

TASTE OF TIDEWATER

GOOD FOOD

GOOD FRIENDS

Only at the VACo Annual Conference
630pm | Sunday, November 14, 2021

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Workgroup on Special Education and the Children's Services Act Underway



A stakeholder workgroup charged with making recommendations regarding the use of Children's Services Act funding to support special education needs has held its first two meetings. The workgroup was created by 2021 legislation that was introduced in response to a study of the Children's Services Act by the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission that was released in fall 2020. Among other changes, the legislation authorizes the use of CSA pool funds for up to 12 months of transitional services within the public school setting for youth who were previously placed in private school for at least six months. In order to look more extensively at the issue of CSA funding for private special education placements, the legislation directed the Secretary of Education and the Secretary of Health and Human Resources to convene a workgroup to develop a detailed plan for the transfer of CSA private day school funding to the Department of Education, make recommendations on the use of CSA funds for services within public schools to avoid out-of-school placements, and make recommendations on the most effective use of CSA funds to transition students from out-of-school placements back to public school.

Specific directives to the workgroup include the following:

- The plan for transfer of CSA funds must include details on how VDOE would administer funding such that it is prioritized for students with the most severe disabilities who are in out-of-school placements, or at risk of such placements, and also such that the funding is equally accessible to all school divisions.
- The plan must include recommendations for minimizing the financial impact of the new policy on localities and consider the effects of using CSA match rates or distributing funding through the Local Composite Index.
- The plan must include a review and analysis of different models of delivering special education,

including a review of specialty regional schools, in-school delivery of services by private special education providers, and in-school delivery of services by the school division.

- The work group must collect data from school divisions that have delivered special education services to students with severe disabilities within the public school setting, as well as school divisions that have used CSA funds to pay for transition services, and use the data to identify the types of services and supports that have enabled children with severe disabilities to be successful in the public school setting and make recommendations for the types of services and supports that should be provided in public school using CSA funds.
- The work group must consider whether transitional services are appropriate direct services to be covered by CSA funding and whether the current criteria for such funding are appropriate, and also evaluate whether CSA funding should be expanded to cover ongoing support for students with disabilities following the 12-month transition period.

Preliminary findings are due to the money committee chairs by November 1, 2021, and a final plan and recommendations are due by November 1, 2022.

At its August 24 meeting, the work group received information from the Department of Education and the Office of Children's Services regarding the number and demographics of children with disabilities served in different settings, including private day and private residential placements (the only settings funded by CSA dollars). Scott Reiner, Executive Director of the Office of Children's Services, provided information comparing current expenditures by locality for CSA-funded special education services using local CSA match rates with projected local expenditures if costs for those services were shared via the Local Composite Index. Slides from the meeting are available [at this link](#).

Workgroup members discussed additional information to be collected for future meetings, including presentations from local school divisions that are successfully serving students within the public school environment as well as regional special education programs. Significant concern was expressed by some members about the ramifications of moving funding away from the CSA structure, which requires a sum-sufficient commitment from the state and local governments, to a structure that may not include such a guarantee. Senator Mason, the Senate representative on the State Executive Council and the Senate patron of legislation creating the workgroup, indicated that the transfer of funding is not a foregone conclusion, and that the workgroup should be evaluating the merits of such a plan in addition to developing a proposal for how such a transfer would be effectuated; several other state representatives suggested that federal and state requirements mandating the provision of free and appropriate public education would still apply regardless of the source of funds. Members representing local governments stressed the importance of caution in transitioning funding to a potentially different funding structure and the need to minimize the effects on local budgets.

The workgroup discussed the establishment of several subgroups: a group to examine the current process for special education placements and how schools serve students in general and special education classrooms; a funding subgroup; and a group reviewing regional programs and other innovative models. The next workgroup meeting is scheduled for September 23.

VACo Contacts: [Katie Boyle](#) and [Jeremy R. Bennett](#)

Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission announces Christine Jacobs as Executive Director



The Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission (TJPDC) is pleased to announce the selection of Christine E.B. Jacobs as its Executive Director. Ms. Jacobs has been serving as Interim Executive Director since February and was selected following a hiring and interview process that began during the summer. She previously served as Chief Operating Officer (COO), Director of Housing and Housing Coordinator for the TJPDC.

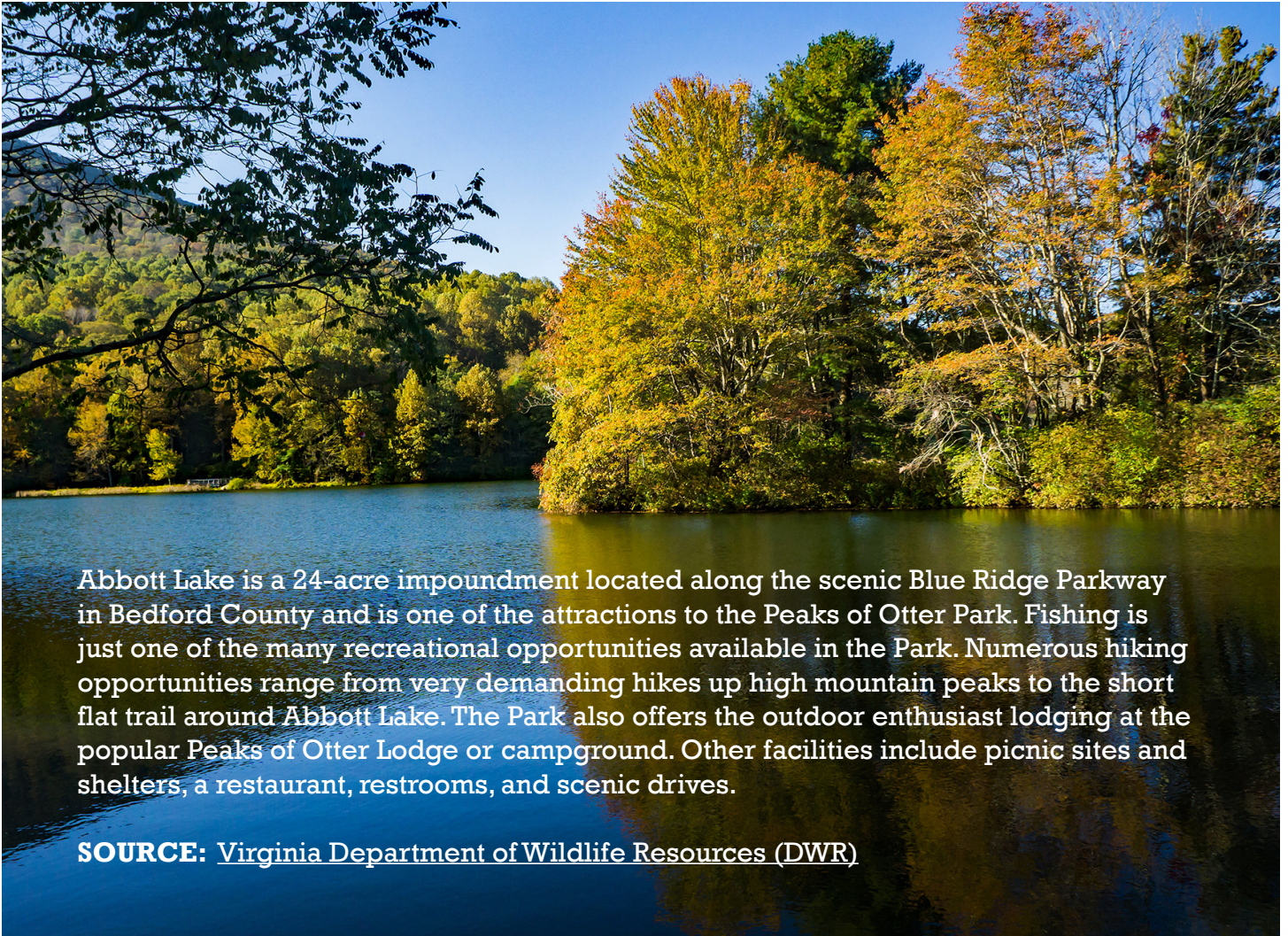
“We are excited to have Christine continue the leadership she has shown over the past seven months, and to support her in the work to keep building the TJPDC as a leader on all things regional,” said Jesse Rutherford, TJPDC Chair and member of the Nelson County Board of Supervisors.

