

VACo 2023 Achievement Awards July 5 Deadline Approaching



Dear VACo Members –

It's time for the 2023 Achievement Awards Program. Any county department is eligible to compete so ENTER NOW!

[Achievement Awards Submission Form](#)

All entries are required to be submitted in electronic form. No paper copy submissions are necessary. The electronic copy should be a PDF or WORD file. Email entries to Gage Harter at gcharter@vaco.org. **Submissions must be received by July 5, 2023.**

Last year, [we processed 100 entries](#) and selected 29 winners from 22 Counties. VACo presented awards at 22 Board of Supervisors Meetings, recognized winners at the 88th Annual Conference, and issued a news release to statewide media.

The judges for the 2023 Achievement Awards will be announced soon.

VACo has received close to 1,000 entries over the past decade. Last year's Best Achievement winner was Chesterfield County for its "Connecting All Community Residents to Public Schools" program.

VACo encourages all Counties, big and small, to enter the 2023 Achievement Awards Program. Please contact gcharter@vaco.org with questions or for more information.

[Achievement Awards Submission Form](#) | [Achievement Awards Website](#)
[2022 Achievement Awards Press Release](#) | [Past Achievement Award Winners](#)



Save the Date - VACo Summit on August 17

AUGUST 17, 2023 | [REGISTRATION FORM](#) | [REGISTER ONLINE](#)
[OMNI RICHMOND HOTEL ROOM RESERVATION](#) | [DRAFT AGENDA](#)

The VACo County Officials' Summit is VACo's summer meeting that previews the upcoming November elections and begins the legislative process of the association for 2024.

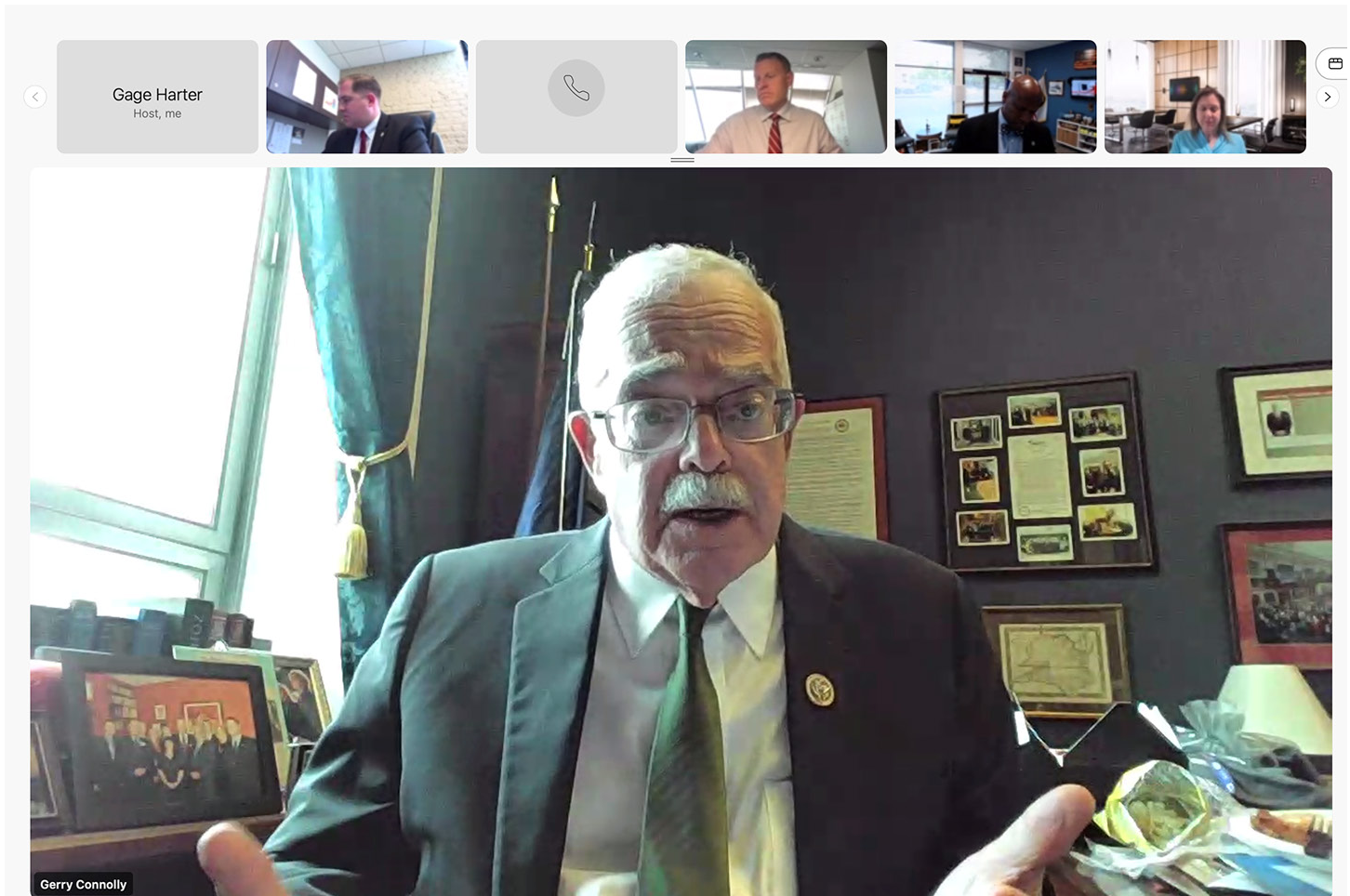
This November is a critical election cycle with many projected new faces in local and state elected offices. Join us on Thursday, August 17, 2023, and hear state leaders share their thoughts on the upcoming election and how it will impact politics and government in the future. A political analyst will also share thoughts on the imminent changes to the state legislature and how that may affect localities.

[Register today](#) to join your peers on Thursday, August 17, 2023, for the VACo County Officials' Summit. Breakfast and lunch are provided with event registration.

Two time blocks of VACo Steering Committee Meetings will follow lunch on August 17. VACo's Board of Directors Meeting will take place at 9am on Friday, August 18.

