of Health and Human Services	Regional Service Office (Bethesda Chevy-Chase)
	Department of Permitting Services	Regional Service Office (Eastern)
	Department of Police	Regional Service Office (Mid-County)
	Department of Recreation	Regional Service Office (Silver Spring)
	Department of Transportation	Regional Service Office (Upcounty)
	Department of Housing and Community Affairs	Sheriff's Office
Special -ized	Agriculture	Human Resources
	Correction and Rehabilitation	Human Rights
	Emergency Mgmt. & Homeland Security	Procurement
	Finance	State's Attorney
Limited	Board of Appeals	Intergovernmental Relations
	Circuit Court	Labor Relations
	Commission for Women	Legislative Oversight
	County Attorney	Management and Budget
	Employee Retirement Plans	Merit System Protection Board
	Ethics Commission	Racial Equity and Social Justice
	General Services	Technology and Enterprise Business Solutions
	Grants Management	Zoning and Administrative Hearings
	Inspector General	

Traditional Communication Channels. The next chart shows how departments utilize traditional communication channels (non-social media communication channels).⁷ Out of the 51 departments, 44 distribute publications, 37 develop handouts, 34 post updated calendars, 29 supply newsletters, 27 create press releases (larger departments on their own; smaller ones or multi-department initiatives are through PIO), and 27 departments utilize email subscription services, such as GovDelivery. Less than 10 departments use blogs, podcasts, or television for communication.

⁷ Department websites were not included in the chart because every department has one.

Table 2. Traditional Communication Channel Use, by Department

Level	Department	Publi- cation	Handout	Calendar	News- letter	Press Release	Subscrip- tion	TV	Blog	Podcast
High	Alcohol Beverage Services	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
	Animal Services	X	X							
	Board of Elections	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
	Community Partner. (Gilchrist)	X	X	X	X		X			
	Community Partner. (Main)	X	X	X	X		X			
	Community Partner. (Volunteer)	X	X	X	X		X			
	Community Use of Public Facilities	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	
	Consumer Protection	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
	County Council	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
	County Executive			X	X	X		X	X	
	Environmental Protection	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	
	Fire & Rescue Service	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	
	Health & Human Services	X	X	X	X	X	X			
	Housing and Community Affairs	X	X	X	X	X	X			
	Permitting Services	X	X	X	X	X	X			X
	Police	X	X	X		X	X			
	Public Information			X	X	X	X	X	X	
	Public Libraries	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	
	Recreation	X	X	X	X	X	X			
	Regional Svc. Office (BCC)	X	X	X	X	X	X			
	Regional Svc. Office (Eastern)	X		X	X		X			
	Regional Svc. Office (Mid-County)	X	X	X	X		X			
	Regional Svc. Office (Silver Spring)	X	X	X	X	X	X			
	Regional Svc. Office (Upcounty)	X			X		X			
	Sheriff		X							
	Transportation	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	

County-wide Outgoing Communications Trends

Table 2. Traditional Communication Channel Use, by Department (Continued)

Level	Department	Publication	Handout	Calendar	News-letter	Press Release	Subscription	TV	Blog	Podcast
Specialized	Agriculture	X	X	X						
	Correction and Rehabilitation		X							
	Emer. Mgmt. and Hland. Sec.	X	X			X	X	X		
	Finance	X	X			X				
	Human Resources	X	X			X				
	Human Rights	X	X	X						
	Procurement	X	X	X	X	X	X			
	State's Attorney				X	X	X			
Limited	Board of Appeals	X	X	X						
	Circuit Court	X	X	X						
	Commission for Women	X	X	X	X					
	County Attorney	X								
	Employee Retirement Plans	X	X	X	X					
	Ethics Commission	X	X	X						
	General Services	X	X	X	X	X				
	Grants Management									
	Inspector General	X				X				
	Intergovernmental Relations	X								
	Labor Relations	X								
	Legislative Oversight	X								
	Management and Budget	X	X			X				
	Merit System Protection Board	X								
	Racial Equity and Social Justice	X								
	Techology and Ent. Bus. Solutions		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Zoning and Administrative Hearings	X		X						
Total		44	37	33	29	27	27	9	8	4

When analyzing by communication levels for departments, more than 69% of the high interaction departments utilize calendars, handouts, newsletters, press releases, publications, and subscriptions. Specialized interaction departments rely heavily on handouts (87.5%), followed by publications (75%), and press releases (62.5%). For departments with limited interaction, creating/posting publications (88.2%) is the most widely used traditional communication channel.

**Table 3. Traditional Communication Channel Usage,
by Level of Department Interaction**

High (26)		Specialized (8)		Limited (17)	
	Dept. %		Dept. %		Dept. %
Publication	88.5%	Handout	87.5%	Publication	88.2%
Handout	84.6%	Publication	75.0%	Handout	47.1%
Calendar	84.6%	Press Release	62.5%	Calendar	47.1%
Newsletter	88.5%	Calendar	50.0%	Newsletter	23.5%
Subscription	88.5%	Subscription	37.5%	Press Release	23.5%
Press Release	69.2%	Newsletter	25.0%	Subscription	5.9%
TV	26.9%	TV	12.5%	TV	5.9%
Blog	26.9%	Blog	0.0%	Blog	5.9%
Podcast	11.5%	Podcast	0.0%	Podcast	5.9%

Bold text = highest use

Social Media Communication Channels. The chart below shows the departments that utilize social media channels. Out of 51 departments, 33 have Facebook accounts, 30 have Twitter accounts, 26 have YouTube accounts, 22 have Instagram accounts, and 17 utilize Nextdoor. Nine or less departments respectively use LinkedIn, Pinterest, TikTok, and Flickr.

County-wide Outgoing Communications Trends

Table 4. Social Media Channel Use, by Department

Level	Department	Facebook	Twitter	YouTube	Instagram	Nextdoor	LinkedIn	Flickr	TikTok	Pinterest
High	Alcohol Beverage Services	X*	X*	X	X*	X	X			
	Animal Services	X	X	X	X				X	
	Board of Elections	X	X	X						
	Community Partner. (Gilchrist)	X								
	Community Partner. (Main)	X*		X	X	X				
	Community Partner. (Volunteer)	X	X	X	X					
	Community Use of Public Facilities	X	X			X				
	Consumer Protection	X	X	X	X	X				
	County Council	X*	X	X	X	X		X		
	County Executive	X*	X*							
	Environmental Protection	X	X	X	X*		X	X		X
	Fire & Rescue Service	X*	X*	X	X	X		X		X
	Health and Human Services	X*	X*		X*					
	Housing and Community Affairs	X	X	X						
	Permitting Services	X	X	X	X	X				
	Police	X	X	X	X	X	X			
	Public Information	X	X*	X		X		X		
	Public Libraries	X	X	X	X	X		X		X
	Recreation	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	
	Regional Svc. Office (BCC)	X*	X*		X					
	Regional Svc. Office (Eastern)									
	Regional Svc. Office (Mid)	X	X		X	X				
	Regional Svc. Office (SS)	X	X		X	X				
	Regional Svc. Office (Upcounty)									
	Sheriff Office	X		X						
	Transportation	X	X*	X	X*	X	X	X		

Table 4. Social Media Channel Use, by Department (Continued)

Level	Department	Facebook	Twitter	YouTube	Instagram	Nextdoor	LinkedIn	Flickr	TikTok	Pinterest
Specialized	Agriculture	X	X	X	X					
	Correction and Rehabilitation	X	X	X						
	Emerg. Mgmt. and Hland. Sec.	X	X	X		X				
	Finance									
	Human Resources	X*	X	X	X*		X			
	Human Rights									
	Procurement	X	X	X			X			
	State's Attorney	X	X	X	X	X	X			
Limited	Board of Appeals									
	Circuit Court									
	Commission for Women	X	X	X	X		X			
	County Attorney									
	Employee Retirement Plans									
	Ethics Commission									
	General Services	X	X	X						
	Grants Management									
	Inspector General						X			
	Intergovernmental Relations									
	Labor Relations									
	Legislative Oversight									
	Management and Budget									
	Merit System Protection Board									
	Racial Equity and Social Justice									
	Technology and Ent. Bus. Solutions	X*	X*	X*	X*	X			X	
	Zoning and Administrative Hearings									
Total		33	30	26	22	17	9	7	3	3

*Multiple accounts

County-wide Outgoing Communications Trends

In general, departments reported they utilized Facebook to communicate to older residents via social media, Instagram to communicate to younger residents, and Twitter to quickly get news or information out. Some other notable uses of social media include:

- When utilizing Nextdoor, most departments used the “Montgomery County Government” account with assistance from the Public Information Office. Only a few departments have their own Nextdoor accounts – Fire and Rescue Service, Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security, and the Police Department.
- Only a small number of departments use Pinterest, TikTok, and WhatsApp (not listed in the chart).
- One department who was exploring using TikTok, ultimately decided to not pursue the application because of the state ban⁸ and the federal ban⁹ of TikTok on federal devices.

When analyzing communication levels for departments, most of the high interaction departments utilize Facebook (92.3%) and Twitter (80.8%) and over half use Instagram, YouTube, and Nextdoor. Specialized interaction departments rely heavily on Facebook (75%), Twitter (75%), and YouTube (75%). Departments with limited interaction use social media sparingly, with Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube used the most (all 17.6%).

**Table 5. Social Media Channel Usage,
by Level of Department Interaction**

High (26)	Dept. %	Specialized (8)	Dept. %	Limited (17)	Dept. %
Facebook	92.3%	Facebook	75.0%	Facebook	17.6%
Twitter	80.8%	Twitter	75.0%	Twitter	17.6%
Instagram	65.4%	YouTube	75.0%	YouTube	17.6%
YouTube	65.4%	Instagram	37.5%	Instagram	11.8%
Nextdoor	50.0%	LinkedIn	37.5%	LinkedIn	11.8%
Flickr	26.9%	Nextdoor	25.0%	Nextdoor	5.9%
LinkedIn	15.4%	Flickr	0.0%	TikTok	5.9%
TikTok	11.5%	Pinterest	0.0%	Flickr	0.0%
Pinterest	7.7%	TikTok	0.0%	Pinterest	0.0%

Bold text = highest use

Several high interaction departments with multiple audiences have multiple social media accounts on a single platform. For example, the County Executive’s Office has four Twitter accounts: MOCOBizSolutions, County Executive Marc Elrich, Montgomery County, MD CAO, and mocodvcc (Montgomery County Domestic Violence Coordinating Council).

⁸ <https://www.npr.org/2022/12/07/1141338246/tiktok-maryland-ban-cybersecurity-china>

⁹ <https://www.forbes.com/sites/tylerroush/2022/12/23/congress-passes-bill-to-ban-tiktok-from-federal-devices/?sh=68a1b79c5bf3>

Table 6. Departments with Multiple Social Media Accounts, by Type

Department	Facebook	Instagram	Twitter	YouTube
Alcohol Beverage Services	2	2	2	
County Council	2			
County Executive	2		4	
Environmental Protection		2		
Fire and Rescue Service	3		4	
Health and Human Services	10	4	7	
Human Resources	2	2		
Public Information			2	
Regional Service Office (BCC)	2		2	
Technology and Enterprise Business Solutions	7	2	5	2
Transportation	2		4	

Health and Human Services (22) and Technology and Enterprise Business Solutions (17) utilize¹⁰ the most overall social media accounts. Many of these accounts are targeted to different audiences, e.g., DHHS has seven Twitter accounts for: (1) the department, (2) the director, (3) Health Connect, (4) Healthy Montgomery, (5) HIV Program, (6) Asian American Health Initiative, and (7) African American Health Initiative.

Table 7. Departments Who Utilize the Most Social Media Accounts

Department	Total Accounts*
Health and Human Services	22
Technology and Enterprise Business Solutions	17
Fire and Rescue Service	12
Transportation	10
Alcohol Beverage Services	8
County Council	8
Environmental Protection	8
Public Libraries	8

**Includes Facebook, Flickr, Instagram, LinkedIn, Nextdoor, Pinterest, TikTok, Twitter, and YouTube*

Subscribers/Followers. For the social media accounts used the most by departments (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram), with high levels of interaction typically have the most followers (or subscribers) – with Facebook and Twitter reaching the most. The Department of Police leads followers

¹⁰ This includes when departments utilize Montgomery County social media accounts, such as Nextdoor.

County-wide Outgoing Communications Trends

in both Facebook (66K+, doubling the next highest account) and on Twitter (107K+). The County Council has the most YouTube followers (4.6K+) and Downtown Silver Spring has the most Instagram followers (6.8K+). Some departments focus on posting on the County Government's social media accounts (opposed to creating their own) because they have a significant number of followers (Facebook at 30K+ and Twitter with 96.3K+).

Table 8. Department Social Media Accounts with the Most Followers

Department	Account	Followers
Facebook - 33 Departments		
Police	Department of Police	66K+
Animal Services	Animal Services and Adoption Center	31K+
Public Information	Montgomery County Government	30K+
Fire and Rescue Service	Fire and Rescue Service	16K+
Recreation	Department of Recreation	14K+
Twitter - 30 Departments		
Police	Department of Police	107K+
Public Information	Montgomery County MD	96.3K+
Fire and Rescue Service	Fire and Rescue Service	44.3K+
County Council	County Council	17.7K+
Emergency Mgmt. & Homeland Security	Emergency Mgmt. & Homeland Security	12.8K+
YouTube - 24 Departments		
County Council	County Council	4.6K+
Environmental Protection	Environmental Protection	2.7K+
Community Partnerships (Main)	Community Partnerships (Main)	2.7K+
Police	Department of Police	2.7K+
Public Information	Montgomery County MD	2.7K+
Instagram - 21 Departments		
Regional Service Office (SS)	Downtown Silver Spring	6.8K+
Animal Services	Animal Services and Adoption Center	4.8K+
County Council	County Council	4.8K+
Recreation	Department of Recreation	3.6K+
Regional Service Offices (BCC)	Bethesda Urban Partnership	3.3K+

Note: exact numbers of followers were not used because the figures are not static.

Communications Staffing. County departments accomplish their communications responsibilities using dedicated staff, contracted staff, and/or staff who also have other non-communications duties. Of 51 departments studied, 18 departments have dedicated staff – they all have high or specialized

interactions with individuals. A total of 32 departments utilize staff where communication is not their primary role, including all limited communication departments (17), 11 of the high communications departments, and four of the specialized communication departments. One specialized communication department (Office of Agriculture) utilizes a contractor and staff who perform other duties.

Six departments have a contractor position or contracting service (combined with dedicated staff and/or staff performing other duties): the Office of Agriculture; the Department of Environmental Protection; the Department of Transportation; the Department of Police; the Department of Health and Human Services; and the Department of Recreation.

Table 9. Department Communications Staffing Makeup by Communication Interaction Levels

	High	Specialized	Limited
Contract & Other Duties		(1) AGR	
Dedicated	(5) ABS, CC, DHCA, MCFRS, PIO	(3) PRO, OHR, SAO	
Dedicated & Contract	(3) DEP, DOT, POL		
Dedicated, Contract, & Other Duties	(2) HHS, REC		
Dedicated & Other Duties	(5) BOE, Consumer Protection, CUPF, OCP (Main), Permitting		
Other Duties	(11) ANM, CEX, MCPL, OCP (Gilchrist), OCP (Volunteer), RS (BCC), RS (Eastern), RS (Mid-County), RS (SS), RS (Upcounty), SHF	(4) COR, FIN, Human Rights, OEMHS	(17) BOA, Circuit Court, CFW, DGS, EC, MCERP, MSPB, OCA, OGM, OIG, OIR, OLO, OLR, OMB, ORESJ, OZAH, TEBS

There are a total of 59 positions and \$8.0 million budgeted¹¹ in the 18 departments with dedicated communications staff. Most positions were traditional communication positions (e.g., public information officer, community outreach manager, community liaison, etc.) while some departments use other positions for communications (e.g., program specialist, office services coordinator, information technology specialist, etc.). The Public Information Office has the most dedicated staff (18), followed by the County Council (7).

¹¹ Since most departments' communications operating expenses were embedded into other programs, the communications operating expenses were not collected. Estimated budgets could be created with further department input and analysis of expenditures.

