



### **Dr. Worsley's Wise Words**

February is Black History Month and together we reflect on the innovation of many African Americans that contributed heart, soul, and talent into the fabric of America. African Americans have assisted in sending astronauts into space such as NASA's legendary mathematician, Katherine Johnson (1918 - 2020); Maggie Walker (1864 - 1934) advanced the finance industry as the first African American woman to charter a bank and serve as its president in the United States; and Reverend Dr. Wyatt T. Walker (1929 - 2018) was a strategist in the Civil Rights Movement and notable composer of black gospel music. Each of these legends have strong ties to Virginia. Today, the Human Services Division, continues the spirit of innovation and collaboration to make Chesterfield County a great place to live, work, learn, and play.

At the Board of Supervisor's Meeting in late January our County Administrator, Dr. Joe Casey, commended CCHASM and Christmas Mother as two non-profits that largely focus on the holiday season were able to still distribute thousands of gifts and meals in a safe manner. They worked with county staff to reinvent their distribution system and found process improvements that will be beneficial for years to come. We look forward to partnering with CHHASM and Christmas Mother in the future.

As you read this month's newsletter, it is the goal to highlight areas in the Human Services Division that maintain our high level of service through reimagining service delivery. Many of our services, such as Courts, had very little shift. After a short closure they reopened with safe protocols and continued serving the public in as normal as possible. As uncertainty with COVID-19 remains we know our resilience will continue.

## **Human Services Innovations in the time of COVID-19**

### **Citizen Information and Resources**

Citizen Information and Resources continues the mission to connect resources in the Community, this has looked different in the times of COVID-19, however there have been several success stories.

- In the Spring of 2020, Youth Services was able to host an online version of Future Leaders to teach students more about the role of local government. Through the virtual offering there was nearly a 200% increase in the enrollment rate!
- Our Community Engagement and Volunteer Coordinator was able to assist a with the Non-Profit For Richmond to engage volunteers for food service delivery to homebound residents.
- Our Aging and Disability Services Office was able to grow their Telephone Reassurance Program by expanding to Long Term Care Facilities and also having volunteers call those in the program five days a week for a warm friendly voice.
- This year's Three Kings Festival had to pivot to a drive thru toy distribution rather than the annual beloved Festival. Partnering with Chesterfield County Public Schools FACE team,

CIR, Parks and Recreation and Public Safety were successful in distributing over 1,000 toys, as seen organized in the picture below!

**[Learn more about Citizen Information and Resources.](https://www.chesterfield.gov/cir)**

**[\[https://www.chesterfield.gov/cir\]](https://www.chesterfield.gov/cir)**



## Community Corrections Services

Community Corrections Services (CCS) continued to provide services to our clients during the pandemic. During the past year, our services have improved, and clients have access to technology that was not available to them prior to the pandemic.

### Improved Services

#### **DocuSign (Piloted at CCS)**

DocuSign technology sends documents via email to clients who can sign the documents virtually and return the forms to their Pre Trial/Probation Officers via email. Staff and clients learned to navigate the technology and it is now used in our daily interactions.

#### **On-line Payments**

Prior to the pandemic clients made supervision payments using money orders and debit/credit cards. Currently, clients can make payments using a secure on-line system. This improved service has given clients ease of access and increased the timeliness of payments.

#### **Virtual Groups**

CCS clinicians and Probation Officers facilitate numerous groups for clients. Prior to the pandemic the groups were only offered in person. Clients are now able to participate in all groups via Microsoft Teams. Examples of groups offered virtually: Moral Reconciliation Therapy (MRT), Anger Management, Seeking Safety, Process Groups, Job Skills and Individual Counseling Sessions.

**[Learn more about Community Corrections Services.](https://www.chesterfield.gov/1084/Community-Corrections-Services)**

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## Juvenile Justice Services

### Detention Home

Early on, the detention home tried to stay ahead of the curve. Cleaning and sanitizing efforts increased exponentially. Maintenance and custodial staff changed schedules to work both day and night to assist in around-the-clock sanitizing. Detention Home employees began wearing masks ahead of CDC and state recommendations, and staff schedules were adjusted to allow for temporal social distancing, all of which continues today. Unfortunately, parental visitation was cancelled; however, virtual visitation began within weeks and in-person, no-contact visitation began a couple months later, along with other in-person services such as haircuts.

### Adolescent Reporting Program

When CARP's building closed, staff worked diligently creating virtual lessons for students and community service program clients. Lessons covered the four main core subjects, health/PE, and included skill building activities. Students could complete the lessons online or, if students did not have reliable computer access, staff would print and mail the assignments to them.