[Registration Form](#) | [Register Online](#) | [Book Your Hotel Room](#) | [Draft Agenda](#)

Great Participation from County Leaders and Legislators at the VACo Regions 7 & 8 Meeting



VACo held its fourth of eight regional meetings for 2023 on May 11th, and this will be the last one conducted virtually this year. VACo staff had the honor of hosting local elected officials and staff from Region 7 and Region 8. Region 7 encompasses the counties of Caroline, Culpeper, Fauquier, King George, Louisa, Orange, Rappahannock, Spotsylvania and Stafford, while Region 8 contains the counties of Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun and Prince William. These regional meetings allow us to hear directly from county staff and elected officials on the important issues facing localities across Virginia. They also help VACo staff craft the legislative program for the upcoming 2024 legislative session.

The meeting began with representatives from each county outlining top issues or legislative priorities in their localities. Several issues emerged as common areas of concern, including preserving local discretion for zoning and land use, housing, broadband availability, and more state support in the areas of mental and behavioral health as well as education.

It has been a long-time priority for VACo that local land use decisions continue to be undertaken by local governments, and VACo is committed to this as one of our top legislative positions. County leaders throughout Regions 7 and 8 stressed that local elected officials must be able to make various land use

decisions that affect their county at the local level. The topic of housing and housing affordability ties into preserving local authority as county elected officials and staff indicated they should be the ones to address the topic of housing at the local level through the various tools of county government. Region 7 counties would go on to discuss the need for more broadband availability in their region, highlighting the need for connectivity in more rural parts of these counties. Counties would find common ground advocating for the state to provide more resources that address mental and behavioral health issues including crisis intake centers and other mental health facilities. Lastly, counties within Regions 7 and 8 would echo support for more state resources to be directed toward education as K-12 funding tends to make up a large portion of county budgets and counties are heavily invested in the success of their public school systems.

VACo was pleased to be joined by various elected officials who hold office in differing levels of Virginia government and thanks Congressman Gerry Connolly, Senator George Barker, Delegate Bobby Orrrock, Delegate Vivian Watts, Delegate Mark Sickles, Delegate Paul Krizek, Delegate Kathy Tran and Delegate Tara Durant, as well as representatives from the offices of Senator Jennifer Boysko, Senator Jeremy McPike, Delegate Dave LaRock, and Delegate Phillip Scott for taking time to participate in the meeting. Congressman Connolly highlighted many federal programs that have been enacted in recent years that are geared toward helping localities across the country. Specific actions included legislation that was passed during the pandemic that directed money to localities to help ease the burdens they were facing as well as money that would keep the Washington Metro operating, as the Metro is vital to Region 8. The Congressman would also discuss the re-founding of the [Congressional Caucus of Former Local Elected Officials](#) for the current Congress. We are delighted to hear that Congressman Connolly, a former President of VACo, is restarting this Caucus and are pleased to see the Congressman chosen as one of the inaugural Co-Chairs. The Congressman addressed several questions from county leaders and we are all thankful for his input and the discussion.

Senator Barker would then speak about ongoing Virginia budget talks, citing the federal debt ceiling debate then underway and the need to carefully watch state revenues in developing an amended budget. Senator Barker would end by discussing that we need to find ways to improve the state and local relationship regarding funding for many programs such as constitutional officers, K-12 education and public safety. Delegate Watts would outline her priority of reforming the tax policy of the commonwealth to better fund the objectives and goals of the state and its local governments. Delegate Sickles made it a point that he supports much of the mental health funding identified by counties earlier in the meeting. The Delegate further touched on his support for broadband funding, the Virginia Housing Trust Fund and local land use authority. Delegate Krizek would reiterate the support for broadband funding and the Housing Trust Fund as well as local decision making. Delegate Krizek made everyone aware of the elephant in the room that the General Assembly will look different next year and that we need to be ready to work with each other. Delegate Durant would end the legislator discussions with a discussion of potential efforts to mitigate the impact of mandatory property tax relief programs on local governments. Overall, these legislators support the localities they represent, are very cognizant of local concerns and are eager to see if an updated budget is released.

The meeting served as a great chance to connect with VACo members counties and really try to understand the issues at heart in the region. VACo staff would like to give a special thanks to the VACo members, legislators, partners, and others who attended and participated in the discussion.

VACo Contact: [James Hutzler](#)

Visit Frederick County and the Frederick County Historic Courthouse



Location: 20 North Loudon Street / Rouss Street

Built: 1839 – 1841

Style: Greek Revival

Architect: Robert Clay Long of Baltimore, Maryland

Contractor: Unknown local trades and labor

Description: The building faces west and is a two story red colored brick structure. The rectangular shaped building is located on a landscaped square in the center of the Winchester. The west front has a large porch with four large white Doric columns rising to a pediment at the gabled roof. On the center of the roof is a square white colored cupola with clock at the top. In the interior on the first story is a ten foot wide hall with four foot high paneled wood wainscot, large chandelier and slate floor in the entry hall. There is a courtroom on the first story. A staircase rises to the second story and the courtroom which has double entry doors. Raised platforms with spectator benches extend along the wall separating the hall from the courtroom. In the center of the room four columns with a low railing separate an eight-inch-high raised lawyers' platform from open space and spectator benches along either (north and south) sidewall. The rail is walnut and the square balusters are painted a white color. A raised platform is situated along the entire east wall. The building served as the courthouse until 1984. The building now houses a museum.

SOURCE: [American Courthouses | Courthouses.co](http://AmericanCourthouses.com/Courthouses.co)

SUPERVISORS TRAINING FOR COUNTY ELECTED OFFICIALS



VIRGINIA CERTIFIED COUNTY SUPERVISORS' PROGRAM

NOW ENROLLING
THE CLASS OF 2023!

MODULE 1 - BUDGETING

INSTRUCTOR - SUZETTE DENSLOW

OPENING SESSION - JANUARY 25 | HENRICO COUNTY

CLOSING SESSION - MARCH 22 | HENRICO COUNTY

MODULE 2 - PLANNING AND LAND USE

INSTRUCTORS - VIRGINIA CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN PLANNING ASSOCIATION

OPENING SESSION - April 14 | VACo TRAINING CENTER

CLOSING SESSION - June 16 | VACo TRAINING CENTER

MODULE 3 - LEADERSHIP

INSTRUCTOR - JANE DITTMAR

OPENING SESSION - August 11 | VACo TRAINING CENTER

CLOSING SESSION - October 6 | VACo TRAINING CENTER

REGISTER TODAY!

Please contact Karie Walker at
kwalker@vaco.org for more information.
Or visit the [VACo website](https://www.vaco.org).



