

# COUNTY CONNECTIONS

The Newsletter of the  
Virginia Association of Counties

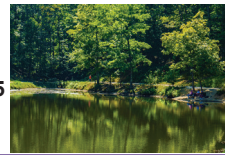
October 8, 2019



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## VACo to Honor William J. Howell with Jefferson Cup

*Former Speaker of the House of Delegates to be recognized  
during the VACo Annual Conference*

**RICHMOND**—The Virginia Association of Counties will present its most prestigious award to former Virginia House of Delegates Speaker William J. Howell on November 10 during VACo's 85<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference in Bath County.

"Bill has been a long-time friend and ally to VACo and Virginia's Counties," VACo Executive Director Dean Lynch said. "We are honored to present the Jefferson Cup to a man who devoted 30 years to serving the Commonwealth in the House of Delegates. Bill was Speaker from 2003 to 2018, making him one of the longest-serving Speakers in Virginia history. Bill is well-deserving of our association's highest honor."

Virginia recorded 10 budget surpluses totaling \$2.5 billion during Howell's tenure as Speaker of the House of Delegates. He was instrumental in the General Assembly's strategic investment in education, economic development, and mental health services. One of Howell's notable legislative achievements, HB 2313 in 2013, was a major transportation initiative passed with bipartisan support. Howell helped preserve several state parks through his passion and support of land conservation.



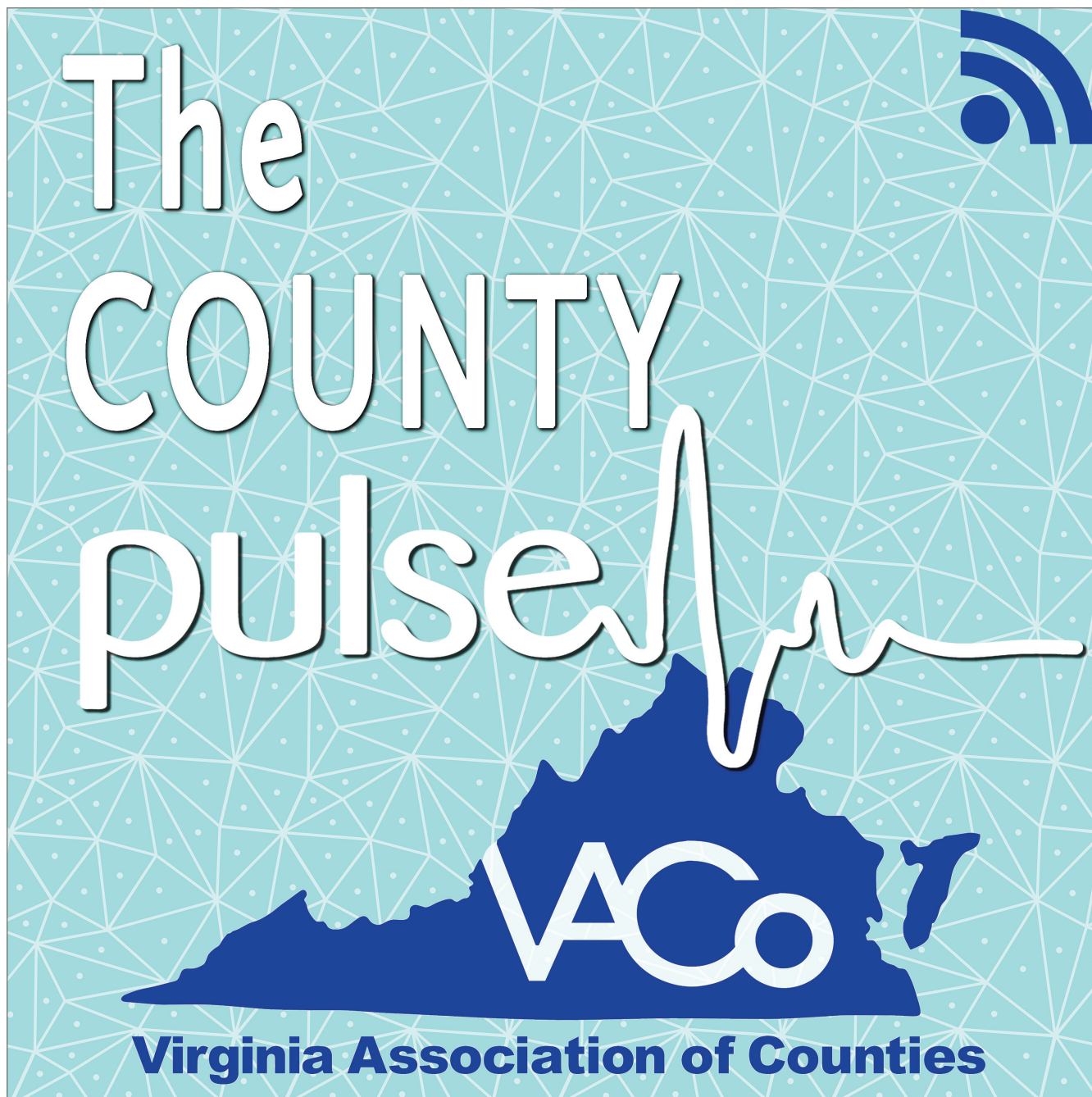
Howell was first elected to the Virginia House of Delegates in 1987 and represented his Stafford-based district for 30 years. He was Co-Chair of the House Courts of Justice Committee in 2000 and became Chairman in 2002.

Currently, Howell is a senior advisor with McGuireWoods Consulting LLC specializing in a range of strategic and policy issues. He and his wife, Cessie, have been married for 53 years.

"I am honored to receive VACo's Jefferson Cup," Howell said. "I've always respected local leaders and learned so much by listening to them. To receive this award is truly special. I've always enjoyed my time with VACo whether it be at the Capitol or at an event or in my office. My door was always open for VACo and its members."

Howell is the first Jefferson Cup recipient since 2017 when former VACo Executive Director James D. Campbell was honored.

[Jefferson Cup Recipients](#)



Guests share the legislative pulse of Virginia Counties. Click on the link below to listen to the next episode. Thank you for listening to the VACo County Pulse Podcast.