Table 10. Dedicated Communications Staffing by Position and Personnel Costs

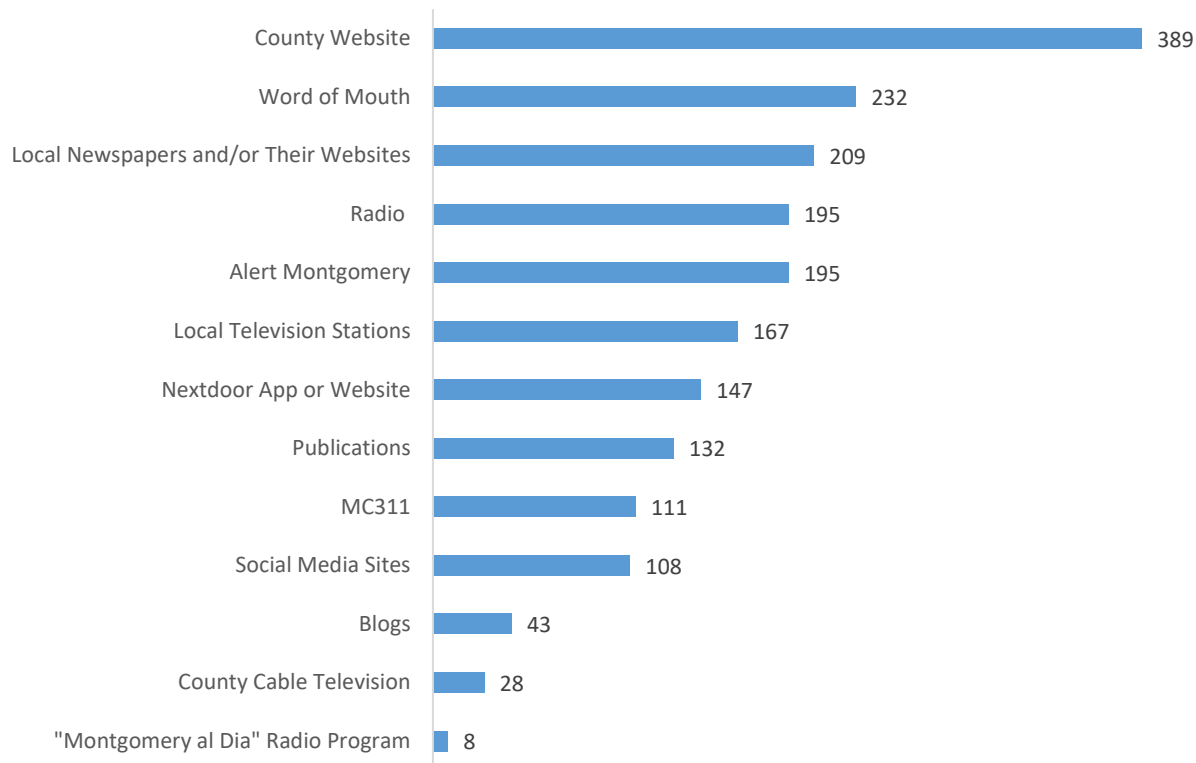
Department (total positions)	# of Positions	Personnel Costs
Alcohol Beverage Services (2)	2 Communication Managers	\$321,292
Board of Elections (1)	1 Community Engagement & Public Relations Officer	\$122,483
Community Partnerships (1)	1 Multicultural/lingual Comm. & Outreach Manager	\$133,013
Community Use of Pub. Facilities (1)	1 Outreach & Education Manager	\$144,228
Consumer Protection (1)	1 Outreach and Education Manager	\$113,187
County Council (7)	1 Legislative Information Officer; 5 Public Information Officers; 1 Community Liaison	\$934,809
Environmental Protection (3)	1 Communications Manager; 1 IT Specialist; 1 Public Engagement and Outreach Program Manager	\$469,757
Fire and Rescue Service (2)	1 Community Risk Reduction Manager; 1 Public Information Officer	\$371,514
Health and Human Services (2)	1 Public Information Officer; 1 Web Manager	\$239,503
Housing and Community Affairs (1)	1 Community Program Administrator	\$133,052
Human Resources (2)	1 Communications Program Manager; 1 Communications Specialist	\$271,058
Permitting Services (1)	1 Outreach Manager	\$150,806
Police (6)	1 Communications Director; 3 Public Information Officers; 1 Office Services Coordinator; 1 Hispanic Liaison	\$703,702
Procurement (1)	1 Outreach Manager	\$127,143
Public Information (18)	1 Director of Public Information; 6 Public Information Officers; 3 Managers; 1 Program Manager; 1 Senior Executive Administrative Aide; 5 Visual Information Specialist; 1 Information Technology Specialist	\$2,497,965
Recreation (4)	1 Public Information Officer; 1 Program Manager; 1 Information Technology Specialist; 1 Program Specialist	\$450,913
Transportation (5)	1 Communications Manager; 1 Planning Specialist; 2 Transit Marketing Specialists; 1 Program Specialist	\$634,505
State's Attorney (1)	1 Director of Public Affairs	\$171,313
Total	59	\$7,990,243

Note: Departments and OLO identified dedicated positions. The personnel costs include estimated benefits, based on OMB calculations. Position salaries were pulled from the Oracle Business Intelligence Dashboard in

Fall 2022. For vacant positions, OLO used a salary 25% above the minimum salary, based on OMB operating budget guidelines. The working titles are either from Oracle or they were provided to OLO by departments.

Spotlight: 2021 Montgomery County Resident Survey

Since 2017, a County contractor performs a biennial survey to gauge the opinions of residents on government services, their community, and other aspects of the county. Results were collected from a sample of 565 residents for the [2021 resident survey](#). In relation to outgoing communications by departments, residents were asked to “indicate which of the following potential sources for information, if any, that you use to get information about County services, activities, and events.”¹² Residents’ responses are below (participants could choose more than one source).



Source: 2021 Montgomery County Resident Survey, Government/Info

¹² [2021 Montgomery County Resident Survey Results](#), Government/Info

Chapter 2. Department Communications Summaries

This chapter provides a one-page communications summary for each department. Each summary provides background on the department, including: its mission; link to its main homepage; social media channels; other communications channels (traditional media) used; a communications summary that includes staffing and future plans, if applicable; and communications highlights, which include links to social media sites and some traditional media. The source for information in each department summary is from OLO research, interviews with departments, and social media images online.

For the department directory below, **BLUE** indicates high interaction with residents, **ORANGE** indicates specialized interaction with residents, and **GREEN** indicates limited interaction with residents.

The following page shows a guide to information in each department summary.

Department Summary	Page	Department Summary	Page
Agriculture	20	Human Resources	46
Alcohol Beverage Services	21	Human Rights	47
Animal Services	22	Inspector General	48
Board of Appeals	23	Intergovernmental Relations	49
Board of Elections	24	Labor Relations	50
Circuit Court	25	Legislative Oversight	51
Commission for Women	26	Management and Budget	52
Community Partnerships (Gilchrist)	27	Merit System Protection Board	53
Community Partnerships (Main)	28	Permitting Services	54
Community Partnerships (Volunteer)	29	Police	55
Community Use of Public Facilities	30	Procurement	56
Consumer Protection	31	Public Information	57
Correction and Rehabilitation	32	Public Libraries	58
County Attorney	33	Racial Equity and Social Justice	59
County Council	34	Recreation	60
County Executive	35	Regional Service Office (BCC)	61
Emergency Mgmt. & Homeland Security	36	Regional Service Office (Eastern)	62
Employee Retirement Plans	37	Regional Service Office (Mid-County)	63
Environmental Protection	38	Regional Service Office (Silver Spring)	64
Ethics Commission	39	Regional Service Office (Upcounty)	65
Finance	40	Sheriff	66
Fire & Rescue Service	41	State's Attorney	67
General Services	42	Technology & Enterprise Business Solutions	68
Grants Management	43	Transportation	69
Health and Human Services	44	Zoning & Administrative Hearings	70
Housing and Community Affairs	45		

Guide to Information in Department Summaries

Department's title, website link, and general mission.

Check marks indicate if a department utilizes social media or other communication channels.

Fire and Rescue Service montgomerycountymd.gov/mcfrs/

Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service protect lives, property, and the environment with comprehensive risk reduction programs and safe and effective emergency response provided by highly skilled career and volunteer service providers representing the County's diverse population.

Social Media

Facebook	Flickr	Instagram	LinkedIn	Nextdoor	Pinterest	TikTok	Twitter	YouTube
✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓

Other Communication Channels

Blog	Calendar	Handout	Newsletter	Podcast	Press Release	Publication	Subscription	TV
✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓

Communication Summary

Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service (MCFRS) has two dedicated communications positions (both Manager III job class) – the Public Information Officer and the lead for Community Risk Reduction. MCFRS has one of the largest social media presences in the County Government, operating on seven social media platforms with 12 accounts (7 active). MCFRS actively uses traditional communication channels, including tables at community events, off-site education/training, brochures and flyers, direct mail, appearances on radio and tv, and display posters. In the future, MCFRS would like to explore utilizing podcasts and video productions (especially through YouTube, if there is staff capacity). Besides MCFRS' local volunteer fire and rescue departments also have their own websites and social media accounts.

Social Media	Followers/ Subscribers
Twitter	44.1K+
Twitter (PIO)	29.8K+
Facebook	1.6K+
Twitter (News)	8.8K+
YouTube	1.2K+
Facebook (Recruiting)	5.5K+
Facebook (CERT)	800+
Instagram	600+
Pinterest	250+
Twitter (Recruiting)	200+
Flickr	30+

Accounts shaded gray are not active.

MCFRS has an active [blog](#) and has transitioned to publishing the department's press releases on this communication channel. The blog also includes seasonal information regarding fire and rescue prevention/education.

Community Outreach

Community Risk Reduction (CRR) is a process to identify the community's risks through data and then apply strategies and tactics to reduce those risks. CRR is integrated into the core mission of the department. MCFRS creates safer and resilient communities through community-based programs, partnerships, education, training, outreach, and canvassing opportunities to get ahead of, and prevent, the 911 call. As part of their progressive CRR strategy, MCFRS also provides programs virtually and has English and Spanish websites dedicated to [public education](#).

Public Data










MCFRS [posts data](#) in real time through the County's dataMontgomery website, providing statistics on Community Emergency Response Training, the Child Car Seat Program, apparatus equipment location, community outreach, ambulance transport fee, training academy classes, and MCFRS incidents.

The department's communications summary, including staffing and whether the department has upcoming communications plans or changes.

Outgoing communication highlights, including links to social and other traditional media. Exact numbers for social media followers and subscribers were not used because the numbers are not static.

The Office of Agriculture promotes agriculture as a viable component of the County's economic sector and oversees the operations and functions for all agricultural agencies within the Agricultural History Farm Park.

Social Media

								
Facebook	Flickr	Instagram	LinkedIn	Nextdoor	Pinterest	TikTok	Twitter	YouTube
✓		✓					✓	✓

Other Communication Channels

								
Blog	Calendar	Handout	Newsletter	Podcast	Press Release	Publication	Subscription	TV
	✓	✓				✓		

Communication Summary

The Office of Agriculture (OAG) utilizes staff (who perform other duties) for communications work and a contractor to manage social media. Despite being a smaller-sized department with 11 positions and a budget of \$1.1 million, OAG has a broad social media presence promoting County farms on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube. OAG's website includes a [brochure](#) on its programs and services, an active [calendar](#) with promotional events, and [publications](#) detailing the importance of County farming.



OAG targets residents and farmers at community events (annual Farm Tour, booth at the Agricultural Fair, and bus tours for groups). OAG also has field personnel who visit farms for various purposes.

OAG is associated with seven boards and committees. OAG's [website](#) lists boards and committees meeting dates, participation information, and archives detailing prior meetings.

Boards and Committees

- Agricultural Advisory Committee
- Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board
- Montgomery Weed Control, Inc.
- Extension Advisory Council (EAC)
- Montgomery Soil Conservation District Board of Supervisors
- Montgomery County Agricultural Center
- Montgomery County Forest Conservancy District Board

Social Media Followers/Subscribers



Instagram	2.0K
Facebook	1.4K
Twitter	1.0K
YouTube	<100

Alcohol Beverage Services

montgomerycountymd.gov/abs/

Alcohol Beverage Services (ABS) is the alcohol wholesaler of beer, wine, and spirits for Montgomery County and operates 26 retail stores throughout the County. In addition, ABS manages alcohol licensing, enforcement, and education for more than 1,000 businesses.

Social Media

								
Facebook	Flickr	Instagram	LinkedIn	Nextdoor	Pinterest	TikTok	Twitter	YouTube
✓		✓	✓				✓	✓

Other Communication Channels

								
Blog	Calendar	Handout	Newsletter	Podcast	Press Release	Publication	Subscription	TV
	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓

Communication Summary

ABS has recently consolidated its communication efforts with the creation of two communications manager positions in the Director's Office (staff are concurrently completing their old duties until new staff can be backfilled). It is important to note that ABS has a very distinct population of "public" – retail customers, wholesale customers (licensees and their staff), and the public (who can also be retail customers). Each ABS Division has a different audience and provides communication and outreach separately, which the two central communications managers coordinate. The central communications team is currently working on the creation of a comprehensive communication plan for the department.

Email Communication

Email is the primary method for ABS communication with vendors and licensees. ABS sends out numerous newsletters and flyers to the following listservs: Retail Newsletter (25K+); licensees/iStore users (1K+); licensees (1K+); sales representatives (300+); and suppliers (300+). Some information shared in these listservs includes weather/closing updates, new products, order information and changes in policies/laws.

ABS has created a community outreach team that visit businesses and provide education and inspection services. ABS also plans tasting and other special events across the County.






Social Media

ABS has a significant media presence – with most platforms having more than one account – one for the public and one for County alcohol vendors (Responsible Alcohol Service and Prevention/RASP). Information provided includes store and product updates, responsible drinking information, and training available.

Platform	Subscribers/Followers
Facebook	1.7K+
Twitter	1.4K+
Instagram	300+
Facebook (RASP)	70+
YouTube	60+
LinkedIn	50+
Twitter (RASP)	20+
Instagram (RASP)	10+

The Montgomery County Animal Services & Adoption Center (MCASAC) provides high-standard sheltering and care to homeless, abused, and neglected animals in the community. MCASAC also provides pet food assistance, vaccination clinics, education, and investigates animal complaints.

Social Media

								
Facebook	Flickr	Instagram	LinkedIn	Nextdoor	Pinterest	TikTok	Twitter	YouTube
✓		✓				✓	✓	✓

Other Communication Channels

								
Blog	Calendar	Handout	Newsletter	Podcast	Press Release	Publication	Subscription	TV
	✓	✓				✓		

Communication Summary

MCASAC has a significant online and traditional communication presence in the County. The communications team for the department consists of one staff member (who also supervises the foster and rescue transport program and the volunteer program) and one contractor (who works approximately 40 hours per week; is responsible for social media and photography). While still utilizing traditional media (such as flyers/cards), MCASAC has a significant online presence, including various social media accounts.

Community Outreach

MCASAC staff conduct community outreach through a variety of methods, including attending community events, partnering with other animal welfare organizations, writing press releases, and handing out brochures and pamphlets. In particular, animal services officers attend community events, visit dog parks, and provide education for pet owners. Some of the educational materials include an info contact card, foster/volunteer info card, summary of animal control laws, license information, and rabies clinic cards.

MCASAC utilizes a system that automatically uploads animals available for adoption to the County's website. MCASAC also works with numerous pet adoption sites to upload available animals on their websites.

Social Media



MCASAC has a significant social media presence – including over thirty thousand subscribers on Facebook. Its social media posts primarily include animals available for adoption, community events, and adoption stories. The website also has information on adoptions, licensing, laws/fees, lost and found animals, how to volunteer, and services/resources available for pet owners.

Platform	Followers/ Subscribers
Facebook	30K+
Instagram	4K+
Twitter	1K+
TikTok	500+
YouTube	300+




The Board of Appeals is responsible to hear and decide on cases involving certain land use issues, including variances from the development standards in the Zoning Ordinance, modifications of existing special exceptions, and appeals of conditional use decisions. The Board also hears and decides Administrative Appeals from certain actions of County government agencies.

Social Media

								
Facebook	Flickr	Instagram	LinkedIn	Nextdoor	Pinterest	TikTok	Twitter	YouTube

Other Communication Channels

								
Blog	Calendar	Handout	Newsletter	Podcast	Press Release	Publication	Subscription	TV
	✓	✓				✓		

Communication Summary

The Board of Appeals (BOA) is a public facing office whose caseload is completely customer driven. The Board serves persons applying for variances or modifications of special exceptions, as well as those appealing conditional use decisions or filing administrative appeals. The Board also serves persons seeking information about current or past filings. The office consists of three staff, all of whom are responsible for outgoing communication (among other job duties). The Board does not have a specific communication plan; all staff communicate with residents primarily through the website, but also email, phone, and in person. The Office is working on translating all posted decisions into several languages.

Website

The Board of Appeals' [website](#) is its primary platform for sharing information with the public. The website has a significant amount of relevant information, including:

- Information and applications for residents;
- Hearing agendas and minutes;
- Links to relevant codes; and
- BOA opinions (current and archived).

User Guide

The Board's [User Guide](#) provides a summary of how to apply for a variance, modify an existing special exception, and appeal a conditional use decision - or how to oppose those applications as well as how to file an administrative appeal. It also includes information on how to oppose those applications as well as how to file an administrative appeal. It outlines what to expect at hearings and describes the process once the Board has made a decision.

How Can I?










- [View User Guide](#)
 - [Introduction](#)
 - [Welcome to the Board of Appeals](#)
 - [About the Board](#)
 - [Relations with Other Governmental Agencies](#)
 - [Variances](#)
 - [Conditional Uses](#)
 - [Special Exceptions](#)
 - [Administrative Appeals](#)
 - [Appealing a Board Decision](#)
- [View Fee Schedule](#)
- [View Rules of Procedure](#)
- [View Weather Policy](#)
- [View Abutting and Confronting Property Owner Instructions](#)

[Find Current and Archived Opinions](#)

- [Digital Zoning Finder](#)
- [Department Of Permitting Services](#)
- [Department of Assessments and Taxation](#)

The Montgomery County Board of Elections (BOE) promotes voter education, administers an efficient voting process, and ensures elected officials are elected in accordance with federal, state, and County election laws.

Social Media

								
Facebook	Flickr	Instagram	LinkedIn	Nextdoor	Pinterest	TikTok	Twitter	YouTube
✓							✓	✓

Other Communication Channels

								
Blog	Calendar	Handout	Newsletter	Podcast	Press Release	Publication	Subscription	TV
	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Communication Summary

BOE uses a combination of social, virtual, and traditional media to get its message out, with an emphasis on direct community outreach. Communication from BOE is the responsibility of one Community Engagement and Public Relations Officer, with the support of several "merit" and "temporary" employees who help on an as-needed basis. Staff report the office also leverages partnerships with other County, state departments, media outlets and community stakeholders (e.g., academia, business, faith, and non-profit) to disseminate multilingual election related information year-round. All communication from the BOE is completed in both English and Spanish. Selected communication available in Amharic, Braille (English/Spanish), Traditional/Simplified Chinese, French, Korean and Vietnamese.

Social Media

In addition to the website, the BOE is very active on two social media sites: [Twitter](#) with 2K+ followers and [Facebook](#) with 3K+ followers. Both platforms include extensive information on how to vote, voter registration, election workers, Board updates, and candidates and elected officials. BOE also has a [YouTube](#) account, which includes recorded Board meetings.

Future Vote

Future Vote is a unique community outreach program that aims to increase civic participation in the voting process. It recruits children in 6th through 12th grade as voting ambassadors at voting locations to provide information and outreach to residents. The goal is to transition students to become poll workers when they are old enough.





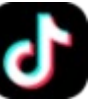



Advertisements

The BOE has a budget of approximately \$73K for promotion of voting and specific elections. Staff report that this is spent on a variety of "advertisements" including bus ad space, poll worker newsletter, posters/flyers throughout the County, and full-page spreads in several ethnic newspaper in the County. The BOE has also produced and posted several animated video shorts on social media and YouTube on how to vote in English and Spanish

The mission of the Montgomery County Circuit Court is to serve the Sixth Judicial Circuit residents in the determination of litigation in serious criminal matters, substantive civil cases, domestic cases, and child support cases in accordance with the Constitution while administering justice in an honest, fair, and efficient manner.

Social Media

								
Facebook	Flickr	Instagram	LinkedIn	Nextdoor	Pinterest	TikTok	Twitter	YouTube

Other Communication Channels

								
Blog	Calendar	Handout	Newsletter	Podcast	Press Release	Publication	Subscription	TV
	✓	✓				✓		

Communication Summary

The ability of the Circuit Court is dictated by state law – in general, staff (including judges) are not allowed to talk about cases. The process for summoning residents to court is also detailed in state law. Therefore, the Circuit Court does not communicate with the public in a significant way – it is primarily for hearing and jury notices for those involved in court cases or summoned to jury duty. The Court Administrator and staff are responsible for communication to the public; these positions also have other job duties. The Court has a director of technical services, who works with TEBS to maintain the website.

