

VETERANS DAY

NOV 11, 2025

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SESSION OF THE
91ST ANNUAL
CONFERENCE AS
WE HONOR OUR
VETERANS.**

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FOR THE 91ST
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CONFERENCE!**



VACo Releases Its 2026 Preliminary Legislative Program



VACo has released its [2026 Preliminary Legislative Program](#), which was drafted through VACo's steering committee process. The document includes a host of important and timely proposed policy statements including language pertaining to K-12 education funding, local taxing authority, stormwater regulations, land use planning, transportation, broadband, health and human resources and other local budget and legislative issues.

Click on the link to read the [2026 Preliminary Legislative Program](#).

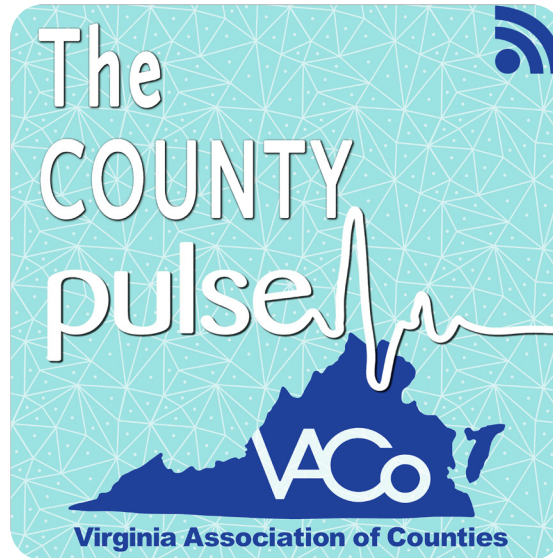
The 2026 Legislative Program will be adopted on November 11 during the Annual Business Meeting at the [VACo Annual Conference](#).

VACo's eight steering committees will finalize and adopt their policy sections on November 9. The Resolutions Committee will ratify the Legislative Program on November 10. VACo's membership will vote to adopt the Final Legislative Program on November 11.

VACo members are encouraged to continue to add their input to this document by working through their county's legislative process and the VACo steering committee process to put forward suggested changes to VACo's 2026 Legislative Program.

For questions regarding VACo's legislative process, contact Dean Lynch at dlynch@vaco.org or 804.343.2511.

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



Energy Landscape of Virginia Series with Joe Lerch

Episode 21 | Managing Virginia's Forest with Biomass Energy Production



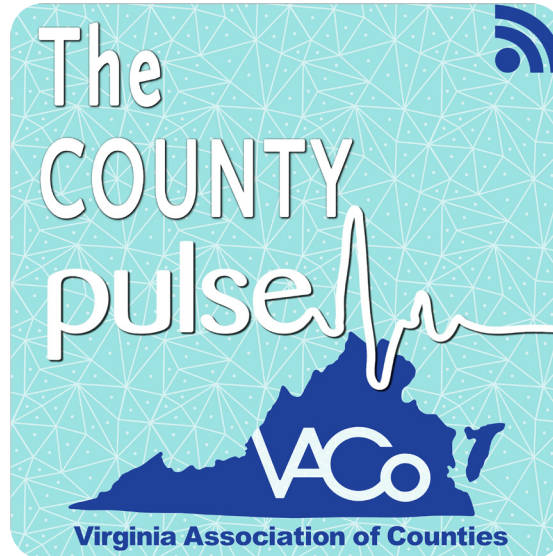
[Listen to the Podcast.](#)

Iscape of Virginia Episode 21 | The Intersection of Forest Management with Biomass Energy. Joe Lerch and James Hutzler visit Rob Farrell, State Forester and Director of the Virginia Department of Forestry, to learn how management of Virginia's oak and hickory forests can be combined with biomass energy production. We also take a tour of a forested plot to learn in depth how effective trees species management can produce a renewable source of energy.

Where to find out more about topics covered in this episode.

- [Report of the Biomass Advisory Panel – December 30, 2024](#) (Virginia Department of Forestry)
- [Hardwood Initiative: Virginia Department of Forestry](#)
- [White Oak Initiative - Ensuring Regeneration of White Oak](#)
- [Pictures of Tree Species](#)

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



Uplifting Our Children Through Education Series with Jeremy R. Bennett

Episode 2 | Gloucester County and School Construction; When A Community Comes Together



[Listen to the Podcast.](#)

Uplifting Our Children Through Education Episode 2 | Gloucester County and School Construction; When a Community Comes Together. In the second installment of the **Uplifting Our Children Through Education** podcast series, VACo's Jeremy R. Bennett sits down with Gloucester County Administrator **Carol Steele** and Deputy County Administrator **Maria Calloway** to explore the county's school construction journey. This episode highlights how Gloucester County successfully aligned vision, funding, and partnerships to deliver modern learning spaces for its students. From securing a local sales tax referendum to navigating planning and community engagement, Steele and Calloway share how collaboration and persistence turned a long-term challenge into a community-wide success story. Listeners will gain insight into how county leadership, strong advocacy, and public support can drive transformative projects that enhance educational opportunities and strengthen long-term community growth. Tune in to hear how Gloucester County's story underscores the importance of education investment, teamwork, and the role of counties in uplifting children through meaningful local action.

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

Photo by Calder Loth



Visit Westmoreland County and the Westmoreland County Historic Courthouse

Location: 15803 Kings Highway / Polk Street

Built: 1900 – 1901

Style: Classical Revival

Architect: Bartholomew Smith Fireproof Construction Company

Contractor: Bartholomew Smith Fireproof Construction Company

Description: The building faces east and is a two story red colored brick structure. The building is located on landscaped grounds in the center of Montross. The east front has a large portico with four tall white colored columns rising to a pediment at the roof line. The recessed door is framed with white colored wood. There is a small balcony on the second story. The building forms a “T” shape with north and south wings. The roof is hipped. The building was remodeled in 1930.