## [VACo County Pulse Podcast](#)

### **K-12 Public Education | Small and Rural Schools**

In this episode, Superintendent Keith Perrigan of Bristol City Public Schools and President of the Small and Rural Schools Coalition and Jason Bellows, District 3 Supervisor for Lancaster County, member of the VACo Board of Directors and VACo Region 2 Director join VACo's Jeremy Bennett to discuss the challenges and opportunities facing K-12 education in small and rural communities. [Listen to the Podcast.](#)

# VACo releases 2019 Preliminary Legislative Program



VACo has released its [2020 Preliminary Legislative Program](#), which was drafted through VACo's steering committee process. The document includes a host of important and timely proposed policy statements including language pertaining to K-12 education funding, local taxing authority, stormwater regulations, land use planning, transportation, broadband, health and human resources and other local budget and legislative issues.

Please click on the link to read the [2020 Preliminary Legislative Program](#).

The 2020 Legislative Program will be adopted during the [VACo Annual Conference](#) on November 10-12 in Bath County.

VACo's seven steering committees will finalize and adopt their policy sections on Sunday, November 10. The Resolutions Committee will ratify the Legislative Program on Monday, November 11. VACo's membership will vote to adopt the Final Legislative Program on Tuesday, November 12.

VACo members are encouraged to continue to add their input to this document by working through their county's legislative process and the VACo steering committee process to put forward suggested changes to VACo's 2020 Legislative Program.

For questions regarding VACo's legislative process, contact Dean Lynch at [dlynch@vaco.org](mailto:dlynch@vaco.org) or 804.343.2511.

**VACo Contact:** [Dean Lynch, CAE](#)

VACo  
**SPOTLIGHT**

**Terri T.  
Catlett**  
Clarke County  
Supervisor



**Q1. You're serving your first term on the Board of Supervisors in Clarke County. What sparked your interest in serving in an elected capacity? Was there anything that surprised you about serving on the Board?**

**Terri Catlett:** *Serving on the Board of Supervisors in Clarke County or any elected office was not something that I thought I would do when I graduated from veterinary school. My interest in serving sparked from experiencing the Clarke County community. It is a wonderful place to live, work, and raise a family. If you value something you need to support it. Surprises? No big surprises, just a greater appreciation. First and foremost for the talent, effort, and time that Clarke County employees put into their work. And a better appreciation for local government and how it functions.*

**Q2. You're a veterinarian who specializes in treating large animals and practices in a rural community. There is a lot of concern about a shortage of providers like yourself and the problems that a lack of veterinarians in rural areas poses for agriculture. Do you see any promising approaches to addressing that issue?**

**TC:** *Yes, I am a large animal veterinarian (Dr. Trimble) and when I moved to Marshall, Virginia for my first job I worked at a mixed animal practice in a rural community. I did treat all animals at that time. Over the years my practice focus changed to horses and I live close to Northern Virginia, so I am not the large animal veterinarian that the question addresses but it is an important question! Yes, there is a shortage of large animal veterinarians in some rural areas of Virginia. The driver of the shortage is economics. From the high student debt load of graduating veterinarians (average debt of graduating veterinarians in 2017 was \$166,714, source AVMA), to salaries of vets in rural areas to practice economics. The American Veterinary Medical Association and veterinary colleges are working to address the shortage. The vet schools set aside a certain number of seats for incoming students enrolled in animal science programs and they are working to diversify their enrollment. The AVMA is working to recruit, train, and support veterinarians in areas of need. And there are programs to help with student loan forgiveness. Hopefully these approaches will help an important need.*

**Q3. Expanding access to broadband is one of your top priorities. What have been some of your successes in this area? Are there any "lessons learned" that can be shared with other communities?**

**TC:** *Clarke County recently received a \$209,513 grant through the Virginia Telecommunications Initiative (VATI). Comcast is matching the VATI funds with \$119,463 of its own. The project will bring high-speed internet to around 97 home and businesses in the White Post area. This success is just a piece of what is needed in Clarke County! We have been working to be a county that is ready to partner with the different vendors. We paid a consultant to do a study and we have a separate website, [Clarkeconnect](#), for citizens and vendors to get up to date information. We formed a Broadband Implementation Committee to develop projects and help expand broadband.*

**Q4. In your view, what are the major challenges and opportunities facing Clarke County in the next ten years?**

**TC:** *Clarke County's challenges are like many counties, how to provide for increasing needs with limited resources. Providing for emergency services is one of the needs.*

**Q5. What are the "must-do" activities for a first-time visitor to Clarke County?**

**TC:** *Must do activities in Clarke County are many for a small county. Check out the Barns at Rose Hill in Berryville for a concert, art show, or community event. Stop by the village of Millwood for lunch and a visit to the Burwell Mill. You may get to see millers grind corn or see the amazing art show that is there in the spring and fall. Go to Blandy, the State Arboretum of Virginia, for a stroll through 172 acres of beauty. And there is always the Shenandoah River for a float as well as a hike on the Appalachian Trail!*

VACo Contact: [Katie Boyle](#)



## Visit Giles County and the Pandapas Pond

Pandapas Pond is a pastoral, 8 acre pond located just outside the town of Blacksburg. It sits on the Eastern Continental Divide and is surrounded by a forest of hardwoods and rhododendron. Visitors will enjoy strolling the one-mile wheelchair accessible trail that encircles the pond. A wooden boardwalk separates the pond from a small wetland area that is abundant with dragonflies, turtles, songbirds, and waterfowl. Horses and bicycles are not permitted on the trail around the pond; however, they may use the 17-mile Poverty Creek Trail system that can be accessed from the upper parking lot.

**SOURCE:** [USDA Forest Service](#)





## Mark Your Calendars



# COUNTY STRONG 85 YEARS

## Advocacy · Engagement · Action

### 2019 VACo Annual Conference



## COUNTIES COMING TOGETHER

November 10-12 | The Omni Homestead | Bath County

As VACo's biggest event of the year, the Annual Conference is a must for every Virginia County Supervisor and county staff member. Drawing in hundreds of officials, dozens of speakers, and a host of vendors and exhibits, VACo's Annual Conference provides opportunities to learn from others, grow in knowledge, and improve skills.