Meyercord Receives Silver Medal from EcoVadis for Commitment to Environment, Human Rights, and Sustainable Supply Chain in Tax Stamp Production

Meyercord Revenue, responsible for producing 12 billion tax stamps annually for 43 State Departments of Revenue (DOR) and over 180 local jurisdictions, places a high value on environmental, social, and governance (ESG) factors. While their primary objective is to safeguard cigarette excise tax revenues, Meyercord also recognizes the importance of promoting sustainability and social causes, which are of paramount importance to their government partners. The commitment to responsible tax stamp manufacturing has been acknowledged by EcoVadis, as they have awarded Meyercord a prestigious silver medal for their dedication to maintaining a sustainable supply chain.



Environmental Benefits:

Meyercord prioritizes the production of eco-friendly tax stamps, focusing on reducing their ecological footprint and implementing sustainable practices. They utilize non-harmful materials in crafting these stamps, aiming to minimize waste generation throughout the production process. By adopting sustainable sourcing methods and eco-friendly manufacturing processes, Meyercord has significantly

reduced carbon emissions, water usage, and energy consumption. This environmental stewardship aligns with global efforts to combat climate change and ensure a better future for generations to come.

Promoting Social Initiatives

By embracing supply chain sustainability, Meyercord creates opportunities to support various social causes. Through sustainable sourcing practices, they are able to contribute to local communities, empower workers with fair wages and safe working conditions, and stimulate economic growth. This commitment to social responsibility aligns with the policies and initiatives of their government customers, fostering a collaborative approach towards achieving positive societal impact.

Meyercord's focus on supply chain sustainability plays a crucial role in driving social causes and environmental stewardship. Their manufacturing of environmentally friendly excise tax stamps, which are procured by DOR and local jurisdictions to protect cigarette excise taxes, demonstrates their integration of sustainable practices throughout their supply chain. The recognition from EcoVadis further validates Meyercord's commitment to responsible business operations. A sustainable supply chain not only benefits society and the environment but also ensures the long-term success of businesses. Meyercord sets a commendable example by prioritizing ESG factors, showcasing that economic prosperity and social responsibility can go hand in hand.

For more information on Meyercord Revenue visit: [Meyercord Revenue, Inc. \(sims.com\)](https://www.meyercord.com)

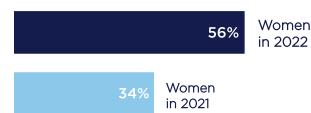
Inflation has shaken women's retirement confidence



Compared to men, more women's financial and retirement goals have been derailed due to high inflation. A new Nationwide Retirement Institute® survey of retirement plan participants found many setbacks that are taking a toll on women's futures and wellbeing.

Nearly two-thirds (62%) of women are expecting to delay their retirement as a result of inflation.

Women feel **worried** when thinking about where they are with their current retirement plan and financial investments.



A **22% uptick**



Women are also delaying their retirement to help their loved ones through inflation.

15% of women who are delaying retirement due to inflation are doing so because they have had to financially support a family member or friend



As a result, well over half of women (57%) say inflation has negatively impacted their mental health



Women are seeking solutions



Women are interested in guaranteed lifetime income investment options

92% of female plan participants would be at least somewhat likely to rollover a portion of their current retirement plan savings into a guaranteed lifetime income option if it was offered by their employer.

87% of women are interested in guaranteed lifetime income investment options that help provide protection from market volatility

Nationwide's [guaranteed lifetime income solutions](#) offer plan participants guaranteed income for life and protection against market volatility.

Nationwide also offers educational resources for [financial professionals, advisors](#) and [consultants](#). Plan sponsors – Please contact your Nationwide representative.



Survey Methodology: Nationwide Retirement Institute's 2022 In-Plan Lifetime Income Survey was conducted online by Edelman Data & Intelligence between July 14 and August 5, 2022 among a sample of 1,000 plan participants (ages 45+), 100 plan participants (ages 35-44), 500 company plan sponsors and 100 government plan sponsors.

This material is not a recommendation to buy or sell a financial product or to adopt an investment strategy. Investors should discuss their specific situation with their financial professional.

This information is general in nature and is not intended to be tax, legal, accounting or other professional advice. The information provided is based on current laws, which are subject to change at any time, and has not been endorsed by any government agency.

Provisions of these options may vary based on plan selection and/or by state regulation. These investment options may not be available in all states.

Guarantees are subject to the claims-paying ability of the issuing insurance company.

Nationwide Investment Services Corporation (NISC), member FINRA, Columbus, OH. Nationwide Retirement Institute is a division of NISC.

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Review & Development

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On-Site or Virtual HR
Support Services

Campbell County Congratulates the Campbell LEADS Leadership Development Program Class of 2023



RUSTBURG, VA - Campbell County is known for its dedication to professional development and ongoing cultivation of leadership skills in employees. As such, on Wednesday, June 7, 2023 the Campbell LEADS Leadership Development Program members were recognized for their remarkable organizational presence, and dedication to continued education and outstanding public service ethic.

Recognized last year by the Virginia Association of Counties (VACo), the locality's newly designed Campbell LEADS Leadership Development program is an internal staff development program created on the basis of a people-driven values model. Key organizational staff identify leadership training as a core operating principle through which the organization could enhance customer service, communication, ethics, budgeting, and higher levels of institutional knowledge and collaboration.



The program lasts for approximately eight (8) months and each session focuses on a different topic. Session content includes communication issues, leading through change, conflict management, budgeting, project and priority management.

Throughout the program, each participant receives several leadership development books which align with the topics of discussion for advanced reading. In addition, members are assigned to teams of 3-4 to



address organizational and community needs, opportunities, and potential innovations for the County. The teams tackled County campus safety, dog park needs at area parks, and options for County recycling programs. In order to form new connections in the organization, at the conclusion of the program, Campbell County provides up to 10 employees with in-depth Leadership Training to engage employees in practical, innovative and rewarding projects that benefit the larger employee base as a whole.

“Our organization believes in leadership at every level. The Campbell County LEADS Leadership Development Program not only boosts employee engagement, but increases the organization’s ability to hire and retain the best public servants,” said Sherry Harding, one of the program founders. “Great leaders inspire others, and share their passions in a way that enables others to feel passionate, too. Shared values, coupled with a devotion to provide the best citizen experiences only help contribute to our organization and move our mission and vision forward.”