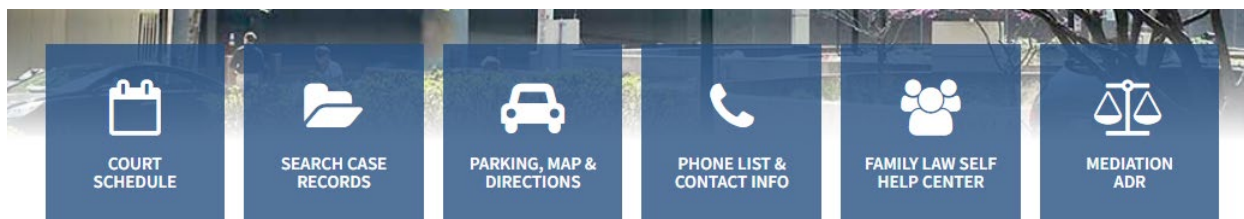
Jury Duty and Hearing Notices

Jury duty summons are the most significant form of outreach the Circuit Court completes; summons are sent out through the mail. The Court Administrator is responsible for this and for any public inquiries about jury duty. For those involved in court cases, notices are automatically sent out by a case management system, which follows a format dictated by the state. The Circuit Court also uses Alert Montgomery for any court closures.

Website

The Circuit Court's [website](#) is the primary method in which the department published information for the public. There are detailed pages for jurors and attorneys. The website also includes:

- Summary of court administration;
- Services provided by the Court;
- Information on coming to Court;
- Court schedule;
- Case records; and
- Information on how to do a variety of legal procedures.



Commission for Women (Community Engagement Cluster)

montgomerycountymd.gov/cfw/

The Commission for Women aims to improve women's lives through the identification of inequities in laws, policies, and practices and recommending remedial actions.

Social Media

								
Facebook	Flickr	Instagram	LinkedIn	Nextdoor	Pinterest	TikTok	Twitter	YouTube
✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓

Other Communication Channels

								
Blog	Calendar	Handout	Newsletter	Podcast	Press Release	Publication	Subscription	TV
	✓	✓	✓			✓		

Communication Summary

The Commission for Women works with the Public Information Office for communications in general but oversees its own social media presence. The Commission's program manager (recently hired) is responsible for overseeing communication (including social media) as well as planning and implementing all events and programs. The Commission has several social media accounts; staff report the most frequently used accounts are Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

Website

The Commission's website provides the public with information on its work, human trafficking, and legislative information on women's issues.

Newsletter

The Commission sends out a weekly electronic newsletter that includes information on upcoming events, seminars, MCPS resources, the Human Trafficking Prevention Committee, abortion care providers, and calls for volunteers and donations. It has approximately 20K subscribers.

Social Media

The Commission's social media presence highlights Commission activities, community events held by the Commission and other County departments, and job/volunteer opportunities. The Human Trafficking Prevention Committee (HTPC) also uses Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

Platform	Subscribers/ Followers
Facebook	2.1K+
Twitter	1K+
Instagram	1.5K+
LinkedIn	150+
YouTube	50+









Gilchrist Center (Community Engagement Cluster)

montgomerycountymd.gov/gilchrist/

The Gilchrist Center is part of the Community Engagement Cluster in the Office of Community Partnerships. The Center provides information and referrals to government and community programs and services for residents from other countries.

Social Media

								
Facebook	Flickr	Instagram	LinkedIn	Nextdoor	Pinterest	TikTok	Twitter	YouTube
✓								

Other Communication Channels

								
Blog	Calendar	Handout	Newsletter	Podcast	Press Release	Publication	Subscription	TV
	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	

Communication Summary

The Gilchrist Center uses a combination of social and traditional media to reach the public. There are no dedicated communication staff. The Director oversees all central communication with the support of all staff.



Search Gilchrist Site

[Home](#) [Classes](#) [Get Help](#) [Citizenship](#) [Immigrant Resources](#) [Volunteer](#) [About Us](#) [Contact Us](#)

Website

The Gilchrist Center's website is its primary platform for communication with the public. The Center recently overhauled its website to make it more user friendly. Information available on the website, includes:

- Available classes;
- Citizenship information;
- Resources and services for those in need; and
- Resources and services specific to immigrants.

Gilchrist staff report that a key part of their communication effort is partnerships with local nonprofits and community organizations. Gilchrist works with community leaders to disseminate information.

Social Media

The Gilchrist Center uses two social media platforms – [Facebook](#) and WhatsApp. The Facebook page, with 1.2K+ followers, primarily posts updates on classes and employment opportunities. Staff report there are no dedicated staff who manage Facebook and it is not used often. The Center also uses WhatsApp to communicate with clients about specific programs.

Community Outreach Events

Gilchrist Center staff participate in numerous community events throughout the year – tracking public interactions and meeting weekly to discuss which events they should attend. Staff report that one of the biggest events of the year is the MCPS Back to School Fair.

Community Partnerships (Community Engagement Cluster)

montgomerycountymd.gov/partnerships/

The Office of Community Partnerships (OCP) is part of the Community Engagement Cluster and works to strengthen relationships between the County Government and the residents it serves, with special focus on underserved and emerging communities and neighbors in need.

Social Media

								
Facebook	Flickr	Instagram	LinkedIn	Nextdoor	Pinterest	TikTok	Twitter	YouTube
✓								

Other Communication Channels

								
Blog	Calendar	Handout	Newsletter	Podcast	Press Release	Publication	Subscription	TV
	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	

Communication Summary

OCP uses a combination of social and traditional media to communicate with the public. OCP has a Multilingual Communications and Outreach Manager who oversees the overall communication strategy, works with 10 community liaison positions, and works on community-wide outreach efforts. Other OCP staff (mainly community liaisons) also provide outreach and communication as a primary part of their job. OCP created a formal written communication plan during Census that has been adapted to general communication going forward.

WhatsApp

OCP extensively uses the County's Spanish WhatsApp and similar platforms to reach specific communities. Staff report they also utilize already existing networks (established by communities) to disseminate information.

Social Media

OCP manages the County Executive's Spanish [Facebook](#) page (2.2K+ subscribers) and several of OCP's advisory groups have their own Facebook pages:

- [African American Advisory Group](#) (800+ followers);
- [Faith Community Advisory Council](#) (600+ followers); and
- [Middle Eastern American Advisory Group](#) (100+ followers).



Paper Communication

OCP staff report that paper communications – flyers, mailers, postcards – are a predominant method to get information out to many underserved communities. All paper media is available in the top six spoken languages in the County. In addition, OCP will tailor the content of paper materials to individual communities – not only in language but message and imagery.

Working through community partnerships, OCP can activate huge ground teams, including staff and volunteers, who distribute this media at community events, food distribution sites, grocery stores, faith community centers, and even go door-door with multilingual media.





Volunteer Center

(Community Engagement Cluster) montgomerycountymd.gov/volunteercenter/

The Volunteer Center is under the Office of Community Partnerships as part of the Community Engagement Cluster. The center recruits, supports, and connects volunteers and nonprofit organizations in the County.

Social Media

								
Facebook	Flickr	Instagram	LinkedIn	Nextdoor	Pinterest	TikTok	Twitter	YouTube
✓		✓					✓	✓

Other Communication Channels

								
Blog	Calendar	Handout	Newsletter	Podcast	Press Release	Publication	Subscription	TV
	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	

Communication Summary

The Volunteer Center uses a combination of traditional and social media to disseminate information. There are no dedicated communication staff in the Center. Currently, the Center is in a state of transition – a new Director was recently hired and other staff/volunteer positions have been vacated and not filled. In the past, the Center has had a communications contractor but currently does not.

Website

The Volunteer Center primarily provides information through its website, including;

- Volunteer opportunities, in particular for student service learning and for seniors;
- Resources and training for nonprofits seeking volunteers;
- Overviews of special volunteer events; and
- COVID-specific opportunities.

Social Media

The Volunteer Center has several social media accounts in place. Staff report that due to the turnover in office staff, the Center has not actively used its social media accounts recently. However, staff anticipate increased use in the coming months.

- [Facebook](#) (2.6K+ followers);
- [Twitter](#) (1.9K+ followers);
- [Instagram](#) (1K+ followers); and
- [YouTube](#) (30+ subscribers).

Newsletters









The Volunteer Center distributes two monthly newsletters – one for the general public and one for nonprofit organizations. Both highlight volunteer opportunities and community events.



Center staff participate in and hand out flyers at numerous community events to inform the public of volunteer opportunities, including, MCPS' Back to School Fair, events at Leisure World, and at community volunteer fairs.

Community Use of Public Facilities issues use permits for public access to County facilities at scheduled times.

Social Media

								
Facebook	Flickr	Instagram	LinkedIn	Nextdoor	Pinterest	TikTok	Twitter	YouTube
✓				✓			✓	

Other Communication Channels

								
Blog	Calendar	Handout	Newsletter	Podcast	Press Release	Publication	Subscription	TV
✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	

Communication Summary

Community Use of Public Facilities' (CUPF) communication is completed by several non-dedicated staff who also have other duties. The department is reclassifying a vacant position that will be dedicated to communications and outreach and will manage all communications for CUPF, with focus on reaching the diverse communities in the County. Staff also plan to create a comprehensive communication plan once the position is filled.

Website

CUPF's website is a primary source for all public information. The website provides information on facility reservation procedures and fees; conditions of use for certain facilities; assistance programs; and information about the Interagency Coordinating Board.

Social Media










In the past, CUPF used both Facebook and Twitter but their accounts are dormant right now. Staff report the department does not have the staff to maintain the accounts but would like to when the communication position is filled. CUPF also had a Nextdoor account, but staff report no one was following it so it was not maintained.

Blog

CUPF's [Community Use Bridge](#) blog is the primary method the department uses to provide information to the public. CUPF updates the blog often and posts some emergency announcements (CUPF also uses Alert Montgomery for facility closures). The blog provides information on facility open/closed status, how to contact CUPF, relevant changes in policies/law, and tips/tricks on navigating the reservation system. The website is available as a blog/website, but the public can also subscribe to it and receive updates through email.

The Office of Consumer Protection (OCP) is responsible for enforcing [consumer protection laws](#) that prohibit unfair and deceptive business acts in order to ensure a fair marketplace for consumers and businesses.

Social Media

								
Facebook	Flickr	Instagram	LinkedIn	Nextdoor	Pinterest	TikTok	Twitter	YouTube
✓		✓		✓			✓	✓

Other Communication Channels

								
Blog	Calendar	Handout	Newsletter	Podcast	Press Release	Publication	Subscription	TV
	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓

Communication Summary

OCP does a variety of online and in person communication, which is managed by one staff member – an Outreach and Education Manager. This position is responsible for all communications for the department and receives help from other OCP staff. OCP is focused on outreach to underserved populations. One special communication note for OCP is that media calls/news stories always take priority.

Social Media

OCP has a significant social media presence where they highlight consumer alerts and OCP events:

[Twitter](#) (1.3K+ followers)
[Facebook](#) (600+ followers)
[Instagram](#) (400+ followers)
[YouTube](#) (300+ subscribers)



Online Resources

Among the numerous online resources available, OCP's website provides extensive information on:

- Licensing and Regulation;
- Business Services;
- Consumer Services;
- Consumer Complaints; and
- Scam Alerts.

OCP also provides data on dataMontgomery, with datasets such as "Trespass Towing Report" and "Second-Hand Personal Property."

Publications







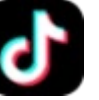


OCP publishes numerous brochures and flyers for community distribution. OCP publishes a quarterly newsletter with consumer advice and tools (available by subscription and online). OCP's "rack card" is available in six languages.

Outreach

OCP provides speakers to consumer groups, community organizations, businesses, and other civic associations, both about what OCP does as well as specific consumer topics. In addition, OCP does their own outreach events, attends community events, and partners with other County departments. Further, OCP conducts "Look, Listen, Walking Tours" to initiate conversations with consumers and business owners in underserved areas of the County.

The Department of Correction and Rehabilitation protects the public and residents of Montgomery County by providing a wide range of constructive, professional correctional services for pretrial and convicted detainees.

Social Media

								
Facebook	Flickr	Instagram	LinkedIn	Nextdoor	Pinterest	TikTok	Twitter	YouTube
✓							✓	✓

Other Communication Channels

								
Blog	Calendar	Handout	Newsletter	Podcast	Press Release	Publication	Subscription	TV
	✓	✓						

Communication Summary

The Department of Correction and Rehabilitation (DOCR) has limited communication with the public – its primary target audiences are detainees, inmates, and their families/friends. DOCR does not have any dedicated communications staff. DOCR's Management Services Division is responsible for most communication. Other divisions will communicate directly with inmates and/or their families. DOCR communicates primarily via its website and printed flyers and has a limited social media presence.

Social Media

Years ago, DOCR created numerous social media accounts to provide content to the public:

- A [YouTube](#) page (70+ subscribers) that includes videos on job recruitment, orientation for inmates, the dangers of opioids, and graduation for inmates.
- Reentry for All has both a [Facebook](#) (70+ followers) and [Twitter](#) (200+ followers) account that posts job opportunities and information about training and services for those leaving DOCR facilities.

DOCR staff report that the department does not currently use these social media platforms because there are no staff resources to maintain them.



Website

DOCR's website provides extensive information for both the public and for inmates and their friends/families. DOCR will direct inmates and families to the website for information on policies, services, and how to communicate with inmates (department staff distribute flyers directing people to the website).









The website also includes a data dashboard with information on inmates, medical data, mental health data and budgets, among other things.

Recruitment

DOCR participation in in-person recruitment events is particularly focused on recruitment of corrections officers and nurses. DOCR participates in all public safety and general County recruitment fairs and it advertises job opportunities via billboards and bus advertisements.

The Office of the County Attorney provides legal advice and services to County departments, agencies, boards, and commissions, as well as to the County Council.

Social Media

								
Facebook	Flickr	Instagram	LinkedIn	Nextdoor	Pinterest	TikTok	Twitter	YouTube

Other Communication Channels

								
Blog	Calendar	Handout	Newsletter	Podcast	Press Release	Publication	Subscription	TV

Communication Summary

The Office of the County Attorney (OCA) has limited outgoing communication with the public and does not have dedicated communications staff. Besides the information provided on its website, the department's outgoing communication only entails litigation involving code enforcement and the collection of overdue taxes. OCA is an internal department and, by Charter, is legally and ethically prohibited from providing certain information to the public.

Periodic Reports

Quarterly Report - Table of Contents

- Individual Case and Lawsuits Reports (Opened last three years)
- Appeals Statistics
- Child and Adult Protective Services Unit
- Code Enforcement
- Debt Collection Unit Statistics
- Monthly Procurement Contract Reviewed
- Litigation Unit intake and closeouts
- Workers' Compensation Monthly Hearings

FY22 Self Insurance Fund Settlement Report(County agencies only)

The OCA publishes a [Quarterly Report](#) with information on cases and lawsuits and a host of other reports related to the department's services. The OCA annually publishes data from the [Self Insurance Fund Settlement Report](#) through dataMontgomery.

Resources

Besides [providing access to](#) the County Charter, the County Code, Zoning Ordinance, and Opinions, the OCA website includes links to additional [resources](#):

- Disparity Study Final Report
- American Legal Publishing website
- Order form for the County Code, Zoning Ordinance, and COMCOR
- Applicability of County Laws to Municipalities
- Opinions responding to Inquiries from agencies and officers of the County
- Appellate briefs
- Frequently discussed topics, and
- Legal links

The County Council legislates for the peace, good government, health, safety, and welfare of Montgomery County and establishes policies under which a system of public administration and finance provides services effectively, efficiently, and equitably.

Social Media

								
Facebook	Flickr	Instagram	LinkedIn	Nextdoor	Pinterest	TikTok	Twitter	YouTube
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓

Other Communication Channels

								
Blog	Calendar	Handout	Newsletter	Podcast	Press Release	Publication	Subscription	TV
	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Communication Summary

The County Council has dedicated staff, led by a Legislative Information Officer (LIO), responsible for communication, including live broadcasts of all Council and Committee meetings. There are 14 staff working for the LIO, with seven dedicated communications staff (other positions include CCM media and Public Information Officers). The staff includes the LIO, five Public Information Officers, and one Community Liaison. The Council utilizes a combination of social and traditional media, with continuous updates to its website, subscriptions to receive updates, press releases, and community events. A significant amount of Council communication is available in multiple languages and is provided by bilingual staff members. Additionally, each individual Councilmember also has their own website, social media accounts, and email subscription services, which are managed by individual offices.

Social Media

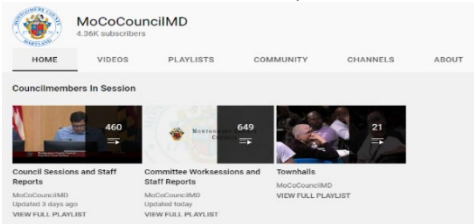
The Council has its own social media accounts, but also posts content on the County's WhatsApp, LinkedIn and Nextdoor accounts and partners with [ConnectMontgomery](#).

Platform	Subscribers/ Followers
Facebook (English and Spanish)	17.7K+
Twitter	17.5K+
Instagram	4.7K+
YouTube	4.4K+

The Council's YouTube site has live and archived meetings, townhalls, proclamations, testimony, and an array of programmed videos including: Council in Brief, Councilmembers in the Community, the Bottom Line, Montgomery Minutes, In the Loop, Community Interest Programs, Parks Rec n Roll, and video Shorts.




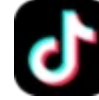


The "How Do I?" tab on the Council's website provides quick links in four categories for constituents: Find (information such as bills and the Council calendar); Watch (live and archived videos), Sign Up For (testimony, press releases, newsletters, etc.); and Apply For (boards, committees, and commissions).



The Office of the County Executive provides political leadership to the community through the County Executive and staff and provides administrative direction to the County's executive branch departments, which are supervised by the Chief Administrative Officer and his staff.

Social Media

								
Facebook	Flickr	Instagram	LinkedIn	Nextdoor	Pinterest	TikTok	Twitter	YouTube
✓							✓	

Other Communication Channels

								
Blog	Calendar	Handout	Newsletter	Podcast	Press Release	Publication	Subscription	TV
✓	✓		✓		✓			✓

Communication Summary

The Office of the County Executive's (CEX) outgoing communications are mainly handled by the Office of Public Information, with a Manager II and a Public Information Officer II focused on the County Executive's social media accounts. The Office's social media umbrella includes the County Executive's accounts, an account for the Chief Administrative Officer, two accounts for the Domestic Violence Coordinating Council, and one account for Montgomery County Business Solutions. The CEX webpage provides users with easy access to the County Executive's weekly newsletter and a slider showing the latest videos/reports/statements from the office and provides quick summaries and links for programs directly administered by the office.