The conference includes:

- Opportunities to shape VACo's Legislative Program
- General Sessions featuring speakers on issues that affect counties
- Breakout Sessions designed to educate and promote collaboration
- Exhibit Hall with vendors that serve Virginia Counties' interests
- The Annual Business Meeting when VACo's Legislative Program is adopted and the VACo Board of Directors is elected
- Steering Committee Meetings
- Regional Meetings
- Specialized Group Meetings
- Multiple networking opportunities with local government peers and state legislators

[Annual Conference Registration Form](#) | [Online Conference Registration](#) | [Preliminary Agenda](#)

[VACo Lodging Policy](#) | [List of Alternative Lodging Options](#)

## Commission on Youth Seeks Public Comment on Foster Care Recommendations



The Virginia Commission on Youth recently received an extensive report from its staff on issues surrounding the state’s foster care system, a topic that is of major interest to state policymakers in the wake of a significant rewrite of federal support for foster care and a December 2018 report by the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission that made numerous recommendations for improvements. The full staff briefing is available at [this link](#), and the list of draft recommendations is available at [this link](#). Public comment is being accepted until 5 p.m. on November 22, 2019.

A major focus of the draft report is the stress placed on the local child welfare workforce and the resulting problems for local departments associated with high turnover rates and significant numbers of vacancies. As the report points out, in July 2019, 20 percent of child welfare Family Service Specialist positions were vacant, and 71 percent of local departments reported substantial or moderate difficulty in recruiting foster care caseworkers. The stresses can be particularly pronounced in small, rural departments; data provided by the Virginia Department of Social Services and cited in the report shows a 61.1 percent turnover rate in small, rural agencies between 2016 and 2017. The report notes several reasons for the high turnover rates, including local workers’ frustrations with the state’s IT systems, training that is time-consuming and viewed as not useful in the field, and reporting timelines that are not realistic. Compensation for child welfare workers was the top concern cited by attendees at a foster care seminar hosted by the Commission this spring.

The report also discusses several other elements of the foster care system that have been identified as areas for possible improvement through Commission staff’s research, including possible revisions to the Fostering Futures program; options to increase the use of kinship care, which often results in better outcomes for children; and ways to address an overreliance on therapeutic foster care or congregate care. In addition to the improved outcomes experienced by children in foster care who are placed with families rather than in congregate care arrangements, the federal government has created a disincentive for relying on congregate care placements through the recently-enacted Family First Prevention Services Act, which, when fully implemented in Virginia, will limit federal Title IV-E funding for congregate care placements, except for certain limited circumstances. The state is already taking steps to review existing congregate care placements and assist local departments with recruiting foster families, an effort expected to accelerate with the Virginia Fosters campaign, which is being undertaken in partnership with the nonprofit Virginia’s Kids Belong.

Several of the recommendations of interest to local governments include:

- Increasing the minimum salary for child welfare workers and providing a salary adjustment for current workers.
- Creating a state-funded child welfare stipend program for college students who pledge to work in local departments of social services. The current federal program, which is funded through Title IV-E, has been successful, but is somewhat limited in its usefulness for smaller departments due to the requirement that recipients spend the majority of their time on Title IV-E programs.
- Establishing a state grant program for local departments to assist with recruitment and retention of foster families.

Public comment is being accepted through close of business on November 22 in advance of the Commission’s December 4 meeting. Comments may be submitted via email to [aatkinson@vcov.virginia.gov](mailto:aatkinson@vcov.virginia.gov) or by hand-delivery or mail to the Commission on Youth, 900 E. Main St, Floor 11, Richmond, VA 23219, or via fax to 804-371-0574.

**VACo Contact:** [Katie Boyle](#)

# Cost Study of Private Day Special Education Programs Released



Language included in the 2018 Appropriations Act required the Office of Children’s Services to contract for a study of the rates paid for private day educational placements funded through the Children’s Service Act, which would include recommendations for how a rate-setting structure for these services might be implemented. The consultants selected to complete the study, Public Consulting Group (PCG), released an interim report in late 2018 and held [listening sessions](#) on a draft final report this summer to solicit feedback in advance of the report’s October 1 due date. The [report](#) has now been released. It provides a recommended methodology for the development of rates, but cautions that a second round of data collection would be necessary to develop rates in the future, since only about 40 percent of schools provided the data requested by PCG (although these schools account for approximately 64 percent of the students served in private day placements).

The report includes a proposed methodology for setting rates for operating and personnel costs and includes some sample rates based on the information supplied by participating providers. Operating costs would include elements such as facility costs, food service, and insurance; personnel costs covered salaries and benefits. PCG recommended that, should the legislature opt to develop school-specific rates in the future, schools would need to be required to submit cost information in order to calculate these rates. PCG also recommended that regional variations in cost be taken into account by developing a set of base rates for each region (this issue was discussed at several of the regional listening sessions this summer). The report also recommends that rates for physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech-language pathology services be set separately, as the costs for these services varied significantly. PCG suggests that an inflation adjustment using the Consumer Price Index would be useful in order to project rates into future years.

PCG points out that one benefit of a potential rate-setting structure to local governments and other interested parties would be predictability, noting, “Standardized rates may allow for stable budgetary predictions among all groups.” At this time, due to the limitations of the data provided, it is difficult to determine the specific effects on individual schools and localities, as PCG notes: “One goal of this rate study was to analyze the impact of new rates on local school districts, local governments, and other affected entities. As specific rates are not set, the local impact is indeterminate at this time. For any future studies, a sample analysis on rate impact to local school districts and local government funds would be advisable.”

It is anticipated that this issue will continue to be under discussion by the legislature and the Administration during the upcoming General Assembly session, including through a study of special education and a study of the Children’s Services Act, both of which were approved by the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission’s Study Selection Subcommittee on October 7 and planned for 2020. The full Commission is expected to approve these studies at its November meeting.

VACo Contact: [Katie Boyle](#)



## New FCC Order May Affect Provision of In-Kind Cable Services to Counties



Under a new Federal Communications Commission (FCC) [rule](#) adopted on August 1 (and effective September 26), the fair market value (FMV) of public, educational, and government (PEG) channels now counts towards the statutory 5 percent franchise fee cap that franchising authorities may charge under the Federal Communications Act. This could have significant local impact via the reduction of franchise fees supporting PEG channels and the undermining of local authority.

