

COUNTY OFFICIALS SUMMIT



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COUNTY OFFICIALS'
SUMMIT
AUGUST 17, 2023

SPEAKERS LINEUP

**17
AUG.
2023**
**—
AGENDA**

BUDGET AND ECONOMIC OUTLOOK FOR 2024



APRIL KEES | DIRECTOR
SENATE FINANCE AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

TONY MAGGIO | LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ANALYST
HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE



PREPARING FOR NEW POLITICAL REALITIES



THE HONORABLE CHRIS SAXMAN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, VIRGINIA FREE | FORMER DELEGATE

THE HONORABLE DAVID TOSCANO
ATTORNEY AND AUTHOR | FORMER DELEGATE



2024 GENERAL ASSEMBLY POLICY GOALS



THE HONORABLE TERRY KILGORE
MAJORITY LEADER | 1ST HOUSE DISTRICT



THE HONORABLE CREIGH DEEDS
25TH SENATE DISTRICT



THE HONORABLE SAM RASOUL
11TH HOUSE DISTRICT

Update on 2023 BPOL Legislation Regarding Cancer Drugs and VACo Request for Information



Legislation was considered during the 2023 General Assembly session that would have required a deduction from BPOL taxes for anti-cancer drugs that were purchased by a medical practice and administered within a physician-patient relationship to patients whose costs for treatment are paid for by Medicare, Medicaid, or TRICARE. VACo opposed this legislation, pointing out that local governments have existing authority under state regulations to provide tax relief to subclassifications of businesses via ordinance. This authority is set out in [23VAC10-500-20](#) and allows localities to establish subclassifications within the existing BPOL business categories and provide for different rates or exemptions for businesses within such subclassifications. The regulations allow these differentiations to be made based on “reasonable distinctions in municipal policy,” recognizing that localities may use these classifications as a tool to incentivize certain industries or to achieve other policy goals.

The 2023 legislation was ultimately revised into a study of current reimbursement and operational challenges for medical practices administering anti-cancer drugs in office settings to patients covered by Medicare, Medicaid, and TRICARE, which will be led by the Secretary of Health and Human Resources.

Representatives of the oncology practices that requested the 2023 legislation are interested in further discussions with localities about possible tax relief under the existing regulatory authority. If your county is interested in additional discussions, please contact Katie Boyle (kboyle@vaco.org).

VACo Contact: [Katie Boyle](#)



Thank You Prince Edward County for hosting the VACo Regions 1 and 4 Meeting!

VACo held its sixth of eight regional meetings for 2023 on June 28, at the Robert Russa Moton Museum in Prince Edward County. VACo staff had the honor of traveling to Prince Edward County, who graciously hosted the event, to meet with local elected officials and staff from Region 1 and Region 4. Region 1 encompasses the counties of Accomack, Charles City, Isle of Wight, New Kent, Northampton, Prince George, Southampton, Surry and Sussex, while Region 4 contains the counties of Amelia, Brunswick, Charlotte, Dinwiddie, Greenville, Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, Nottoway and Prince Edward. 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 Senator Frank Ruff discussing the ongoing budget talks and providing an overview of the 2023 General Assembly session. Senator Ruff firmly believes the House and Senate will not allow the \$3.6 billion surplus to be left on the table and expects a revised budget to be approved with more funding for education, law enforcement and mental health programs along with tax relief. He stated that the corporate income tax rate is being looked at and that cutting

this tax rate will allow for business in the Commonwealth to stay competitive and keep Virginia's workforce in Virginia. Delegate Otto Wachsmann also attended the meeting outlining his legislative priorities. As a representative for multiple rural counties, he will continue to pursue restoration of state payments in lieu of taxes to compensate counties housing state correctional facilities, as well as multiple rural healthcare initiatives. We were pleased to be joined by a representative from Senator Tim Kaine's regional office, Taylor Thornhill, who would highlight items Senator Kaine is working on and available programs to counties in the region. These items include strengthening our workforce, expanding childcare for working families, and the announcement of \$1.4 billion in broadband that became available to Virginia. Ms. Thornhill highlighted the congressionally directed spending process, which Senators Kaine and Warner do jointly, and encouraged counties to contact the Senator's office for assistance in pursuing federal funds for local projects.