In the interim role, Ms. Jacobs has effectively led the TJPDC’s transportation, environmental and community planning, and affordable housing programs, while also overseeing the financial and administrative functions of the agency. As COO, she designed and implemented an agency-wide invoicing system and provided administrative oversight and support. While at the TJPDC, Ms. Jacobs also has led the development of a strong Regional Housing Program, to include the development of a Regional Housing Plan and the recent award of a new \$2 million grant. She also managed the region’s Emergency Rent and Mortgage Relief Program and the Nelson County Small Business Grant Program.

Ms. Jacobs holds two Master Degrees from the University of Virginia. She received a Master of Public Policy from the Frank Batten School of Leadership and Public Policy and a Master of Teaching from the Curry School of Education. She also holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Virginia Tech.

She currently serves on the Board of Directors and Governance Committee for the Center for Nonprofit Excellence and is a past member of the Batten Alumni Advisory Board.

***The Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission serves the member governments of Albemarle, Fluvanna, Greene, Louisa and Nelson Counties, and the City of Charlottesville, by providing regional vision, collaborative leadership and professional service to develop effective solutions.*



Abbott Lake is a 24-acre impoundment located along the scenic Blue Ridge Parkway in Bedford County and is one of the attractions to the Peaks of Otter Park. Fishing is just one of the many recreational opportunities available in the Park. Numerous hiking opportunities range from very demanding hikes up high mountain peaks to the short flat trail around Abbott Lake. The Park also offers the outdoor enthusiast lodging at the popular Peaks of Otter Lodge or campground. Other facilities include picnic sites and shelters, a restaurant, restrooms, and scenic drives.

SOURCE: [Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources \(DWR\)](#)



Visit Bedford County and Abbott Lake

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for serving our communities.

VACo 2021 Annual Conference

November 14-16
Hilton Norfolk The Main

CHECK OUT OUR DRAFT AGENDA

Contact Valerie Russell at vrussell@vaco.org to register today.



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Premier Partner Spotlight

VML/VACo Finance



Financial Services of the Virginia Association of Counties

Join Dean Lynch and Bob Lauterberg, Managing Director, as they discuss the Financial and Municipal Advisory Program offered by VML/VACo Finance. VML/VACo Finance is an MSRB-registered municipal advisor that assists local governments of all sizes and credit strengths in planning and structuring the financing of new money capital projects and in refinancing existing debt. They provide high quality financial services at low cost, a goal achieved through cost-sharing. **How can VML/VACo Finance help you?** For more information, please visit www.valocalfinance.org.

Watch the [Premier Partner Video](#)

VDOT Provides Clarity Regarding Ability of Certain Localities to Reduce Speed Limits Below 25mph



The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) has determined that [HB1903 \(Carr\)](#), which allows a locality to reduce speed limits in a residence or business district on streets within their boundaries to less than 25 mph (but not less than 15 MPH), does not apply to streets that are in the state highway system. Thus, it would appear that the effect of the new law would be to eliminate the requirement of an engineering study when localities seek to reduce speed limits in a business or residence district, for streets under their authority. VDOT does not believe that the new law provides a locality the authority to exercise this new provision on any highway in the state highway system.

The basis for VDOT's position is as follows: As noted in [§ 46.2-1300](#), the authority provided to localities to pass ordinances setting speed limits etc. under § 46.2-1300 only applies where it does not conflict with other provisions of law under Title 46.2. Particularly, subsection A states: "The governing bodies of counties, cities, and towns may adopt ordinances not in conflict with the provisions of this title to regulate the operation of vehicles on the highways in such counties, cities, and towns localities.). Section [§ 46.2-878](#) gives the Commissioner of Highways ("Commissioner") the authority to change speed limits on highways under the Commissioner's jurisdiction, which includes the primary state highway system pursuant to [§§ 33.2-310](#) and [33.2-317](#) and the virtually identical jurisdiction over secondary state highway system pursuant to Va. Code [§ 33.2-326](#). In particular, the language in § 46.2-878, which provides that the increased or decreased speed limits over highways under the control of the Commissioner of Highways shall be effective only when prescribed in writing by the Commissioner.

Thus, VDOT would interpret the new law to apply only to roads or highways under the locality's jurisdiction/authority as any interpretation that would apply the new law to roads under the jurisdiction of the Commissioner of Highways/VDOT would be an interpretation of the new law that is in conflict with the provisions of, and authority of the Commissioner under, § 46.2-878.

VACo testified in support of HB 1903 during the 2021 General Assembly session and continues to support the expansion of authority and discretion of Resident Administrators of VDOT to approve modifications to design standards where appropriate with local needs, including reduction of speed limits.

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

State Executive Council Soliciting Public Comment on Two Children's Services Act Policies Until November 12

Applications

- Local Government Reporting
- OCS Helpdesk
- CANVAS 2.0
- Policy Public Comments Form
- Virginia Learning Center (CSA)
- Service Fee Directory
- Training Calendar

Welcome to OCS



Welcome to the website for the Children's Services Act (CSA) and the Office of Children's Services (OCS). This website is one part of our effort here at OCS to provide the highest quality information and support to the public, our state government partners, and local CSA programs in the spirit of "empowering communities to serve youth." The site contains a wealth of materials and I am confident it is a valuable resource.

In the 2020 fiscal year, CSA served over 15,000 children and families in the 133 cities and counties in the Commonwealth. With a combined state and local budget of over \$435 million, CSA is a major contributor to supporting

On September 9, the State Executive Council for Children's Services (SEC) approved the release of two proposed policies for public comment. The public comment period began Monday, September 13, and closes Friday, November 12 at 5pm.

The proposed policy revisions result from a goal adopted in the SEC's 2019 strategic plan of reviewing CSA policies to ensure alignment with initiatives in partner agencies. The Office of Children's Services has convened a workgroup as part of this effort and is in the process of examining and updating CSA policies accordingly. VACo is part of this workgroup.