The act [defines](#) franchise fees to include any tax, fee, or assessment of any kind including non-monetary or in-kind cable-related contributions imposed on a cable operator. What this means for Virginia counties is uncertain because franchise fees are not collected in Virginia; instead cable operators collect a 5 percent Communications Sales and Use Tax ([CSUT](#)) directly from subscribers.

Agreements between counties and cable companies provide cable operators the right to construct, install, maintain and operate a cable system on County Public Rights-of-Way in exchange for the provision of cable service to residents of the County. These agreements (also known as “franchise agreements”) typically include in-kind contributions in the form of operational costs associated with PEG channels and other contributions such as complimentary cable service to government buildings, I-Nets (uses of which may include but are not limited to GIS mapping, distance learning, emergency services, and management of utilities), network capacity, as well as the relocation, restoration, and maintenance of these services.

[PEG channels](#) provide significant public benefits to communities, such as transparency and accountability through access to local and regional government meetings; educational programming including for-credit courses; coverage of local events; local election coverage; candidate forums; and public safety programming. Should cable companies now charge for or discontinue these services, counties will face significant costs to provide these public benefits that are essential to communities.

The new rule (see [FCC Third Report and Order](#)) which applies to existing franchise agreements is already being [challenged](#) in court by local government organizations, and the National Association of Counties (NACo) is working with other stakeholders at the federal level to address the potential impacts of this decision. In the meantime, local governments may wish to review their current franchise agreements to determine potential fiscal impact, monitor franchise fee payments received after September 26 for any changes, as well as review the franchise modification [procedure](#), which gives a local franchising authority 120 days to make a final decision on a cable operator’s requested modification.

In addition to providing updates regarding the new rule, VACo will monitor its impacts to Virginia’s counties.

VACo Contacts: [Jeremy R. Bennett](#), [Joe Lerch](#), and [Phyllis Errico](#)

## **Joint Commission on Health Care Considering Public Access to Naloxone; October 25 Deadline for Public Comment**

Staff to the Joint Commission on Health Care (JCHC) [briefed](#) Commission members last week on a study of barriers to public access to naloxone, a medication that reverses opioid overdoses, and the benefits and drawbacks of placing naloxone in publicly accessible places, such as co-locating naloxone kits with Automatic External Defibrillators (AEDs). JCHC staff worked with VACo and VML to survey local governments on their interest in, and concerns about, positioning naloxone in local government facilities that are open to the public. The Commission is accepting public comment until October 25, and will consider and vote on policy options at its November 14 meeting.

In recent years, the state has enacted policy changes and provided funding to enhance access to naloxone, including the passage of several bills to expand the list of professionals who are authorized to possess and administer naloxone, and the issuance of a standing order by the State Health Commissioner, which allows dispensing of naloxone to individuals without a prescription (dispensers are required to provide instruction to members of the general public when dispensing naloxone). Recent media reports have suggested that there may be confusion among some pharmacies about the application of the standing order, and staff suggested that the JCHC may consider requesting the Board of Pharmacy to disseminate information on this topic.

Although naloxone is generally regarded as safe by the Food and Drug Administration and is considered to be relatively easy to administer by individuals without medical expertise, JCHC staff recommended that some form of training still be required for “lay administrators” of naloxone if JCHC members opt to pursue measures to increase the placement of naloxone in public places, because there are some risks to naloxone administration that can be mitigated by training (for example, by learning to expect a person recovering from an overdose to be agitated). Currently, the main avenue for instruction on naloxone administration is the REVIVE! training offered by the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services. Other mechanisms for assistance to the public in responding to overdoses are the 911 call centers (some of those answering points with Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) services are incorporating naloxone administration protocols into their EMD services), and regional Poison Control Centers, which are staffed by medical professionals 24/7, but may not be widely known as a source of information for overdose response.

JCHC staff outlined several benefits associated with co-locating naloxone with AEDs, including general public familiarity with where to look for AEDs, and the possibility that an overdose may cause cardiac arrest. Concerns included whether co-location with AEDs was the most cost-effective approach, given that the majority of overdoses do not appear to occur in public places, and that emergency medical providers may be able to respond to the overdose more quickly than lay rescuers, particularly in urban areas where EMS providers’ response time is short. There is also concern about the potential for theft of naloxone, as well as the cost associated with periodic replacement of the naloxone as it reaches the end of its shelf life. Local governments had indicated significant concerns about potential liability, a concern that was shared by several JCHC members. Staff explained that although Virginia Code provides “Good Samaritan” civil liability protection for the administration of naloxone by individuals who receive it through recognized channels, the law is not clear about protections in a scenario in which, for example, “naloxone [is] dispensed to individual A who gives Individual B naloxone to administer on Individual C who is experiencing [an] overdose.” Civil liability protections would not apply to individuals who obtained a drug through unauthorized channels, and because naloxone is a controlled substance (although it is not overseen by the Drug Enforcement Agency, the Food and Drug Administration has approved it by prescription only), according to state law, unauthorized possession is a Class 4 misdemeanor. JCHC staff suggested that JCHC members may wish to consider broadening civil and criminal liability protections to address this type of situation.

Policy options presented for Commission members’ consideration in November are as follows:

- Option 1: take no action
- Option 2: introduce legislation authorizing individuals acting on behalf of public locations who have completed a training program to possess and administer naloxone in the case of a suspected overdose
- Option 3: introduce legislation expanding criminal and civil liability protections for individuals administering naloxone
- Option 4: request that the Board of Pharmacy distribute information to pharmacists about the standing order authorizing dispensing of naloxone without a patient-specific prescription
- Option 5: request the convening of a task force to study the roles of Public Safety Answering Points and poison control centers in providing assistance to the public on opioid overdoses

Written public comments may be provided to the JCHC by close of business October 25 via email ([jchcpubliccomments@jhc.virginia.gov](mailto:jchcpubliccomments@jhc.virginia.gov)), fax (804.786.5538), or US Mail (Joint Commission on Health Care, P.O. Box 1322, Richmond, VA 23218).