“Campbell County congratulates these fine public servants, and recognizes the dedication they have not only to their daily work, but to continual professional development,” notes Jordan Welborn, a fellow program founder. “Our Campbell LEADS members prioritize cooperation and servanthood, and are engaged in making our county the best it can possibly be. We are confident they will continue to inspire others and embody the very essence of the values we hold so dear.”

Members of the 2023 class are pictured in both photos. (Photo 1 shows community service day – Gleaning for the world) Back row – left to right: Cody Cole (Public Library), Danielle Burns (Public Safety), Arthur Robinson (Public Works), Clifton Tomlin (Public Safety), front row: Stacey Meyer (Public & Employee Relations), Lyzzie King (Public Library), Brooke Wright (County Administration), Karissa Shrader (Community Development), and Cody Everett (Community Development).

For more information, contact Campbell County Public and Employee Relations at 434-332-9818 or per@campbellcountyva.gov.

(The Campbell LEADS 2023 Group chose as their group community service project to assist with packing essential items for those in need through Gleaning for the World).



Wesley Dawson Hired as Prince William County's First Community Safety Initiative Director

PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY, VIRGINIA... Prince William County hired Wesley Dawson as the county's first director of the Office of Community Safety. He will start with the county on Monday, June 26, 2023.

Dawson comes to Prince William County from the City of Baltimore, where he worked in the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement, which focuses on violence prevention using holistic and public health-oriented strategies to improve community safety.

Dawson most recently served as the Community Engagement Manager for the office, where he was responsible for establishing and maintaining healthy, trauma-informed, and supportive community relationships for the agency. He also was responsible for developing, implementing, evaluating, and monitoring all programmatic, grant management, and budgetary deliverables associated with agency community engagement and opportunity programs, including approaches to address gun violence and the root causes of health-related matters.

Before that, Dawson worked for the District of Columbia as a special assistant and program analyst with the Department of Transportation, and as a constituent services coordinator with the Council of the District of Columbia. In those roles, he developed and implemented community engagement and outreach strategies in partnership with communities, from conceptualization to implementation. These initiatives encouraged community and institutional engagement through inter-agency and multi-sector partnerships.

"Wesley brings critical and unique experience in community engagement, program development and evidenced-informed decision-making to the Office of Community Safety," said Deputy County Executive for Public Safety Dan Alexander. "This is a key role in our Community Safety Initiative efforts, and with Wesley's leadership, the county can continue to work with our citizens to improve the quality of life in every neighborhood, every day."

"I believe that my community engagement and public safety experience align perfectly with the county's Community Safety Initiative goals," said Dawson. "I am honored and excited by the opportunity to lead Prince William County's CSI efforts and to build impactful programs that will drive meaningful change in the community."

Prince William County's CSI program will focus on prevention, intervention, education and diversion strategies to be more proactive in addressing safety concerns within the community. The initiative uses data and active community engagement to determine strategic priorities and focused action plans that are holistic, evidence-informed, equitable and inclusive. This approach will involve four key elements: 1) stakeholders from multiple sectors to drive the CSI process, 2) trusted messengers and practitioners to ensure effective citizen engagement and service delivery, 3) approaches to safety that are driven by data, and 4) practices which are rooted in an understanding of how trauma affects all people and the larger community.

The Board of County Supervisors gave staff approval to move forward with the new CSI program in December 2022, to include creating two new positions, a director and a community safety administrator/data analyst, which is currently open for hire. The Board approved two additional positions in the Office of Community Safety as part of the FY2024 Budget.

Dawson received his Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from Virginia Commonwealth University and a Master of Public Administration from George Mason University.

Chesterfield's Chief Learning Officer Earns International Award for Learning and Development Professionals



Kevin Bruny, Chesterfield's chief learning officer and director of the county's Learning & Performance Center, has been recognized as one of the world's top learning and development professionals.

Bruny received a 2023 OnCon Icon Top 50 Award during the organization's recent virtual summit, an annual event that brings together corporate executives from across the globe.

"I was surprised to have been named a finalist last fall and certainly didn't expect this outcome," he said. "This is my first exposure to OnCon and after learning alongside other private-sector winners, I'm honored to be in their presence as a public-sector L&D professional. Chesterfield has much to be proud of our employee development practices and it is through many others on the Learning & Performance Center team that our work is recognized."

Honorees of this prestigious award have made a considerable impact on their current and/or previous organization; make strong contributions to the professional community through thought leadership; innovate in their role/career; and exhibit exceptional leadership.

Bruny has more than 30 years of human resource management experience in private, public and nonprofit organizations – including the past 20 years as head of Chesterfield's Learning & Performance Center, which provides developmental experiences for county employees and consulting services that promote individual and organizational success.

In addition to overseeing the center's staff and operations, Bruny develops and executes strategic performance solutions; ensures learning objectives are based on needs analysis, core competencies and strategic goals; evaluates, selects and manages external providers; researches "best practice" learning curriculum; and designs and develops performance support tools, modules and instructional methods directed toward competency improvement.

State Revenues Ahead of Forecast Through May



Secretary of Finance Stephen E. Cummings returned to the Senate Finance and Appropriations Committee on June 13 to provide [an update on state revenue collections](#) during the critically-important last quarter of the state fiscal year. Secretary Cummings reiterated his confidence in the Administration's forecast despite some "noise" in the revenue figures due to the state's new Pass-Through Entity Tax and more softening than expected in withholding and sales and use tax collections.

General Fund revenues are down 3.4 percent on a fiscal year-to-date basis relative to the same period in FY 2022, but ahead of the forecasted 8.8 percent decline. On a fiscal year-to-date basis, state general fund revenues are ahead of the December 2022 forecast by \$948 million. However, the Administration expects that approximately \$600 million of this additional revenue may be returned to certain business taxpayers in FY 2024 due to the timing of implementation of the new Pass-Through Entity Tax. Although there is no net effect on Virginia revenues attributed to this tax (this mechanism allows certain business owners to deduct state and local taxes from their federal income taxes at levels above \$10,000 per year), delays in processing credits against the new tax and taxpayer requests for extensions have pushed those credits into FY 2024.