Social Media

	Followers/Subscribers
Twitter (CE)	4.5k+
Twitter (CAO)	1.1k+
Facebook (CE)	400+
Twitter (DVCC)	80+
Facebook (DVCC)	70+
Twitter (MOCO BizSolutions)	400+



The CEX homepage includes embedded recent social media posts and videos with pictures to catch the attention of the user.

Programs

 Business Advancement Team The County Executive's internal team focused on small business growth, legislative and process improvements, and utilizing a variety of economic development tools to enhance the local economy.	 Internal Audit This program provides independent strategic risk-based auditing services. The core function of this program is to improve internal controls and provide reasonable assurance.	 Boards Committees & Commissions The County Executive encourages constituents to become actively involved in matters affecting the quality of life in County.
 County Register The Montgomery County Register provides information on proposed, adopted and temporary regulations issued by the County Executive, and Boards and Commissions.	 Innovation The Innovation Team leads behavior change towards a just, liberating, human government by people. Innovation is open to all - join Open Innovation events to include and unleash everyone.	 Climate Action Plan Montgomery County Executive Marc Elrich unveiled the Climate Action Plan that will guide the County toward its goals of reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 80 percent by 2027 and by 100 percent by 2035 compared to 2005 levels.
 Contact Us <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Email the County Executive Maryland Public Information Act 	 Citations/Commendations Citations/Commendations are a way for the County Executive to bring attention to the people, issues, and events that matter most in Montgomery County. Request a certificate, proclamation, or letter from the County Executive for a milestone event.	 Thrive 2050 Correspondence County Executive Elrich's Statements and Media Regarding Thrive Montgomery 2050

[Website](#) users can easily access information about the County Executive's programs with icons and short summaries next to each program title.







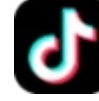


A [button](#) at the top of the homepage links directly to the County Executive's recent message and archived older messages.

Emergency Management & Homeland Security

montgomerycountymd.gov/oemhs/

The Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security plans, coordinates, prevents, prepares for, and protects against major threats that may harm, disrupt, or destroy our communities, commerce, and institutions. It also manages and coordinates the County's unified response, mitigation, and recovery from disasters/events.

Social Media

								
Facebook	Flickr	Instagram	LinkedIn	Nextdoor	Pinterest	TikTok	Twitter	YouTube
✓				✓			✓	✓

Other Communication Channels

								
Blog	Calendar	Handout	Newsletter	Podcast	Press Release	Publication	Subscription	TV
		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓

Communication Summary

The Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (OEMHS) does not have dedicated communications staff. To get emergency information out quickly, OEMHS uses social media and traditional media. The communication channel it uses most is the email/phone/text subscription service, Alert Montgomery. OEMHS is one of the few County departments to have its own Nextdoor page that provides emergency information. For serious events, OEMHS is authorized to send a Wireless Emergency Alert to all cell phones in the County and will also communicate on TV in conjunction with the Public Information Office. The Office also performs outreach at community events, providing emergency preparedness brochures and presentations.

National Preparedness Month

Every September is National Preparedness Month and OEMHS saturates most of their media channels with useful information. This includes a month-long social media campaign, posting tips and resources, and advertising preparedness throughout the County.

Social Media	Followers/Subscribers
Nextdoor	200K+
Twitter	12.7K+
Facebook	6.5K+
YouTube	<10

Alert Montgomery

Get Emergency Alerts. Get Alert Montgomery.

Emergency notifications, straight from Montgomery County to you.

The Alert Montgomery System provides accurate and immediate emergency notifications from Montgomery County to your cell, work, or home phones via text, email, or voice message. Receive notifications about emergencies that may affect your home, workplace, child's school, or any other locations within Montgomery County, Maryland.

- **Government and School Status** for County government and public school closures, cancellations, or delays due to inclement weather or other emergencies
- **Weather Alerts** for your family's home, business, school, child care, and more
- **Infrastructure Issues** including Water and Power Outages
- **Severe Traffic Issues** including accidents and prolonged road closures



The County's Alert Montgomery program started in 2006 and has over 245K subscribers who receive emergency notifications. Users can register to receive the alerts through the [Alert Montgomery page](#).

Employee Retirement Plans

montgomerycountymd.gov/mcerp/

Montgomery County Employee Retirement Plans is responsible for the administration of over \$8.0 billion in assets for approximately 9,500 active employees and 6,500 retirees.

Social Media

								
Facebook	Flickr	Instagram	LinkedIn	Nextdoor	Pinterest	TikTok	Twitter	YouTube

Other Communication Channels

								
Blog	Calendar	Handout	Newsletter	Podcast	Press Release	Publication	Subscription	TV
	✓	✓	✓			✓		

Communication Summary

Montgomery County Employee Retirement Plans (MCERP) does not have dedicated communications staff. MCERP has limited interaction with the public; its main audiences are active County employees and retirees. MCERP is guided by two boards – the Board of Investment Trustees (BIT) (for employee retirement plans) and the Board of Trustees (for the Consolidated Retiree Health Benefits Trust). Overall, MCERP's primary outward communications are through its website.

Annual Reports

On its main page, MCERP has links to its most recent reports including the Board's Annual Report, the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report, and the Popular Annual Financial Report.

Newsletters

MCERP publishes [a semi-annual newsletter](#) focused on retirement. The newsletter provides information on services available to County government employees, retirement plan updates, and on the Montgomery County Retired Employees' Association.







Trustees

MCERP's website has [detailed information](#) on the Board of Investment Trustees and the Board of Trustees. This information includes: meeting schedules, agendas and minutes; board members; mission; bylaws and policies; reports; and legal mandates.

Although both boards' information is available on the MCERP website, the County website's [list of departments and agencies](#) contains a separate dropdown for BIT (indicating it has its own site); it redirects the user to MCERP's page. MCERP is working with TEBS on addressing this issue.

The Department of Environmental Protection works to protect and improve the County's air, water, and land and provides recycling and resource management.

Social Media

								
Facebook	Flickr	Instagram	LinkedIn	Nextdoor	Pinterest	TikTok	Twitter	YouTube
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓

Other Communication Channels

								
Blog	Calendar	Handout	Newsletter	Podcast	Press Release	Publication	Subscription	TV
✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	

Communication Summary

The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has a significant communication presence, led by a central communications team (created in 2020) that oversees all press/media, manages websites, controls social media, and works on community wide events. The team consists of a Communications Manager and two permanent staff – (1) an IT Specialist who focuses on the department's web presence and (2) a Public Engagement and Outreach Program Manager. DEP also has an annual budget of \$175,000 to hire contractors to produce videos, provide translation services, assist with media engagement and public relations, and develop graphics, social media content, and social media strategy. DEP program managers are also responsible for flyers/posters for smaller events.

Websites

DEP maintains three websites – DEP's homepage, the County's Flooding website, and the Climate Action Portal. MyGreenMontgomery is DEP's online blog that helps County residents find local programs, services, resources, and answers to environmental questions.

Community Events

DEP does a significant number of community events, including: (1) program-specific events where DEP staff are asked to speak to an organization about a specific topic; (2) smaller community events where DEP will have a table with information; and (3) large community events.

DEP's internal website has a communications dashboard where DEP employees can search over 50 databases on things such as online users, click rates, and social media.

Social Media

DEP has significant social media presence, with three main social media platforms to share information – Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. DEP focuses less on its other social media platforms. Staff report a TikTok presence is in development.

Platform	Followers
Facebook	4.2K+
Twitter	3.7K+
YouTube	2.7K+
Instagram – MyGreenMC	2.3K+
Instagram – MCEnergy Connection	500+
Pinterest	100+
LinkedIn	600+
Flickr	40+

Newsletters

DEP has 14 online newsletters that residents can sign up for via email or text, including newsletters on climate, energy, green living, recycling/trash, and lawn care.

The Ethics Commission exercises authorities granted to it under the Public Ethics Law to promote the public's trust of County government and to ensure the impartiality of County employees, including elected officials, in the execution of their responsibilities.

Social Media

								
Facebook	Flickr	Instagram	LinkedIn	Nextdoor	Pinterest	TikTok	Twitter	YouTube

Other Communication Channels

								
Blog	Calendar	Handout	Newsletter	Podcast	Press Release	Publication	Subscription	TV
	✓	✓				✓		


Communication Summary

The Ethics Commission does not have dedicated communications staff. The department rarely interacts with the public since their main audiences are County financial disclosure filers, lobbyists, and County employees seeking outside employment. The Ethics Commission's primary outward communications to the public is through its website, providing information on the Ethics Law and Ethics Regulation, Ethics Commission decisions, members, County Attorney opinions, etc.


Jurisdiction of the Ethics Commission:

- Ethics Advice and Advisory Opinions and Waivers
- Financial Disclosure
- Outside Employment Approval
- Lobbying Registration and Activity Reporting
- Complaints, Investigations, and Hearings
- Education and Training

MONTGOMERY COUNTY ETHICS COMMISSION



100 Maryland Avenue, Room 204
Rockville, MD 20850
240-777-6670
Ethics.Commission@montgomerycountymd.gov
www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ethics



Revised 2017

Public Meetings







The Ethics Commission uses its website to announce upcoming public meetings, which can also be attended via Zoom. Residents can also find meeting [agendas](#) since 2021 and meeting [minutes](#) since 2017 on the Commission's website.

Annual Reports

The Ethics Commission's [annual reports](#) from 1998 through 2021 are available on its website. The reports summarize the Commission's actions taken during the preceding calendar year, approved waivers, and advisory opinions it issued.

The Department of Finance is responsible for the financial administration of the County government, including accounting and payroll, debt and cash management, tax billing and revenue collection, economic and revenue forecasting, and risk management.

Social Media

								
Facebook	Flickr	Instagram	LinkedIn	Nextdoor	Pinterest	TikTok	Twitter	YouTube

Other Communication Channels

								
Blog	Calendar	Handout	Newsletter	Podcast	Press Release	Publication	Subscription	TV
		✓			✓	✓		

Communication Summary

The Department of Finance does not engage in significant outgoing communications. The Department does not have a central communications team or full-time dedicated staff. Rather, most of the Department's outgoing communications originate in the Treasury Division and are completed by staff who have communication duties in addition to other job duties.

Annual Reports

The following reports are available on Finance's website:

- Tax Expenditure Report
- Revenue Estimating Group Report
- Annual Comprehensive Financial Report
- Report of the Business Advisory Panel
- Economic Development Fund Report
- Popular Annual Financial Report
- Debt Service Book
- Public Election Fund Reports

Website

The largest source of information on Department resources is Finance's [website](#), which includes information on:

- Tax rates and credits;
- Debt management;
- Fiscal management;
- Risk management;
- Revenue estimation; and
- Payroll.

Quick Links









- [State Law Change Requiring Homestead Credit Application on File with SDAT to Qualify for ITOC](#)
- [Important Information About The Maryland Homestead Tax Credit - YouTube](#)
- [Pay or View Your Property Tax Bill Online](#)
- [Pay or View Your Business Personal Property Taxes](#)
- [PROPERTY TAX CREDIT FOR ELDERLY INDIVIDUALS AND MILITARY RETIREES](#)

Property Tax Billing

The primary outgoing communication from Finance is the property tax billing to County residents, which is sent by the Treasury Division. This includes annual real property tax bills that are sent out through traditional mail. The Department also sends out revised bills and information about tax credit programs for residents.

Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service protect lives, property, and the environment with comprehensive risk reduction programs and safe and effective emergency response provided by highly skilled career and volunteer service providers representing the County's diverse population.

Social Media

								
Facebook	Flickr	Instagram	LinkedIn	Nextdoor	Pinterest	TikTok	Twitter	YouTube
✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓

Other Communication Channels

								
Blog	Calendar	Handout	Newsletter	Podcast	Press Release	Publication	Subscription	TV
✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓

Communication Summary

Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service (MCFRS) has two dedicated communications positions (both Manager III job class) – the Public Information Officer and the lead for Community Risk Reduction. MCFRS has one of the largest social media presences in the County Government, operating on seven social media platforms with 12 accounts (7 active). MCFRS actively uses traditional communication channels, including tables at community events, off-site education/training, brochures and flyers, direct mail, appearances on radio and tv, and display posters. In the future, MCFRS would like to explore utilizing podcasts and video productions (especially through YouTube, if there is staff capacity). Besides MCFRS, local volunteer fire and rescue departments also have their own websites and social media accounts.

Social Media	Followers/ Subscribers
Twitter	44.1K+
Twitter (PIO)	29.8K+
Facebook	16K+
Twitter (News)	8.8K+
YouTube	1.2K+
Facebook (Recruiting)	5.5K+
Facebook (CERT)	800+
Instagram	600+
Pinterest	250+
Twitter (Recruiting)	200+
Flickr	30+

Accounts shaded gray are not active.

MCFRS has an active [blog](#) and has transitioned to publishing the department's press releases on this communication channel. The blog also includes seasonal information regarding fire and rescue prevention/education.

Community Outreach

Community Risk Reduction (CRR) is a process to identify the community's risks through data and then apply strategies and tactics to reduce those risks. CRR is integrated into the core mission of the department. MCFRS creates safer and resilient communities through community-based programs, partnerships, education, training, outreach, and canvassing opportunities to get ahead of, and prevent, the 911 call. As part of their progressive CRR strategy, MCFRS also provides programs virtually and has English and Spanish websites dedicated to [public education](#).

Public Data






MCFRS [posts data](#) in real time through the County's dataMontgomery website, providing statistics on Community Emergency Response Training, the Child Car Seat Program, apparatus equipment location, community outreach, ambulance transport fee, training academy classes, and MCFRS incidents.

General Services

montgomerycountymd.gov/dgs/

The Department of General Services (DGS) provides an array of services to other County departments (e.g., fleet and facilities management; photocopying, mail, and records management services; ADA compliance; building design and construction; energy-efficiency, renewable energy design and construction and utility management services; redevelopment services; and real estate services).

Social Media

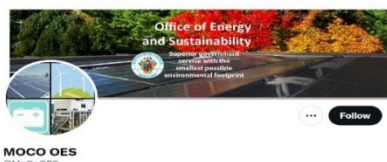
								
Facebook	Flickr	Instagram	LinkedIn	Nextdoor	Pinterest	TikTok	Twitter	YouTube
✓							✓	✓

Other Communication Channels

								
Blog	Calendar	Handout	Newsletter	Podcast	Press Release	Publication	Subscription	TV
	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		

Communication Summary

DGS does not have dedicated staff for communications. Rather, each Division has staff that work on communications to the public in addition to other job duties. DGS's communications plan includes updating its website, and publishing and distributing a comprehensive DGS Annual Report.



Social Media

The Office of Energy and Sustainability (OES) has two social media accounts to distribute the latest green County government news stories, videos, and press releases - [Twitter](#) (230+ followers) and [Facebook](#) (170+ followers). DGS also has numerous green [YouTube](#) videos available on its website and advertises on electronic message boards throughout the County. Due to staffing shortages, OES does not currently manage its social media accounts.

The DGS ADA team is working with the PIO and TEBS to develop a web-accessibility guide to assure that all County websites and social media posts are accessible.

Website









The DGS website includes extensive information on a variety of environmental topics (along with other DGS services), including the [County's Solar Initiative](#), the electric bus fleet, green buildings, and [neighborhood projects](#). DGS also has an easy-to-use information finding platform, "[I Want To...](#)" on their home page, which shows different topics users can look up such as property management for County facilities, reporting a serious problem about a County facility, etc.

Community Outreach

DGS staff participate in recruitment fairs, ground breakings/ribbon cuttings, and energy fairs. At these events, DGS distributes flyers and brochures, provides guest speaking, and/or conducts training sessions. DGS further participates in Montgomery County GreenFest, Energy Summit, Climate Action Working Groups and Procurement Forum for County residents along with conferences and webinars with other local jurisdictions.

The Office of Grants Management provides a central point of contact regarding County grants, disseminates information on grant opportunities within the County, maintains a central database of County grants, provides training and technical assistance to County government departments regarding grants management, and coordinates all County competitive grants programs.

Social Media

								
Facebook	Flickr	Instagram	LinkedIn	Nextdoor	Pinterest	TikTok	Twitter	YouTube

Other Communication Channels

								
Blog	Calendar	Handout	Newsletter	Podcast	Press Release	Publication	Subscription	TV

Communication Summary

The Office of Grants Management (OGM) is a new department created in FY23. Currently the department has a non-traditional County website address (not an extension of montgomerycountymd.gov) and it only has the Grants Application Program available. However, the department plans on creating a more traditional website and general outgoing communications as staff are hired. Additions would include creating a social media presence, creating a newsletter, and creating an email subscription service,

Website

OGM is in the process of creating a new website. The office currently uses a grants application platform that highlights grant-related events/trainings and showcases currently active Montgomery County Grants Programs. The goal for the website is to have a one-stop shop for all County departments and non-profit organizations for all things grant-related.












Montgomery County Office of Grants Management - Grants Application Platform

The Office of Grants Management is a recently established office with only one staff person who is solely responsible for all office functions, including communication. OGM reports that it is currently in the process of filling two positions – a Program Manager to work with internal County departments and a Program Manager who will be responsible for grant distribution and managing the online website and social media platforms. OGM staff report that when these positions are filled, communication from the office will increase.

The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) assures the provision of integrated services addressing the health and human service needs of County residents.

Social Media

								
Facebook	Flickr	Instagram	LinkedIn	Nextdoor	Pinterest	TikTok	Twitter	YouTube
✓		✓					✓	✓

Other Communication Channels

								
Blog	Calendar	Handout	Newsletter	Podcast	Press Release	Publication	Subscription	TV
	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	

Communication Summary

DHHS uses a combination of social and traditional media. Communication is done by a combination of the Public Information Officer (PIO), contractors, and staff in each service area. A web manager position was added in FY23, but it is currently vacant. The PIO is responsible for the department's overall message, website, social media, and press releases. The PIO has three contract positions – two for website management and the other for social media, press releases, and newsletters. In addition to central PIO communication, each service area disseminates information through printed materials, community events, and newsletters.

Platform	Followers/Subscribers
Twitter	6.3K+
Twitter (Director)	900+
Facebook	13K+
Twitter (Health Connect)	100+
Facebook (Health Connect)	300+
Facebook (VASAP)	600+
Facebook (Child Link)	30+
Twitter (Healthy Montgomery)	700+
Facebook (Child Care Support)	1.4K+
Instagram (Child Care Support)	600+
Facebook (Community Action Agency)	900+
Facebook (HIV Program)	100+
Twitter (HIV Program)	100+
Instagram (HIV Program)	300+
Facebook (Asian American HI)	700+
Twitter (Asian American HI)	400+
YouTube (Asian American HI)	500+
Instagram (Latino HI)	500+
Facebook (Latino HI)	3.9K+
Facebook (African American HP)	700+
Instagram (African American HP)	200+
Twitter (African American HP)	400+

DHHS distributes approximately ten newsletters on various topics. Examples includes Healthy Montgomery and the T2D Connection (Type 2 diabetes).