### Child Advocacy Center

The CAC went to emergency only forensic interviews from March 16 to June 8. During that time, 58 interviews were conducted. Full service was restored June 8, with two-hour timeslots per child to ensure only one family was at the center at a time. This also allowed ample time to clean in between appointments. Masks were provided to families, as well as premade packets for children including crayons/coloring books, play-doh, and food/drinks.

[Learn more about Juvenile Justice Services.](#)



## Mental Health Support Services

During the COVID-19 crisis our Mental Health Support Services Department continues to provide critical services to Chesterfield County citizens. Our

Medical Services Team continues to distribute psychiatric medications and provide outdoor/drive-by injections by appointment. Our nurses continue to conduct Office Based Opioid Treatment (OBOT) drug testing/screens as well. We are following CDC guidelines in regard to cleaning/sanitizing offices after each consumer and chairs in our waiting area have been spaced out accordingly to ensure social distancing. The psychiatrists continue to provide follow up medication evaluation visits to all agency consumers and much needed psychiatric evaluations for - Chesterfield County residents who may be experiencing mental health symptoms. Psychiatric evaluations are also prioritized for post hospital, post jail discharges and those who are in need of OBOT services. Services are modified, but consumers are thankful that they are still able to access their medications. Visits are done through either tele-health conferencing, telephone or in-person when clinically necessary.

[Learn more about Mental Health Support Services.](#)



## Social Services

The COVID-19 pandemic certainly removed us from our 'normal' and impacted how our agency provided services but **did not** impact the quality of services.

Since March, we have continued to provide FIRST CHOICE social services by using best practices, innovative strategies that maximize technology, utilizing efficient processes, proactivity responding to the changing demands of the community, creating a customer-centric culture where services are delivered timely, accurately, efficiently and with compassion and by creating connections that positively impact the lives of individuals, families and the community and promote lifelong changes.

Here are just a few examples of how our Family Services, Benefits Programs and Administration and Finance divisions have updated strategies and processes to better serve the citizens of Chesterfield County and City of Colonial Heights since the beginning of the pandemic.

- Implemented virtual new hiring and onboarding process.
- Document Management Team implemented department centralized email system for customers to submit documents for contactless and paperless processing.
- Customer Relations Team adjusted the structure of the department's main phone line to equip and deployed call center employees to telework and continue to serve customers.
- Customer Relations Team restructured and adjusted front lobby to provide safe alternatives for customers and staff to be served.
- Children's Services Act Team shifted to all virtual meetings for families and children to continue to have access to necessary services.
- Spearheaded development of local feeding group with schools, Chesterfield Education Foundation, Citizens Information & Resources and Chesterfield Food Bank.
- Employment Services redefined Career and Resource Fair efforts by utilizing online platforms.
- Strategic effort to focus on eliminating Child Protective Services referral backlog.
- Safe/In-person emergency EBT/SNAP distribution.
- Developed team focused on long-term recovery efforts

[Learn More about Chesterfield-Colonial Heights Department of Social Services. \[https://www.chesterfield.gov/569/Social-Services\]](https://www.chesterfield.gov/569/Social-Services)



## Wellness Corner

With Valerie Dunbar-Brooks, Chesterfield- Colonial Heights Social Services



Despite what some people may think, talking to yourself is not always a sign of a mental illness, rather it can be quite the opposite. As we all go through the motions of our daily lives, it's no surprise that we tend to forget who we really are and what we've set out to accomplish. We often forget the importance of self-reflection. But how can we know how we're doing without asking?

Reconnect with yourself during a walk around the block, a morning stretch, or even while you're in the shower. Do whatever it takes to give yourself the space to just clear your mind to ask, "how am I doing" and "how did I get here?" The shorter time between a time of self-reflection, the easier it is to remember who you really are and what you really want to accomplish. Take this a step further and keep record of how you are doing daily by keeping track of how you are feeling.

## Resource Corner

### Latinos in Virginia Empowerment Center

Latinos in Virginia Empowerment Center announces the launch of their 24/7 Hotline in Spanish for victims of violence and injustice. Direct Access to bilingual and bicultural advocates by calling 888-969-1825. Free and confidential services in Spanish.

### Black History Month Events

Virginia State University and Chesterfield County proudly presents the 32<sup>nd</sup> Black History Month Celebration. Each February, Chesterfield County and Virginia State University celebrate the month with a variety of programs designed to explore the rich, diverse heritage of African Americans and their contributions to our community and nation.

[Learn more about Black History Month Events.](#)



## For More Information

Caring & Connected Newsletter Team

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