The meeting continued with representatives from each county outlining top issues or legislative priorities in their localities. Several issues emerged as common areas of concern, including education and school capital funding, EMS and public safety support, broadband, transportation and infrastructure funding, as well as unfunded mandates. Localities within these regions support more funding for education as well as expanding the ability to impose a 1% local sales and use tax, of which the revenue would be dedicated to school capital needs. Volunteerism was an often discussed topic in the meeting as county leaders feel this trait is dwindling in their counties, a situation that challenges more rural counties, which often have a hard time supporting paid emergency services employees. Broadband is imperative for the region, as this utility is necessary for work, education, and quality of life in the 21st century. Transportation and other infrastructure funding was cited in the discussion, as Region 1 and 4 counties believe they are being left behind with current funding programs and that this work will help with economic development. Lastly, costs associated with early voting, Constitutional offices, emergency services, and temporary detention orders were brought up by leaders in these counties, who urged the Commonwealth to direct more resources to help offset the burden taken on by localities to provide these necessary services.

After the discussion with county representatives, attendants got to experience a history lesson. Newly appointed Executive Director of the Moton Museum, Cainan Townsend, discussed the historical significance of the Museum and highlighted how Prince Edward County is tied into the nationwide civil rights movement of the 1960's. The meeting ended with Charlie Lintecum, Director of Operations for the Opioid Abatement Authority, discussing the [recent awarded funding](#) that was announced and announcing that [planning grants for localities](#) looking for ideas on what to do with their abatement funds open July 1.

The meeting served as a great chance to connect with VACo member counties and get a grasp of the issues at heart in Regions 1 and 4. VACo staff wants to first thank Prince Edward County and the Robert Russa Moton Museum staff for hosting us for a great meeting. We would like to give a special thanks to the county leaders and staff, Senator Ruff, Delegate Wachsmann, Taylor Thornhill, sponsors and others who attended and participated in the discussion.

VACo Contact: [James Hutzler](#)



Visit Gloucester County and the Gloucester County Historic Courthouse

Location: Courthouse Square / Main Street

Built: 1766 – 1767

Style: Georgian

Architect: Unknown

Contractor: Unknown

Description: The building faces south and is a one story red colored brick structure. The “T” shaped building is located on landscaped grounds of the courthouse circle in the center of Gloucester to the east of the courthouse. The south front has a large portico with four white colored Ionic columns rising to a pediment at the roof line. The entrance has a fanlight above. The windows are arched and the roof is hipped. The courtroom occupies the center floor space of the building and has plaster walls and wood furniture. The building was renovated in 1956. The architect was Carl M Lindner & Son and the contractor was Wray & Richardson. Nearby are the Clayton Building (1823) and Roane Building (Clerk’s Office – 1896).

SOURCE: [American Courthouses](#) | [Courthouses.co](#)

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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

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kwalker@vaco.org for more information.
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Part 15 | [Timeline to Implement Retirement Program](#)

Part 16 | [Thank You](#)

**PRESS RELEASE**

SUBJECT: Virginia School Boards Association Task Force to Address School Construction and Infrastructure Funding Needs

IMMEDIATE RELEASE: July 19, 2023

CONTACT: Don Robertson (757) 365-6202

William M. McCarty, Sr., Chairman, Isle of Wight County Board of Supervisors, was recently named to serve on the Virginia School Boards Association (VSBA) Task Force to Address School Construction and Infrastructure Funding Needs.

In June 2022, the VSBA established a task force focused on assisting school boards in advocating for best practices and outcomes for improving the infrastructure of school divisions in the Commonwealth. The VSBA Task Force on School Infrastructure Needs engages federal, state, and local leaders to ensure the need for increased federal and state resources is recognized as a critical priority.

