

**2021 NACO Achievement Award Program
Nomination Summary
York County, Virginia**

Program Title: Peninsula COVID-19 Operations Center

Program Category: Risk and Emergency Management

1. Abstract of the Program

The Peninsula COVID-19 Operations Center (PCOC – “Peacock” for short) was a direct result of the rapidly evolving COVID-19 “Coronavirus” Pandemic that began to appear in our region in early March of 2020. The initial discussions of the COVID-19 regional approach concept began after observing the operations of the Virginia Department of Health’s Peninsula Health District COVID-19 call center operations. At the same time, cases of COVID-19 were appearing within our own communities, including the first death on the Peninsula.

2. The Problem/Need for the Program

The inception and formation of the PCOC was a direct result of the rapidly evolving COVID-19 “Coronavirus” Pandemic that began to appear in our region in early March of 2020. Fire Chiefs in the region recognized the need to share information and utilize best practices in order to reduce the learning curve with personnel, resources and community care.

3. Description of the Program

The Peninsula COVID-19 Operations Center, (PCOC – “Peacock for short”), served as an Incident Management Team (IMT) encompassing all six fire and EMS governmental agencies (James City County, York County, City of Williamsburg, Newport News, Poquoson and Hampton) located on the Virginia Peninsula. It further served as a collection point for COVID-19 related concerns, a data gathering point and provided daily operational updates in a single format to all localities within the Virginia Peninsula region. Recognition of the abilities of the PCOC and representation expanded on the committee across the Peninsula beyond just the fire/EMS agencies. Local government (County Administrators and City Managers), the VDH, law enforcement (including sheriffs and police), area hospitals (Sentara Hampton CarePlex, Riverside Regional Medical Center, Bon Secours Mary Immaculate, Riverside Doctor’s Hospital of Williamsburg and Sentara Williamsburg Regional Medical Center), local military partners, the Peninsulas EMS Council, the Virginia Peninsula Regional Jail, local Emergency Management (EM) and the Newport News Shipbuilding Fire Department. Many of those representatives served as “in person” roles in the actual PCOC, providing immediate access and collaboration for our entire region.

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4. Cost of the Program

The costs associated with the program were absorbed by local communities and regional business partners, as all the representatives to the collective group were compensated by their employer. Internal resources were used by agencies, such as buildings, computers, supplies, and other necessary office-related items.

5. The Results/Success of the Program

The Peninsula COVID-19 Operations Center has been an ongoing success to the region for information sharing, coordination and procurement of supplies related to the virus, preparation for increase in patient load, and understanding impacts of the pandemic to city and county government and regional businesses. The value of the PCOC has expanded into the vaccination stage of the pandemic, continuing to aid in a seamless flow of information and guidance. Since the PCOC's inception, the Virginia Office of EMS has awarded the concept a regional EMS Award for Innovation in Excellence in EMS and the Governor's EMS Award for Innovation Excellence in EMS.

6. Worthiness of an Award

The York County Department of Fire and Life Safety is proud to nominate this award due to the significant contributions to Virginia's local, regional and state organizations. Without collaboration of efforts, unnecessary lives could have been lost. It is through the innovation of these community leaders that improved communications, collaboration of resources and shared best practices aided these communities to navigate the initial impact of the pandemic. This practice has persevered over the past year and proves to be of benefit in the ongoing recovery.