Individual income tax withholding collections, with growth of 4.1 percent on a fiscal year-to-date basis, are lagging the forecast of 4.8 percent growth in this source, and are \$112.4 million behind projections. Although the December forecast expected some slowing in withholding collections, this revenue source has performed slightly worse than anticipated; Secretary Cummings noted that although job growth overall has remained strong, much of Virginia's job growth has been concentrated in lower-paying employment. Sales and use tax collections are similarly falling short of expectation, growing by 6 percent on a fiscal year-to-date basis, and lagging the forecast of 8.1 percent growth. Sales and use tax collections are \$185.8 million behind projections to date. As Secretary Cummings has previously indicated, slowing growth in this revenue source is a reflection of a shift away from consumption of goods (which are generally subject to sales and use taxes) toward non-taxable services, and will need to be evaluated carefully in developing the forecast for the Governor's December 2023 budget proposal.

Secretary Cummings's [June 13 memorandum transmitting the May revenue report](#) indicates that the Administration continues to expect a recession, but on a later timetable than originally predicted; the December forecast expected a recession in the first half of calendar year 2023, but the Administration now anticipates a mild recession during FY 2024. The difficulty in pinpointing the timing of an economic slowdown was highlighted later in the week when the Federal Reserve's Federal Open Market Committee opted not to raise interest rates at its June 13-14 meeting, preferring to monitor the effects of the series of rate increases approved at earlier meetings, but signaling that future rate increases are likely. The most recent inflation figures, [released on June 13](#), suggest overall progress in managing inflation, although certain components are proving to be "sticky." The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) rose by 0.1 percent in May (down from an 0.4 increase in April); shelter and used cars and trucks were the largest contributors to the increase, offset by a drop in energy prices. However, when volatile food and energy prices are removed, "core" inflation registered at 0.4 percent in May. Yearly figures demonstrated a similar pattern; overall inflation was 4 percent for the 12 months ending in May (the smallest yearly increase since the 12-month period ending in March 2021), but core inflation was 5.3 percent.

Federal Open Market Committee members cited the difficulty of interpreting mixed economic indicators in explaining the Committee's decision to pause action this month. Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell said in his post-meeting press conference, "In light of how far we have come in tightening policy, the uncertain lags with which monetary policy affects the economy, and potential headwinds from credit tightening, today we decided to leave our policy interest rate unchanged and continue to reduce our securities holdings. Looking ahead, nearly all Committee participants view it as likely that some further rate increases will be appropriate this year to bring inflation down to 2 percent over time." However, the Committee underscored its commitment to taming inflation; as Chair Powell stated at the press conference, "[T]he committee is completely unified in the need to get inflation down to 2 percent over time...we understand that allowing inflation to get entrenched into...the U.S. economy is the thing that we cannot, cannot allow to happen...Getting price stability back and restored will benefit generations of people as long as it's sustained."

VACo Contact: [Katie Boyle](#)

SMART SCALE Round 5 Projects Approved by Commonwealth Transportation Board



SMART SCALE

*Funding the Right
Transportation Projects
in Virginia*

In May, the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) unanimously agreed to a resolution approving the 5th round of SMART SCALE projects. The CTB found that the [Consensus Scenario](#) as presented in the May 23, 2023 Workshop is the approach to be used in funding projects scored pursuant to the fifth round of the [Project Prioritization Process](#). The Consensus Scenario includes Board modifications to the Staff Recommended Scenario, which was presented at the January 17, 2023 meeting of the CTB. Modifications were made in collaboration with the CTB, Office of Intermodal Planning and Investment Staff, Virginia Department of Transportation Staff, Department of Rail and Public Transportation staff, and the applicant community.

To read the full Resolution passed by the CTB click [here](#).

413 project applications were submitted for round 5 which totaled around \$8.3 billion in funding requests. With \$1.64 billion in funding available not every project would or could be funded. The CTB would ultimately approve 165 projects for funding totaling \$1.64 billion. While the SMART SCALE projects are now approved, the CTB must still approve the Six-Year Improvement Program (SYIP), which is a state document that outlines planned spending for transportation projects proposed for construction development or study for the next six years. The approved round 5 SMART SCALE projects will be included in the SYIP which is set to be considered at the June meeting of the CTB.

VACo Contact: [James Hutzler](#)

Virginia seeks survey input in drafting digital equity plan to access federal funds



The Office of Broadband at the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) is in the process of developing the Virginia Digital Opportunity Plan, which will assess the state of the digital divide in Virginia and enable the Commonwealth to apply for Federal broadband funding from the Digital Equity Act Capacity Grant program, which will award \$1.44 billion over 5 fiscal years to states, possessions/territories, and tribal entities for the purpose of implementing their State Digital Equity Plans (or similar plan). For more information, including determination of state allocations and eligible uses of funds, see the [National Telecommunications and Information Administration's \(NTIA\) frequently asked questions \(FAQ\) webpage](#).

Under the [Digital Equity Act](#), states interested in participating in the State Digital Equity Capacity Grant Program must first apply for State Digital Equity Planning Grants and complete State Digital Equity Plans.

To help inform the development of the Commonwealth's Plan, DHCD has launched a [digital opportunity survey](#) that aims to understand where respondents reside within the Commonwealth and their current levels of broadband access, the affordability of the broadband services, and their level of comfort navigating the internet and digital devices. This information will be used in helping determine how much federal funds will be allocated to Virginia to meet the needs of its citizenry. All Virginians are welcome and encouraged to take the [survey](#).

VACo Contacts: [Joe Lerch, AICP](#) and [Jeremy Bennett](#)

Feds issue draft guidelines on transferrable tax credits now available to counties through the IRA for energy investments

Opportunities to learn more in upcoming webinars and outreach



As part of the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), the U.S. Department of the Treasury and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) released draft guidance on June 14 regarding key provisions in the IRA to expand the reach of the clean energy tax credits and help build projects more quickly and affordably.

The two new credit delivery mechanisms are (1) elective pay (otherwise known as “direct pay”); and (2) transferability. The purpose of these mechanisms is to enable state, local, Tribal governments, non-profit organizations and other entities to take advantage of clean energy tax credits. With these new credit delivery mechanisms, governments, many types of tax-exempt organizations, and even many businesses may derive more benefit from tax credits like those that incentivize renewable energy and energy efficient construction.

The National Association of Counties (NACo) will host a [webinar](#) on Thursday, June 22 at 3 p.m. EDT for members to learn more about the guidance and how counties can utilize the new elective pay and transferability mechanisms. Click [here](#) to register.