Proposed Policy 3.2, Family Assessment and Planning Team, is available at [this link](#). The revisions to the policy are intended to provide additional detail regarding the process by which multidisciplinary teams may be established by local CSA programs as alternatives to Family Assessment and Planning Teams. Proposed Policy 3.3, Family Engagement, is available at [this link](#). This proposal is a more significant revision, emphasizing a broad concept of family, setting out considerations for local programs in ensuring family and youth involvement, and requiring the Office of Children's Services to provide training and technical assistance to local programs in improving family engagement.


Comments will be accepted through the Policy Public Comments Form on the CSA website (<https://www.csa.virginia.gov/>), via email to csa.office@csa.virginia.gov (commenters are requested to use "Public Comment" in the subject line, along with the name of the policy), or via U.S. Mail or alternate courier service to Office of Children's Services, 1604 Santa Rosa Road, Suite 137, Richmond, VA 23229, ATTN: Public Comment.

VACo Contact: [Katie Boyle](#)

VRS Provides Updates Concerning Investment Returns, Plan Handbooks, Health Insurance Credit Benefits, and More!



As part of their Quarterly [Newsletter](#), the Virginia Retirement System (VRS) confirmed achieving a 27.5% return, net of fees, on its investment portfolio for fiscal year 2021. The trust fund thus ended the year with approximately \$101.8 billion, exceeding the \$100 billion mark for the first time in its history. As previously [reported](#), this is good news for local government employers as the success of VRS investment returns has a direct impact on employer contribution rates into the retirement system plans.

VRS also released updated member handbooks to reflect the latest legislative and administrative changes. The [Hybrid Retirement Plan Handbook for Members](#)  also underwent a redesign. As a best practice, VRS recommends checking the date on the back cover of printed or downloaded handbooks to ensure you have the most recent version. All handbooks are available in the [Publications](#) section of the VRS website.

Lastly, as a result of [legislation](#) from the 2020 General Assembly session, non-teacher school division retirees are now eligible to receive the health insurance credit, a tax-free benefit that assists with health insurance premiums paid for single coverage, excluding any portion of the premiums covering a spouse or dependents. As previously [reported](#), current and future retirees with at least 15 years of VRS service credit will receive a monthly credit of \$1.50 per year of service, or \$2.50 if the employer elects an additional \$1 enhancement. To receive the credit, eligible employees must provide supporting documentation if VRS is not deducting their health insurance premiums or if they have additional premiums to report. The health insurance credit is included with their retirement benefit payment and ends upon the employee's death.

The full VRS newsletter may be accessed [here](#) and additional VRS newsletters may be accessed [here](#).

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

Workgroup on Services for Individuals Living with Dementia Preparing Recommendations



A workgroup created by language in the 2021 Appropriation Act and directed to review existing services for individuals living with dementia and to recommend ways to improve access to evidence-based and evidence-informed services for this population has held four meetings and is preparing recommendations in advance of its November 1, 2021, report deadline. The workgroup was inspired in part by the challenges facing Virginia's state hospital system, which has been operating with critically high census levels, particularly in geriatric hospitals and units. Individuals with dementia who experience behavioral health crises are being hospitalized because their behaviors are challenging to manage and there are sometimes few alternatives to the state hospital system, but state hospitals are not well-suited to provide appropriate care for this population.

At the workgroup's first meeting, staff from the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services provided information regarding state hospital care for individuals with dementia, noting that the average length of stay for an individual with dementia in FY 2020 was 167 days – far longer than the 67.3-day average length of stay for all patients, a situation attributed to challenges in finding supports in the community to enable individuals with dementia to be discharged. Department staff pointed out that state hospitals are generally intended to treat serious mental illness, which is not a classification under which a primary diagnosis of dementia would fit. State hospitals typically rely on pharmacological treatments, which are not recommended for individuals with dementia, and the evidence-based treatments that are indicated are difficult to provide within state hospitals due to space and staffing limitations. The Department currently funds a pilot project at the Mount Rogers Community Services Board through which the CSB provides support to a nursing facility to enable that facility to serve

individuals with dementia, a program that has been successful in avoiding further hospitalization and one the Department is seeking to replicate in other parts of the state.

The Appropriation Act language instructed the workgroup to consider the Regional Older Adult Facilities Mental Health Support Team (RAFT) program, which operates in northern Virginia, as a possible model. Currently this team is the only program of its kind in Virginia; its mission is to support the discharge of older adults with serious mental illness or dementia with behavioral problems from state hospitals to assisted living facilities or nursing facilities, and to divert older adults from hospitalization by providing support in the community. RAFT provides intensive mental health services to older adults, including within assisted living facilities or nursing facilities, and also provides training and consultations to facilities and crisis intervention to enable individuals to stay in their places of residence.

At its fourth and final meeting, the workgroup considered a series of potential recommendations, which include the following:

- **Integrating dementia specialists into the system of care:** The Department is working to develop teams within CSBs similar to the RAFT model to support older adults with mental illness, and there is interest in integrating dementia specialists into those teams.
- **Enhancing workforce development:** Some suggestions included cataloging existing training programs and partnering with schools of social work and health care training to offer specialty training. The workgroup discussed the importance of a unified statewide strategy for workforce development for behavioral health practitioners.
- **Awareness, education, and training:** Members discussed improving training for specific professions, such as law enforcement (perhaps through the incorporation of dementia-specific training into Crisis Intervention Team training) and primary care physicians, as well as working with local health departments on public awareness of dementia-related issues.
- **Crisis Stabilization Units or respite centers:** Members discussed the creation of temporary options for individuals experiencing behavioral health crises who cannot remain in their residences.
- **Exploration of funding streams and reimbursement opportunities:** Members were supportive of exploring potential Medicaid coverage for the services of dementia specialists or similar programs. It was noted that such a review should include the managed care organizations who are part of the Virginia Medicaid program.
- **Collaboration among state agencies:** Members discussed potential partnerships among state agencies, to include agencies outside the human services secretariat, such as the Department of Veterans Services and the Department of Criminal Justice Services, as well as with interested stakeholders such as the Alzheimer's Association. One potential opportunity would be the creation of a dementia services task force.

VACo Contact: [Katie Boyle](#)

State General Fund Revenues Continue Growth in August



State General Fund revenues continued to perform well in August, growing by 18.9 percent. Although this figure is partially attributable to an extra deposit day and August is not typically considered a significant month for revenue collections, the continued trend of growth is encouraging as the state approaches the start of the fall forecasting process. On a fiscal year-to-date basis, General Fund revenues have increased by 5.2 percent, far outperforming the forecast of an 8 percent decline. The state's main General Fund revenue sources – individual income tax and sales and use taxes – continued to demonstrate solid growth, with individual income tax withholding growing by 9.6 percent on a fiscal year-to-date basis (ahead of the forecast of 1.7 percent growth), and sales and use tax collections growing by 14.3 percent (well ahead of the forecasted 4.2 percent decline).