COVID-19

During the pandemic, DHHS served as the central communications hub for pandemic related information. The County hired an outside crisis communications consultant as the overall lead and the DHHS PIO was the leader for the County's crisis communication team.



The Department of Housing and Community Affairs (DHCA) prevents and corrects problems that contribute to the physical decline of residential and commercial areas; ensures fair and equitable relations between landlords and tenants; increases the supply of affordable housing in the County; maintains existing housing in a safe and sanitary condition; and supports the success of common ownership communities – all with a focus on reducing racial inequities and climate change impacts.

Social Media

								
Facebook	Flickr	Instagram	LinkedIn	Nextdoor	Pinterest	TikTok	Twitter	YouTube
✓							✓	✓

Other Communication Channels

								
Blog	Calendar	Handout	Newsletter	Podcast	Press Release	Publication	Subscription	TV
	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	

Communication Summary

DHCA has a dedicated Community Program Administrator who handles communications and other duties. DHCA has a strong focus on traditional media (i.e., flyers, website, newsletters, brochures, in-person outreach) to reach their target audiences: landlords, tenants, developers, and homeowners. DHCA also utilizes social media through Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube and uses the County's main Twitter account to reach a larger audience. DHCA is in the process of reinventing its website to be user-focused and to expand social media.

Newsletters

DHCA has a series of "Working Together" newsletters available through subscriptions and individualized for each target group: Common Ownership Communities, landlords and tenants, and developers.

DHCA administers webinars through YouTube on topics such as COVID-19 rent relief and the rental housing survey. The Department also runs targeted Zoom meetings for families that need support in institutions such as Montgomery County Public Schools, Montgomery College, and the Commission on Common Ownership Communities.

Website







The DHCA website features an area for time sensitive notifications at the top of each page, a slider with recent events/notices, an array of resources including reports and useful links to featured programs such as the Moderately Priced Dwelling Unit Program, and the DHCA service requests through MC311.

Social Media	Followers/ Subscribers
Facebook	700+
Twitter	400+
YouTube	10+



The Office of Human Resources administers the County government's human resources program to attract, develop, and retain a diverse, high-performing, and well-qualified work force.

Social Media

								
Facebook	Flickr	Instagram	LinkedIn	Nextdoor	Pinterest	TikTok	Twitter	YouTube
✓		✓	✓				✓	✓

Other Communication Channels

								
Blog	Calendar	Handout	Newsletter	Podcast	Press Release	Publication	Subscription	TV
		✓			✓	✓		

Communication Summary

The Office of Human Resources (OHR) has a two-person dedicated communications staff (a Communications Program Manager and a Communications Specialist). As the face of employment for the County, OHR places great emphasis on recruitment and uses both social media and traditional media. OHR has a broad social media presence over Facebook (two accounts), Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter, and YouTube. OHR sponsors and participates in career fairs and uses banners, business cards, brochures, and electronic digital boards for communication (created with assistance from the Public Information Office). The department has future plans to further utilize social media and other forms of advertising.

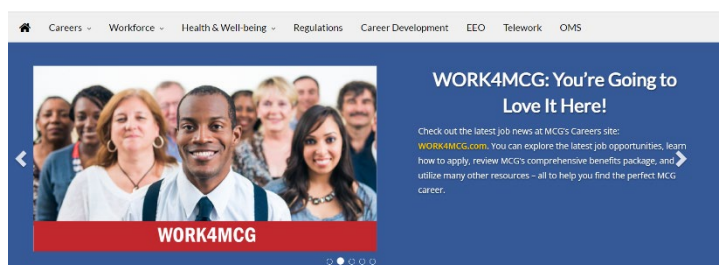
Live Well

OHR offers the Live Well program to promote the benefits of health and wellness for job applicants and for current employees. OHR has separate [Facebook](#) and [web pages](#) for the Live Well program.



Social Media	Followers/ Subscribers
LinkedIn	14K+
Twitter	400+
Facebook	400+
Facebook (Live Well)	400+
YouTube	50+
Instagram	30+
Instagram (Live Well)	50+

Department Homepage



OHR has a dynamic [homepage](#) that has "sliders" at the top of the screen to rotate recent and prominent information. The website also provides information for interested job applicants and resources for current employees.

The Office of Human Rights investigates incidents of hate/violence and complaints of discrimination. Victims of hate/violence crimes can seek compensation for replacement of property through the County's Partnership Fund, administered by the Office of Human Rights.

Social Media

								
Facebook	Flickr	Instagram	LinkedIn	Nextdoor	Pinterest	TikTok	Twitter	YouTube

Other Communication Channels

								
Blog	Calendar	Handout	Newsletter	Podcast	Press Release	Publication	Subscription	TV
	✓	✓				✓		

Communication Summary

The Office of Human Rights does not have dedicated communications staff. The department has a plethora of resources on its website for individuals who are: discriminated against in employment; public accommodations; real estate, and panic selling; and victims or witnesses of hate crimes and incidents. These resources include brochures, intake forms, and links regarding minimum wage, COVID-19, guidance for employers/employees, fair housing, civil rights, etc. The website also provides information on Human Rights Commission activities. The Office used to have a Facebook page but is currently inactive.

Ban-the-Box



With the Fair Criminal Record Screening Standards Law, employers are restricted from inquiring about a job applicant's criminal history. The Office provides [an entire web page](#) with resources about the law and how to file a complaint.










Community Relations and Outreach

The Office actively maintains community relations so residents and employees in the County know their rights, how to file a complaint, and how to participate in Office-supported groups/committees. Office initiatives include:

- Committee Against Hate Violence
- Partnership Fund
- Human Rights Hall of Fame
- Human Rights Camp
- Network of Neighbors
- Commission on Remembrance and Reconciliation

The Office of the Inspector General prevents and detects fraud, waste, and abuse in government activities and proposes ways to increase the legal, fiscal, and ethical accountability of County government and County-funded agencies.

Social Media

								
Facebook	Flickr	Instagram	LinkedIn	Nextdoor	Pinterest	TikTok	Twitter	YouTube
			✓					

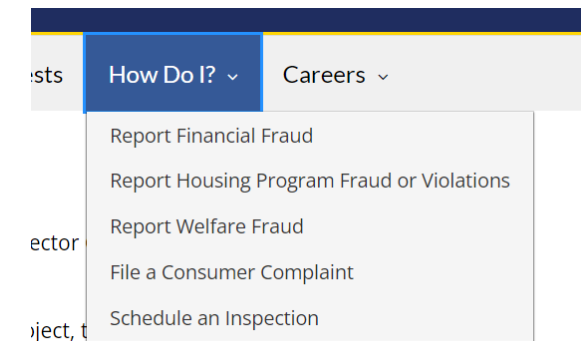
Other Communication Channels

								
Blog	Calendar	Handout	Newsletter	Podcast	Press Release	Publication	Subscription	TV
					✓	✓		

Communication Summary

The Office of the Inspector General's (OIG) primary outward communication to the public is the release of its [reports](#). The OIG does not have a dedicated communications position and staff share communications responsibilities. The OIG creates a [four-year work plan](#) that includes engagements (soon-to-be-reports) that are already in process and those the OIG expects to initiate in the four-year period. In addition, the OIG has an active [LinkedIn page](#) and the office's website has news releases organized by date and easy access to an [online complaint form](#) in English and Spanish to report fraud, waste, or abuse in County government.

How Do I?



to the Inspector General's report, which is

The ["How Do I?"](#) tab on the office's website provides straightforward information for how residents or business can report fraud. The OIG website also provides links to other County department services, including information on filing a consumer complaint (Office of Consumer Protection) and scheduling an inspection (Department of Permitting Services).










Searchable Publications

Reports					Annual Reports and Work Plans	
Show 10 entries					Search:	
Date	Fiscal Year	Type	Title	Agency	Ag	
2022/08/29	FY 2023	Report	Disposal of Surplus Property Utilizing GovDeals.com	Montgomery County Government		
2022/08/09	FY 2023	Bulletin	Cross Cutting Trends from FY21 and FY22 OIG Engagements	Montgomery County Government		
2022/06/10	FY 2022	Report	Retention of Employee Health Insurance Premiums by MCPS	Montgomery County Public Schools		
2022/05/12	FY 2022	Report	Criminal Background Investigations, OIG Publication #22-014	Montgomery County Department of Recreation		

The OIG's publications are organized by searchable "Reports" and "Annual Reports and Work Plans." The "Reports" detail the results of individual engagements and the "Annual Reports and Work Plans" include the office's annual report summarizing engagements and current and previous workplans.

The Office of Intergovernmental Relations represents the County interests at the regional, state and federal levels. The Office prepares the annual state legislative program and the annual federal priorities request and serves as liaison with state government and the County's state and congressional delegations.

Social Media

								
Facebook	Flickr	Instagram	LinkedIn	Nextdoor	Pinterest	TikTok	Twitter	YouTube

Other Communication Channels

								
Blog	Calendar	Handout	Newsletter	Podcast	Press Release	Publication	Subscription	TV

Communication Summary

The Office of Intergovernmental Relations (IGR) does not have dedicated communications staff. The department rarely interacts with the public because its main audiences are state and federal elected officials/staff and County departments and agencies. Overall, IGR's primary outward communications are through its website.

Current and Prior Years' Documents

- [Montgomery County's Federal Priorities](#)
- [Montgomery County's State Priorities](#)
- [Montgomery County's Transportation Priorities Letter to the State](#)
- [Montgomery County's Legislative Tracking Database](#)
- [End of State Legislative Session Summary](#)
- [State Grants for Capital Projects Located in Montgomery County \(Non-Transportation\)](#)
- [State Aid Allocated to Montgomery County](#)
- [Office of Intergovernmental Relations Staff Subject Matter Assignments](#)
- [Documents from Prior Years](#)

Useful Links





- [Maryland Congressional Delegation Committee Assignments](#)
- [U.S. Congress](#)
- [Find your Federal and State elected officials \(Maryland State Archives\)](#)
- [View detailed information about Maryland's 24 counties \(Maryland Association of Counties\)](#)
- [View list of Maryland Cities and Towns including elected officials \(Maryland Municipal League\)](#)
- [Maryland Manual Online: A Guide to Maryland \(Maryland State Archives\)](#)
- [Maryland General Assembly](#)
- [Maryland Department of Legislative Services](#)
- [Montgomery County Delegation](#)
- [View archived videos for Public Hearings Conducted by Montgomery County Delegation](#)
- [Maryland Association of Counties](#)
- [National Association of Counties](#)
- [Maryland Municipal League](#)

[Current documents](#) on the IGR web page include the County's legislative priorities, tracking of state legislation, state aid allocated to the County, and subject matter assignments. IGR also has links to [prior years' documents](#) back to 2007.

IGR's website provides a list of [relevant state government and federal government links](#).

The Office of Labor Relations fosters high-performing labor-management relationships through the use of collaborative and interest-based methods that demonstrate the possibilities of effective labor-management partnership and confirm the value of the County's workforce.

Social Media

								
Facebook	Flickr	Instagram	LinkedIn	Nextdoor	Pinterest	TikTok	Twitter	YouTube

Other Communication Channels

								
Blog	Calendar	Handout	Newsletter	Podcast	Press Release	Publication	Subscription	TV

Communication Summary

The Office of Labor Relations (OLR) does not have dedicated communications staff. The department rarely interacts with the public because their main audiences are County departments, employees, and labor unions. Overall, OLR's primary outward communications are through its website.

Bargaining Agreements

Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs)

		
MC GEO FY21-23	IAFF FY22-24	FOP FY21-23 <small>New</small>

Additional related documents may be found in the OLR Archive

Direct Bargaining Agreement (DBA)


MCV FRA FY21-23

OLR [posts the latest collective bargaining agreements](#) for MC GEO, IAFF, FOP, and the MCV FRA.

Bulletins and Links

Management Guidance Bulletins

This information provides guidance to managers who oversee MC GEO employees on hot topics within the labor relations field.










Resources

- Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)
- Annual Leave
- Notices to Employees
- Employee Participation in Union Activities
- Labor Management Relations Committees (LMRCs)

On its main web page, the office lists management guidance bulletins and conflict resolution resources for supervisors of MC GEO employees. The main page also has links for relevant laws and regulations.

The Office of Legislative Oversight provides accurate information, analysis, and independent findings and recommendations that help the County Council fulfill its legislative oversight function.

Social Media

								
Facebook	Flickr	Instagram	LinkedIn	Nextdoor	Pinterest	TikTok	Twitter	YouTube

Other Communication Channels

								
Blog	Calendar	Handout	Newsletter	Podcast	Press Release	Publication	Subscription	TV

Communication Summary

The Office of Legislative Oversight (OLO) does not have dedicated communications staff. OLO's primary outward communication to the public is the release of its reports and impact statements for bills and zoning text amendments. The Council approves a yearly OLO workplan that includes planned reports and assignments for the upcoming fiscal year. OLO also undertakes additional work and research at the request of the Council, as needed.

Streamlined Website

-  Reports released 2001-Present
-  Reports released between 1977 and 2000
-  Economic Impact Statements
-  Racial Equity and Social Justice Impact Statements
-  Racial Equity and Social Justice Impact Tools

Everything from its reports to contact information can be accessed directly from OLO's homepage.

OLO has a publicly-available Racial Equity and Social Justice [Legislative Review Tool](#) that describes the process OLO uses to analyze the racial equity and social justice impact of bills and zoning text amendments. Beginning in 2023, OLO now does Climate Assessments for Bills.










Updated Report Search

Report #	Report Name	Report Date	Report Author/s	Committee/s	Key Words
2022-13	Firearms: Availability, Data, And Legal Authority in Montgomery County, MD	2022/11/01	Bryant, Rubin	TBD	police, public safety, firearms, guns, gun violence, ghost guns, MCPD, trafficking, PMF
2022-12	Analysis of dataMontgomery Traffic Violations Dataset	2022/10/25	Carrizosa		racial equity, traffic enforcement, MCPD, police, disparities, discrimination, race, ethnicity
2022-11	Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) Principal Hiring, Selection and Evaluation Policies and Programs	2022/10/04	Latham	N/A	personnel, principals, human resources
2022-10	K-12 Virtual Education: Promising Practices	2022/09/14	Simmons	TBD	MCPS, Montgomery County Public Schools, virtual education, K12, online schools
2022-09	Establishing and Maintaining a Business-Friendly Environment: A Literature Review	2022/07/26	Trombka	TBD	economic development, workforce, tax incentives, regulation, business, capital, incubator, accelerator

As of November 2022, [OLO reports can be searched](#) by keywords and by report number, name, date, author, and Council committee (when applicable).

The Office of Management and Budget provides recommendations to the County Executive and County Council and acts where appropriate on resource allocation, fiscal policy, and related matters to support elected officials' policy agendas and the effective and efficient operation of County Government.

Social Media

								
Facebook	Flickr	Instagram	LinkedIn	Nextdoor	Pinterest	TikTok	Twitter	YouTube

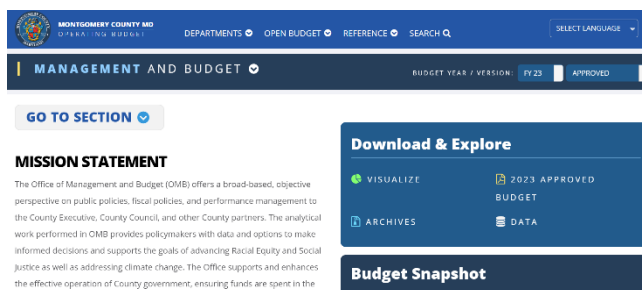
Other Communication Channels

								
Blog	Calendar	Handout	Newsletter	Podcast	Press Release	Publication	Subscription	TV
		✓			✓	✓		

Communication Summary

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) does not have dedicated communications staff. OMB's primary outward communication to the public is through its website along with the annual publication of the recommended and approved operating and capital budgets and the fiscal plan. For future communications plans, OMB is considering development of a calendar for residents to track the yearly budget schedule.

Interactive Budget



OMB's website has dynamic online [operating](#) and [capital](#) budget resources in multiple languages. Users can visualize departments' budgets through charts and graphs, view budget snapshots and trends, view archived previous budgets, and view data. The website also includes pdf versions of traditional printed budget books.










Budget Forums



OMB hosts hybrid in-person and virtual budget forums before release of the County Executive's recommended budget. These forums provide a platform for OMB to present information on the budget in English, Spanish, and Chinese and provide an opportunity for community members to offer input and ask budget-related questions.

The Merit System Protection Board (MSPB) oversees the County government's merit system and protects County government employee and job applicant rights guaranteed under the merit system law.

Social Media

								
Facebook	Flickr	Instagram	LinkedIn	Nextdoor	Pinterest	TikTok	Twitter	YouTube

Other Communication Channels

								
Blog	Calendar	Handout	Newsletter	Podcast	Press Release	Publication	Subscription	TV

Communication Summary

The MSPB does not have dedicated communications staff. The department rarely interacts with the public unless an applicant did not get a job they applied for and they fill out the Merit System Protection Board Appeal Form. Overall, the MSPB's primary outward communications are through its website.

Annual Reports

The MSPB provides historic annual reports on its website. Reports from the most recently completed year (2022) are available along with historic reports from [1981- 2021](#).

Decisions

The MSPB website includes published decisions by year from FY18 to FY23. Decisions are categorized by case number, decision type, appeal issue, and date.

Appeals Process

The Personnel Regulations provide an opportunity for Merit System employees and applicants to file written appeals with the Merit System Protection Board. [Read more!](#)

Appeals Form




Merit System employees and applicants may now file a written appeal online through a web based form. [Access it online!](#)

Types of Appeals










- [Grievance](#)
- [Disciplinary Action or Termination](#)
- [Denial of Employment](#)

The Department of Permitting Services (DPS) staff reviews, approves and processes construction plans and permits with an emphasis on safety and sustainability, along with conducting inspections of structures, rights-of-way and development, and investigates property complaints.

Social Media

								
Facebook	Flickr	Instagram	LinkedIn	Nextdoor	Pinterest	TikTok	Twitter	YouTube
✓		✓		✓			✓	✓

Other Communication Channels

								
Blog	Calendar	Handout	Newsletter	Podcast	Press Release	Publication	Subscription	TV
	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

Communication Summary

DPS utilizes a mix of social and traditional media to inform the public of its programs and services. DPS has one dedicated communications staff person – an outreach manager – responsible for much of the Department's outreach. However, each division provides its own communication outreach and materials. All permit technicians are currently staffed under customer service and outreach.

