

**City of Alexandria, Virginia  
FY 2027 Proposed Operating Budget & CIP  
Budget Questions & Answers**

**April 20, 2026**

**Question:** How much do the public safety departments — Police, Fire, and Sheriff's Office have in their outreach budgets and what are the major outreach initiatives that they do?

**Response:**

**POLICE DEPARTMENT**

Public outreach is administered through the Community Engagement Section. The program operates without a dedicated outreach budget and relies on community partners and external donations, which are not a stable funding source. The annual outreach budget is \$40,000. Some officers also contribute personal funds to support outreach activities.

Major initiatives include National Night Out, Dog Walker Watch, Trunk or Treat, Coffee with a Cop, and the Barbershop Series, all of which promote community engagement and communication. Additional programs include community cookouts and the Community Academy, which is funded and organized by the Police Foundation and Police Volunteers.

The department also supports community events such as shopping programs with children, turkey giveaways, toy drives, Tons of Trucks, Friends-Giving, and seasonal food, clothing, and household supply drives. Officers maintain a regular presence in schools and senior centers and collaborate on youth development and problem-solving initiatives. Youth athletic programs include Police Department (APD) soccer leagues, the World Cup of Games, and partnerships with the Boys and Girls Clubs.

**FIRE DEPARTMENT**

Public Education operates within Community Risk Reduction and does not have a dedicated annual budget or full-time position. For Fiscal Year 2026, \$8,000 was allocated for program supplies. Staffing includes a firefighter detailed from Operations, following the elimination of a dedicated public education position.

The department provides fire safety education to schools, community groups, senior residents, immigrant communities, and multi-dwelling housing residents. The Community Fire Academy offers residents an immersive understanding of fire department operations. Staff also participate in community events, distribute fire safety materials, and support career education through job fairs and city programs.

Additional efforts include firehouse visits, smoke detector installations, home safety surveys in partnership with the Red Cross, and CPR training supported by the Training Division.

**SHERIFF OFFICE**

The Alexandria Sheriff's Office conducts extensive community outreach without a dedicated outreach budget. These activities are fully integrated into daily operations and primarily carried out by Field Services Unit deputies while performing core duties such as civil process service, inmate transport, and warrant service, ensuring no impact to state-mandated responsibilities.

Key initiatives include the Elementary School Liaison Program, Community Academy, gun safety education and free gun locks, Project Lifesaver, Away-from-Home Checks, child ID services, expungement fingerprinting, civic engagement programs, and public safety events.

In CY2025, deputies completed 231 community events, 437 school visits, and 363 home security checks, along with successful Project Lifesaver recoveries and expungement services.

Additional outreach includes food distribution, school supply and coat drives, senior programs, Drug Take Back events, mentoring, Operation Elf, and the Public Safety Cadet Program.

These outreach efforts are sustainable under current staffing levels and delivered in a cost-effective manner through operational integration and partnerships. If staffing levels were to change, the Sheriff's Office would need to continue prioritizing its state-mandated responsibilities, which may impact the level of community engagement activities that can be maintained.