**VACo Contact:** [Katie Boyle](#)

# VDOT FY 2021 Local State of Good Repair (SGR) Primary Extension and Local Bridge Programs Call for Applications and Submittals



The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) recently announced that it is soliciting for FY 2021 submittals for both the local State of Good Repair (SGR) Primary Extension Paving and Bridge programs. Please see the correspondence regarding the details for the [SGR pavement](#) and [bridge programs](#) applications and submittals for FY 2021. Localities should use the Smart Portal for submitting all Primary Extension paving applications and bridge notification forms for the State of Good Repair (SGR) program at the following link: <https://smartportal.virginiahb2.org>.

Additional information, including the application and submittal process is posted to the VDOT Local Assistance Division webpage at the following link: [http://www.virginiadot.org/business/local\\_assistance\\_division\\_funding\\_programs.asp#good](http://www.virginiadot.org/business/local_assistance_division_funding_programs.asp#good).

VDOT has also posted frequently asked questions and responses focused primarily on the requirement to meet federal requirements for SGR Primary Extension paving requests. These FAQs are based on discussions with a stakeholders group held in August. The presentations from the September 24 webinar are also posted on the webpage and the webinar recording should be posted soon.

The deadline for submitting Primary Extension pavement applications and bridge notification forms through the Smart Portal system is **5pm on December 13, 2019**. If you have questions, please contact Todd Halacy at [Todd.Halacy@VDOT.Virginia.gov](mailto:Todd.Halacy@VDOT.Virginia.gov) or by phone 804.786.3438 or Yolanda Newton at [Yolanda.Newton@VDOT.Virginia.gov](mailto:Yolanda.Newton@VDOT.Virginia.gov) or by phone 804.786.0334.

**VACo Contact:** [Jeremy R. Bennett](#)

# Children’s Needs Discussed at Mental Health Subcommittee



Members of the Joint Subcommittee to Study Mental Health Services in the Commonwealth in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century who serve on one of the Joint Subcommittee’s workgroups took up the issue of children’s access to mental health supports at a recent workgroup meeting. Traditionally the Joint Subcommittee has focused on the needs of adults, but members had expressed interest in incorporating more attention to the needs of children during its 2019 work period. Child psychiatrists are in short supply in Virginia, but efforts are underway to enhance primary care doctors’ ability to treat children’s mental health needs. School nurses, counselors, and psychologists play key roles in identifying and addressing students’ mental health needs as well.

Nina Marino, Director of the Office of Child and Family Services at the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS) and Dr. Sandy Chung, Medical Director of the Virginia Mental Health Access Program (VMAP), made a [presentation](#) on this program, which was developed through a federal grant, supplemented with state General Fund dollars. The program addresses the serious shortage of child and adolescent psychiatrists in Virginia by bolstering pediatricians’ capacity to treat common mental health conditions. VMAP provides education for primary care providers, telephone or video consultations with mental health specialists, telepsychiatry appointments if needed, and referrals and linkages to mental health resources for families. VMAP launched as a pilot program in August 2019, and there are plans to expand the program to serve more providers statewide in the future.

Workgroup members also received presentations from representatives of school nurses, school counselors, and school psychologists about the important roles these professionals play in supporting student mental health. Debra Ruppert, a school nurse at Independence Nontraditional School in Prince William County, [explained](#) how the nursing staff at her school work collaboratively with school administration, school resource officers, counselors, and social workers to ensure a safe and supportive learning environment, and her efforts to connect students and families with community resources. Several representatives from the Virginia School Counselor Association [spoke](#) about the role they play in their respective schools, which typically includes individual or small group counseling sessions, as well as classroom instruction on social/emotional learning and career exploration. The presenters discussed the state’s work in the most recent legislative session to lower counselor-to-student ratios, and encouraged members to continue to work toward a ratio of one counselor per 250 students. The workgroup meeting concluded with a [presentation](#) by several school psychologists, who explained how they support student mental health through efforts such as educating parents and teachers about mental health; participating in crisis intervention and suicide prevention efforts; and developing re-entry plans for students transitioning back to school after a mental health crisis. The presenters noted that school psychologists typically support several schools within a school division, and that they would prefer to see lower staff-to-student ratios so that they could spend more time on prevention services.

Later in the day, the full Joint Subcommittee met to receive updates from DBHDS and the Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS) on major behavioral health projects underway at the two agencies. Acting DBHDS Commissioner Mira Signer began by [briefing](#) members on the status of implementation of STEP-VA. The first two “steps,” same-day access to assessment and primary care screening, are underway; crisis services and outpatient services are in progress, and planning for the remaining steps is ongoing. Work continues to address the serious concerns about overcrowding at the state hospitals, which continue to operate at dangerously high census levels; a workgroup is developing short- and long-term proposals to fix this problem, and in the meantime, DBHDS is opening temporary beds at Catawba Hospital to relieve some of the pressures on the hospital system. Members also received [a briefing](#) on a joint effort by DBHDS and the Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS) to redesign the state’s Medicaid-funded behavioral health system so that it supports initiatives underway in other human services agencies (such as changes to federal assistance with foster care incorporated in the Family First Prevention Services Act) and invests resources to support evidence-based and trauma-informed services across a continuum of care. A report is due to the General Assembly later this year on the proposed redesign.

**VACo Contact:** [Katie Boyle](#)

## Updates from the Commonwealth Connect Coalition

The Commonwealth Connect Coalition met on September 24 in at the Governor's Summit on Rural Prosperity to provide the latest updates in the effort to empower Virginia communities to reach functionally universal broadband coverage. The Coalition provided updates on FOIA exemptions for VATI, utility middle-mile pilots programs, updates from King George County Supervisor and VACo Board of Directors member Ruby Brabo, and discussion of allocation of FCC funds to Virginia in the form of block grants.

In August, the Freedom of Information Advisory Council (FOIA Council) issued an [advisory opinion](#) related to the Council's interpretation of [SB 1492](#), legislation enacted on July 1, 2019, that added specific exemptions from disclosures under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) for proprietary materials submitted to the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). In its opinion, the FOIA Council concluded that information submitted as part of a challenge to a Virginia Telecommunication Initiative (VATI) application or in the course of monitoring and verification of an awarded VATI grant would not be exempt from FOIA disclosure under subsection 32 of § 2.2-3705.6.