As noted in Secretary of Finance K. Joseph Flores's [memorandum](#), September collections, which include estimated payments from individuals, corporations, and insurance companies, will provide a better picture of revenue growth. This information will be factored into revenue models that are then considered as part of the forecasting process. The Joint Advisory Board of Economists will meet October 13, followed by a meeting of the Governor's Advisory Council on Revenue Estimates on November 22. The Governor's revisions to the 2020-2022 biennium budget (the "caboose" budget bill) and proposed budget for the upcoming 2022-2024 biennium will be unveiled on December 16 in his presentation to the "money committees."

[More on Next Page](#)

The state received another piece of positive economic news last week with the announcement that Virginia's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate dropped by 0.2 percentage point in August and now stands at 4 percent, 3 percentage points below a year ago and well below the national rate of 5.2 percent. The Virginia Employment Commission [reported](#) that job growth in August was in government, miscellaneous services, and leisure and hospitality. On a year-to-date basis, the private sector has gained 97,400 jobs, with the largest growth in the leisure and hospitality sector, followed by professional and business services and trade, transportation, and utilities. The public sector lost 14,900 jobs over the same period. In August, five of the 10 metropolitan areas for which employment data is produced experienced gains (Blacksburg-Christiansburg-Radford; Harrisonburg; Northern Virginia; Roanoke; Winchester/West Virginia); four experienced losses (Charlottesville, Lynchburg, Richmond, Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News, Virginia/North Carolina), and one was unchanged (Staunton-Waynesboro).

Some uncertainty remains about the course of the economy, with the effects of the Delta variant and inflation two major unknowns in economic forecasting. Secretary Flores noted in his [presentation](#) to the House Appropriations Committee on September 20 that national employment growth had slowed in August, with only 235,000 jobs added in August (based on revised figures, 1.1 million jobs were added in July and 962,000 in June). The Consumer Price Index rose by 0.5 percent in July and is 5.3 percent above last July, a factor that Secretary Flores indicated warranted close monitoring.

Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell sounded a note of cautious optimism in [remarks on August 27](#), reiterating his view that recent price spikes are transitory in nature, reflecting increases in "a relatively narrow group of goods and services that have been directly affected by the pandemic and the reopening of the economy" rather than "inflationary pressures...spreading more broadly through the economy." However, he affirmed the importance of close monitoring of these indicators, noting that "central banks cannot take for granted that inflation due to transitory factors will fade." In its September 22 statement, the Federal Open Market Committee similarly signaled a view that the economy is strengthening enough to consider winding down certain stimulative policies, indicating that it may begin to slow its bond purchases, provided that "progress continues broadly as expected."

VACo Contact: [Katie Boyle](#)

Virginia Telecommunications Initiative Updates



On September 16, the [Commonwealth Connect Coalition](#) met to discuss historic news concerning the [VATI](#) program. The FY22 grant round closed on September 14. In total, the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) received:

- **57** applications representing **84** localities
- **\$943,300,424** in requested funding
- **\$1,159,125,288** in matching funds
- **Approximately 300,000** proposed locations served

The [approval](#) by Governor Northam and the General Assembly of an additional \$700 million in state-dedicated ARPA funds will hopefully accelerate broadband build-out as the number of applications and amount of funding requested demonstrate the continued need to improve broadband access across the Commonwealth.

Staff from DHCD also provided information on the challenge process for applications submitted during this round of funding. The full presentation may be accessed [here](#).

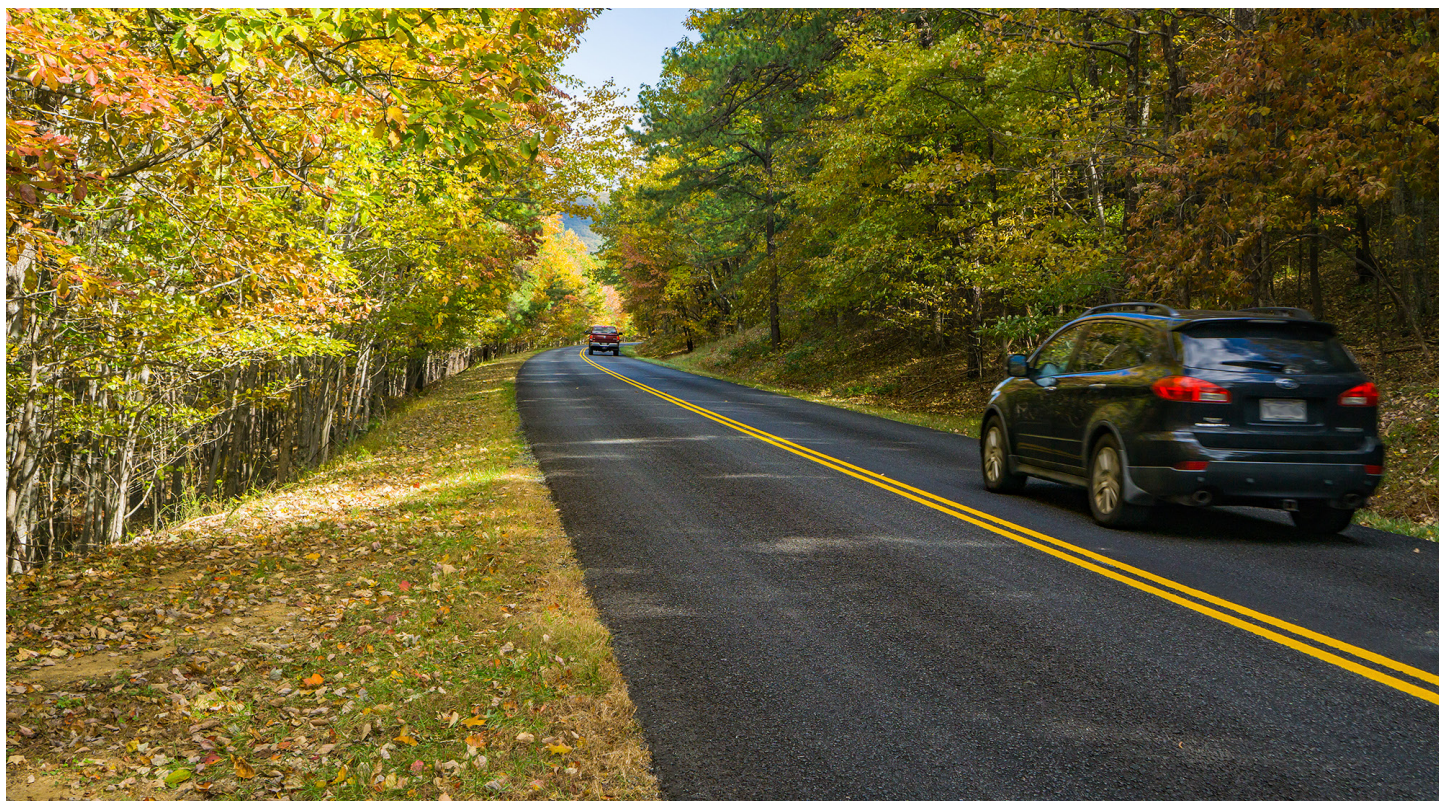
Upcoming Events and Deadlines

- **September 27 - Utility Leverage Program Guideline Updates Released**
- **October 12 - Utility Leverage Program Guideline Input Session**
Registration to come
- **October 21 – VATI Challenges Due**
- **November 18 – Deadline for Challenge Rebuttals**
- **December 1-2 - VCTA/VACo/VML Broadband Together Conference**
Learn more [here](#)
- **December 3 – DHCD Notifies All Parties of Challenge Determination**
- **Late December – Anticipated Announcement of Awards**

VACo encourages members to reach out if you have any additional questions or concerns regarding VATI or other Broadband related issues.