The Virginia Commission on School Construction and Modernization has previously reported that more than half of Virginia's school buildings are at least 50 years or older and the cost of replacing over 1,000 aging facilities is roughly \$25 billion (based on costs in 2021).

Chairman McCarty will represent the Virginia Association of Counties and Isle of Wight County as the only non-school affiliated local government representative on the Task Force.

Chesterfield Announces Community Engagement and Resources Naming



To better reflect its current work and future mission, Chesterfield County's Citizen Information and Resources Department has been renamed Community Engagement and Resources.

Community Engagement and Resources (CER) has long been focused on assisting residents, businesses and visitors through a variety of service-focused offices. While using "information" in the title still speaks to much of what the department does, engaging the community is at the center of what the shared mission has become and will continue to be.

At its core, CER assists residents in connecting to the community and accessing needed resources throughout their lives through divisions and activities such as: [Aging and Disability Services](#), [Mobility Services](#), [Multicultural Engagement](#), [Volunteer Services](#) and [Youth Services](#).

"As Citizen Information and Resources has developed over the past five years and looks toward the future, we were able to take time to pause and redefine a name that points to the heart of what we do beyond providing information and that is engaging with our community," said CER Director Emily Ashley. "The new name quickly defines our department as a place for anyone who lives, works and plays in Chesterfield to be able to reach out and engage with our team and the services that this entire community provides."



THE VIRGINIA DELEGATION AT THE NACo ANNUAL CONFERENCE!

Behavioral Health Commission Adopts Strategic Plan, Looks at National Best Practices for Crisis System



Commission Meeting



July 18, 2023

Briefing

On July 18, members of the Behavioral Health Commission met at the Richmond Behavioral Health Authority, where they adopted a strategic plan and received several updates from staff on ongoing efforts, as well as a briefing from representatives of the University of Virginia School of Law's State and Local Government Policy Center on ways to improve Virginia's crisis response system.

In addition to the presentation at the meeting, Commission members received a research memorandum from Thomas Driscoll, Carson White, and Andrew Block, two law students and the director of the State and Local Government Policy Center, respectively, analyzing national best practices for a crisis response system, where Virginia's system stands relative to those national best practices, and what investments would be needed for Virginia to achieve national standards. The memorandum outlines national best practices that are building blocks of a "no wrong door" crisis response system, including regional call centers, mobile crisis response teams,

More on Next Page

and crisis receiving and stabilization programs. Using a national model, the authors estimate that Virginia will need \$790 million annually (\$300 million more than currently funded, not counting current budget proposals) for a crisis system that meets national standards. These dollars would support additional mobile crisis teams to enable responses within 90 minutes; Virginia has 36 teams now and would need at least 64 to meet national models, although state estimates indicate 70 teams are needed to meet a goal of responding to crises within one hour. The additional funding would also enhance Virginia's supply of short-term crisis stabilization beds (from 252 to 398) and crisis receiving center slots (from 186 to 468). In their presentation to the Commission, Center representatives offered several recommendations about the Commission's role in supporting the buildout of Virginia's crisis response system over time, including a proposal that the Commission work with the Administration and money committees to establish financial and operational goals for an effective system, as well as benchmarks for required performance reports by relevant agencies. The full memorandum is available at [this link](#).

Commission staff reported on their efforts to seek feedback from interested parties on the Commission's proposed strategic plan, which the Commission subsequently adopted. Key elements of the plan are a set of strategic goals, to include establishing a complete continuum of care, with timely access to services statewide, as well as the Commission's role in building on existing efforts to improve the behavioral health system. One area of planned focus for the Commission is monitoring program implementation, and staff provided an update on their plans for the remainder of 2023, which will feature monitoring of STEP-VA, the redesign of behavioral health coverage within the state's Medicaid program, and permanent supportive housing. Staff monitoring will involve determining the extent to which implementation is consistent with targeted milestones, whether programs are implemented in a way to bring about desired results, and whether services and programs are achieving desired results.