Having received counsel from the Office of the Attorney General (OAG), DHCD will apply the FOIA exemption standards previously understood and described to the stakeholder community, and continue to accept requests for specific exemptions from disclosure under FOIA materials related to VATI applications, including materials submitted as part of a challenge to an application or materials submitted in the course of monitoring and verification of an awarded grant. DHCD will follow procedures previously outlined in the [FY20 VATI Program Guidelines and Criteria](#) for reviewing, granting, and maintaining information presented in support of applications exempted by disclosure from FOIA as allowed by subsection 3 of § 2.2-3705.6.

DHCD encourages applicants and challengers to consult their own legal counsel when evaluating the sufficiency of their submissions under the relevant statute, and further encourages collaboration between applicants and challengers to avoid challenges when possible.

**The deadline for submitting a challenge for the FY20 VATI grant round is October 9th.** A reminder that those wishing to request FOIA exemption **for information related to or in response of a VATI challenge** must submit a request to [vati@dhcd.virginia.gov](mailto:vati@dhcd.virginia.gov) detailing exactly what information is being requested for exemption. Applicants wishing to submit multiple FOIA exemption requests for multiple VATI applications must do so individually in separate requests. DHCD will make a written determination within ten (10) days of the request as to whether FOIA-exemption will be afforded as well as the nature and scope of the protection. **Please do not submit proprietary or confidential information with your initial request, only do so once you have received a response from DHCD affording FOIA exemption.** If you have any questions, please contact [vati@dhcd.virginia.gov](mailto:vati@dhcd.virginia.gov).

Ed Diggs with Dominion Energy and Amanda Cox with Appalachian Power provided an update on the utility broadband program. Dominion Energy's [request for information](#) (RFI), which closed in early September, saw more than 2 dozen responses from ISPs and localities alike. They are continuing to meet with potential partners, so please [contact Dominion](#) if you are interested. Ed Diggs discussed some of the unique challenges this program faces, such as easements and finding/prioritizing projects. Amanda Cox talked through Appalachian Power's first project, a partnership with Grayson County and Gigabeam. Appalachian Power filed the project with the State Corporation Commission (SCC) on September 6. Since then, the SCC has set a timeline on the review process for the project, culminating in a 1/24/20 hearing. The filing, full timeline, and more information can be found [here](#).

If you are interested in partnering with either Dominion Energy or Appalachian Power to serve unserved communities, please reach out to the folks listed below.

- Amanda Cox, Appalachian Power - [accox@aep.com](mailto:accox@aep.com)
- Ed Diggs, Dominion Energy - [ed.diggs@dominionenergy.com](mailto:ed.diggs@dominionenergy.com)

Ruby Brabo, South Region Director for the National Association of Counties (NACO) and King George County Supervisor shared her experience with broadband in King George; chiefly how an early partnership with a broadband provider fell through on bad terms and despite this setback, the county didn't waiver from their goal of universal coverage and pressed onward. Ruby Brabo and King George County convened major providers in the County to gauge their interest in expanding, found both wireless and fiber providers to partner with, and have now set off on a plan for universal coverage. She stressed the importance of hybrid solutions, with both wireless and fiber, for rural counties looking to achieve universal broadband.

Lastly, Evan Feinman previewed a letter template in process for coalition members to sign and send to the chairman of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Ajit Pai, asking the FCC to block grant broadband funds to the Commonwealth of Virginia. Doing so would potentially allow for easier distribution of funds to connect more households in a more efficient and shorter timeframe.

**VACo Contact: [Jeremy R. Bennett](#)**



## **VACo 2019 Regional Meeting Season ends in Augusta County**

The sun set both literally and figuratively on the 2019 Regional Meeting Season, as folks from VACo's Region 9 gathered at the Shenandoah Valley Regional Airport on September 19. At this, our last Regional Meeting of the year, county officials enjoyed delicious local BBQ, discussed the challenges of their respective communities, and even took a moment to gaze through the airport's huge glass windows to witness the beauty of a fall sunset in the Valley.

Thank you Delegate Tony Wilt for participating the entire evening. During the conversation with Delegate Wilt, the discussion bounced from transportation, to improvements and increased funding for I81, to broadband access and innovation, and to workforce development.

Attendees then shared their challenges – issues of population, broadband expansion, trust in institutions, and the impact of the upcoming 2020 Census.

The 2020 Census was mentioned several times during the group discussion segment, which was timely given that the educational portion of the evening was entirely devoted to this topic. During the last component of the meeting, Kathleen O'Connell of the US Census Bureau, Lauren Snellings of Voices for Virginia's Children, and Bradford R.R. Dyjak of Rockingham County, each shared their unique perspective as to how the U.S. Census will impact Virginia's counties and how their organizations or communities are preparing to ensure a complete count within the Commonwealth.

VACo is grateful for those who made the trip to Augusta County for the meeting. As we conclude this season of travel and discussion, we look forward to taking all that we have learned from our members and utilizing that information to craft our legislative priorities for the coming year. VACo thanks all of our members who have attended one or more of these meetings and who have contributed to a successful VACo Regional Meeting Season.

**VACo Contact:** [Angela Inglett](#)

**COUNTY STRONG 85 YEARS**  
 Advocacy · Engagement · Action  
 2019 VACo Annual Conference 

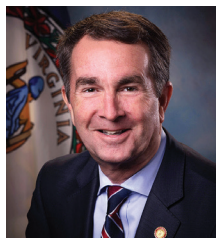
**November 10-12**  
The Omni Homestead  
Bath County, Virginia

[Annual Conference Registration Form](#)  
[Online Conference Registration](#)  
[Preliminary Agenda](#)

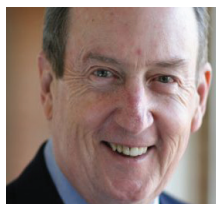
# Keynote Speakers confirmed for the 2019 VACo Annual Conference

**Monday, November 11**  
Opening General Session  
830am

The Honorable **Ralph Northam**, Governor,  
Commonwealth of Virginia



**Dr. George H. Gilliam**,  
Lecturer, Corcoran  
Department of History,  
University of Virginia  
- Will speak about 400  
years of the Virginia State  
Legislature.