SOURCE: [American Courthouses](#)

91st

VACo ANNUAL CONFERENCE

November 8 – 11, 2025
The Omni Homestead
Bath County

**PRELIMINARY
AGENDA**

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the van for the 2025
Annual Conference!

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How to contact us...



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Lonnie@pierceins.com
Direct Telephone # 252-725-3064



Donna Pierce, Client Relations
Donna@pierceins.com
Direct Telephone # 704-576-0934

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Watch the [Pierce Insurance Video](#) and learn how they can help you save money.

VACo Contact: [Karie Walker](#)



Take Your Leadership Skills to the Next Level Through the NACo Leadership Academy. Now Enrolling for 2026

Counties affect the lives of residents every day. When frontline staff are empowered as leaders, services are delivered more effectively and efficiently. The NACo Leadership Academy provides county teams with practical leadership training tailored to the realities of local government. Using an innovative, interactive online platform, the Academy blends real-time webinars, on-demand learning, and small group discussions—making high-impact training accessible without the need to travel, saving both money and time.

Empowering county government professionals with fundamental, practical leadership skills to deliver results for counties and residents. More than 400 Virginia leaders have now graduated, joining the 15,000+ participants nationwide.

With a curriculum co-developed by the late General Colin Powell and public/private sector leaders, the NACo Leadership Academy gives participants the opportunity to learn from world-class faculty while being supported by expert facilitators.

NACo now offers a suite of leadership programs, equipping local government professionals with diverse skills and insights:

- **High Performance Leadership Academy (HPL)** | 10-week online flagship program – next session, **January 2026 and April 2026**
- **AI Leadership for Government** | 6-week program on navigating AI and digital transformation – next session, **November 2025 and February 2026**

Find out more at [NACo.org/Skills](https://naco.org/Skills) or reach out to Mark Speck to register today!



Mark Speck
mspeck@pdaleadership.com
D: 971-255-5586

Mark joined the Professional Development Academy in 2023 as an Enrollment Director, partnering with the National Association of Counties (NACo) to expand leadership development opportunities for Virginia's local governments. With a background in education, leadership training, and program development, he helps cities and counties maximize growth while navigating budget constraints. He understands the unique challenges facing local leaders and is passionate about equipping teams with the confidence and skills to succeed. Outside of work, Mark enjoys coaching, spending time with his wife and two young daughters, and staying active through sports and the outdoors.



CYBER AWARENESS MONTH

Empower yourself. Protect your county. Lead with confidence.

Ready to take the lead in protecting your county from cyber threats? The NACo Cybersecurity Leadership Academy is your chance to build critical cyber leadership skills — and, during Cybersecurity Awareness Month scholarships from NACo make your enrollment just \$1000!

Claim your scholarship **TODAY!**

naco.org/cyberskills

New Powhatan County Deputy County Administrator of Human Services Hired

Powhatan County is pleased to announce the appointment of Sarah Barnett as the new Deputy County Administrator over Human Services. Barnett brings more than 15 years of experience in local government leadership, with a strong record of expanding community services, overseeing large-scale programs, and supporting staff and residents with compassion and innovation.

Barnett joins Powhatan County from the City of Manassas Park, where she most recently served as Interim Deputy City Manager/Chief Operating Officer and Director of Community Services. In that role, she oversaw Human Resources, Finance, IT, and General Services, while also managing housing, health, emergency management, and economic development. She guided the City's strategic planning process, coordinated emergency management efforts, and worked with community partners to address affordable housing, workforce development, and public health needs.



Earlier in her career, Barnett advanced through the Manassas Park Department of Parks and Recreation, beginning as a part-time lifeguard before moving into roles as Aquatics Manager, Operations Manager, and ultimately senior City leadership. Along the way, she managed multimillion-dollar budgets, directed major facility renovations, expanded aquatic and recreation programming, and developed successful sponsorships and rental initiatives that boosted revenue and community engagement. She also created a mental health program for first responders and found innovative uses for opioid abatement funds to support residents.

Barnett is completing her Master of Public Administration at Syracuse University. She also holds a Graduate Certificate in Local Government Management from Virginia Tech and a Bachelor of Science in Psychology with a minor in Addiction Studies from Saint Vincent College. In addition, she is a Certified Parks and Recreation Professional (CPRP) and a Certified Pool Operator Instructor (CPOI).

"Sarah is a dedicated public servant who has built her career on improving services that directly impact people's daily lives," said Will Hagy, County Administrator. "She has a proven ability to listen, collaborate, and deliver results, and I know she will be a tremendous asset to both our staff and our community."

Barnett said she is honored to begin her service in Powhatan County: "The County's Strategic Vision really aligned with my core values and describes an organization that I am excited to work for. After meeting the County Leadership Team during the panel interview, my excitement about Powhatan County was further reinforced. My family and I are looking forward to relocating to the Powhatan area and immersing ourselves in the community!", said Barnett.

Virginia Board of Education Approves More Flexible Guidelines for School Construction Assistance Program



The Virginia Board of Education ([VBOE](#)) voted at its September 25 [meeting](#) to approve amended [guidelines](#) for the School Construction Assistance Program ([SCAP](#)) for the 2024–2026 biennium, adopting revisions that will expand eligibility, increase flexibility, and improve access for localities seeking state assistance with major school capital projects.