Commission members received recommendations from a group of stakeholders regarding ways that the Commission could consult with individuals who have experience with the behavioral health system, to include possible regional meetings with Commission members in different parts of the state. Staff indicated that they will be conducting surveys of stakeholders annually and incorporating interviews into research projects.

Slides from the meeting are available at [this link](#). The Commission's next meeting is scheduled for September 19.

VACo Contact: [Katie Boyle](#)

DCR hosts webinar for counties on incorporating native plants and pollinators in utility-scale solar development: September 12, 2023, 1pm - 3pm



Pictured is the Gold-Certified Virginia Pollinator Smart Solar Facility at Cople Elementary School in Westmoreland County. Photo is taken after second growing season.

The Virginia Pollinator-Smart Team is hosting an informational session about the [Virginia Pollinator-Smart Program](#). As part of the approval process for utility-scale solar installations, more counties are incorporating native plants and pollinators into their vegetation requirements both in ordinances and Conditional Use Permits/Special Use Permits. The Pollinator-Smart Program is a voluntary certification program that provides an existing framework that localities can reference when determining what requirements surrounding native plants and pollinators they would like to include as part of their permitting and planning. The aim of this meeting is to provide an overview of the program and then answer any questions or concerns counties may have.

This webinar is being presented by the Pollinator-Smart Team including the Department of Conservation and Recreation in conjunction with the Department of Wildlife Resources and the Department of Environmental Quality.

Interested parties can register for the Webinar by emailing pollinator.smart@dcr.virginia.gov using the subject line Pollinator-Smart Locality Meeting RSVP.

VACo Contact: [Joe Lerch, AICP](#)

Commission on Early Childhood Care and Education Inaugural Meeting



Commission on Early Childhood Care and Education

On July 20th, the Commission on Early Childhood Care and Education ([ECCE](#)) met for the first time. This Commission is comprised of Virginia legislators and representatives of business, economic development, local government, school divisions, parents and early care and education programs. The Commission is charged with providing recommendations for and tracking progress on the financing of Virginia's comprehensive birth-to-five early childhood care and education system. The inaugural meeting was comprised of introductions and an overview of Virginia's ECCE ecosystem as well as discussion on priority issues.

The Commission was established by [legislation](#) supported by VACo from the 2023 General Assembly session. Given the role of county government in supporting many early childhood programs and initiatives, VACo successfully advocated for a permanent local government representative seat on the Commission as ECCE has enormous impact to the health and well-being of counties. This seat is currently held by Belinda Astrop, Chair of the Greenville County Board of Supervisors.

The importance of quality, affordable, and accessible early childhood programs cannot be overstated. According to the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE), 40 percent of Virginia's kindergarteners began the 2022-2023 school year still needing to build skills in Literacy, Mathematics, Self-Regulation, and/or Social Skills. Only about 3

out of 10 students from low-income backgrounds with no preschool experience enter school ready. Research shows high-quality early childhood is linked to better life outcomes such as academic achievement, health and well-being, and employment and earnings. Access to childcare also drives economic growth and employment.

Unfortunately, affordability limits choice. Tuition rates for infant care in Virginia average \$16,723 each year. Tuition rates for a preschooler average \$13,749. Together, that's over \$30,000 — almost 40% of the median household income in Virginia. In nearly every region, it costs more to send one child to childcare than to earn a bachelor's degree from a local public university.

VACo supports efforts to increase at-risk children's access to high-quality, enriching learning environments, including more resources and flexibility for localities participating in programs like the Virginia Preschool Initiative and Head Start, as well as additional federal and state funding for programs such as Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) to support increased demand for childcare services. VACo also supports local flexibility to administer or expand support services for childcare.

The Commission next meets on August 29th at the Reynold Workforce Development Conference Center. VACo will continue to engage and report on this issue. Information and presentations from the July 20th meeting can be found [here](#).

