

**Charge of the Commission on the Status of Women**  
**Adopted July 16, 2019**

**Introduction:** The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) was created as an advisory body by the County Board of Arlington County, Virginia on May 4, 1974. The Commission was chartered to study issues, serve as a public forum, and act as a liaison between Arlington women and other County commissions.

**Mission:** The Arlington Commission on the Status of Women works to advance initiatives and policies that empower women and girls and serves as a community advocate and resource on the social and economic interests of all Arlington women and girls.

**Governing Documents:** Advisory Group Handbook

**Areas of Focus:** CSW focuses on studying issues, serving as a public forum, and acting as a liaison to other commissions on behalf of women, girls, and working families. Specifically, CSW was created to study all aspects of issues leading to economic equality. Additionally, CSW has continued to provide a forum for the women of Arlington; serve as a clearinghouse in the exchange of information concerning equality; answer questions concerning discrimination of women and girls; assist individuals and groups working toward the improvement of women's status; and help educate Arlington citizens about its work for women and the legal and human rights of women and providing best practices. CSW serves as a liaison between women and other County commissions and committees.

**Functions and Scope:**

CSW engages in the following activities:

- Supports County programs that focus on women, such as Project Peace.
- Provides guidance and advice to the County on relevant legislation and public policy issues, as well as County budget priorities.
- Apprises County, school (if applicable), and community leadership of issues and actions regarding initiatives that empower women and reduce barriers to economic security.
- Sponsors awareness and outreach events that empower women, including the Women of Vision Awards, Women in Business Forum, and Rally Against Rape.
- Promotes education on issues regarding the needs of women and prepares and distributes such information.
- Conducts research and investigation focused on women's status in Arlington.

**Membership:** The CSW shall be comprised of an unlimited number of members. These members are drawn from Arlington County at large. The County Board will appoint and maintain a roster of members who are passionate about empowering women, have a history of community engagement, and are able to commit the time to making a difference in the lives of Arlington women. CSW members may serve as

a liaison to interested parties in Arlington.

Members will be appointed for three-year terms, and with reappointment, shall be permitted to serve no more than three (3) consecutive terms. All members serve at the pleasure of the Board.

After a member of CSW has failed to attend three (3) CSW meetings in a single year without providing advance notice to the Chair, or staff, she may then be asked to resign her remaining term on CSW. The Commission Chair, after consultation with the County Board liaison, shall notify the member if such an action is warranted.

- **Chair and Vice-Chair:** The CSW shall forward a nomination to the Board for Chair to lead the efforts of the CSW. Also, one member of the group may also be appointed by the CSW to serve as Vice-chair when the Chair is unavailable.
- **Committee Membership:** The CSW may create committees, as necessary, to accomplish specific CSW missions and the Chair shall appoint committee leadership. Committee membership may include persons who are not on the CSW.
- **Staff Liaison:** The County Manager shall appoint a member of staff from the Human Rights Office, to serve as liaison to the CSW.

**Meetings:** The CSW will meet monthly to adequately fulfill its role and responsibilities outlined in this charge. All meetings will comply with Virginia Open Meeting requirements and the Freedom of Information Act. Agendas and meeting minutes will be made available to the public in a timely manner. The Advisory Group Handbook provides additional information on the conduct of meetings as well as communication protocols that should guide all members in their advisory group work.

**Reporting to the Board:** The CSW informs and advises the County Board about policies which advance women's empowerment and equality in Arlington. The CSW will at a minimum submit an annual report to the County Board after consultation with the Board Liaison. The CSW may, as needed, provide comment at a regular Board meeting or Board work session. In addition, testimony from advisory groups on budget and capital spending priorities is always welcome. The Chair will consult with the staff liaison and review the published public hearing schedules.

**Update of this Charter:** The CSW shall review this charge as needed to assure that it meets current needs. Any requests for changes must be processed through the Board Liaison.