Additionally, U.S. Treasury is also conducting outreach to educate stakeholders, including through speaking engagements, webinars, and similar engagements in the coming months. This will include a series of webinars this summer, [beginning on Thursday, June 29](#), where interested stakeholders can learn more. In addition, IRS.gov contains [more information](#) about the proposed and temporary guidance, as well as the underlying tax credits that can be used with elective pay and transferability.

Both the [elective pay guidelines](#) and [transferability guidelines](#) are scheduled to be published in the federal register on June 21 and available online at <https://www.federalregister.gov/d/2023-12798>, with written or electronic comments due by August 14, 2023.

Lastly, VACo provided a preview of these mechanisms last year (as part of our 2022 annual conference webinars) with a summary and explanation of how Virginia counties can take advantage of these investments. In this recorded [webinar](#) (and [accompanying slides](#)) a panel of experts walk through the basics of the IRA regarding eligible funding opportunities in regard to deployment of technology, and how federal energy tax credits have been significantly modified and increased so that counties can utilize them to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

VACo Contacts: [Joe Lerch, AICP](#) and [Katie Boyle](#)



Since 1980, billion-dollar weather and climate disasters (hurricanes, severe storms, drought, flooding, wildfire, winter storms, and freezing) have led to \$2.2 trillion in losses (Source: Billion Dollar Losses, Trillion Dollar Threats).

Between 2017 and 2021, annual losses from billion-dollar disasters totaled \$765 billion in losses and more than 4500 deaths. This is almost 8 times higher than in the 1980s.

Not only are the events increasing in both occurrence and intensity, they are disproportionately impacting our communities. Fortunately, new funding opportunities and innovative financing options are emerging for comprehensive resilience initiatives.

Register today for the [2023 Resilient Virginia Conference](#), where you will learn about new federal resiliency programs funded through the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) and the Infrastructure and Investment Jobs Act (IIJA), as well as state agency funding and financing initiatives. You will also see examples of resilience measures taken at the state, local and regional levels directly from the program managers.

The future well-being of our communities depends on the actions we take now. Come learn from the experts at the [Conference](#)!

Plan to participate in our fifth statewide conference on resiliency!

August 1-2 | Hybrid Event

Welcome to the **2023 Resilient Virginia Conference** website. We are pleased to announce that the conference, focused on **Economic Opportunities for Community Resilience**, will take place on **August 1-2 at University of Virginia's Darden School of Business in Charlottesville**.

Given the success of our [2021 virtual conference](#), we are organizing the 2023 conference as a **hybrid event** — registrations for both online and in-person attendance will be available.

[Register Now](#)

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OneDigital has a track record of providing cost-saving solutions to counties. This has been achieved through creative funding strategies, rate holds, and exclusive partnerships with various carriers. One of these exclusive partnerships is through VACORP and Anthem Life. OneDigital is responsible for the inception of the Virginia Local Disability Program (VLDP) which is through the Virginia Retirement System (VRS). Our team of fierce advocates negotiated a 5-year locked rate, including short-term and long-term disability benefits. Your division may already work with us in this capacity, as we currently serve over 270 public sector entities in the VLDP program.



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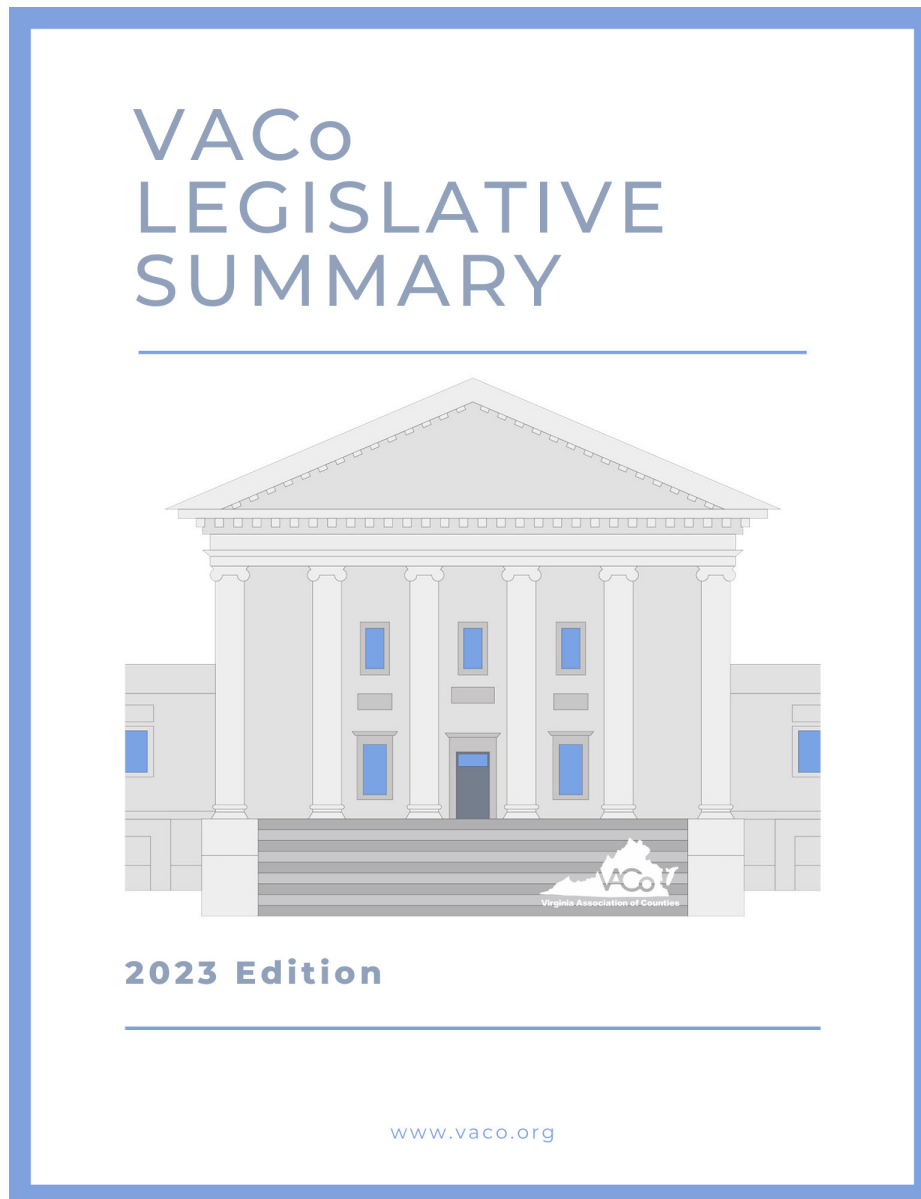


Sarah Anne Struckmann
Business Development Executive
sarah.struckmann@onedigital.com
434-987-2240



At OneDigital, we harness the power of one to solve complex challenges for businesses and people. Scan the code to the left to watch the video and learn more.