Under the revised guidelines, local school divisions and regional Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs will benefit from more favorable scoring criteria and additional application rounds for the remaining \$170 million in available program funding. This was an important step by the Board to ensure that available funding reaches more communities, especially those facing significant facility challenges.

The School Construction Assistance Program was established by the 2022 General Assembly to provide state grants for new construction, major renovations, and modernization of public-school facilities. The program is funded through the School Construction Fund and administered by the Board of Education on a competitive basis.

Funding for the program continues in the 2024–2026 Appropriation Act, with \$250 million available for FY2025 and an additional \$110 million in FY2026. Awarded funding is based upon 10, 20, or 30 percent of total construction costs for a project, depending on the local school division composite index and the locality fiscal stress category.

The amended guidelines introduce several updates designed to make the program more accessible and equitable:

- **Expanded Eligibility and Project Flexibility:** School divisions and regional Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs can now submit up to three applications per cycle, with the highest scoring project from each division considered first.
- **Updated Scoring Criteria:** The revised guidelines lower certain thresholds and increase point opportunities for factors such as building condition, local poverty levels, and fiscal stress, enabling more localities to reach the 65-point minimum needed to qualify for funding.
- **Encouragement of Innovative Use of Space:** Applications that include school-within-a-school models, microschools, or consolidation of underutilized facilities may receive additional consideration.
- **Expanded CTE Opportunities:** Both school-based and regional CTE programs are now fully eligible, with points available for alignment to high-demand workforce needs and local business partnerships.
- **Improved Accountability and Reporting:** Funded projects must now submit semiannual progress reports detailing expenditures, project status, and anticipated completion timelines.
- **Long-Term Sustainability:** Schools or centers receiving SCAP funding must remain open for at least five years, including in divisions with declining enrollment.

These refinements are intended to ensure that limited state resources reach divisions with the greatest need, while promoting innovation and community collaboration in facility planning.

The Virginia Department of Education will open the next application period in late fall 2025, followed by an additional round in spring 2026 to distribute remaining funds. Applications will continue to be submitted through the Department's Single Sign-On for Web Systems (SSWS) portal.

All eligible school construction and renovation projects must also be entered into the School Building Construction and Renovation (SBCR) database and assigned a project number in compliance with §22.1-140 of the Code of Virginia before construction begins.

VACo's Education Steering [Committee](#) previously discussed the need for greater flexibility in SCAP guidelines, urging the Board to make the program more accessible to counties of all sizes and fiscal capacities. VACo commends the Board's decision, which reflects local input and strengthens the partnership between state and local governments in addressing Virginia's aging school infrastructure.

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

Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services Releases CY 26 Unmanned Aircraft Trade and Replace Program Grant Guidelines



The Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) has received a general fund appropriation to make available one-time grant funding to replace certain unmanned aircraft through the Unmanned Aircraft Trade and Replace Grant Program. Only local first responder agencies in Virginia are eligible for this grant program.

As previously [reported](#), consistent with Appropriation Act [language](#), the unmanned aircraft being replaced through this program are those manufactured by countries designated as a foreign adversary in the Code of Virginia § 55.1-507, with unmanned aircraft manufactured or assembled by a country not covered by section 1822 of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) of 2024. The countries listed in the NDAA as foreign adversaries are the People's Republic of China (including Hong Kong), Cuba, Iran, North Korea, the Russian Federation, and Venezuela. The unmanned aircraft eligible to be replaced by this grant program are only those used by Virginia first responder agencies, including local law enforcement agencies, local fire or ambulance service providers, and other local first responders. The terms "unmanned aircraft" and "drone" as used in the Unmanned Aircraft Trade and Replace Program are interchangeable.

Local law enforcement agencies, local fire or ambulance service providers, or other local first responders are eligible to apply for this grant. This grant program is available to replace only unmanned aircraft currently in use by eligible local Virginia first responder agencies.

Applications must be submitted in the DCJS [Online Grants Management System \(OGMS\)](#) no later than 5:00 p.m. on October 24, 2025. More information on the grant program and the program guidelines can be found [here](#) and [here](#) respectively.

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

Virginia Office of Data Governance and Analytics Hosts Lunch and Learn on Virginia Government Data Collection and Dissemination Practices Act



The [Virginia Office of Data Governance and Analytics](#) is charged in the Virginia Code with ensuring agency, locality, and Virginia college/university compliance with the GDCDPA. To help universities manage GDCDPA compliance, ODGA is [hosting a lunch and learn](#) on December 4th, 2025 to share information about the act and the requirements.

The [Virginia Office of Data Governance and Analytics \(ODGA\)](#) is an office within the Virginia Information Technologies Agency tasked with helping Commonwealth organizations with their data governance, data management, and data sharing. ODGA is beginning a new project regarding Virginia localities and we need your help!

The [Virginia Government Data Collection and Dissemination Practices Act \(GDCDPA\)](#) is a personal data privacy law that is codified in Chapter 38 of Title 2.2 of the Virginia Code. The Act governs how government agencies in Virginia collect, maintain, use, and disseminate personal information about individuals. This Act serves as Virginia's framework for ensuring government accountability and transparency in data handling practices while protecting citizens' privacy rights.

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

Changes to the Aid to Localities Policy: Fire Reporting as a Condition



The Department of Fire Programs (VDFP) has worked over the last few months to craft changes to the Aid to Localities (ATL) Program Policy to ensure compliance with recent [legislation](#) mandating that fire departments report incidents to National Emergency Response Information System (NERIS) to remain eligible for ATL funding. The updated policy with new additions highlighted in yellow can be accessed [here](#). VDFP is seeking feedback from several organizations statewide. VDFP also plans to release this publicly through their newsletter and social media.