Instead of having its own social media presence, DPS has found it more effective to utilize the County's social media accounts, including Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram and NextDoor.

Newsletters

DPS has two newsletters. The monthly Constructive Comments is the primary newsletter that summarizes DPS events, information sessions and provides residents the opportunity to complete a customer satisfaction survey. Readers are encouraged to subscribe to the newsletter.

Community Outreach

DPS conducts community outreach in a variety of ways including creating flyers/brochures/posters in English and Spanish, utilizing the County's digital boards & the County's website slider, setting up tables at fairs/events, speaking at events and meetings when requested, hosting workshops for customers, and participating in local podcasts and the County's Spanish-language radio show.

Website







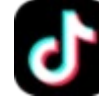


DPS' website is its primary platform for sharing information with the public. The website has a significant amount of relevant information and provides eServices:

- Information on permits, inspections, licenses, and fees;
- Relevant codes;
- Information and tools for homeowners, professionals, and businesses on various permitting requirements; and
- Online services, including applying and paying for permits, uploading plans, scheduling inspections, status checks and data searches.



The Department of Police (MCPD) aims to safeguard life and property, preserve the peace, prevent and detect crime, enforce the law, and protect the rights of all residents.

Social Media

								
Facebook	Flickr	Instagram	LinkedIn	Nextdoor	Pinterest	TikTok	Twitter	YouTube
✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓

Other Communication Channels

								
Blog	Calendar	Handout	Newsletter	Podcast	Press Release	Publication	Subscription	TV
	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	

Communication Summary

MCPD's Public Information Office (PIO) serves as the "hub" of all Department communications and PIO staff are the official spokespeople for MCPD. The PIO is responsible for media relations, management of department wide social media, and creating video content. The office consists of a communications director, two police officers (serve as public information officers), a professional staff public information officer, a contract videographer, and an office administrator. The office is currently posting a position for a Hispanic liaison. In addition to the PIO, MCPD's Community Engagement Division provides outreach and education through community events. Each MCPD district and division also conducts its own communication and outreach.

Social Media

MCPD has a significant social media presence that includes publishing information on crime in the County/asking for information on crime, community events, missing person information, and updates on laws in the state. The Chief of Police also has his own Twitter account.

Social Media	Followers/ Subscribers
Twitter	107K+
Facebook	66K+
YouTube	2.7K+
Instagram	2.3K+
LinkedIn	300+

In addition to the platforms listed above, the Community Engagement Division and each MCPD district have their own [Nextdoor](#) pages.

Data Publications

MCPD publishes many public safety data reports, including weekly crime summaries, Internal Affairs reports, and speed camera/red light camera revenue data (among others). MCPD also publishes an online interactive crime incident map.

Community Events









The Community Engagement Division attends and hosts a significant number of events throughout the year organized by the County, the school system, and community organizations.



MCPD posts its weekly crime summary to its homepage, as well as other crime data.

The Office of Procurement facilitates the purchasing of goods and services for the County Government.

Social Media

								
Facebook	Flickr	Instagram	LinkedIn	Nextdoor	Pinterest	TikTok	Twitter	YouTube
✓			✓				✓	✓

Other Communication Channels

								
Blog	Calendar	Handout	Newsletter	Podcast	Press Release	Publication	Subscription	TV
	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	

Communication Summary

The Office of Procurement's communication is done primarily by one staff member, an outreach manager. The position's main responsibility is to advertise the department's Minority, Female, and Disabled (MFD) Owned Business and Local Small Business Reserve (LSBRP) programs, but the position has become the de facto communications manager. The outreach manager cultivates and maintains relationships with local chambers and business organizations to get the word out about upcoming solicitations and events. The outreach manager's knowledge of procurement initiatives allows them to represent the department at conferences, meetings, and trade shows. Other procurement staff do communication work with the public in addition to other job duties. Procurement uses a combination of online and in-person outreach to obtain their target audience – vendors. Note that while this report focuses on communication with the community, Procurement has another significant "audience" – the County's using departments.



Community Outreach

Procurement does a variety of community outreach projects. It:

- Hosts monthly open houses (currently online);
- Hosts annual spring and fall events to bring together vendors and other County agencies;
- Distributes flyers and a pocketbook that outlines how vendors register with the County and how to find solicitations;
- Livestreams procurement events via County Cable; and
- Pre-Covid, staff would attend 30-35 events per year.

Social Media

The Office has a significant social media presence including [Facebook](#) (500+ followers), [Twitter](#) (600+ followers), [YouTube](#) (700+ followers), and [LinkedIn](#) (100+ followers). All platforms provide information on open houses and other procurement events, along with weekly links to the Office's newsletter.

Newsletter

Procurement publishes a weekly newsletter, the *Business Opportunities Newsletter*, available through its website, on social media channels, and through email subscription. The newsletter provides information on available solicitations, upcoming/previous events, law/policy updates, and vendor resources. Staff report that approximately 25,000 people subscribe to the newsletter via email with a 25-30% open rate.






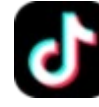



Office of
Procurement
MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MD

Business Opportunities Newsletter

The Office of Public Information communicates with the public, the County Executive, departments and agencies, media, County employees, the County Council, and other elected officials, businesses, and civic groups through the mass media, internet, press conferences, publications, and cable television programming.

Social Media

								
Facebook	Flickr	Instagram	LinkedIn	Nextdoor	Pinterest	TikTok	Twitter	YouTube
✓	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓

Other Communication Channels

								
Blog	Calendar	Handout	Newsletter	Podcast	Press Release	Publication	Subscription	TV
✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓

Communication Summary

The Office of Public Information (PIO) is the spokesperson for the County Government (excluding the County Council and Judicial departments) and the central contact for non-emergency service requests through MC311. The PIO has 18 dedicated communications staff, excluding MC311 (Director of Public Information, three Manager II positions, Program Manager, Senior Executive Administrative Aide, IT Specialist, five Visual Information Specialists, and six Public Information Officers). The Office provides communication services to the County Executive, County departments (especially those without dedicated communications staff), and coordinates County-wide communications. The Office's structure is divided into public information (press releases, social media), production (photography, video content, cable, graphic design, electric signboards), and MC311.

Social Media	Followers/ Subscribers	Social Media	Followers/ Subscribers
Twitter	96K+	WhatsApp	1.5K+
Nextdoor	283K+	YouTube	2.6K+
Facebook	30K+	Instagram	200+
Twitter (MC311)	2.8K+	Flickr	100+

Blogs

The Office manages two blogs – one for the [County](#) and one for [MC311](#). The County blog is more active and includes messages from the County Executive, department-specific announcements and information, and upcoming events and activities in the County.

County Website

The Office and TEBS maintain and update the "Montgomery County, MD" [website](#) – particularly the site's main landing page. The Office utilizes the sliders at the top of the screen to display current news, events, and important information.

COVID-19 Impact

The COVID-19 pandemic changed and enhanced how the PIO communicates with residents, departments, and media. The County Executive now holds weekly Zoom meetings with media. The Office also expanded its social media use and utilizes multiple languages to disseminate important County messages.

The PIO has several distribution lists that disseminate information to various audiences:







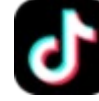


- Press releases (10K+ unique recipients);
- Media advisories (5K+ unique recipients); and
- Weekly newsletter (505K+ unique recipients).

Public Libraries

montgomerycountymd.gov/library/

Montgomery County Public Libraries (MCPL) makes library services available to the public through information services: Public Access Catalog; automated phone renewal; regularly scheduled preschool programming; meeting room use; and a comprehensive collection of materials.

Social Media

								
Facebook	Flickr	Instagram	LinkedIn	Nextdoor	Pinterest	TikTok	Twitter	YouTube
✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Other Communication Channels

								
Blog	Calendar	Handout	Newsletter	Podcast	Press Release	Publication	Subscription	TV
✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	

Communication Summary

Montgomery County Public Libraries (MCPL) has three positions who lead communications, among other duties (Manager II, Administrative Specialist II, and a Program Manager II). MCPL has the broadest use of both traditional media and social media channels among County departments, utilizing seven social media platforms and most types of traditional media. In addition, MCPL routinely assists other departments with their work because MCPL has a steady flow of foot traffic. Examples include libraries having tables with COVID-19 test kits and masks (HHS), handing out lightbulbs (DEP) and providing information on mental health (HHS).

Social Media	Followers/Subscribers
Facebook	10K+
Twitter	7K+
Instagram	3K+
Pinterest	700+
YouTube	400+
Flickr	50+
TikTok	10+

MCPL heavily uses social media to reach County residents and is planning on adding another social media channel on Discord.

MCPL publishes eight newsletters with over 265K total subscribers, including general MCPL news, job seeker information, and newsletters targeted by age of recipient (adult, teen, child, etc.). MCPL also targets customers receiving their first library card with a "New Cardholders" newsletter.

Community Outreach

MCPL hosts events to advertise its services at libraries, off-site, and virtually. In FY22, the outreach team hosted 77 events. Virtual events include conversations with an author, in-person events include story time readings at libraries (in English and Spanish), and off-site events include participating in municipality or County events. These [events](#) are prominently listed on the MCPL website and on its [blog](#).

To reach more County residents, MCPL is planning on having an electric Outreach Van that will be able to bring the department's services to non-traditional places and events.










The department publishes an annual [Report to the Community](#), which details MCPL's accomplishments over the past year.

Racial Equity & Social Justice

montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/

The Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice is focused on advancing racial equity and dismantling structural racism in County Government. The Office supports the Racial Equity and Social Justice Committee, trains County staff, conducts department equity assessments, and assists with department racial equity action plans.

Social Media

								
Facebook	Flickr	Instagram	LinkedIn	Nextdoor	Pinterest	TikTok	Twitter	YouTube

Other Communication Channels

								
Blog	Calendar	Handout	Newsletter	Podcast	Press Release	Publication	Subscription	TV

Communication Summary

The Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice (ORESJ) does not have dedicated communications staff. The department rarely interacts with the public because its main audiences are County departments and employees. However, when more staff are hired, the Office plans on putting out a quarterly newsletter to departments and have a social media presence. ORESJ's primary outward communications are through its website.

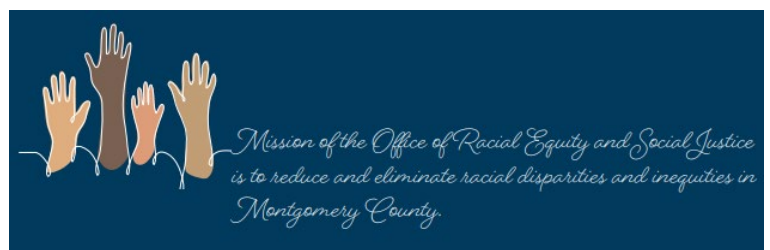
Annual Report



ORESJ is a new department created in December 2019. Its website includes an [annual report](#) from its first year of operation, detailing training, core teams, racial equity policy analysis, racial equity and social justice tools, community outreach, and the Racial Equity and Social Justice Committee.








Resources

The Office provides a page of helpful [racial equity and social justice links](#) that includes legislation and reports; OLO reports; community resources; suggested readings; and other resources.



The Department of Recreation provides high quality, diverse, and accessible programs, activities, services, and facilities to enhance the quality of life for people of all ages, abilities, and communities in the County.

Social Media

								
Facebook	Flickr	Instagram	LinkedIn	Nextdoor	Pinterest	TikTok	Twitter	YouTube
✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓

Other Communication Channels

								
Blog	Calendar	Handout	Newsletter	Podcast	Press Release	Publication	Subscription	TV
	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	

Communication Summary

The Department of Recreation (REC) has a significant traditional media presence, including its own dedicated online [communication hub](#) on its website. Recreation's communications are managed by a Public Information Officer with the help of several staff including a Program Manager (press/social media), an IT specialist (website), a Program Specialist (content), and a part time Graphic Artist contractor. Staff report the department has strong relationships with local organizations who help support communication efforts.

Social Media

Recreation has a broad social media presence. Staff report that the department pays for ads on various social media platforms.

*Recently launched

Platform	Followers/ Subscribers
Facebook	14K+
Twitter	6K+
Instagram	3K+
YouTube	200+
TikTok*	50+
Flickr	20+

Community Events

Recreation staff participate in community events and forums every weekend of the year. Examples include the Pool Pooch Party, Summer Camp Fair, Contractors Fair, a Senior Picnic, and the County's two Fourth of July fireworks shows. Recreation staff also have a strong relationship with MCPS to communicate available services and activities. The Youth Development Team works extensively with MCPS to promote out of school and after school activities. Recreation also has a web page on the MCPS website directing customers to our after-school and out-of-school time programs.

Seasonal Guide

The primary way the public learns about classes, activities and events is through five seasonal guides. It is now an online digital guide from which the public can print out customized guides. Recreation also has "rack cards" all over the County that contain a QR code to access the guide.

Communications & Public Outreach



Press Releases
Videos
Events
Photo Gallery

Regional Service Office – Bethesda-Chevy Chase (Community Engagement Cluster)

montgomerycountymd.gov/bcc/

The Bethesda-Chevy Chase Regional Service Office is part of the Community Engagement Cluster and works with local community representatives to assess and address community needs, problems, and issues. Its community partner is the Bethesda Urban Partnership.

Social Media

								
Facebook	Flickr	Instagram	LinkedIn	Nextdoor	Pinterest	TikTok	Twitter	YouTube
✓		✓					✓	

Other Communication Channels

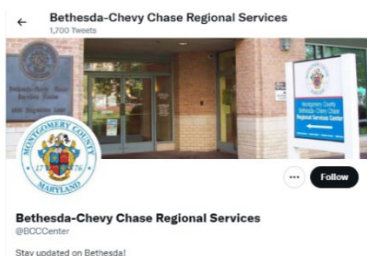
								
Blog	Calendar	Handout	Newsletter	Podcast	Press Release	Publication	Subscription	TV
	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	

Communication Summary

The Bethesda-Chevy Chase (B-CC) Regional Service Office communicates with the public using a mix of traditional and social media, with a focus on community events. The RSO has no dedicated communications staff; all staff contribute to communication efforts. One special note for the B-CC RSO is that its partnership with the Bethesda Urban Partnership (BUP) provides access to a significant amount of ground roots outreach.

Social Media

The B-CC Regional Service Office uses two social media platforms to inform the public of community events and services available: [Facebook](#) (400+ followers) and [Twitter](#) (1K+ followers).



Website

The B-CC RSO [website](#) provides a significant amount of information on available services, facility tenants, and community/land development issues. It also provides information on the Western Montgomery County Citizens Advisory Board and the White Flint Downtown Advisory Committee.

Bethesda Urban Partnership

The Bethesda Urban Partnership, working in conjunctions with the B-CC RSO, undertakes most community outreach. Staff are visible in the community, attending events such as Bike Day, Veteran's Day events, and Taste of Bethesda. BUP highlights events on its own website and social media accounts:

- [Facebook](#) (7.2K+ followers);
- [Twitter](#) (5K+ followers); and
- [Instagram](#) (3.2K+ followers).



Newsletter




The B-CC RSO newsletter is an electronic bi-weekly newsletter available via subscription with over 7,000 subscribers.

Regional Service Office – Eastern County (Community Engagement Cluster)

montgomerycountymd.gov/eastcounty

The Eastern County Regional Service Office is part of the Community Engagement Cluster and works with local community representatives to assess and address community needs, problems, and issues in the Eastern region of the County, including Burtonsville, Briggs Chaney, Colesville, Hillandale, Calverton, Fairland, White Oak, Ashton-Sandy Spring.

Social Media

								
Facebook	Flickr	Instagram	LinkedIn	Nextdoor	Pinterest	TikTok	Twitter	YouTube

Other Communication Channels

								
Blog	Calendar	Handout	Newsletter	Podcast	Press Release	Publication	Subscription	TV
	✓		✓			✓	✓	

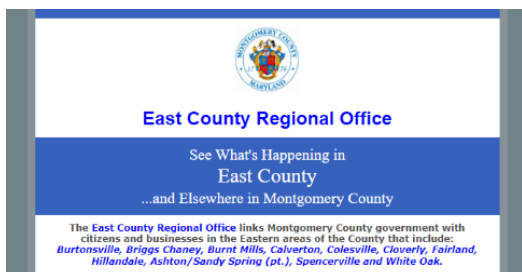
Communication Summary

The Eastern County Regional Service Office (RSO) provides information to the public through a variety of methods, including a subscription newsletter, its website, and community events. There are no dedicated communication staff in the Eastern RSC. All office staff contribute to communication (assisted by the CEC centralized Business Management Team).

Newsletter

The primary method of communication with the community is the electronic distribution of the Eastern County RSC Newsletter. The weekly newsletter provides extensive information:

- Advisory Board updates;
- County Government news;
- East County events;
- Community meeting information;
- Available resources;
- Volunteer opportunities; and
- Job postings.



Staff report that relationships with local organizations (civic associations, non-profits, etc.) are a key communication tool for the RSO. The Eastern RSO uses other organizations social media platforms and mailing lists to get important information out. The Eastern RSO will also use other County newsletters/outreach efforts to distribute information, including the OCP/Gilchrist Center, WorkSource Montgomery, and the Department of Recreation.

Community Events









Eastern RSO staff participate in numerous community-building activities where they share information on County events and services. These include National Night Out, hot dog nights, attendance at faith-based activities, health/job fairs, food distributions, and visiting various apartment complexes. The RSO makes a special effort to ensure that activities are culturally sensitive and include local organizational leaders.

Regional Service Office – Mid-County (Community Engagement Cluster)

montgomerycountymd.gov/midcounty/

The Mid-County Regional Service Office is part of the Community Engagement Cluster and works with local community representatives to assess and address community needs, problems, and issues in Wheaton and the surrounding areas.

Social Media

								
Facebook	Flickr	Instagram	LinkedIn	Nextdoor	Pinterest	TikTok	Twitter	YouTube
✓		✓		✓			✓	

Other Communication Channels

								
Blog	Calendar	Handout	Newsletter	Podcast	Press Release	Publication	Subscription	TV
	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	

Communication Summary

The Mid-County Regional Service Office (RSO) provides information to the public through a variety of methods including social media, subscription newsletter, its website, and community events. The RSO also advertises events on local radio shows. There are no dedicated communication staff in the Mid-County RSO; the staff in the office are responsible for all communication. However, the RSO's partner, the Wheaton Urban District, have dedicated communication/outreach staff.