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

Virginia Board of Education Convenes Annual Retreat



On July 25th, the Virginia Board of Education (VBOE) [convened](#) for its annual retreat. In addition to certain housekeeping items, VBOE elected a new President and Vice President. Due to term limits and other factors, eight of the nine VBOE [members](#) are relatively recent appointees of Governor Youngkin. VBOE members voted to elect Grace Creasey as President of the Board and Bill Hansen as Vice President.

Perhaps one of the more important agenda items discussed at the meeting was an overview of the 2023 biennial review of the Standards of Quality (SOQ) process. The Constitution of Virginia requires VBOE to prescribe SOQs for the public schools of Virginia, subject to revision only by the General Assembly. As previously [reported](#), VBOE reviews the SOQs every two years and typically submits their recommendations for consideration by the General Assembly in September or October as mandated by Article VIII, Section 2 of the Constitution of Virginia. The SOQs have wide ranging fiscal impacts to localities as they determine a variety of factors, including school staffing ratios, distribution of state aid, and other requirements for public education. However, regardless of VBOE's prescriptions, the SOQs have been codified by the General Assembly and any changes would require changes to the code.

Discussion by Board members focused on the recent JLARC report, which as previously [reported](#), contains major recommendations to reform how K-12 education is funded in Virginia. Several VBOE members indicated the importance of consulting VACo and local governments during the SOQ review process. VACo staff intends to provide public comments on this process.

As this is also a rebenchmarking year, any recommendations from VBOE to the General Assembly will be relevant to upcoming biennial budget discussions for FY 24-FY26. A rebenchmarked budget represents the state cost of continuing the current Direct Aid programs into the next biennium, with updates to the input data used in the funding formulas that determine the cost of the programs. This technical process occurs every two years and incorporates the latest data to reflect changes in enrollment, salaries, support costs, inflation, and other factors. This process impacts localities as it helps determine required local effort.

VACo will continue to advocate for additional state support for K-12 education and report any updates on these issues. Information and documents from the annual retreat may be found [here](#).

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



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. Political analysts 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](#)



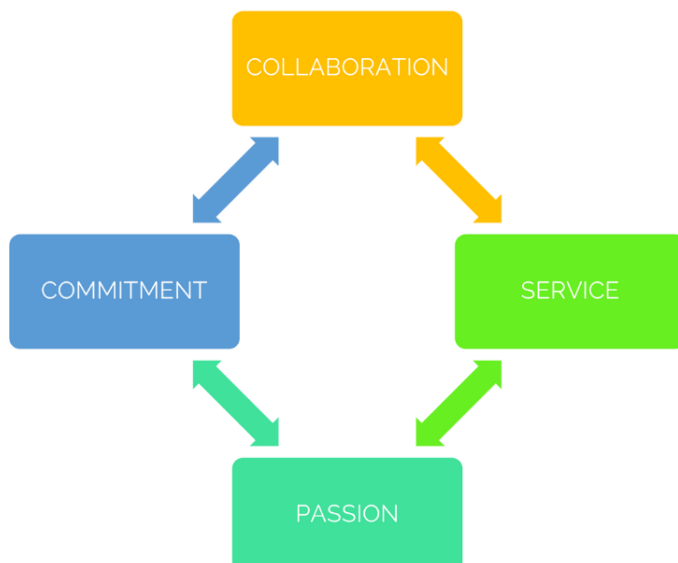
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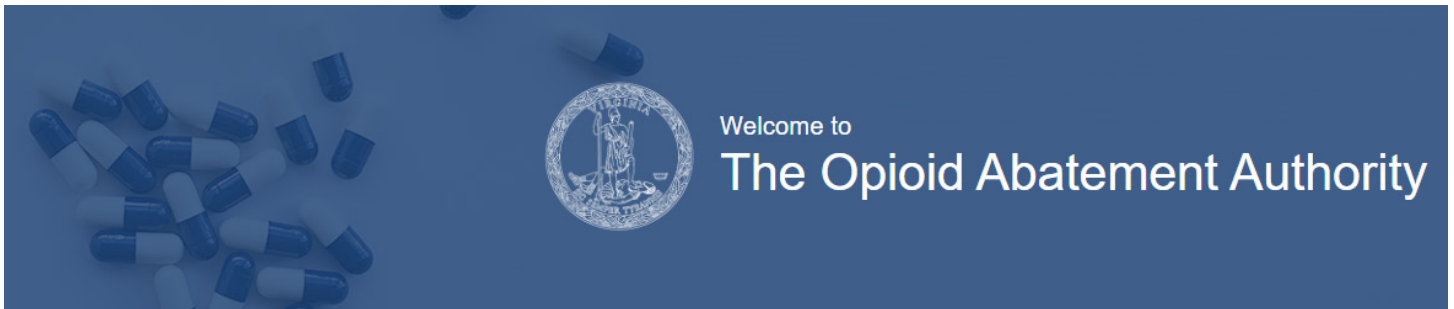
WESTMORELAND COUNTY RFP