The policy requires that VDFP run a compliance report twice a year. If a department is listed as noncompliant, they will be placed on a list provided to localities that cannot receive ATL funds. The onus would be on the locality to withhold funds to departments that appear on the list unless they actually did not run any emergency incidents during the period. If a locality willingly funds a department not in compliance, they would lose all ATL funding for the year.

This policy is expected to be adopted by the [Virginia Fire Services Board](#) on **December 2** at a meeting currently slated to occur in Glen Allen at VDFP Headquarters. After this, it will go through the public guidance document process through Virginia Town Hall and will be subject to further public comment. These changes must go into effect by July 1, 2026.

Please provide feedback to the Government Affairs Division by emailing PolicyOffice@vdfp.virginia.gov by **November 18**.

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

Virginia Fire Services Board Mini-Grant Open



Last week, the Virginia Fire Services Board voted to fund the Mini-Grant Program with a specific priority of addressing firefighter wellness, including the purchase of items such as particulate blocking hoods, gear extractors and exhaust systems.

Please see information below from the VDFP Grants Unit and share with your respective groups/areas:

Application Period: Open

2025 Funding Priorities: Particulate Blocking Hoods, Extractors and Exhaust Systems

Application Period: October 1, 2025 through November 15, 2025

The purpose of this grant program is to enhance fire departments' capabilities by lessening their economic burden. Individual Mini-Grant award amounts shall be decided by the Virginia Fire Services Board based upon need.

The maximum allowable amount of any Mini-Grant shall be \$30,000 per jurisdiction annually. Additional information about this program can be viewed in the Agency Policy document on VDFP website <https://www.vafire.com/grants-and-local-aid/mini-grant-program>.

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

Virginia Opioid Abatement Authority to Host a Webinar on Isaiah 117 House



Many counties have had situations where children had to be separated from their parents, but the local department of social services (DSS) lacked an immediate place for the children, which at times has resulted in children sleeping in local DSS offices while awaiting placement – a very challenging situation for the children as well as the local DSS, juvenile and domestic relations judges, court services units, schools, and other local entities.

Because children in the foster care system are at high risk of developing substance use disorders, the Opioid Abatement Authority (OAA) has determined that it is an allowable use of opioid settlement dollars to fund efforts that reduce trauma for these children and support their placement in healthy family settings.

To that end, the OAA is providing information about a non-profit organization called Isaiah 117 House, which builds houses that are specifically designed to provide a safe and healthy environment for children from the moment they are removed from a home until they can be placed with kinship caregivers or foster parents.

On October 9 from 11:00 to noon, the OAA is hosting a webinar that provides an overview of Isaiah 117 House, and how cities and counties can utilize opioid settlement funds to support more Isaiah 117 Houses. The webinar is a live event, but the OAA will record the session and make the recording and the presentation materials available afterwards for anyone who is interested.

The link to sign up for the webinar is https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_1dX4DPI0QMeEM9QZT4Qw-Q.

VACo Contact: [Katie Boyle](#)

VIRGINIA ENERGY SENSE

VALUE YOUR POWER



No tricks, just energy savings! Unplug your unused electronic devices to avoid inflating your energy bills with **phantom power**.

Nothing is spookier than receiving a mysteriously high energy bill. The scary suspect may be phantom, or “vampire” energy: electricity consumed by devices that are plugged in but not in use.

Energy usage from idle electronics may cost the average U.S. household as much as \$100 a year. You can save money by unplugging devices you’re not using such as computers, printers, TVs, gaming consoles and speakers.

If your county is looking to further your sustainability goals and support your residents, Virginia Energy Sense is here to help.

Virginia Energy Sense operates under the guidance of the State Corporation Commission as Virginia’s only statewide energy-efficiency education program. Our mission is to empower Virginians with the knowledge and tools they need to:



Drain monthly utility costs



Fend off excessive energy usage



Decrease carbon footprint

We know local government plays a powerful role in charging energy-conscious communities. If your department is involved in sustainability, public outreach or utility services, we’d love to discuss how VES can support your mission.

Visit www.virginiaenergysense.org to view our full library of resources. Connect with us directly via email at EnergySense@scc.virginia.gov. Or, call 804-371-9141 to learn more about collaboration opportunities.

Together, we can help Virginians save energy and money. Scan the QR code with your phone’s camera to get started.



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Founded in 2010, Berkley Group is a public sector consulting firm dedicated to providing value-driven, collaborative services to local governments, school systems, and other public agencies. Our team is made up of former public sector professionals who bring deep, practical expertise and firsthand experience in public operations, policy-making, and implementation. We understand the unique challenges public agencies face because we've been there ourselves. This perspective allows us to deliver **responsive, high-quality solutions grounded in real-world knowledge**. Berkley Group understands the public sector because we have worked in it and continue to serve it proudly.

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INTRODUCING A VACo PREMIER PARTNER

Schneider Electric



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to Watch the
Video](#)

As a Premier Partner of the Virginia Association of Counties (VACo), Schneider Electric has proudly served as a trusted energy and infrastructure partner across the Commonwealth since 2001. We specialize in supporting school districts, municipalities, higher education institutions, and state agencies in overcoming budget constraints through strategic capital funding solutions.

Recognized as the #1 ranked Energy Services Company (ESCO) since 2017, Schneider Electric delivers comprehensive infrastructure upgrades through performance contracting. Our approach helps clients tackle deferred maintenance by shifting from reactive fixes to proactive, long-term solutions—building resiliency, modernizing facilities, and generating guaranteed energy savings to fund critical improvements.

Join us for our webinar with VACo, where we'll explore the fundamentals of our business model and share real-world examples of how we've helped communities across Virginia achieve impactful renovations.