VACo Releases 2023 Legislative Summary



The [Legislative Summary](#) details the actions of the 2023 General Assembly. It also includes information on legislation of interest to counties.

This edition contains links to bills through the General Assembly's Legislative Information System and includes studies and statistics of importance to counties.

[Read VACo's 2023 Legislative Summary](#)

VACo Contact: [Legislative Team](#)

Nominations sought for VACo Jefferson Cup

VACo seeks nominations for this year's Jefferson Cup Award to be presented at the November 12-14 Annual Conference. Please submit nominations to Dean Lynch at dlynch@vaco.org.

[Click here for a list of Jefferson Cup recipients](#). Below is a brief history of the Jefferson Cup as well as criteria for award recipients.

On October 25, 1964 at The League of Virginia Counties Executive Board Meeting - The Committee that had been appointed by President Stuart T. DeBell of Fairfax County to study methods and procedures for recognizing outstanding programs, contributions and achievements in local government, reported. The Committee recommended the establishment of an award for outstanding contributions and achievements in local government to be made at the discretion of an Awards Committee in a presentation at the Annual Meeting. The Committee further recommended that the Jefferson Cup suitably engraved to set on a wooden base be adopted as the award. The award was to be called THE JEFFERSON CUP AWARD.

Criteria established for award recipients

1. Any individual who has made an outstanding contribution to local government may be a recipient of the Award.
2. Any local government which has participated in an outstanding local government activity may be a recipient.
3. The Award is to be made at the Annual Meeting of VACo but may not necessarily be made each year.
4. Nominations are to be made to the Awards Committee by August 15 of each year prior to the Annual Meeting.
5. Any additional rules, regulations, standards can be adopted by the Awards Committee.



The Jefferson Cup was last awarded in 2019 when longtime House of Delegates Speaker William J. Howell was honored.

VIRGINIANS ENCOURAGED TO GET READY FOR HURRICANE SEASON BY SETTING UP A DIGITAL PREPAREDNESS KIT

The Virginia IT Agency and Virginia Department of Emergency Management are teaming up to share important preparedness tips

RICHMOND – With hurricane season starting on **June 1**, the Virginia Information Technologies Agency (VITA) and Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) are encouraging people in the Commonwealth to get ready now by setting up a ‘digital preparedness kit’ to help stormproof your electronic devices and digital information.

“When it comes to preparing for hurricane season, you may not necessarily think about digitization or protecting your computers, smart phones and other electronics,” said **Chief Information of the Commonwealth Robert Osmond**. “However, technology is a critical response and recovery tool, allowing you to stay connected and have access to life-saving and life-sustaining information before, during and after a disaster.”

“Preparing your digital devices and assets is just as essential to hurricane readiness as strengthening your home and gathering emergency supplies,” said **State Coordinator of Emergency Management Shawn Talmadge**. “When a disaster strikes, you must have several ways to receive warnings, alerts and updates, including Wireless Emergency Alerts, weather apps, verified government agency social media accounts and other digital communications. Identifying those trusted and reliable sources beforehand will help keep you informed, safe and protected from misinformation and disinformation when it matters the most.”

Here are the steps you can take right now to safeguard your data and devices:

- Make sure your electronics are backed up on a regular basis;
- Scan important paperwork, documents and sentimental items such as photos into a digital format. You can do this by using a scanner, a handheld camera or with an app on your mobile device;
- Once your key information has been saved digitally, back up your data and files to an external hard drive, USB drive or a cloud-based server; and
- Take physical steps to prepare your devices ahead of time:
 - Make sure you keep all of your electronics charged up, so you’re ready to go prior to any type of emergency;
 - If you’re in an area prone to flooding, elevate your electronic devices to a high and dry place, away from windows;
 - Unplug them to protect them from power outages and lightning strikes; and
 - In the event of power outages, have a portable charger ready to recharge your devices.

“One more area to watch out for when it comes to putting your digital preparedness kit together is cybersecurity. Phishing and other scams can increase after a disaster,” said **Chief Information Security Officer of the Commonwealth Michael Watson**. “That’s why it’s so important to access only known websites and social media accounts, such as those of VDEM and the [Federal Emergency Management Agency](#), when you’re looking for updates and information. You’ll also need to maintain the security of your back-up systems. Make sure you choose a tool with strong security features such as data encryption, password protection and secure datacenters. These are all great ways to thwart bad actors and hackers who want to take advantage of the chaos that happens around a disaster.”

You can find more preparedness tips on the [VITA](#) and [VDEM](#) websites.



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To register for one of these or other webinars, please visit <https://www.nrsforu.com/rsc-web-preauth/resource-center/webinars>. We also have on-demand videos available at this link so you can get the info you need when you have time. Follow up with an individual consultation with your local Sr. Retirement Specialist or reach out to our Retirement Resource Group at 888-401-5272.



James City County Deputy Clerk Teresa Saeed was recently elected as the President of the Virginia Municipal Clerks Association (VMCA). VMCA's mission is to promote education and certification of Municipal Clerks, increase efficiency of municipal clerk operations, and to be alert and responsive to federal, state, and local legislation which impacts the clerk's office.

The Executive Committee was elected during the 46th Annual VMCA Conference held in Harrisonburg, VA, April 19-21, 2023. Saeed will be representing the VMCA at the International Institute of Municipal Clerks Annual Conference in May 2023.

