



SUBMISSION FORM

All submission forms must include the following information. Separate submission forms must be turned in for each eligible program. **Deadline: July 1, 2021.** Please include this submission form with the electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).

PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: County of Henrico

Program Title: Graphics Program Leads Effort to Reopen Government and Schools

Program Category: Health and Human Services

CONTACT INFORMATION

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SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

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Title: Deputy County Manager for Administration

Signature: 

Program Overview

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Henrico County Public Schools (HCPS) and Henrico County Government needed to use Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines to raise awareness about community safety. This included signage considerations to adhere to everything from social distancing practices to awareness of proper hygiene protocols.

The school division is fortunate to offer a graphic communications program for students, where industry-standard equipment in the print industry is used throughout the year as a teaching tool. During the pandemic, this learning lab was able to be repurposed to help the school division and county government create the necessary signage for hundreds of buildings. This in-house operation was established to facilitate a quick turnaround for the needed signs while saving money in a period of uncertain economic conditions.

Problem/Challenge/Situation Faced by Locality

When the pandemic first started, the graphic communications program was asked about creating yard signs to thank first responders. Once word was out that the program was available to be used, they were contacted by others seeking services.

As guidelines from the CDC were made available, Henrico County needed to develop multiple plans for implementation, including creating and installing adequate signage throughout hundreds of buildings. This would include large banners to identify changes in doorways to enter or exit, arrows to tell individuals which way to flow in and out of spaces, posters on hygiene practices, and the social distance dots that directed where individuals should stand when waiting next in line.

Getting the visible signage in place was an important part of safely reopening various buildings throughout the county. Government facilities, including the courthouse and libraries, had been closed due to the pandemic and needed correct signage prior to reopening to the public. Not only was identifying this need a challenge, but the print industry was struggling to meet the demand. As a result of the pandemic, the print industry was inundated with requests and couldn't promise a quick production turnaround. As a result, the cost of these print jobs had risen.

Being able to source and complete the jobs with the HCPS graphic communications program was appealing, as production could be completed at cost with a quick turnaround time.

How Program Fulfilled Awards Criteria

Through this program, essential social distancing supplies were created during the pandemic to reopen essential county buildings. The project demonstrated how reallocating resources and drawing on individuals' unique skills can meet the emergency needs of a community. In addition to the county government and business partner collaboration, it was the efforts, skills and dedication of the graphic communications teacher and his spouse that made the effort possible.

How Program Was Carried Out

Beginning in late March of 2020, the graphic communications program was asked about creating signage to thank the many first responders throughout the county. This would be on display at various medical facilities, including hospitals and nursing homes, as well as outside of firehouses and other buildings.

Henrico County government had prioritized the reopening of the judicial system and in turn, the courthouse. The graphic communications program produced banners, posters, directional

signage and social distancing “dot” stickers for the floor. The quality products and quick turnaround led to the program producing the signage for other government buildings, including Henrico County’s public libraries, in preparation for their reopening to the public.

After large public buildings such as the libraries were completed, attention shifted to the school division. Starting in June, signage was created for offices to raise awareness for staff, parents, guardians and students as they re-entered the schools for various purposes. Throughout the summer, the transition was to focus on needs throughout the schools, preparing for the eventual return of students.

Community partners played a role in the success of this effort. Ricoh, a business partner that helps to support and supply much of the equipment for the graphic communication program, was able to work through their staff limitations to help install a new printer that would enable the completion of many of the tasks identified. In addition, Ricoh provided guidance and technical support to use the equipment and retool processes to accommodate new materials that were being used. Lindenmeyr Munroe Paper Warehouse, a vendor often used for supplies, was critical in sourcing materials. The pandemic caused delays or shortages of some raw materials, which normally come from China. Lindenmeyr Munroe helped get supplies from businesses across the country that had excess stock, to help get the materials needed to produce the signage. In order to accommodate the new equipment, the HCPS Facilities Department provided the electrical work and helped get the equipment online with the correct power needed for it to operate.

It should be stated that the actions of individuals sometimes help drive successes seen in times of uncertainty. A veteran teacher of the graphic communications program, along with his spouse and a former student, worked countless hours to produce the thousands of various types of

COVID-19 signage to be displayed. This team brought to the table their years of experience working in and owning a print production shop Henrico County's needs and help safely reopen the buildings.

Financing and Staffing

The facilities signs were produced at low cost during a time when printers had a backlog of jobs. Materials used to create the signage came through regular funding sources in the general government budget and was supplemented through the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act. The equipment used was previously budgeted and acquired through regular funding sources in the school division.

Henrico County not only benefited from a fast turnaround time by doing this in-house, but there was also a cost savings. Using HCPS' graphic communications department was less expensive as it allowed for on-demand printing. The print industry was struggling to meet the demand for signage and was charging premium prices.

- Social distancing floor dots (12"x12"): \$2 each.
- Banners (4'x8'): \$96 each.
- Posters (8"x10" or 11"x14"): less than \$0.20 each.

Around 15 rolls of sticker and banner materials were used during the production of various forms of signage.

Program Results

Thousands of different products have been mass-produced and were made available quickly to the many buildings owned and operated by Henrico County. This has helped contribute to our community's ongoing effort to adhere to CDC guidelines, encourage safe practices and reopen these facilities.

Last year, the Graphic Communications program took over the county print shop duties and functions as the print shop for the entire county. Because of the large amounts of items that needed to be printed for COVID-19 for our reopening plan, much of day to day printing stopped during this time period.

Production has continued through 2020 and into 2021 for the school division. More than 13,000 stickers had been produced by January 2021 for school buses to identify properly spaced seating. Another 2,100 floor dots, as well as 5,000 posters about CDC guidelines and countless other products, have been created in-house to prepare buildings for the return of students. While many companies and businesses were in desperation mode to find print shops to be able to print their materials, the Graphic Communications programs proved to be our saving grace.

Brief Summary

With a need to produce extensive signage for social distancing and safety protocol throughout county buildings, and the availability and cost of commercial signage a consideration, the school division's graphic communication program's equipment and staff expertise was utilized to meet the demand. Signage needed included large banners to identify changes in doorways to enter or exit, arrows to tell individuals which way to flow in and out of spaces, posters on hygiene practices, and social distance dots that directed where individuals should stand when waiting next in line. Installation of these items was needed in order to reopen various buildings.

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turnaround led to the program producing the signage for other government buildings, including Henrico County's public libraries, in preparation for their reopening to the public.

Attention then shifted to the school division. Starting in June, signage was created for school offices to raise awareness for staff, parents, guardians and students as they re-entered the schools for various purposes. Throughout the summer, the transition was to focus on needs throughout the schools, preparing for the eventual return of students.

Individual graphic communications department staff, as well as key business partners, and other school and county department staff played important roles in this important project. Production has continued into 2021 to provide for the expanding needs of schools with the return of staff and students to buildings.

Graphics Program Leads Effort to Reopen Government and Schools

Supplemental Materials