Abby Weigel | Account Executive | 804.248.0523 | abby.weigel@se.com

Kevin DeLeon | Account Executive | 804.517.2819 | kevin.deleon@se.com

Website: www.se.com/ww/en/about-us/sustainability/



Let's Make an Impact, Together.

Our projects create best-in-class public sector infrastructure that delivers a healthy, safe, and sustainable future for all.

Why Schneider Electric?

Schneider Electric is a global leader in energy management, public infrastructure, and sustainability. We offer a comprehensive range of services and solutions tailored for state and local governments, school districts, and institutions of higher education.

We help our clients reduce costs, optimize operations, access funding, and build resilient communities. We're dedicated to delivering innovative, sustainable solutions that deliver impact in the public sector.



Delivering Impact in the Public Sector

We deliver more than projects; we develop strategic, long-term infrastructure and sustainability plans that leave a lasting impact on your community.



Modern Critical Infrastructure

Transform outdated infrastructure into modern, efficient spaces designed to meet today's demands and tomorrow's challenges. Our projects can address your deferred maintenance, critical infrastructure, and capital improvement needs with one comprehensive plan. Our master planning approach means we're your one point of contact to design and implement your facility projects and ensure they're done right.

[Learn More](#)



Energy Efficiency and Sustainability

Make your infrastructure work for you. Our projects make your facilities and critical infrastructure more energy efficient, sustainable, and resilient. Our solutions are engineered with the latest software and technology to give you confidence in your facilities' performance for years to come.

[Learn More](#)



Funding

Our projects help overcome your most difficult financial constraints by unlocking unique funding streams like energy and operational savings, grants and incentives, generated revenue and economic impact. We are experts at finding innovative ways to fund infrastructure improvements so you can accomplish more in every project.

[Learn More](#)

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**Guidehouse
INSIGHTS**

**RANKED
#1 ESCO**
By Guidehouse Insights

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“

This project is one that has been years in the making and the BRWA started seeing cost savings before the project was even completed. Rarely is it possible to have a major treatment plant upgrade project that pays for itself with operational savings, let alone a construction project that helps to protect the environment. This project has all that and more.

Brian Key, BRWA Executive Director

”

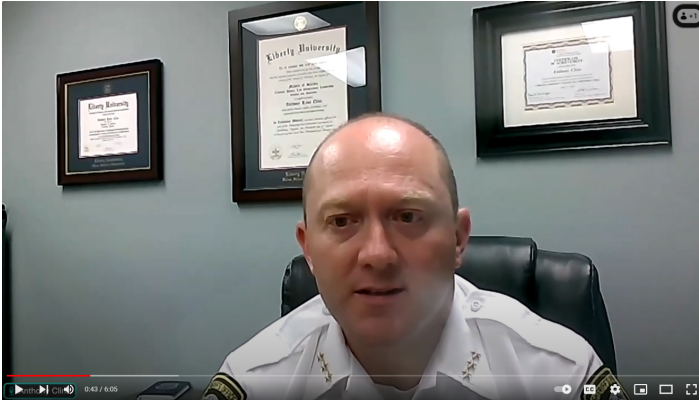


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Thank you Wythe County Chief Deputy [Anthony Cline](#) for sharing your experience with Blue Line Solutions!



Thank you Sussex County Sheriff [Ernest Giles](#) for sharing your experience with Blue Line Solutions!

Premier Partner Spotlight

Blue Line Solutions Testimonials

Blue Line Solutions is making a positive impact on communities all over Virginia. In Smyth County - **Blue Line Solutions** recorded during a five-day period that there were 3,530 vehicles traveling through school speed zones at 10mph or higher above the speed limit. That's over 12,000 speeding vehicles a month during school days.

Blue Line Solutions uses information and communications rather than focus on enforcement to reduce speeds in school zones.

During **Blue Line Solutions** Public Information Phase of its program in Smyth County - the number dropped to 213 over a five-day period. That's without writing one ticket. The community heard the problem and reacted to it. During the warning phase - the number dropped to 175. Then during the enforcement phase - it dropped to 72. That's a 98 percent reduction of speeders compared to before the **Blue Line Solutions** program.

"That's absolutely fantastic that we can make a difference in a community," Blue Line Solutions CEO/Founder Mark Hutchinson said.



Performance Contracting 101 with Schneider Electric

What if upgrading your aging infrastructure didn't mean draining your budget—or your patience? Meet *Performance Contracting (PC)*: the superhero of budget-friendly, energy-efficient solutions.

Here's the scoop: PC allows you to address infrastructure challenges strategically by leveraging future energy savings and significant cost reductions to fund your projects with minimal upfront capital investment.

How Does PC Work?

STEP 1

We start with a deep-dive energy audit.

STEP 2

We identify inefficiencies and craft a plan to fix them with guaranteed savings.

STEP 3

Savings offset costs, enabling upgrades with lower upfront investment.

What's in It for You?



Stress-Free Upgrades

Fix your facilities without tapping into reserves.



Energy Savings

Modernize your systems and save big.



Green Goals, Met

Boost sustainability while creating healthier communities.



As the **#1 Energy Services Company (ESCO)** since 2017 (by Guidehouse Insights), we bring decades of experience and a proven track record partnering with counties nationwide to deliver results.

Curious how PC can work for your county?
Let's discuss your project



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**Thank you
Nationwide for
being a long-time
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Nationwide®
is on your side

VACo long-standing partner Nationwide Retirement Solutions, provides these valuable services:

- 457 and 401(a) Plans
- Roth 457 Account
- Protected Retirement Solutions
- Nationwide Retirement Institute
- Social Security

VACo Executive Director, Dean Lynch, recently sat down with Debbie Turner, Charlie Brennan, Lynn Robinette, and David Bazzell to discuss their expertise in assisting counties with comprehensive savings and retirement programs and what sets Nationwide apart.