VACo Contact: [Jeremy R. Bennett](#) and [Joe Lerch, AICP](#)

Transportation Revenues Rebound after Historic Decreases



During the September 20 [meeting](#) of the House Appropriations Committee, Deputy Secretaries of Transportation Nick Donohue and John Lawson provided updates on the state of transportation revenues used to finance infrastructure projects across the Commonwealth. Thankfully, after facing historic lows caused by decreases in fuel consumption, transit ridership, and other economic factors related to the pandemic, revenues are exceeding. FY 2021 Commonwealth Transportation revenue collections were \$368.5 million above estimate.

From the start of the pandemic through FY27 state transportation revenues are down \$1.8 billion from March 2020 estimates. The General Assembly provided the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) with authority to take actions with the goals of: reducing impacts on then currently programmed projects fully funded in the Six Year Improvement Program (SYIP) and allowing for phased implementation of the 2020 Governor's Omnibus Transportation Bill.

In addition to the FY 2021 returns Transportation is also supposed to receive 2/3 of any undesignated General Fund surplus (estimated to be \$115 million for FY21). However, this action must be approved by the General Assembly during the 2022 regular session.

FY 2022 through FY 2027 state transportation revenue estimates will be updated in December. By then, additional clarity should be given about the state of recovery for transportation funding as well as whether federal legislation pertaining to infrastructure will be enacted by Congress.

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

Kristen Perdue joins Botetourt County as Communications & Marketing Specialist



We are so excited to introduce you to the newest member of our Botetourt County Family! Meet Kristen Perdue, our Communications & Marketing Specialist.

Kristen, a Botetourt County resident, is an alumna of Longwood University where she studied Public Relations. Her career started at the age of seventeen as an intern for Roanoke FireEMS Department, that turned into a part-time position in the Community Risk Reduction Office. After graduating with her BA in three years, Kristen began working for the American Red Cross as a Disaster Program Specialist for the Roanoke Valley Chapter.

While at the Red Cross, she deployed, boots on the ground, to areas like Louisville, KY, after devastating flooding to help the community. This opportunity also allowed her to work hand in hand with local Fire-EMS agencies throughout the valley to install smoke alarms for residents.

After a few years, Kristen joined Roanoke Fire-EMS full-time as their Community Risk Reduction Specialist/Public Information Officer, where she grew skills in crisis communications, public relations, community education, fire and life safety education and social media management. This led her to her current role with Botetourt County. Kristen is a talented graphic designer, social media manager and communicator.

"I am excited about my new position as the Communications & Marketing Specialist for Botetourt County! Growing in a role that I enjoy just as the community around us grows is an incredible thing to showcase. I can't wait to show off all that Botetourt has to offer and to help tell the stories in our community!"

Congratulations!

We love presenting Achievement Awards
at Board of Supervisors Meetings



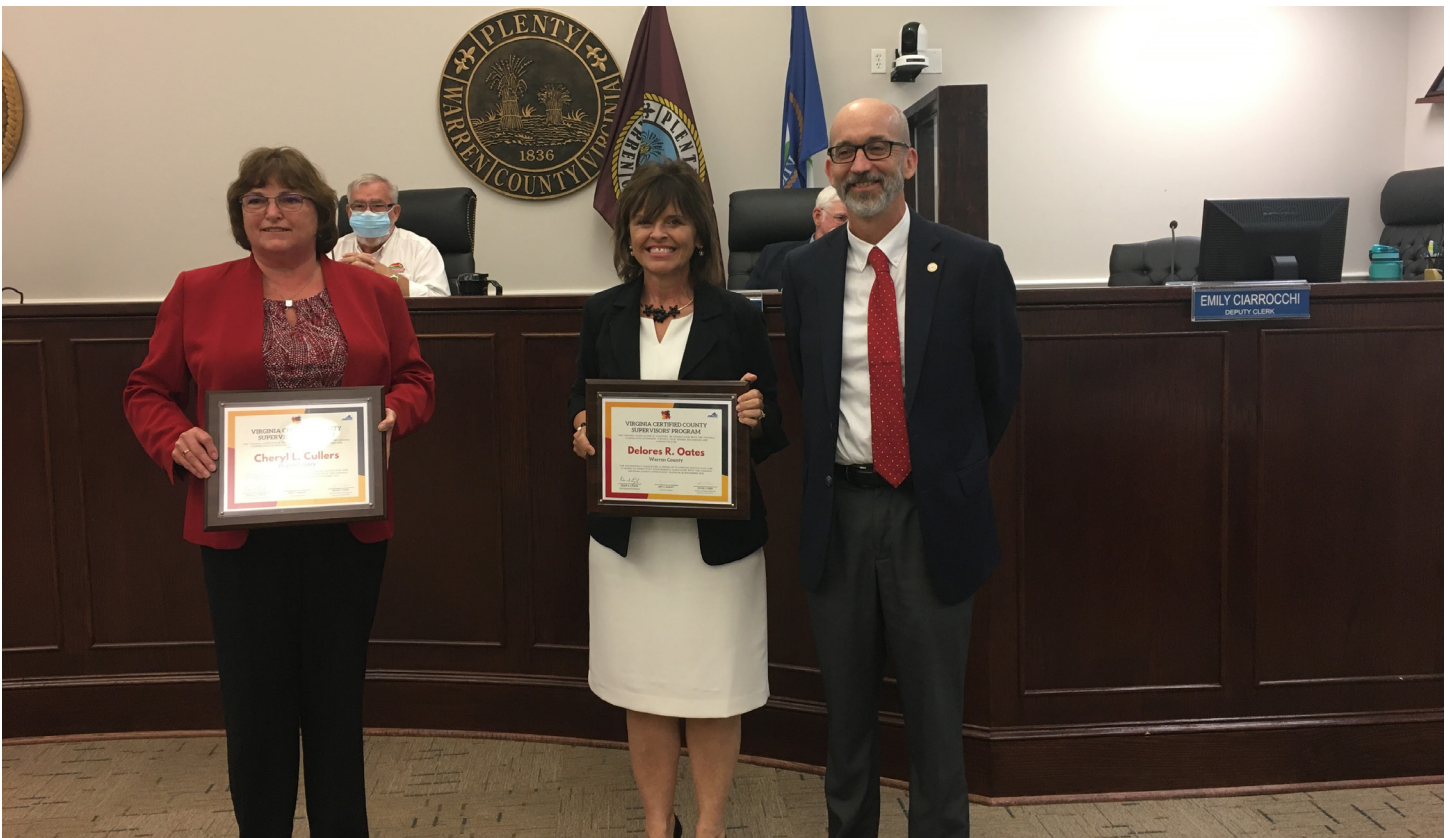
Congratulations Nelson County!