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL UPDATE JOB DESCRIPTIONS, COMPENSATION PAY, CLASSIFICATION PLANS

Westmoreland County's goal is to attract and retain a highly skilled workforce. We are requesting sealed proposals from experienced firms to update our job descriptions and develop a complete compensation strategy and pay plan structure for the County. Our objective is to ensure a compensation system based upon accurate job descriptions that fairly represent the regional marketplace in which we compete.

[READ THE RFP](#)



Opioid Abatement Authority Updates

OAA Board of Directors Finalizes \$23 Million in Grants to 76 Cities & Counties

On Friday June 23, 2023, the Board of Directors for the Virginia Opioid Abatement Authority (OAA) voted to award more than \$23 million in grants to 76 Virginia cities and counties for opioid abatement and remediation efforts. The vote confirmed the full Board's approval of recommendations made by the OAA's grants committee, which earlier recommended the slate of awards. [Read the Press Release.](#)

New Application Period for Planning Grants for Individual Cities and Counties Open

The Grants Committee of the Opioid Abatement Authority has voted to open a 2nd application period this year for Planning Grants for Individual Cities and/or Counties. The application period opens July 1, 2023 and closes September 30, 2023. This will be the last opportunity for planning grants from the OAA.

Planning Grants must result in a plan that can be executed into an application for funds from the OAA. The performance period will be 12 months. The Grants Committee will consider awards at their December 4, 2023 meeting. Click on the link below to review requirements and additional information.

GRANTS PORTAL

Virginia Housing Impact Sessions

Session registration is now open: <https://conta.cc/3Xn7ejQ!>



Virginia Housing

Virginia Housing's Community Outreach team is introducing our "Community Impact Sessions" this summer. We're offering six interactive sessions across the Commonwealth that are geared to educate and support you in your efforts to provide affordable and workforce housing in your communities. Anyone interested in the production and preservation of affordable housing and wants to learn more about our programs is encouraged to attend.

Regional partners will be part of the conversation – discussing their experiences with accessing Virginia Housing resources to support local housing initiatives. Bring your questions and learn how we can work together to help your community thrive.

Detailed session information for each event can be found in the registration links provided below. Register soon! Seating is limited; however, you may attend more than one session. Session registration is now open: <https://conta.cc/3Xn7ejQ!>

- [Norfolk](#) - July 25
- [Woodbridge](#) - July 27
- [Richmond](#) - August 22



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We're excited to see you in Travis County this July representing your county at the NACo Annual Conference. As you review the conference schedule and plan your time in Austin, I hope you'll explore the five content themes this year -- one of which is LEADERSHIP.

As a benefit to your county and a thank-you from NACo for traveling to the conference, you have access to a one-time promotion for the **NACo Leadership Academy**. Instead of \$1,995 per participant as the everyday rate, your county can register **5 participants for \$5,000** -- *that's half off!* Please share this offer with your teams, so you can take advantage of the opportunity to invest in your county's leadership skills this year.