The Executive Committee of the VMCA for 2023-2024:

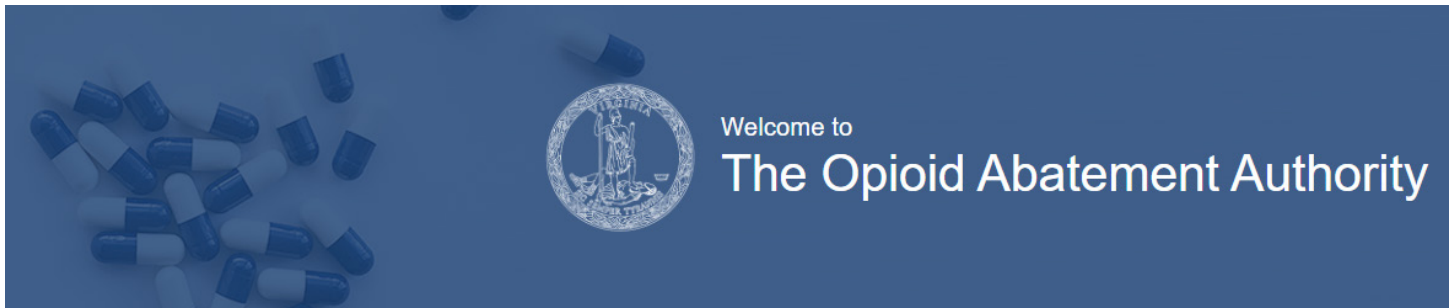
- **Teresa Saeed**, President, Deputy Clerk, County of James City
- **Katherine Glass**, 1st Vice President, City Clerk, City of Hampton
- **Kimberly Ellis**, 2nd Vice President, Deputy Clerk, County of Culpeper
- **Jennifer Green**, Treasurer, Assistant to the City Manager, City of Hampton
- **Kaylyn McCluster**, Secretary, Deputy Clerk, County of Pittsylvania
- **Keia Waters, Historian**, Senior Deputy Clerk, City of Alexandria
- **Travis Morris**, Parliamentarian, Senior Deputy Clerk, County of Albemarle
- **Tanya Brackett**, Immediate Past President, Clerk to the Board, County of Henrico

For more information on VMCA, visit www.vmca.com

Media Contact:

Teresa Saeed, VMCA President

757-253-6609; teresa.saeed@jamescitycountyva.gov



Best Practices for Local Governments in the Allocation of Opioid Settlement Funding

Tony McDowell, Executive Director | Virginia Opioid Abatement Authority

Virginia has already received settlements worth more than \$500 million from prescription opioid manufacturers and distributors, and that number could double. Most of these funds will flow to Virginia's cities and counties for efforts to abate the opioid crisis. As Virginia's cities and counties develop local and regional plans for the use of these funds, some best practices are beginning to emerge.

The first of these is **establishing a local abatement committee** comprised of various stakeholders including prevention and treatment specialists, public health, behavioral health, law enforcement, and people with lived experience.

Some communities are holding **town hall style public meetings** or listening sessions so that local leaders can hear from residents who have been directly affected by the prescription opioid epidemic, as well as from service providers and community-based organizations. The OAA's Board of Directors has been following this approach, and has already conducted six public listening sessions around the state. The feedback from these sessions has been instrumental in informing the Board's strategy for allocating grants.

Local governments are encouraged to **engage with community partners**, especially those that have already been fighting the opioid epidemic for years. This certainly includes the local Community Services Board, but in addition there are many non-profits, grassroot organizations, treatment providers, and recovery support organizations that want to be involved. During its listening sessions the OAA Board has heard numerous examples of such organizations that have been barely surviving financially, working off of donations and volunteer effort. These organizations often know exactly how to reach the people who are sick and suffering, and have a track record of stretching dollars for maximum impact. The OAA is only able to provide funding to cities, counties and state agencies. This means the opioid settlement funds will not reach these non-government organizations unless there is a partnership with the local government.

The OAA is committed to providing assistance to cities and counties in developing their abatement plans. We offer **planning grants** and are in the process of launching a series of best-practice webinars and workshops. For more information please visit us at www.voaa.us.



Claim your Scholarship to the NACo High Performance Leadership Academy

In these unprecedented times, there is one critical component to ensure the success of your county: leadership. The need for strong leadership skills is more important than ever as we adjust to shifting challenges in labor and economy.

In support of your county, you have access to the [NACo High Performance Leadership Academy](#), the **12-week, online leadership program** designed by the late General Colin Powell. It has been described by one graduate this way:

"I can say hands-down it was the best leadership training I've ever experienced. Want to know Gen. Colin Powell's 13 keys to leadership? He tells you. Want to know how to communicate and negotiate? He offers his secrets. Want to know how to best-manage people? He drops stories that will give you confidence. And it's not just him. Executives from across the country are invited in as coaches, too. It's an incredible cast of experts."

Because of the pandemic and economic crisis we are facing, NACo is offering a \$1995 scholarship for the first enrollee from your county. That means, when you or another leader at the county enrolls, the cost is not \$2,995; it is now \$1000.

If you have more than one person to enroll, we will extend significant discounts to them, too. We believe in you, your leadership and the leadership of your county employees. This High Performance Leadership Academy will make existing leaders better and your emerging (next generation) leaders ready to address the growing complexity of county business.

We are inviting you to enroll at least one leader into the course that begins in April 2023. Please help us invest in county frontline leaders who are making great sacrifices to serve our communities.

If you have any questions or to enroll someone in the program, please contact Treina Smith-Slatt at 503-878-7184 or treinas@pdaleadership.com.



REGISTRATION IS OPEN!

2023 NACo ANNUAL CONFERENCE

JULY 21-24 | TRAVIS COUNTY, TEXAS

Join county elected and appointed officials from across the country in Travis County, Texas for the [National Association of Counties \(NACo\) 2023 Annual Conference & Exposition](#).

NACo's Annual Conference is the premier national opportunity for counties to exchange cutting-edge practices, elect the association's leadership and shape our federal policy agenda for the year ahead.

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[VIEW SCHEDULE](#)

QUESTIONS?

We are happy to help. Explore the [conference landing page](#) for the latest information. Please reach out to nacomeetings@naco.org with any questions.



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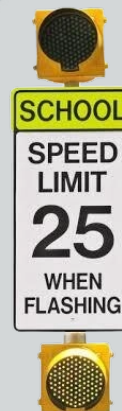


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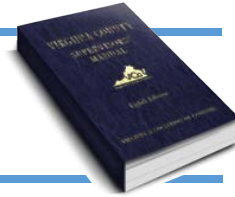


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The Virginia Association of Counties accepts employment ads in a PDF file or a link to a job site. Please include information for applying, and a link to other important information. Please do not fax your employment ad. VACo members are not charged for placing an employment ad. **The cost is \$100 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](#).

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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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