Congratulations Grayson County!

Congratulations!

We honor our Virginia Certified County Supervisors' Program Graduates at Board of Supervisors Meetings



VACo's Joe Lerch and Karie Walker honored Warren County Supervisors Cheryl L. Cullers (left) and Delores R. Oates for their graduation from the VACo Virginia Certified County Supervisors' Program.

Congratulations Supervisor Cullers and Supervisor Oates!

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2022 EXCELLENCE IN VIRGINIA GOVERNMENT AWARDS



VCU L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 14, 2021

For More Information Contact:

Paula Otto, piotto@vcu.edu

804.363.9399

Excellence in Virginia Government Awards Nominations Open

The L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs at Virginia Commonwealth University is pleased to announce the 15th annual Excellence in Virginia Government Awards (EVGA) on **April 14, 2022** at Noon. EVGA celebrates people and organizations in the public and private sectors who have made significant contributions to the practice of government and the well-being of our communities and citizens.

“These awards recognize outstanding work at all levels of government in Virginia and honor dedicated public service, innovative approaches and commitment to excellence,” said Susan T. Gooden, Ph.D., dean of the Wilder School.

Nominations for the 2022 Awards are now open, and will be accepted through November 1, 2021. Nominations are being accepted in seven categories: Community Enhancement, Grace E. Harris Leadership Award, Hill-Robinson Expansion of Freedom, Innovation in Government, Lifetime Achievement, Public-Private Partnerships, and Unsung Hero.

To learn more details about the Excellence in Virginia Government Awards, including criteria and past winners, go to wilder.vcu.edu/

You can submit your nomination:

- Electronically via this link: [EVGA 2022 Nomination](#)
- Email to EVGA@vcu.edu (word document preferred)
- Mail to EVGA Awards, c/o Paula Otto, L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs, VCU Box 842028, Richmond, VA 23284-2028.



ADVANCING LEADERSHIP FOR NEWLY ELECTED COUNTY OFFICIALS

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A 12-week online program was designed — in partnership with the Professional Development Academy — to enable newly elected officials to achieve their fullest potential, making them smarter, more effective leaders.

Additionally, and importantly, the academy is designed to be non-disruptive to newly elected officials' busy schedules. It requires just a few hours of time each week, and there's no travel away from the county required.

The NACo High Performance Leadership Academy will help to retain rising stars in county government and enable them to be better leaders.

"You can't put into words the value of this course. Fantastic moderators and video viewpoints from amazing leaders. Highly recommended for all level of leaders."
— *Polk County Wisconsin Commissioner*

"This program has taught me new leadership tactics, reinforced 30 years of leadership training and experience, and created a nationwide network of leaders." — *Magoffin County Kentucky Judge*

"This program has connected me to others who share the same struggles that I am going through as a leader. This enables me to use them as a support system when needed." — *Wapello County Iowa County Recorder*

Take this opportunity to close the leadership gap. The next programs begin January 2022 and we would love to see you be a part of it.

On behalf of Chief
Technology Officer
Rita Reynolds and
the NACo team,
THANK YOU!

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Cybersecurity: A Better Way to Test Readiness than Experiencing Reality

Let's face it, when it comes to some realities it is best to not experience them at all. No one wants to experience a fire in their home or a devastating earthquake, tornado, tsunami, or pandemic. Similarly, no one wants their privacy stolen or the critical assets of their organization threatened. While we would like to avoid risks altogether, we know that they are part of reality; and while nothing tests our readiness quite like reality, we will perform better if we properly prepare.

So, we prepare accordingly. We use risk management protocols to protect and defend against a variety of risks. An example of this is the auto-shutoff switches to our electrical breakers in our homes that prevent a surge in electricity which could cause a fire. We use seat belts to prevent injury from an auto accident. We also use incident response and recovery plans when risks do become reality. Conducting fire drills in schools, offices, and our homes help to prepare us if there is a fire and where we need to respond quickly to protect ourselves and others. We use documented playbooks and manuals sometimes when responding and recovering from a risk-turned-reality because emotions and anxieties can cloud judgement and impair decision making during the chaos of a crisis. It is for similar reasons that we have cyber simulations; we prepare for a reality that we hope never occurs. We prepare because we know the occurrence is very possible, and perhaps, very probable in today's world.

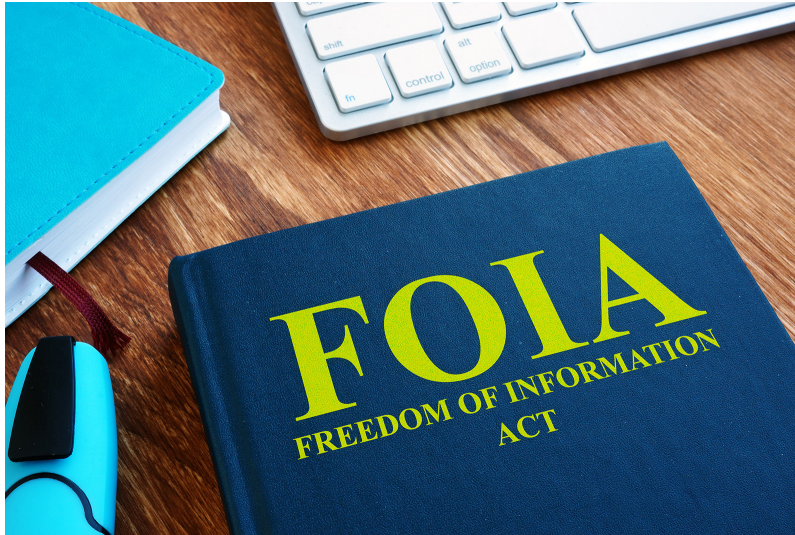
Our understanding of the probability of a cyber risk occurring is similarly high. We know that it is common practice to talk about an inevitable hack, phishing attack, data ransom, or even network sabotage. We also know from security officers, risk managers, and administrators in our community that counties, government agencies, and organizations are not as prepared as they would like to be for the cyberattacks threatening their operations, stakeholders, critical assets, and overall brand. For a variety of reasons (budget, staffing), counties lack fully tested incident response procedures and fully detailed operationalized playbooks ready for use to mitigate cyber threats and to adequately respond to attacks before they become a crisis. Consider the following list of threats. Are you prepared?

[DISCOVER MORE](#)



How awesome was The Supply Room Swag at the County Officials' Summit? [Click here](#) to learn how The Supply Room can help your locality save money and be more efficient.

FOIA Training information



The FOIA council staff will be hosting the following live webinar FOIA trainings during the months of August and September. If you have any problems registering for a training session, please try using another internet browser such as Google Chrome, as the staff has received reports that Internet Explorer doesn't load the webpage properly. The webinars are free to attend and are approved for DCJS or CLE credit, as appropriate.