You are VAcorp

You are not merely a customer of VAcorp; you **are** VAcorp! We are both owned and governed by you – our members! VAcorp is created under 15.2-2700 of the local government code where all assets and surplus belong to the members. In addition, VAcorp is controlled by a Supervisory Board that is elected from and by our members. The Board determines and approves all major risk pool decisions, and as a voting member, you have a voice in the decisions that matter most.

Know Who You Are

Because you are VAcorp itself, we think it is critical that you understand exactly what VAcorp is and why it exists. Many simply think of us as their “insurance carrier” – writing customized coverages and handling claims when they occur – but we are so much more!

Our History

The Birth of Risk Pools

VAcorp is not an insurance company, but rather a Risk Pool.

Unstable economic conditions in the mid-1980s led to a commercial insurance crisis with ballooning premiums and widespread policy cancellations. As a result, Risk Pools began to form as an alternative to volatile traditional carriers, allowing Pool members to exert more control over their coverages and costs. Today, almost all public sector entities throughout the country get their coverage from Risk Pools rather than from commercial insurance companies.

VAcorp's Origin

VAcorp was founded by a handful of Virginia counties in 1993. The ultimate goals of the program were to provide **cost stability**, the most **comprehensive coverages** possible, and **custom services** tailored specifically to the unique needs of our members. While we are pleased by how well our prices compare against the competition, our goal was never to guarantee the lowest cost. Instead, we promised to avoid the wild price swings that we've seen in other providers and provide stable pricing year after year, and that is exactly what we have delivered. VAcorp rates are actually **lower today in 2024 than they were in 1993!**

VAcorp's Growth

Today, VAcorp is the **largest self-insurance risk pool** for public sector entities in the Commonwealth with a membership retention rate of better than 98%. Over the years, we have expanded beyond counties to include municipalities, school divisions, authorities, volunteer fire & rescue companies, state agencies, and non-profits funded by taxpayer dollars. **Over 560 members** have joined VAcorp, including 8 of the 10 largest counties, 8 of the 10 largest cities, and 8 of the 10 largest school divisions. We believe that the extraordinary success of the program can be attributed to our unwavering commitment to our founding principles.

VAcorp Exists to Serve You

VAcorp was created solely to serve Virginia's public sector entities, and from day one until now, we have never lost sight of that purpose. Because we answer only to our members, every decision is designed to benefit the group over the long haul.

VAcorp advocates for local government through a myriad of partnerships with affiliated associations including: VACo, VSBA, VLGMA, VASS, VFGOA, VASBO, LGA, Regional Jail Association, PDC, etc. While there is a cost associated with these partnerships, they add value to the group by aiding in our ability to lobby the General Assembly on behalf of our members.

You may not always see the immediate payoff, but every VAcorp decision is made in alignment with our vision to serve our members and promote the health and longevity of your program.

Take a look at a few of VAcorp's milestones over the years:

- **1993** - VAcorp is established with 12 founding members and less than \$700,000 in annual contribution.
- **1998** - VAcorp terminates service contract with claims administration vendor and hires staff to promote more control and efficiency.
- **1999** - VAcorp offers coverage to K-12 Public Schools across the Commonwealth.
- **2001** - VAcorp begins offering Public Officials Liability coverage in response to VARisk offering limited coverage.
- **2004** - VAcorp begins providing Environmental Liability coverage to all members at no additional cost. Even in 2024, VAcorp is the only provider offering this coverage with a low \$25,000 deductible. Other providers offer this coverage with a \$250,000 deductible.
- **2008** - VAcorp responded to the great recession by freezing rates and providing financial relief with over \$8,000,000 in dividends to members.
- **2011** - VAcorp introduces Line of Duty Act (LODA) coverage, creates the only LODA trust in the state, and absorbs existing LODA losses in response to the state pushing this cost to the local level. VAcorp paid all of its members' 2010 past liability for over \$1,000,000.
- **2013** - VAcorp merges with the VSBA Self-Insurance Group and assumes their liabilities to prevent School Boards from being assessed. This action saves Local Governments in excess of \$5,000,000.
- **2013** - VAcorp becomes the first to offer Cyber Risk coverage in Virginia offering the broadest coverage available to local governments anywhere in the US.
- **2016** - VAcorp offers Student Accident and Catastrophic Accident coverage in order to fill VHSL coverage gaps.
- **2020** - VAcorp provides over \$5,000,000 in rate credits during the COVID pandemic to assist members.
- **2023** - VAcorp includes security risk management coverage (active shooter) for all members (coverage has been included for Schools since 2013).





Equipment Lease-Purchase Financing

Equipment Lease-Purchase Financing is a great tool to make your locality's and school division's budget go further!

Contact us for details.

VML/VACo Equipment Lease-Purchase Financing offers:

- Competitive rates and low closing costs.
- Predictable and level payments.
- Lease terms up to the expected life of the equipment.
- Streamlined process – we handle the details for you.

Budget less in the current year by spreading payments out over the useful life of the equipment – perfect for school buses, fire engines, and police cars.

CONTACT US TODAY

Questions?

Contact Steve Mulroy
804-648-0635

[**smulroy@valocalfinance.org**](mailto:smulroy@valocalfinance.org)





OneDigital is thrilled to be one of VACo's Premier Partners.

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.