NACo Leadership Academy

Who: For current and emerging leaders in county government (officials, directors, and staff are welcome)

What: 12 week virtual course with independent study, peer-group networking, and facilitated discussion

Where: 100% online with approximately 5 hours of flexible weekly time commitment

When: choose from July 31st, September 18th, or future program starts in 2024

Offer: 5 participants for \$5,000 for a limited time - one per county

More information: www.naco.org/skills

We hope you and your county team will join the 7000+ graduates of the NACo Leadership Academy from across the nation. If you've already taken the course, please share this opportunity with others in your county, and don't forget to join the **Graduate Reception** happening on **Friday, July 21, from 5:30pm - 6:30pm on Level 3, Room 9A**.

If you'd like to reserve the offer now, please contact our Academy representative, **Luke Afeman**, at lukea@pdaleadership.com or stop by the Academy table to learn more next month.



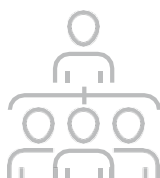
Counties affect the lives of residents every day. When our frontline staff are empowered as leaders, we deliver services more effectively. **The NACo High Performance Leadership Academy is a resource that connects your staff with practical leadership training.** HPLA uses an innovative, interactive online 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.

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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.

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What truly distinguishes OneDigital as a leading **insurance, financial services, and HR consulting advisory firm** is our holistic approach to creating environments that enable people to do their best work and live their best lives. OneDigital understands that counties face rising insurance costs while still struggling to attract/retain talent. This is why we use proprietary software to provide accurate and predictable insurance consulting projections for those core benefits that impact your bottom line and incorporate solutions to improve retention. While voluntary benefits may be the focus of other providers, OneDigital has the expertise in alternative funding strategies, best-in-class analytics, and an in-house actuarial team.

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
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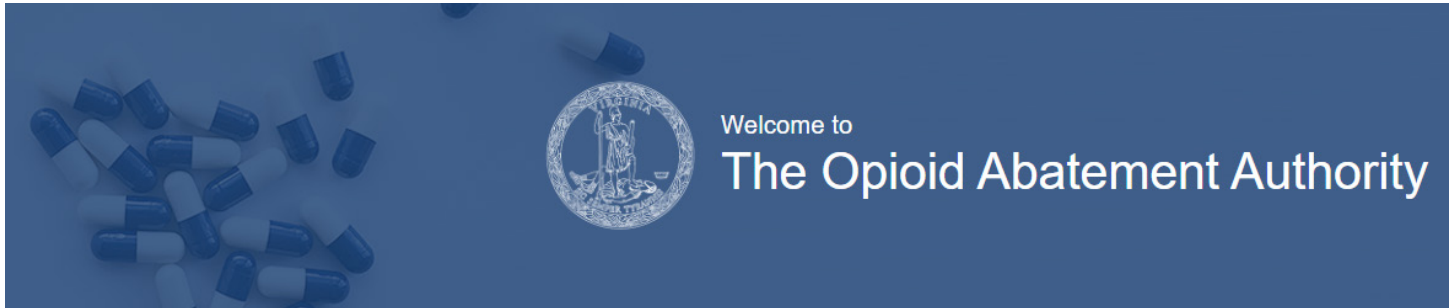
Nationwide Retirement offers free webinars on targeted subjects on an ongoing basis.

Here are just a few topics coming up that may interest you.

**Managing the Taxes on your Retirement Income – July 27
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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.



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.



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Virginia Association of Counties

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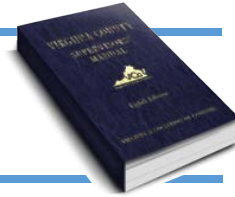


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The Virginia Association of Counties accepts employment ads in a PDF file or a link to a job site. Please include information for applying, and a link to other important information. Please do not fax your employment ad. VACo members are not charged 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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1207 East Main Street | Suite 300
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