Newsletter

The Mid-County RSO distributes a weekly newsletter that summarizes community updates and events, provides information on available services, showcases volunteer opportunities, and has updates on local advisory boards.



Mid-County RSO staff report one of the key communication tools the RSO uses is networks - both

in County Government and the community. Staff participate in an informal Latino Communication Group with staff from multiple departments to talk weekly about Spanish-language communication. Mid-County staff further report that community networks are the best form of communication - fostering relationships at neighborhood block parties, local businesses, and at chamber events.

Wheaton Urban District

The Wheaton Urban District (WUD) is a partner of the Mid-County RSO and provides special services to the Central Business District. The RSO works with the PIO to issues press releases for the UD and also promotes UD events.

The UD has dedicated communication staff, including a marketing manager and contractors for social media, the website, and graphic design. UD staff attend community events, distribute flyers/pamphlets in the downtown area, and answer questions. The UD manages its own website and social media, including [Instagram](#) (700+ followers), [Twitter](#) (2.3K+ followers), and

Social Media









The Mid-County RSO does limited social media outreach. It has a [Facebook](#) page but does not use it. Rather, staff report the RSO uses the County's Spanish Facebook page, the County's Nextdoor account, and the County's Spanish WhatsApp account to communicate.

Regional Service Office – Silver Spring (Community Engagement Cluster)

montgomerycountymd.gov/silverspring/

The Silver Spring Regional Service Office is part of the Community Engagement Cluster and works with local community representatives to assess and address community needs, problems, and issues in Silver Spring.

Social Media

								
Facebook	Flickr	Instagram	LinkedIn	Nextdoor	Pinterest	TikTok	Twitter	YouTube
✓		✓		✓			✓	

Other Communication Channels

								
Blog	Calendar	Handout	Newsletter	Podcast	Press Release	Publication	Subscription	TV
	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	

Communication Summary

The Silver Spring Regional Service Office (RSO) uses a mix of social and traditional media to provide information to the public, with a focus on community events. There are no dedicated communications staff. The director is responsible for communication. Staff report the Center is in the process of hiring a regional manager who will focus on community engagement, among other duties. One special note for the RSO is its partnership with the Silver Spring Urban District, which provides a significant amount of grassroots outreach.

Newsletter

The RSO sends out a weekly electronic newsletter, with 4-6K recipients. The newsletter includes information on:

- Local community events;
- Volunteer/charity opportunities;
- Important County events/government happenings; and
- Upcoming board meetings.



Website

The [website](http://www.silverspringdowntown.com) provides information on Silver Spring and Urban District Advisory Boards, Arts and Entertainment District, a variety of community newsletter resources, and a data-driven neighborhood analysis report.

Silver Spring Urban District

The Silver Spring Urban District (SSUD) provides enhanced services to the Central Business District to ensure that downtown Silver Spring is maintained as a clean, safe, and attractive environment. SSUD is responsible for most of the community outreach. Its staff is visible in the community and it sponsors events such as a summer concert series, the Silver Spring Jazz Festival, and the Montgomery County Thanksgiving Parade.

The SSUD has its own website and significant social media presence: [Twitter](#) (2.1K+ followers); [Facebook](#) (3K+ followers); and [Instagram](#) (6.5K+ followers).












Regional Service Office – Upcounty (Community Engagement Cluster)

montgomerycountymd.gov/upcounty/

The Upcounty Regional Service Office is part of the Community Engagement Cluster and works with local community representatives to assess and address community needs, problems, and issues in the northern half of the County.

Social Media

								
Facebook	Flickr	Instagram	LinkedIn	Nextdoor	Pinterest	TikTok	Twitter	YouTube

Other Communication Channels

								
Blog	Calendar	Handout	Newsletter	Podcast	Press Release	Publication	Subscription	TV
			✓			✓	✓	

Communication Summary

The Upcounty Regional Service Office (RSO) provides information to the public through a variety of methods, including a subscription newsletter, on its website, and community events. There are no dedicated communication staff in the Upcounty RSO; the staff in the office are responsible for all communication.

Newsletter

The primary way information is disseminated by the Upcounty Regional Service Office is via its weekly electronic newsletter that provides information on Upcounty community events, general County updates, and COVID-19 updates.



Website

The Upcounty RSO's website provides information on the County's campaign to end panhandling, the Upcounty Citizen's Advisory Board, and Take Out Tuesdays (a community event).

Annual Report





The Upcounty Regional Service Office also publishes its annual report on its website – the latest one was completed in 2019. The annual report includes information on:



- Advisory Board's Year in Summary;
- Advisory Board guest speakers;
- Correspondence with the County Executive; and
- Summary of Center Services/Partners.

The Sheriff's Office provides general law enforcement, judicial enforcement, and specialized public safety services (including the Family Justice Center) to County residents.

Social Media

								
Facebook	Flickr	Instagram	LinkedIn	Nextdoor	Pinterest	TikTok	Twitter	YouTube
✓								✓

Other Communication Channels

								
Blog	Calendar	Handout	Newsletter	Podcast	Press Release	Publication	Subscription	TV
		✓						

Communication Summary

The Sheriff Office's primary outward communication is through its website, which provides information on [evictions](#), [the Family Justice Center](#), [job application process information](#), [Sheriff's sales](#), and pertinent links to information including local police departments. The Office uses [Facebook](#) for recruiting purposes. The Office has a YouTube site but has not used it recently. The Sheriff's Office does not have a dedicated communications position; communication responsibilities are shared by staff. In the future, the Office would like to modernize its website, post more information on Facebook, and work on its "brand."

Facebook



The Sheriff's Office has managed a [Facebook](#) page since 2012 and has 6.3K+ followers. The department occasionally posts "Good News of the Day," recruitment information, and other pertinent news.









Community Events



The department participates in community events (e.g., National Night Out) to provide information about the department and to also recruit prospective employees.

The State's Attorney's Office prosecutes County criminal violations, educates the public on criminal justice issues, provides lawyer training, addresses inequality and promotes criminal justice system fairness, ensures criminal justice system access, promotes professional court relations, and furthers efficient criminal justice resources use.

Social Media

								
Facebook	Flickr	Instagram	LinkedIn	Nextdoor	Pinterest	TikTok	Twitter	YouTube
✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓

Other Communication Channels

								
Blog	Calendar	Handout	Newsletter	Podcast	Press Release	Publication	Subscription	TV
			✓		✓		✓	

Communication Summary

The State's Attorney's Office (SAO) has a dedicated Director of Public Affairs who handles communication and coordinates with SAO staff on communication efforts. The SAO has a visible social media presence through Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Nextdoor (through the County's account), Twitter, and YouTube. Furthermore, the SAO publishes a monthly newsletter that highlights SAO activities (not specific cases), prepares regular press releases, provides program information and forms on its website, and releases statements about major issues from the State's Attorney.

Social Media



Platform	Followers/Subscribers
Facebook	1.0K+
Twitter	690+
Instagram	200+
LinkedIn	170+
YouTube	70+





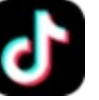


Community Outreach



The SAO has a community outreach team of attorneys that participate in community events and provides information about the office. Event examples include Olney Days, the Wheaton Community Safety Summit, and peace walks/events.

The Department of Technology and Enterprise Business Solutions provides technology solutions and services to facilitate the delivery of a wide range of services in all branches of government.

Social Media

								
Facebook	Flickr	Instagram	LinkedIn	Nextdoor	Pinterest	TikTok	Twitter	YouTube
✓		✓		✓			✓	✓

Other Communication Channels

								
Blog	Calendar	Handout	Newsletter	Podcast	Press Release	Publication	Subscription	TV
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓

Communication Summary

The Department of Technology and Enterprise Business Solutions (TEBS) does not have dedicated communications staff but does provide support for communications in all County departments. The Office provides technology assistance by creating/updating websites, addressing software needs (to enable communications), enabling data collection and transparency, providing mapping services, and even providing temporary contractual staffing when needed. TEBS has two offices that facilitate County communications: the Office of Digital Transformation (County websites, dataMontgomery, gov delivery, email subscriptions, Geographic Information Systems) and the Office of Broadband Programs (Montgomery Connects, Community Engagement, and Broadband, Cable, & Franchise).










Social Media	Followers/ Subscribers
Twitter (Cable)	7.4K+
YouTube (Council CCM)	4.5K+
Facebook (Connect)	3.7K+
Facebook (Cable)	1.7K+
Instagram (Cable)	1K+
Instagram (Connect)	700+
Twitter (dataMont)	700+
Twitter (Connect)	600+
Facebook (Podcast)	500+
Twitter (BBand)	500+
YouTube (CCM)	200+
Facebook	200+
Facebook (BBand)	100+
Facebook (Group)	100+
Facebook (BLine)	100+
Twitter (Ultra Mont)	50+

With County employees required to work from home during the COVID-19 pandemic, TEBS had to quickly respond to technological needs for outgoing communications. For example, TEBS had to create the County COVID-19 information portal to quickly give guidance, infection data, testing info, etc. TEBS also quickly provided County workers who suddenly moved to telework with support and resources.

With the execution of the [Open Data Bill](#), TEBS has been administering [dataMontgomery](#) since 2013, providing users with direct access to County department datasets in multiple formats so they can be viewed, sorted, and analyzed. TEBS maintains the platform and actively coordinates with departments on making the data sets clear and easy to understand. dataMontgomery has data from every County Executive department and from some legislative branch offices. The datasets are static or updated regularly, depending on the data type.

The Department of Transportation (MCDOT) provides an equitable, environmentally responsible, and safe Countywide transportation system that connects people and places through new infrastructure and maintenance.

Social Media

								
Facebook	Flickr	Instagram	LinkedIn	Nextdoor	Pinterest	TikTok	Twitter	YouTube
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓

Other Communication Channels

								
Blog	Calendar	Handout	Newsletter	Podcast	Press Release	Publication	Subscription	TV
✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	

Communication Summary

DOT is currently in the process of consolidating its communication efforts – the department has created a central Communications Team. The team has five staff. One Communications Manager, one staff responsible for the newsletter, graphics, website updates, information gathering, Adopt A Road program management, GovDelivery posting and media placement audits; two staff work on social media, press releases, partnerships and the commuter outreach programs, and one staff focused on press event coordination, website updates, event materials and specializes in grant writing and bus rapid transit (BRT) promotion (there is also a contractor for BRT marketing). The team has a weekly meeting to update/edit the comprehensive Excel based media plan for all outgoing communications. In addition to the central team, DOT divisions provide information and draft releases but almost everything goes through the Communications Team. Four of the divisions have contractors that assist with outreach, education and specific project marketing tasks.

Social Media

MCDOT has recently consolidated almost all its divisions' social media presence into one MCDOTNow account (with daily posts on all social media platforms). MCDOT is currently consolidating its YouTube accounts.

- [Twitter](#) – 5.1K+ followers;
- [Facebook](#) – 1.1K+ followers;
- [Instagram](#) – 1.2K+ followers;
- [LinkedIn](#) – 70+ followers;
- [YouTube](#) – 10+ subscribers; and
- [Flickr](#) – 10+ followers (new).

The public can subscribe to numerous email and text alerts regarding MCDOT operations.

MCDOT completes a significant amount of traditional media including weekly press releases, hosting press conferences, attendance at community events; flyers/brochures; and advertising within buses and transit centers.

RideOn

Ride On is the one division that will maintain its own social media presence, including [Facebook](#) (8K+ followers), [Twitter](#) (3K+ followers), and [Instagram](#) (1K+ followers). MCDOT will consolidate Ride On's YouTube channel (310 subscribers) into the main MCDOT YouTube

Newsletters

MCDOT distributes information via numerous newsletters – about MCDOT in general and for specific MCDOT projects. Examples include a Ride On Transportation Newsletter, White Flint Redevelopment Project Newsletter, Commuter Services Newsletter, and Safe Routes to School Newsletter. Many area and highway projects also distribute newsletters.






MCDOT also maintains GoMontgomery! – an online blog (and electronic newsletter subscription) that provides information about major department announcements and programs, roads, transit, hiker-biker trails and pedestrian safety.

Zoning and Administrative Hearings

montgomerycountymd.gov/ozah

The Office of Zoning and Administrative Hearings (OZAH) conducts due process hearings in land use and other administrative matters in a manner that protects the rights of the participants, provides a complete record in each case, results in a thorough and balanced report or decision, and serves the public interest.

Social Media

								
Facebook	Flickr	Instagram	LinkedIn	Nextdoor	Pinterest	TikTok	Twitter	YouTube

Other Communication Channels

								
Blog	Calendar	Handout	Newsletter	Podcast	Press Release	Publication	Subscription	TV

Communication Summary

OZAH's primary outreach is through its website, which provides information on public hearings in land use applications and other matters, such as human rights discrimination cases, contested cases referred by agencies, and accessory dwelling unit objection and waiver cases. OZAH's website includes transcripts of all public hearings, copies of its decisions and recommendations, an up-to-date hearing schedule and information on how to participate and attend public hearings. OZAH does not have a dedicated communications position and the communications responsibilities are shared by staff.

Frequently Used Resources

Frequently Used Resources

- [OZAH Rules Governing Small Cell Tower Applications](#)
- [NEW - OZAH Rules of Procedure for Agency Referral and Accessory Dwelling Unit Cases](#), Adopted 10-30-18, in Council Resolution 18-1276 ** The new Rules of Procedure went into effect on October 18, 2018 for Agency Referral cases, and went into effect on January 15, 2019 for accessory apartment cases.
- [Local Map Amendment and Conditional Use Fee Schedule](#) - effective Sept. 14, 2016
- [Information for Filing Applications for Local Map Amendments](#)
- OZAH's [Amended Land Use Rules of Procedure](#) - effective April 25, 2017
- Form for Plan [Certification Blocks](#) in Rezoning Cases
- [Zoning Ordinance](#) (County Code, Chapter 59)
- [Zoning Map](#) - effective October 30, 2014 (on the Montgomery Planning website)
- [Zoning Code Companion Documents](#) (on the Montgomery Planning website)
- [Contact the Department Of Permitting Services](#) for matters such as Requesting a Building Permit, Contacting a Zoning Specialist, Locating the Zoning Classification of Property and Zoning Setbacks.
- [Contact the Department of Housing and Community Affairs](#) for matters relating to Accessory Dwelling Unit licenses.

The Frequently Used Resources section is front and center on the OZAH website, making it easier for users to find the most frequently used links/documents.

Reports for Zoning Cases

Development Plan Amendments and Schematic Development Plan Amendments

Case No.	Case Name	Date of Report
SDPA 16-01	In the Matter of Wildwood Medical Center, LLC	Jul. 27, 2016
DPA 15-01	In the Matter of USL2 MR Montgomery Village Business Trust	Oct. 7, 2015
DPA 13-02	In the Matter of Adventist Healthcare, Inc. and Cabin Branch Commons, LLC	Dec. 9, 2013
SDPA 12-1	In the Matter of Wildwood Medical Center, LLC	Dec. 10, 2012
DPA 05-2	In the Matter of Branch Banking & Trust Company (BB&T)	Feb. 3, 2011
DPA 11-1	In the Matter of Clarksburg Village Center, LLC - <i>After Remand</i>	Nov. 9, 2011
DPA 11-1	In the Matter of Clarksburg Village Center, LLC	Jan. 31, 2011
DPA 09-1	In the Matter of Fairland Development, LLC and Fairland Development II, LLC	Jul. 9, 2009
DPA 08-2	In the Matter of Stabler 1848 (Goddard School)	Jan. 30, 2009

The reports available online include development plan, schematic development plan, local map, and floating zone plan amendments. They are in order by amendment type and the most recent reports are listed first.

Chapter 3. Communications in Local Jurisdictions

Government communication can be defined as “all the activities of public sector institutions and organizations that are aimed at conveying and sharing information.”¹ Creating a strong identity and message through communication allows government to provide the public with adequate information on priorities, policies, and programs. Effective communication can also contribute to the public’s trust of government.

The journal *Humanities and Social Sciences Communication* has ten recommendations for effective government communication.² While the following was written for health communications during the COVID-19 pandemic, it mirrors other research findings on effective government communications. The focus of these recommendations is transparency and civic engagement to establish trust:

1. Engage in clear and specific communication.
2. Strive for maximum credibility by leveraging trusted, authoritative intermediaries to communicate key messages.
3. Communicate with empathy and listen to the community’s needs and concerns.
4. Communicate with openness, frankness, and honesty, including discussing the basis on which decisions are being made.
5. Recognize that uncertainty is inevitable.
6. Account for levels of literacy and numeracy.
7. Empower people to act and provide appropriate measures to facilitate behavior change and action.
8. Appeal to social norms by including using both descriptive norms (everyone is doing it) and injunctive norms (it is the right thing to do).
9. Consider diverse community needs by identifying and engaging with key groups to make information accessible in various ways.
10. Be proactive in combating misinformation.

An effective communication plan includes initiatives that reflect an organization's goals. A good communication plan must not only target various social and cultural communities, but it must identify key messages and themes that will resonate with these groups.³ It is important to use a range of elements, both media and non-media, to insure both coverage of and responses from targeted groups.

¹ https://dictionnaire.enap.ca/dictionnaire/docs/definitions/definitions_anglais/government_communication.pdf

² <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41599-020-00701-w>

³ <https://govinfo.library.unt.edu/npr/library/papers/bkgrd/chapter3.html>

The remainder of this chapter summarizes communications policies in three local jurisdictions. OLO conducted research and interviewed staff in each jurisdiction to compile these summaries.

Fairfax County, Virginia. Fairfax County Government has an Office of Public Affairs that serves as the communication clearinghouse for the County. About half of departments in the County have their own dedicated communication staff. In general, the County uses a combination of traditional media, social media, and its website to communicate with the public.

The Office of Public Affairs (OPA) serves as the information connection for Fairfax County Government in six key areas: external communications; internal (employee) communications; emergency communications; customer service; language access; and Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests. The Office currently has 26 positions, including 12 public information officers, a four-member digital team, and three new positions dedicated to language access services.⁴ Staff report that some of the key responsibilities of the Office include:

- Serves as spokesperson for the County;
- Provides support and resources for departments with their own communications staff;
- Provides communication services for departments that do not have dedicated staff;
- Provide leadership and coordination on countywide/multi-department communications (i.e., pedestrian safety, opioids, gang prevention, etc.);
- Answers calls and answers emails from the public (703 Fairfax - similar to a 311 system);
- Manages the countywide social media accounts;
- Manages the County's homepage and many multiagency topic pages; and
- Coordinates multiagency and complex FOIA requests.

The OPA holds biweekly meetings with all department communication contacts to ensure the County is all on the same page – their strategy is “common message, many voices.” County communicators include Public Information Officers (PIO), Communications Specialists (CS), Public Safety Information Officers (PSIO) and marketing related positions.