**Tuesday, November 12**  
Closing General Session  
1030am

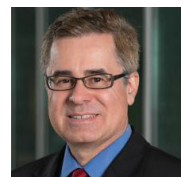
The Honorable **Tom Davis**, Attorney  
and Former Representative, U.S.  
House of Representatives



The Honorable **Jim Moran**,  
Professor of Practice, School  
of Public and International  
Affairs, Virginia Tech and Former  
Representative, U.S. House of  
Representatives



**Mark J. Rozell**, Founding Dean,  
Schar School of Policy and  
Government, George Mason  
University



# 85<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference Hotel Information



If you are attending VACo's Annual Conference, here are some helpful suggestions to make your time at The Omni Homestead run smoothly. Please call 804.788.6652 with questions.

## UPON ARRIVAL

Check-in time for your room is 4 p.m.

Valet parking is included in the 15 percent daily charge that is automatically added to your room rate.

When you arrive, please remember that bellmen and doormen work for tips and are not compensated through any service fees collected by the hotel. These individuals should be rewarded at the guest's discretion for their superior service.

- The doormen will give each guest a Valet Parking ticket for the car, or you may park in the complimentary parking lots at the top of the hill.
- The doormen will give each guest a luggage ticket that you should take to the front desk where you will check-in.
- You will need a credit card, a photo ID and your luggage claim ticket.
- If your room **is** ready, you will receive your room keys and hotel ID cards and the bellman will deliver your luggage to your room.
- If your room **is not** ready, you will receive a temporary ID card for charging purposes. Luggage will be stored until your room is ready.
- Please provide a cell phone number if you would like to be called when your room is available.
- Luggage delivery will take approximately 20 minutes, but can vary depending on the flow of guests arriving around the same time.

## UPON DEPARTURE

Checkout time is noon.

To order your car for departure:

- Call the Transportation Department directly at Ext. 57711.
- Allow 15 minutes for your car to be delivered at the front drive. Please keep in mind that peak departure is between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m., and you may experience a wait.
- As a reminder, the hotel is unable to leave cars unattended in front of the resort, due to the flow of arrivals and departures. Please call for your car when you are ready to depart.

Luggage pick up:

- Please call the bellman directly by pressing the "Bellman Button" on your guest room phone, or dialing Ext. #57571.
- Place luggage inside your guest room by the door for the bellman.
- Your luggage may be retrieved on the front porch.
- Please speak to a doormen for assistance with departure, and notify them if you have golf clubs to load.

Checkout:

- You will receive a copy of your charges under your door the last night of your stay or as an email if an address was provided.
- You may leave your Express Checkout card (located in your key packet) at the Front Desk in the Express Checkout Box (keys may be dropped in the box).
- You may check out directly with the front desk. Please keep in mind that peak departure is between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m., and you may experience an extended wait time.

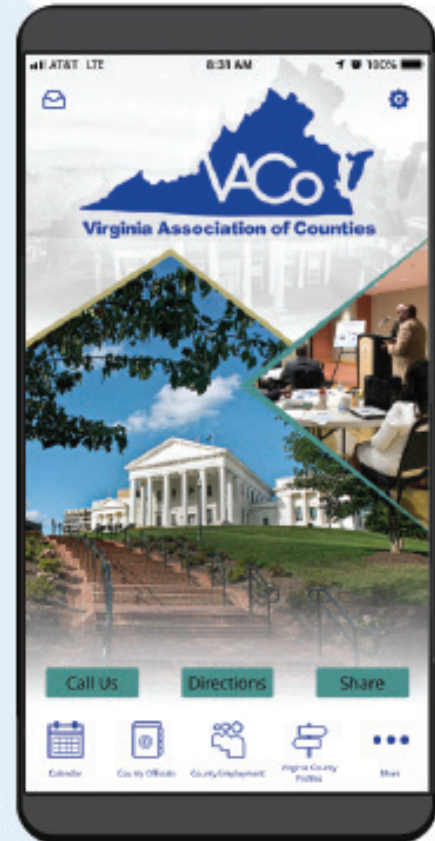
## BILL SPLITTING

Separate billing for room, the Daily Resort Charge, the Modified American Plan (MAP) and related taxes will be provided for each conference attendee staying at The Omni Homestead. Expenses for spouse, guests and children, as well as incidentals will be provided on a separate bill. For more information about bill splitting, please request assistance from the front desk during check-in.



# DOWNLOAD

our new app



The Virginia Association of Counties (VACo) mobile application is a valuable tool for County officials and staff to better serve their communities. With the VACo mobile app, users can easily stay informed about issues important to Counties with many features, including:

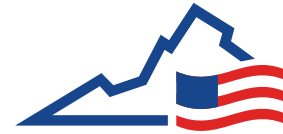
- \* VACo Events Registration and Info
- \* VACo Member Directory
- \* Legislative News and Alerts | Capitol Contact
- \* VACo Chat
- \* County Pulse Podcast
- \* Employment Opportunities

### Downloading the app is easy...

- Scan the QR Code or search "Virginia Assn of Counties" from the iTunes or Google Play Store
- Opt-in for VACo Push Notifications to receive important VACo alerts
- For access to the most features, request an account with your email and a password
- Once your account is approved, members will have access to all the features.

# VIRGINIA VALUES VETERANS

Bringing Veterans and Employers Together Across the Commonwealth



Virginia Department of Veterans Services

Virginia Values Veterans V3 Program



## Learn How Veterans can be the Ideal Solution to Your Talent Needs!

The Virginia Values Veterans V3 Program offers this **free** employer training event.

- Become educated on nationally recognized best practices in recruiting, hiring and retaining Veterans
- Learn how you might qualify for the V3 Program \$10,000 Veteran Employment Grant

This special all-day event will feature ALL courses needed for V3 Certification.