OUR SOLUTIONS FOR EMPLOYERS

MANAGE

Talent Planning
Recruiting
Development & Training

SUPPORT

Benefits & Compensation
Total Wellbeing
Productivity
Retirement Readiness

ENGAGE

Culture
Education & Fiduciary
Literacy
Communications

PROTECT

Compliance
Workplace Safety
Operational Continuity
Cyber Security



Ritter Jonas
Senior Business Development Executive
804.393.2122 | rjonas@onedigital.com



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.



The VA250 Mobile Museum: A Classroom on Wheels

Get ready to bring Virginia's history to life! The VA250 Mobile Museum Experience, a hands-on, interactive, and immersive museum on wheels, is coming early 2025. This unique experience will transport students back in time, exploring key stories from every region of the state.

Perfect for:

- **Schools:** Enhance your curriculum with a memorable field trip.
- **Community organizations:** Host a unique event for all ages.
- **Local festivals:** Attract visitors with a fascinating historical exhibit.

Book the museum for your school or community event today! Visit [the VA250 website](#) for more information and to schedule a visit.



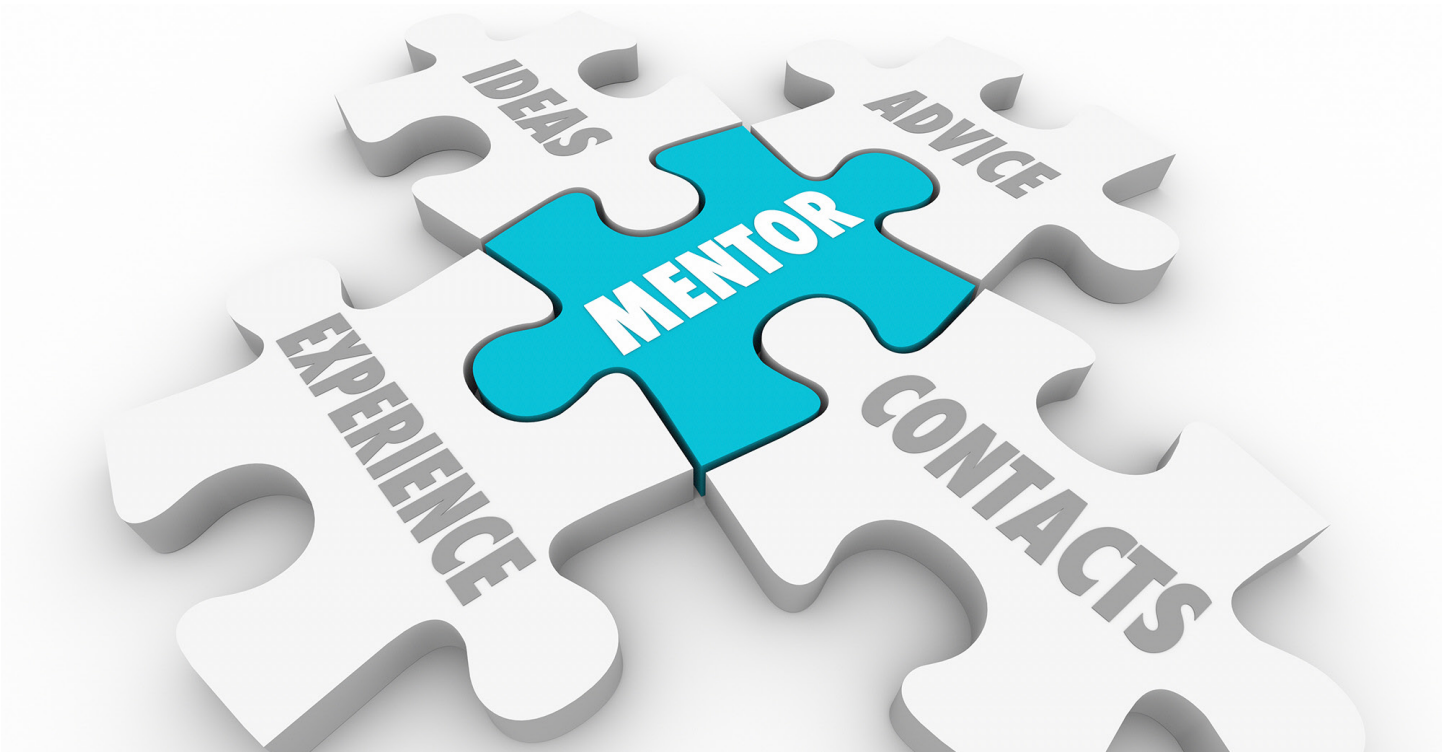
Get your VA250 license plates - now available

Are you ready to show your pride in America's 250th anniversary? The VA250 commemorative license plate is now available for purchase! As a symbol of our nation's rich history and bright future, this limited-edition license plate offers a unique opportunity to drive with a piece of history.

By purchasing a VA250 license plate, you're not only adding a stylish touch to your vehicle, but you're also supporting a worthy cause. A portion of the proceeds from each plate sold will be donated directly to VA250, a non-profit organization dedicated to creating educational programs, events, and exhibits to commemorate America's 250th anniversary.

Don't miss out on this opportunity to own a piece of history and support a great cause. [Visit the Virginia DMV website](#) to purchase your VA250 license plate today.

VACo Seeks to Create Mentorship Program for Supervisors



Dear Members/County Administrators...

VACo is blessed to have many smart and experienced Supervisors. This year we welcomed a slew of newly elected Supervisors, some of whom have expressed interest in being mentored. VACo thrives when Supervisors connect and share experiences and challenges. Therefore, we would like to establish an informal, voluntary mentoring program to offer opportunities for personalized connections among Supervisors.

