



Department of Social Services Administrative Board

August 13, 2019



DSS Administrative Board

DSS Administrative Board Required by Virginia Code

- Oversees the administration of the Local DSS, duties include:
 - Administer the applicable provisions of law
 - Receive and disburse funds from public grants or private sources
 - Report to DSS Commissioner and Board of Supervisors
 - Submit annual DSS budget to the Board of Supervisors
 - Employ DSS counsel and director
 - Provide child welfare and other services
 - Direct activities of the DSS director, cooperate with JDR court and other agencies
 - Authorized to hold hearings and issue subpoenas
 - Issue emergency payments for public assistance and social services



DSS Administrative Board

Two Types of DSS Administrative Boards

- Local governing body (Board of Supervisors) determines
 - Single member Administrative Board
 - Local government official (currently Deputy County Administrator)
 - May designate a senior DSS staff person to act on his behalf
 - Must establish Advisory Board
 - Multi-member Administrative Board
 - Residents appointed by Board of Supervisors
 - Three or more members
 - One Supervisor may serve on the Board
 - Appointed to four year terms
 - May serve only two full terms
 - Must receive annual training
 - Members may be suspended or removed for cause by Board of Supervisors



DSS Administrative Board

Most Agencies Use Multi-member Administrative Boards

- 78 Multi-member Administrative Boards
- 42 Single Member Administrative Boards with Advisory Boards

Most Larger Agencies Use Single Member Administrative Boards

- 6 Multi-member Administrative Boards
- 22 Single Member Administrative Boards with Advisory Boards
 - Includes Spotsylvania DSS



DSS Administrative Board

Advantages and Disadvantages of Multi-member Boards

- Advantages
 - Gives public a forum to seek redress of grievances
 - Has the ability to be briefed on cases
 - Multiple perspectives or viewpoints
 - Higher confidence in decisions of a group
- Disadvantages
 - May take longer to make decisions or take action
 - Higher costs



DSS Administrative Board

Recommend the establishment of a multi-member Administrative Board as follows:

- Seven member board
 - One member from each district
 - Staggered terms to match appointing Supervisor
 - One may be a Supervisor, at the Board's discretion
 - Meet monthly
 - Compensation of \$ 400 / month plus \$ 100 / meeting attended
- County Administrator, or designee, serve as alternate member
 - Would participate in meetings
 - Only vote if a primary member is absent



DSS Administrative Board

An alternative smaller, multi-member Administrative Board:

- Three member board
 - Appointed by Board of Supervisors
 - Staggered terms
 - One may be a Supervisor, at the Board's discretion
 - Meet monthly
 - Compensation of \$ 400 / month plus \$ 100 / meeting attended
- County Administrator, or his designee, serve as Chair/alternate member
 - Would participate in meetings
 - Only vote if a primary member is absent



DSS Administrative Board

Is there a “right” size for a multi-member Administrative Board?

- Survey of single locality, multi-member Administrative Boards
 - 38 percent have Administrative Boards the same size as the Governing Body
 - 35 percent have Boards larger than the Governing Body
 - 27 percent have Boards with fewer members than the Governing Body
- No clear consensus for Administrative Board size
 - Size at the discretion of the Board of Supervisors



DSS Administrative Board

Recommend establishment of Multi-member Board effective January 2020:

- Provide time to develop and vet by-laws
- Schedule and conduct required training
- Complete outstanding action items:
 - DSS attorney / contract
 - Management reorganization
 - Hire new Deputy Director



DSS Administrative Board

An alternative would be to fully utilize Advisory Board

- Advise in matters pertaining to public assistance and social services
- Monitor the formulation and implementation of public assistance and social services programs
- Make recommendations on policy matters
- Annually report to the Board of Supervisors on the administration of public assistance and social services programs
- Provide other reports to the Board of Supervisors as needed
- Meet monthly, currently meets bimonthly
- Move meetings to the evening to increase public participation
- Increase compensation to \$ 200 / month plus \$ 100 / meeting attended



DSS Administrative Board

Guidance requested:

- 7 member Administrative Board with 1 Alternate
- 3 member Administrative Board with 1 Alternate
- Keep current single member Administrative Board with increased involvement by the Advisory Board