**WHEN:**

Wednesday,  
October 16, 2019  
8:30 am - 3:00 pm

**WHERE:**

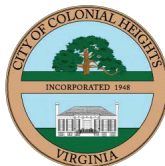
American Legion  
505 Springdale Ave  
Colonial Heights, VA 23834

**REGISTER:**

<http://bit.ly/ColonialHeights2019>

*Free Parking and Lunch Provided*

**Thank you to our hosts!**



**Dominion Energy**

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**Contact Valerie Russell: [vrussell@vaco.org](mailto:vrussell@vaco.org) or call 804.788.6652**

Virginia Association of Counties | 1207 East Main Street, Richmond, VA 23219

# VIRGINIA COUNTY SUPERVISORS' MANUAL

EIGHTH EDITION, 2019

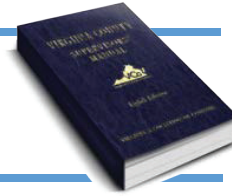


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Virginia County Supervisors' Manual  
8th Edition - NEW FOR 2019



The Eighth Edition (2019) of VACo's *Virginia County Supervisors' Manual*, is now in stock. The Supervisors' Manual is the number one resource on the framework of county government and the responsibilities of the county board.

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Manuals are \$75 per copy. Number of Copies \_\_\_\_\_.

Check enclosed for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Make payable to **VACo Services, Inc.**

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1207 East Main Street, Suite 300  
Richmond, VA 23219-3627

Or FAX credit card purchases to 804.788.0083

Questions? Call 804.788.6652.



# employment opportunities



The Virginia Association of Counties accepts employment ads in a PDF file or a link to a job site. Please include information for applying, and a link to other important information. Please do not fax your employment ad. VACo members are not charged for placing an employment ad. The cost is \$50 per ad for non-VACo members. VACo publishes the ad on its website and mobile app as well as the upcoming County Connections issue. If you have any questions or concerns, please email [Valerie Russell](mailto:Valerie.Russell).



**JUDICIAL LAW CLERK** |

Montgomery County | Posted October 4



**CUSTODIAL SERVICES**

**COORDINATOR** | James City County | Posted October 4



**EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER I/II/III/IV** | James City County | Posted October 4

October 4



**FAMILY SERVICES**

**ASSISTANT** | James City County | Posted October 4



**DEPUTY COURT CLERK**

**SUPERVISOR** | Montgomery County | Posted October 4



**DIRECTOR OF**

**PLANNING** | Berkley Group | Posted October 3



**TOWN MANAGER** | Town

of Cape Charles | Posted October 2



**SENIOR PLANNER/**

**ZONING ADMINISTRATOR** |

Dinwiddie County | Posted October 2



**PLANNER/GIS**

**TECHNICIAN** | Fluvanna County | Posted October 1



**DESIGN REVIEW**

**SPECIALIST** | Frederick County | Posted October 1



**BUDGET MANAGER** | City

of Fredericksburg | Posted October 1



**TRANSPORTATION**

**PLANNER** | Fauquier County | Posted October 1



**LEAD BUILDING**

**REVIEWER** | Fauquier County | Posted October 1



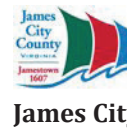
**EXECUTIVE**

**DIRECTOR** | Blue Ridge Crossroads EDA | Posted September 30



**ZONING**

**ADMINISTRATOR/SUBDIVISION AGENT** | Northampton County | Posted September 30



**FIREFIGHTER I/II/III/IV** |

James City County | Posted September 27



**ANIMAL CONTROL**

**OFFICER** | James City County | Posted September 27



**HUMAN**

**RESOURCES DIRECTOR** | Virginia Retirement System | Posted September 27



**ASSISTANT DIRECTOR**

**OF HUMAN RESOURCES** | Roanoke County | Posted September 27



**RECREATION PROGRAM SUPERVISOR – WELLNESS** | Roanoke County | Posted September 27



**INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SPECIALIST** | Madison County | Posted September 26



**PLANS EXAMINER II (MECHANICAL & PLUMBING)** | City of Alexandria | Posted September 24



**VICTIM/WITNESS PROGRAM ASSISTANT** | Prince George County | Posted September 24



**POLICE OFFICER (CERTIFIED)** | Prince George County | Posted September 24



**METER READER** | Prince George County | Posted September 24



**MANAGER IV, PLANNING** | Prince George County | Posted September 24



**COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER** | Prince George County | Posted September 24



**DIRECTOR, INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY** | Prince George County | Posted September 24



**WATERWORKS OPERATOR APPRENTICE I/II/III/IV** | James City County | Posted September 23



**APPLICATION SPECIALIST – LAND DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM** | Montgomery County | Posted September 23



**INSTRUCTOR I/II/III SPECIAL INTEREST (ARC)** | James City County | Posted September 20



**SPORTS INSTRUCTOR I/II/III** | James City County | Posted September 20



**FINANCE DIRECTOR** | Warren County | Posted September 20



**DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC & CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT** | Town of Rocky Mount | Posted September 20



**DEVELOPMENT PLANNER** | Montgomery County | Posted September 19



**PLANNING & ZONING ASSISTANT** | Town of Culpeper | Posted September 19



**BUDGET & MANAGEMENT ANALYST** | Hanover County | Posted September 19



**FACILITIES MANAGER** | Roanoke County | Posted September 19



**ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF FINANCIAL SERVICES** | New Kent County | Posted September 18



**DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OF THE REVENUE IV** | Fauquier County | Posted September 18



**CONSTRUCTION PROJECT COORDINATOR II** | Stafford County | Posted September 18



**WASTEWATER PLANT MANAGER** | Stafford County | Posted September 18



**OFFICE ASSISTANT – PARKS, RECREATION, & TOURISM** | Gloucester County | Posted September 18

# COUNTY CONNECTIONS

1207 East Main St., Suite 300  
Richmond, VA 23219-3627



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**Director of Technical Services:** John N. Kandris, A+, ACT, CCA  
**Administrative Secretary:** Valerie M. Russell  
**VACORP:** Chris Carey, Administrator, 888.822.6772

VACo exists to support county officials and to effectively represent, promote and protect the interests of counties to better serve the people of Virginia.

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[www.vaco.org](http://www.vaco.org)

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804.343.2502