Links to register can be found below and on the FOIA [website](#).

If you are interested in receiving DCJS or CLE credit, you will need to individually register and attend the webinar so that we can confirm your attendance.

[Access to Law Enforcement and Criminal Records](#) (2 hours)

- August 31, 2021 at 9am
- September 23, 2021 at 9am

[Access to Public Records](#) (1.5 hours)

- August 31, 2021 at 1pm
- September 23, 2021 at 1pm

[Access to Public Meetings](#) (1.5 hours)

- August 31, 2021 at 3pm
- September 23, 2021 at 3pm

Trainings will also be offered in late October (exact date TBD).

Please email ric-foiatraining@dls.virginia.gov if you have any questions!



Broadband
Association
of Virginia



Virginia Counties Recognized for Model Programs

The Virginia Association of Counties (VACo) is pleased to announce the 30 recipients of the 2021 Achievement Awards, which recognize excellence in local government programs. VACo received 102 submissions.

Winning entries focused on addressing issues of inclusion, belonging, and reconciliation that challenge counties today.

[Winning Achievement Award Submissions](#) | [Winning Program Descriptions](#)

"I want to thank all who participated in the 19th year of the Achievement Awards," VACo Executive Director **Dean Lynch** said. "Our counties face challenges every day, and those challenges are written in these program submissions. What's also written are the innovative solutions that overcome these obstacles to make life better for communities across the Commonwealth. We celebrate these victories with all who participated."

Tedd Povar, retired Associate Director of the Virginia Institute of Government; **Dr. Sheryl Bailey**, Visiting Professor of Practice at Virginia Tech and former Chesterfield County Deputy County Administrator; and **Larry Land**, retired VACo Director of Policy Development, served as judges for this year's statewide competitive awards program.

Henrico County and its **Equity Ambassadors** program won this year's **Best Achievement Award**.

"Equity Ambassadors is a wonderful program that has gained in popularity among Henrico County students over the past couple of years," Dr. Bailey said. "The students recognized a need for their voices to be amplified on issues of equality, and they took action to make it happen. Equity Ambassadors also provides students with opportunities to learn positive leadership. I speak for the judges when I say we are honored to give this program the Best Achievement Award."

The judges also selected a Best Small County Achievement Award (50,000 or less population) and a Best Large County Achievement Award. **Nelson County** and its **Blue Ridge Tunnel Rehabilitation and Trail Project** program captured the **Best Small County Achievement Award** while **Chesterfield County** and its **Innovation Bootcamp** program earned the **Best Large County Achievement Award**.

"Congratulations to Nelson County for winning its first-ever Achievement Award, and for such an excellent program," Land said. "The county turned an abandoned railroad tunnel built in the 1850s into a regional recreation asset. I'm sure traveling through the long, dark tunnel is quite a thrilling treat, and I look forward to experience it one day."

Povar, who has served as judge since the Achievement Awards inception in 2003, said Chesterfield County's winning program reflects an important criteria for the VACo Achievement Awards. "As judges, we look for how a county uses innovation or ideas to solve a problem," Povar said. "Chesterfield County's program is about teaching the process of innovation from start to finish. In fact, this program was created because one of Chesterfield County's core values is innovation. Congratulations to Chesterfield County for a tremendous program and for continuing to be a leader in the VACo Achievement Awards program."

Chesterfield County tops the all-time Achievement Awards list with 39. Chesterfield County has won an award in each year of the 19-year history of the program. **Henrico County** is second on the list with 34 Achievement Awards while **Loudoun County** is third with 25.

The VACo Achievement Awards is a competitive program open to local government members of the association.

[Winning Achievement Award Submissions](#) | [Winning Program Descriptions](#) | [Achievement Awards Website](#)
[2021 Achievement Awards Entries](#) | [Past Winners](#) | [Past Judges](#)



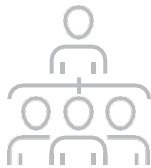
Counties affect the lives of residents every day. When our frontline staff are empowered as leaders, we deliver services more effectively. **The NACo Frontline IT Leadership Academy is a resource that connects your staff with practical leadership training.** FLIT uses an innovative, interactive online learning platform that combines real-time webinars, recorded sessions and small group discussions to deliver effective training without traveling away from the county – saving money and maximizing time.

THE ACADEMY FOCUSES ON FIVE ESSENTIAL SKILLS:



LEAD:

Engage teams and stakeholders to foster positive climates and exceed common expectations



ORGANIZE:

Plan, lead and execute organizational change more effectively and consistently



COLLABORATE:

Establish alignment and strong partnerships through building stronger relationships



DELIVER:

Measure projects and processes to deliver results aligned with county and community priorities



COMMUNICATE:

Create clarity, confidence and community

The NACo Frontline IT Leadership Academy empowers frontline county government professionals with fundamental, practical leadership skills to deliver results for counties and residents.

The Academy enrollment fee is \$2,495 per participant. NACo Member County cost per enrollee is \$1,350.

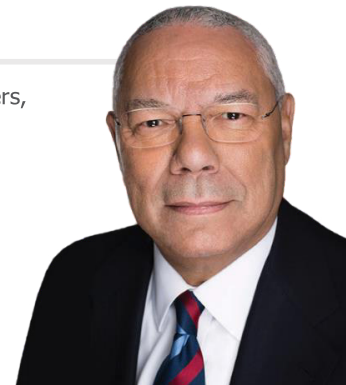
With a curriculum developed by *General Colin Powell* and public and private sector leaders, NACo Frontline IT Leadership Academy gives students the opportunity to learn from world-class faculty. All content is guided by an expert facilitator.

Find out more at [NACo.org/skills](https://nacoleaders.org/skills)

Or contact Luke Afeman

lukea@pdaleadership.com

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A Tailored Cybersecurity Program for VACo members



Carlton Harris CTO of EEC will join Dean Lynch Executive Director of VACo in this month's premier partner spotlight to discuss how VACo members can take advantage of our tailored cybersecurity program to make cybersecurity services more accessible. This program will feature:

01

Cyber Hygiene Assessment

A complementary cyber hygiene assessment program for members to identify gaps in their cybersecurity program and strategize methods for closing those gaps.

02

Informative Training

A series of joint training sessions scheduled throughout the year to registered members. Sessions will also include training collateral for combating common threats and best practices.

03

Special Membership Pricing

A catalog of discounted pricing to VACo members.
(Ability to leverage GSA schedule for ease of procurement.)



Carlton Harris CTO of EEC

**View this VACo
Premier Partner
Spotlight Video**

[https://www.youtube.com/
watch?v=RnmFDYIHKol](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RnmFDYIHKol)



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833-720-7770



With the release of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARP) funds, local governments have the opportunity to address the economic fallout and unequal impact of COVID-19. This is an incredible opportunity to increase trust in local government and tell your community's story of recovery. The Berkley Group can help your community develop a roadmap to maximize return on investment and take the pressure off of managing all aspects of the funds and projects by offering the following services:

- Community Engagement;
- Strategic Planning;
- Capital Improvement Planning;
- Project Management; and
- Program Administration.