Departments with their own communication staff have the authority to do their own media (but coordinate with the OPA on requests affecting multiple agencies) and use a combination of traditional, electronic, and social media tools. The OPA has created two important supports/resources for departments:

⁴ [FY23 Approved Fairfax County Operating Budget – Office of Public Affairs](#), Page 73

- **Online Communications Tool Kit.** An internal website prepared to provide all County communications staff information and guidance on all things communication: governing policy, style guides, event planning, communications personnel in each department, available vendors, and publication requirements, among other things (*See Appendix A, Fairfax County Communications Toolkit Policy*).
- **Contractor List.** Fairfax County has four approved vendors on contract at any given time to provide communications services. Any department can use them for support and are responsible for payment for each task (if over \$10K, must have a bidding process with all four vendors). The County occasionally uses the contractors for countywide initiatives.

NewsCenter.⁵ In addition to the OPA website, which provides a significant amount of information, Fairfax has created the NewsCenter website, which provides information on County news, traffic, weather, and events/meetings.

The NewsCenter also provides access to the County government’s Social Media Hub – a comprehensive list of links to all social media accounts for County departments, along with the Social Media Policy. About half of Fairfax County government departments have their own social media accounts. The County requires that a department receive approval from the OPA and the County Attorney to create its own social media accounts. The intensive application process requires a panel review (*See Appendix B, Fairfax County Countywide Communicators Policy*⁶). Once approved, department users must go through training on social media policies and procedures. Once this approval and training are complete, the department can update their social media as they like (within the guidelines of the approved Social Media Policy). The next table summarizes the Fairfax County Government departments with approved social media accounts.

⁵ <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/news/>

⁶ <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/news/>

Communications in Local Jurisdictions

Department/Office	Facebook	Instagram	NextDoor	Twitter	YouTube
Fairfax County Government*	X	X	X	X	X
Animal Shelter	X	X		X	
Board of Supervisors	X	X	X	X	
Circuit Court				X	
Climate and Energy	X				
Community Services Board	X			X	
Consumer Affairs	X				
Disabilities	X				
Elections				X	
Emergency Management and Security					
Environment	X			X	
Fairfax (Age) 50+	X				
Fairfax Connector	X			X	
Fairfax TV				X	
Family Services	X				
Farmers Markets**		X			
Fire and Rescue	X	X	X	X	X
Health	X	X		X	X
Housing	X				
Land Use Planning	X				X
Library	X	X		X	X
Neighborhood and Community Services				X	
Newswire				X	
Office for Children	X				
Park Authority	X	X		X	X
Park Authority (Golf)				X	
Police	X	X	X	X	X
Public Works				X	
Sheriff	X			X	
Transportation	X				
Volunteer Solutions	X				
Youth Thrive***				X	
Zoning	X				

* Also has Facebook and Twitter accounts in Spanish

** Not a department, maintained by Parks Authority

*** Not a department, maintained by Neighborhood and Community Services

Frederick County. The mission of Frederick County Government’s communications is “[t]o engage and inform the people we serve, through direct communications and by telling the stories of Frederick County Government.”⁷ The County’s Office of Communications and Public Engagement (OCPE) is the communications hub for the County. Frederick County uses a combination of traditional and electronic media (including social media) to communicate with the public. One special note – staff report the government tailors media to different parts of the County. Frederick has a significant number of residents in rural areas and emphasizes the use of traditional media (flyers, in person events, etc.) to those areas.

The Office of Communications and Public Engagement was created in 2015 and included a new position – a communications director. This central office ensures that all County departments are communicating the same message, manages social media for the County’s main accounts, supports other departments’ communication efforts (with videos and other types of media), provides communication services for departments that do not have dedicated staff, and provides outreach and constituent services. The Office, which was restructured last year to include public engagement, currently has nine staff:⁸

- Communications Director;
- Assistant Director;
- Public Affairs Specialist;
- Public Affairs Specialist (Bilingual);
- Video Services Supervisor;
- Video Producer;
- Associate Video Producer;
- Multimedia Journalist/Video Technician; and
- Constituent Services.

While the OCPE does significant communications for the County, some departments have their own communications staff. These communications staff, with central communications staff meet monthly to discuss strategy and events.

- Police has its own communications team;
- Fire and Rescue has one staff person with 50% of their time dedicated to communications;
- Energy and Environment has a dedicated staff person; and
- Economic Development utilizes contractors for communications.

⁷ <https://frederickcountymd.gov/6758/Communications-and-Public-Engagement-Off>

⁸ [FY23 Frederick County Adopted Operating and Capital Budget – Communications and Public Engagement Office](#), Page 206

Communications in Local Jurisdictions

Social Media. Departments do not need to get approval for the creation of social media accounts; however, they must abide by the Social Media Policy (created by the County Attorney). The OCPE has also created a decision tree that departments use to determine what they should post on social media. OLO was able to identify the following social media accounts for Frederick County Government. This list may not be comprehensive.

Department/Office	Facebook	Instagram	Twitter	YouTube
Frederick County Government*	X	X	X	X
Board of Elections			X	
Economic Development	X		X	X
Emergency Management			X	
Fire	X		X	
Health	X			
Parks and Recreation	X	X		
Senior Services	X			
Solid Waste and Recycling	X			
Sheriff	X			
Sustainability	X	X	X	
Transit			X	

*Also has LinkedIn

Howard County. Howard County Government's Office of Public Information (PIO) facilitates public access to information and heightens awareness of government services by operating as a full-service communications agency to provide professional expertise through a network of professional, creative, technical and administrative staff skilled in the following communications fields: marketing and promotion; print, television and electronic media; media and public relations; and information and referral services.⁹

The office is comprised of 10 positions (currently staffed and/or vacant):

- Director of Communications;
- Public Information Administrator;
- Two graphic designers;
- Two photographers/videographers/multi-media specialists;
- Public information specialist for correspondence;
- Public information specialist coordinating MPIA requests and overseeing social media and correspondence;
- Office manager/media coordinator; and

⁹ <https://www.howardcountymd.gov/public-information>

- Writer/media liaison.

The PIO utilizes a combination of traditional media, social media, and its website to communicate with the public. The Office communicates with the public and media through a variety of tools, including marketing and promotion; print, television, electronic media; media and public relations; and information and referral services. Other than those issued by the Howard County Police Department, all news releases are disseminated by the PIO.

While the PIO serves as a clearinghouse for all official executive branch government communications with the public to ensure consistency and professionalism, several County government departments have their own communication staff. These departments include:

- Department of Fire and Rescue Services has its own Public Information Officer;
- Police Department has its own Public Affairs Office;
- Department of Recreation & Parks has its own marketing team; and
- Department of Community Resources and Services has a marketing team that handles internal communication and planning of its events.

Social Media. Any Howard County Government department/office that wants to create its own social media account must obtain approval from the PIO and must abide by the County's Social Media Policy. Once approved, the department/office manages and develops content for its own account(s). The PIO does not review or sign off on posts, tweets, etc. OLO identified the following social media accounts. This list may not be comprehensive.

Communications in Local Jurisdictions

Department/Office	Facebook	Instagram	Twitter	YouTube	Flickr	LinkedIn
Howard County Government	X		X	X	X	X
Animal Control Division	X	X				
Baltimore & Ohio Ellicott City Station Museum	X					
Belmont Manor & Historic Park	X	X				
Community Resources and Services	X	X	X			
Community Sustainability	X		X		X	
County Executive	X	X	X			
Economic Development Authority*	X		X	X		
Emergency Management	X		X			
Fire and Rescue	X	X	X	X		
Health**	X	X	X	X		
Housing and Community Development	X		X			
Human Rights and Equity	X	X	X			
Police	X	X	X			
Recreation & Parks	X	X	X	X		
Robinson Nature Center	X					
Transportation	X	X				
Workforce Development	X					

* The Howard County Economic Development Authority (EDA) is not a County government department. The EDA is a separate organization. It is included in this report because there are links to it from the County's website.

** The Howard County Health Department is a state agency under the Maryland Department of Health, not a County government department. It is included in this report because there are links to it from the County's website.

Chapter 4. Agency Comments

The Office of Legislative Oversight (OLO) shared final drafts of this report with staff from Montgomery County Government. OLO appreciates the time taken by County staff to review the draft report and to provide technical feedback. This final report incorporates technical corrections and feedback received from County staff.

The written comments received from the Montgomery County Chief Administrative Officer is attached in its entirety on the following pages.



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Marc Elrich
County Executive

Richard S. Madaleno
Chief Administrative Officer

MEMORANDUM

February 22, 2023

TO: Chris Cihlar, Director
Office of Legislative Oversight

FROM: Richard S. Madaleno, Chief Administrative Officer *BSM*

SUBJECT: Draft OLO Report 2023-3: How the County Communicates to Its Residents

Thank you for providing this complete and comprehensive inventory of the various ways in which Montgomery County Government communicates with its residents. This report will be extremely valuable to us in our next steps for strengthening communication between Montgomery County and all constituents that interact with government.

The Montgomery County Government (MCG) prides itself on providing high quality information and services to our residents, businesses, and visitors. County government exists to serve those that live, work, and play in Montgomery County, and we know that clear and effective communication is a key part of providing excellent service to our community. The COVID-19 pandemic required MCG to communicate at an unprecedented level of complexity and regularity with our diverse residents, businesses, organizations, and community partners. Learning from these past few years, we are evaluating our communication strategies to ensure that all interactions meet resident expectations and are guided by common principles.

This shared data-gathering exercise between the Office of Legislative Oversight (OLO) and the Executive Branch was a valuable collaboration and avoided duplication of effort. As the OLO report shows, the County has many customer touchpoints, including incoming communication through digital platforms, paper documents and mail, calls, and walk-ins, as well as outgoing communication. This inventory provides a critical foundation for our continued work, and we appreciate the collaboration with OLO as we strive towards a better customer experience.

Montgomery County will continue to be guided by the experience of the County's residents, workers, businesses, and visitors in moving toward an organization in which every interaction with government is a positive one.

RSM/fk

cc: Fariba Kassiri, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, Office of the County Executive
Jake Weissmann, Assistant Chief Administrative Officer, Office of the County Executive
Ken Hartman, Director of Strategic Partnerships, Office of the County Executive
Jennifer Bryant, Director, Office of Management and Budget
Barry Hudson, Director, Office of Public Information
Gail Roper, Director, Department of Technology and Enterprise Business Solutions
Diane Vu, Director, Office of Community Partnerships

List of Appendices

Appendix	Title	Begins at
A	• Fairfax County Communications Toolkit Policy	83
B	• Fairfax Countywide Communicators Policy	86

FAIRFAX COUNTY, VIRGINIA
PROCEDURAL MEMORANDUM No. 13-05

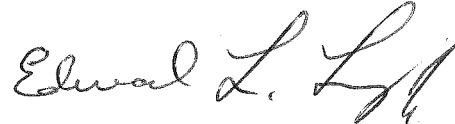
TO: Agency Directors

Date: May 20, 2014

Reference:

Initiated by: Office of Public Affairs; Department of Information Technology; Department of Cable Communications and Consumer Protection

Approved by the County Executive:



SUBJECT: FAIRFAX COUNTY COMMUNICATIONS TOOLKIT

Fairfax County Communications Toolkit

Policy:

Agencies and employees of the County of Fairfax will comply with the standards and policies outlined in the Fairfax County Communications Toolkit as found on the County's intranet site.

History:

The Fairfax County Communications Toolkit (formerly the Fairfax County Communication Strategy) was initiated by the County Executive in 2004 to create and maintain a cohesive look, feel and message in County communications. It was updated in 2011 to include rules for content placed on the County's public website, intranet and social media sites and to enhance its effectiveness as a resource for County communicators.

Purpose/Objective:

The objective of the Fairfax County Communications Toolkit is to ensure that County information meets professional standards of quality and clarity and maintains a cohesive look, feel and message to reflect the County's effective integration of programs, services and resources.

Scope:

The Fairfax County Communications Toolkit outlines standards and policies for print and electronic communications. All County agencies are required to comply with the toolkit. Any modifications or exceptions must be approved by the Office

of Public Affairs, in collaboration with the Deputy County Executive (DCE) responsible for information. Appeals will be decided by the DCE.

Compliance:

Implementation of this policy, including development of more specific procedures and guidelines as needed, is the local responsibility of each agency. Information in the toolkit may change, and changes will be announced through employee communication tools. Agencies are accountable for using the most current toolkit as outlined on the County's intranet site.

Responsibility:

All employees need to be familiar with the County's communications toolkit, as its effective implementation resides at all levels of the County organization. Primary responsibility for the toolkit is summarized below.

Deputy County Executive

As the Executive Sponsor of the Fairfax County Communications Toolkit, the DCE will provide executive level guidance and support for the management of the toolkit. The DCE will also work with department directors to respond to issues at the policy level.

Communications Policy Advisory Committee

This subcommittee of the Lead Communicators group will advise the DCE to ensure that the information provided in the toolkit for employees and communicators is current, accurate and consistent. The Communications Policy Advisory Committee will consist of the Directors of the Office of Public Affairs, Department of Information Technology and the Department of Cable and Consumer Services; selected staff from these agencies; and lead communicators from major departments to include: the Department of Health, Park Authority, Department of Family Services, Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board, Police Department, Fire and Rescue Department and Public Library.

Office of Public Affairs

Department of Information Technology

Department of Cable and Consumer Services

These three departments are responsible for helping County agencies comply with the standards and policies in the communications toolkit. OPA, DIT and DCCS have the authority to direct County departments/agencies in all matters related to the communications toolkit. The Office of Public Affairs will take the lead in approving modifications or exceptions to the toolkit, in collaboration with the DCE. Requested modifications that involve information technology security, standards or policy and/or cable communications programming and services will be reviewed and approved in collaboration with the Departments of Information Technology and Cable and Consumer Services.

Questions regarding the communications toolkit should be directed to OPA. Questions regarding technical tools for communications and print services should

be directed to DIT. Questions regarding video programming and mail services should be directed to DCCS.

Department/Agency Directors:

Directors are responsible for their department's compliance with the policy and adherence to the Fairfax County Communications Toolkit and for ensuring that their employees are familiar with its standards and procedures.

County Communicators:

County communicators in "exempt" agencies (that is, agencies that have their own communications staff and do not rely on the County's Office of Public Affairs for communications support) are responsible for reviewing their agencies' news releases, publications, Web content and any other materials their agencies disseminate to the public to ensure accuracy, relevancy and compliance with the policy and adherence to the communications toolkit. Office of Public Affairs communicators who serve as agency consultants are responsible for working with the agencies they support to coordinate the appropriate review of materials disseminated to the public.

Employees and Other Users:

Individual employees are responsible for reviewing their own public communications and complying with the toolkit rules, standards and policies that apply to their job duties.

Management of the Communication Policy:

The Fairfax County Communications Toolkit on the County's intranet site will be managed and updated as necessary by the DCE and the Communications Policy Advisory Committee. The Committee will meet as needed. The County Executive will be kept informed of all major changes to the Communications Policy.

FAIRFAX COUNTY, VIRGINIA	
PROCEDURAL MEMORANDUM No. 02-11	
To: Department Heads	Amended: December 8, 2010
	First Implemented: December 8, 2010 Reference:
Initiated by: Office of The County Executive	Approved by the County Executive:
Subject: Countywide Communicators Policy	

PURPOSE

The Countywide Communicators Policy describes the collaborative relationship and interaction between the County's Office of Public Affairs (OPA) and County communicators based in other departments. County communicators include Public Information Officers (PIO), Communications Specialists (CS), Public Safety Information Officers (PSIO) and marketing related positions.

STRUCTURE

The OPA Director, who serves as the County's spokesperson, has an indirect supervisory role with County communicators who are based in other departments. The close relationship and interaction among the County's communicators and OPA, as described in this policy, enhances day-to-day countywide communication, eliminates gaps in information dissemination, and strengthens skills and relationships among all communicators in the County.

A centralized structure for communicators exists during emergencies (<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency/fairfaxeop.pdf> (Page 230)), when the OPA Director coordinates all internal and external communications and all County communicators work under the coordination and leadership of the OPA Director as members of a countywide PIO Corps. This better coordinates communication efforts by providing central oversight to facilitate the creation of a common look, feel and message that is then disseminated by many voices.

Under the Countywide Communicators Policy, the PIO Corps structure is also used to enable the County to convene in non-emergency situations, under the direction of the OPA Director, a valuable pool of County communicators to help manage issues, events and actions identified by the Board of Supervisors or the County Executive as urgent and/or critical for the County.

Communicator Responsibilities

Under this structure communicators will:

- Attend monthly (led by the OPA Director) and quarterly (led by the Deputy County Executive) communicator meetings on a regular basis.
- Follow the guidance of the OPA Director when setting the County's common messages and ensure that messages are in compliance with all legal mandates under which they work.
- Work as part of the PIO structure when requested in emergency and urgent or critical non-emergency situations.
- Collaborate with the OPA Director when responding to media inquiries and FOIA requests on issues or subjects that have the potential to be sensitive to the operation and governance of the County or are not related to information previously distributed or commented on by the department.
- Collaborate with other agencies when addressing issues that transcend the home agency.
- Adhere to countywide communications policies established by the County Executive and to best practices and guidelines set by the OPA director.
- Be willing to learn from others and share communications best practices.
- Take advantage of opportunities for training and skills improvement.

Responsibilities of OPA Director

The OPA Director will:

- Work with the Department of Human Resources and Deputy County Executive responsible for information to determine the appropriate communicator classification when a new communicator position is requested or an existing position is reclassified by a department head.
- Serve on or designate an OPA staff member to serve on interview panels for department lead communicators. If requested by the department, OPA Director or designee may also serve on interview panels for other non-lead communicators.
- When media inquiries or FOIA request assistance is required, work with communicators to determine the best course of action, including, but not limited to, identifying the appropriate spokesperson; developing talking points; and notifying the Board of Supervisors, senior management, and other agencies that may be impacted.
- Meet with all lead department communicators monthly in a team setting. These meetings will focus on issues, policies, tools and information that affect communication countywide. The goal of the monthly meetings is to standardize countywide messages across departments and encourage efficient and effective use of communication resources and tools.

- Participate in a quarterly meeting facilitated by the Deputy County Executive responsible for information to ensure that lead communicators from various County departments have a regular opportunity to discuss common issues and share best practices.
- Provide performance evaluation input for department lead communicators to ensure accountability for achieving key countywide outcomes and common messaging. The County's existing form for outside input into staff evaluations will be utilized for this purpose. Performance evaluation input would include the responsibilities for communicators noted above.
- Provide orientation sessions for new lead department communicators and training opportunities for department-based communicators as necessary.