Take this time to reimagine your community - building a strong and socially equitable foundation for the future.



Darren K. Coffey, AICP | Director of Strategic Partnerships
434-981-2026 | www.bgllc.net

REBOOTING EDUCATION WITH FURNITURE AND SANITATION

It's 2021 and schools are faced with the complex task of getting students, faculty, and staff back into classrooms safely. This task will require a variety of well thought out plans. Plans that address the logistics and scheduling of a greater number of smaller class sizes and plans that support keeping those spaces clean. With extensive experience, The Supply Room can help ease the stress of designing and executing these plans.

FURNITURE



Desk and table shields with mobile and multi-functional furniture is one key factor in making spaces both safe and flexible. Creative plans will include scenarios for how and when to turn a gymnasium, cafeteria, or common area into a classroom and back in minutes. Flip-top tables can be nested and moved aside quickly when not in use. These tables and shields can also create health checkpoints, sanitation stations, and help direct the flow of traffic at building entrances and in common areas. This combined with clear and consistent signage will ensure students and faculty have the time and space to keep safe.

SANITATION

Knowing the difference between cleaning, disinfecting and sanitizing and when to do each is the second key to developing your plan. To start, what is the difference?

- **Cleaning:** removes visible dirt, soil and debris – it does not disinfect.
- **Disinfecting:** eliminates bacteria, fungi and certain viruses – it does not remove dirt.
- **Sanitizing:** reduces the number of germs on surfaces or objects to a safe level, as judged by public health standards or requirements – it does not fully eliminate them.



Sanitizing and disinfecting products also vary in their dwell time (the length of time that a chemical must be in contact with the surface and remain wet, in order to achieve the product's advertised kill rate.) Dwell times can range from a matter of seconds to 10 minutes. Our janitorial and sanitation experts are here to help recommend the best products for your space and put your plan in place.



While the situation with the pandemic is rapidly evolving in every direction, it is important that the solutions you create are adaptable and resilient. Designing a creative plan to keep your faculty and students safe with the ability to flex will help reduce infection and create a stable learning environment. Let's start a conversation – visit our website or call to get help with your plans and implementation today.

VIRGINIA COUNTY SUPERVISORS' MANUAL

EIGHTH EDITION, 2019

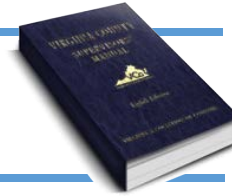


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Virginia County Supervisors' Manual 8th Edition



The Eighth Edition (2019) of VACo's ***Virginia County Supervisors' Manual*** is 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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Or FAX credit card purchases to 804.788.0083

Questions? Call 804.788.6652.



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@vacounty.org).



bakertilly COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR | Cumberland County | Posted September 22



FIELD TRIP DRIVER | City of Harrisonburg | Posted September 22



DEPUTY COURT CLERK PART TIME/TEMPORARY | Montgomery County | Posted September 21



DEED & SUBDIVISION REVIEWER | Rockingham County | Posted September 21



DEPUTY COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR FOR COMMUNITY OPERATIONS | Chesterfield County | Posted September 21



SENIOR PLANNER | Chesterfield County | Posted September 21



PRINCIPAL PLANNER | Chesterfield County | Posted September 21



HOUSEKEEPER - FULL TIME | Montgomery County | Posted September 20



DIRECTOR OF FINANCE | Henrico County | Posted September 20



DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT | Louisa County | Posted September 17



HUMAN RESOURCE DIRECTOR | Colonial Behavioral Health | Posted September 17



FINANCE DIRECTOR | Town of Crewe | Posted September 16



MANAGER OF ELECTRIC OPERATIONS | Town of Front Royal | Posted September 15



DIRECTOR OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY | Mathews County | Posted September 15



BUILDING OFFICIAL/INSPECTOR | King & Queen County | Posted September 15



RECYCLING SITE ATTENDANT PT | Montgomery County | Posted September 15



OFFICE ASSOCIATE HR/ACCOUNTS PAYABLE | Prince Edward County | Posted September 15



PLANNER OR SENIOR PLANNER | The Berkley Group | Posted September 15



TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT SPECIALIST II-III | Montgomery County | Posted September 15



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLANNER II | City of Fredericksburg | Posted September 15



REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNER III-IV | Thomas Jefferson PDC | Posted September 15



INFO TECH PROGRAM MANAGER I | Fairfax County | Posted September 14



COUNTY

ADMINISTRATOR | Roanoke County
| Posted September 14



GRANT WRITER

Campbell County | Posted September 14



bakertilly DEPUTY

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR | Stafford County
| Posted September 13



PLANNER

Hanover County | Posted September 13



DCJS CERTIFIED POLICE

OFFICER | Town of Front Royal
| Posted September 13



CLERK OF COUNCIL

City of Staunton | Posted September 10



911 EMERGENCY

COMMUNICATOR | City of Harrisonburg
| Posted September 10



UTILITIES ENGINEER

Chesterfield County | Posted September 10



WATER ELECTRICAL

CONTROL SPECIALIST (JOURNEYMAN ELECTRICIAN) | Chesterfield County
| Posted September 10



ADMINISTRATIVE

ASSISTANT | James City County
| Posted September 10



CHILDREN'S SERVICES

ACT (CSA) COORDINATOR | James City County
| Posted September 10



HUMAN RESOURCES

ANALYST | James City County | Posted September 10



LEAD COMMERCIAL

BUILDING INSPECTOR | James City County
| Posted September 10



PLANNER I/II/III

City County | Posted September 10



PLANS EXAMINER I/

II/III | James City County | Posted September 10



SENIOR CUSTOMER

SERVICES REPRESENTATIVE | James City County
| Posted September 10



SENIOR ASSISTANT

GENERAL REGISTRAR | James City County
| Posted September 10



OFFICE TECHNICIAN

PART TIME | Montgomery County
| Posted September 10



COMBINATION BUILDING

INSPECTOR/CODE ENFORCEMENT | Henry County
| Posted September 10



VICTIM WITNESS

ADVOCATE PART TIME | New Kent County
| Posted September 10



OFFICE TECHNICIAN

| Montgomery County | Posted September 10



DEPUTY COURT CLERK

PART-TIME/TEMP | Montgomery County
| Posted September 10



PART TIME REFUSE

SITE ATTENDANT | New Kent County
| Posted September 10



ASSESSOR II

County | Posted September 10



FINANCIAL SYSTEMS

SENIOR ANALYST | Chesterfield County
| Posted September 10

VALUE OF VACo



ADVOCACY

VACo's lobbying efforts have helped stem the tide of unfunded mandates and have saved Counties millions of dollars every year.



EDUCATION

Our educational programs offer County leaders and staff opportunities to become more effective in their communities.



MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT

Some of VACo's best moments are when members convene and work to improve communities all over the Commonwealth.



BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Our business development opportunities offer savings and innovative approaches to delivering services at the County level.

VACo LEADERSHIP



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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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