If you are interested in being a mentor or being connected with a mentor, please contact Karie Walker, kwalker@vaco.org or 804-343-2504.

We look forward to hearing from you!

Sincerely,

Karie Walker
Director of Programs and Development
Virginia Association of Counties

Virginia County Supervisors' Manual 8th Edition



Eighth Edition 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.

ORDER YOUR ALL-NEW VOLUME NOW

ORDER FORM

NAME: _____ TITLE: _____

COUNTY (OR ORGANIZATION): _____

SHIPPING ADDRESS: _____

CITY / STATE / ZIP: _____

PHONE: _____ EMAIL: _____

PAYMENT INFORMATION

Manuals are \$75 for VACo Members. Manuals are \$150 for Non Members.

Number of Copies _____.

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

If you are paying by credit card, an invoice will be sent you.

Mail completed form to:

Virginia Association of Counties
1207 East Main Street, Suite 300
Richmond, VA 23219-3627

Or FAX form to 804.788.0083 Questions? Call

804.343.2507



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](#).

[GENERAL COUNSEL](#) | Virginia Association of Counties | Posted October 6

[MEDIUM HEAVY TRUCK TECHNICIAN](#) | Chesterfield County | Posted October 6

[SENIOR ENGINEER \(PART-TIME\)](#) | Chesterfield County | Posted October 6

[ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER](#) | City of Charlottesville | Posted October 6

[EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES](#) | Spotsylvania County | Posted October 6

[HUMAN RESOURCES GENERALIST](#) | Fluvanna County | Posted October 6

[EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT GENERALIST](#) | Fluvanna County | Posted October 6

[EMT BASIC LIFE SUPPORT \(BLS\) FULL & PART-TIME POSITIONS](#) | Fluvanna County | Posted October 6

[EMT ADVANCED LIFE SUPPORT \(ALS\) FULL & PART-TIME POSITIONS](#) | Fluvanna County | Posted October 6

[EQUIPMENT & FLEET MAINTENANCE TECHNICIAN \(MECHANIC\)](#) | Fluvanna County | Posted October 6

[HVAC SPECIALIST](#) | Fluvanna County | Posted October 6

[COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER I \(NO EMD CERTIFICATION\) & COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER II \(EMD CERTIFICATION\)](#) | Fluvanna County | Posted October 6

[PART-TIME SEPUTY SHERIFF – COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE](#) | Fluvanna County | Posted October 6

[DEPUTY SHERIFF – COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE](#) | Fluvanna County | Posted October 6

[PART-TIME FACILITIES ASSISTANT/ SENIOR CENTER REC AIDE](#) | Fluvanna County | Posted October 6

[DEPUTY REGISTRAR](#) | Fluvanna County | Posted October 6

[HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR](#) | Fluvanna County | Posted October 6

[DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT](#) | Chesterfield County | Posted October 6

[MHSS EMPLOYMENT SPECIALIST \(JOB COACH\)](#) | Chesterfield County | Posted October 6

[MENTAL HEALTH CASE MANAGER – YOUTH & FAMILY](#) | Chesterfield County | Posted October 6

[CLINICIAN \(DUAL TREATMENT TRACK\)](#) | Chesterfield County | Posted October 6

[CITY ATTORNEY](#) | City of Franklin | Posted October 6

[CITY MANAGER](#) | City of Franklin | Posted October 6

[FAMILY SERVICES SPECIALIST](#) | Montgomery County | Posted October 2

[DIRECTOR OF FINANCE](#) | Colonial Behavioral Health | Posted October 2

[SENIOR ASSISTANT COUNTY ATTORNEY](#) | Chesterfield County | Posted October 1

[EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COORDINATOR](#) | Patrick County | Posted September 30

[REGISTERED NURSE SUPERVISOR \(GALLOWAY GROUP HOME\)](#) | Chesterfield County | Posted September 30

[PEER RECOVERY SPECIALIST](#) | Chesterfield County | Posted September 30

[MHSS EMPLOYMENT SPECIALIST \(JOB COACH\) \(WHITE PINE\)](#) | Chesterfield County | Posted September 30

[VAN DRIVER](#) | Chesterfield County | Posted September 30

[PRINCIPAL PLANT OPERATOR – MAINTENANCE](#) | Chesterfield County | Posted September 30

[PRINCIPAL PLANT OPERATOR \(DAY SHIFT\)](#) | Chesterfield County | Posted September 30

[PRINCIPAL ENGINEER](#) | Chesterfield County | Posted September 30

[EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES](#) | Spotsylvania County | Posted September 29

[EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES](#) | Fauquier County | Posted September 29

[ZONING PERMITS MANAGER](#) | Loudoun County | Posted September 29

[WASTE MANAGEMENT OPERATOR/ CLERK \(PT & FT\)](#) | Botetourt County | Posted September 26

[DEPUTY CLERK II](#) | Campbell County | Posted September 26

[ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF UTILITIES, FISCAL ADMINISTRATION & CUSTOMER SERVICE](#) | Town of Leesburg | Posted September 26

[ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF UTILITY SERVICES](#) | Isle of Wight County
| Posted September 25

[SCHOOL BUS TECHNICIAN \(MONDAY-THURSDAY: 12:30PM-11:00PM\)](#) | Chesterfield County | Posted September 25

[EMERGENCY VEHICLE TECHNICIAN](#) | Chesterfield County | Posted September 25

[SENIOR ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNER](#) | Caroline County | Posted September 23

[COUNTY ATTORNEY](#) | Prince George County | Posted September 23

[PLANNER](#) | Town of Middleburg
| Posted September 23

[PRINCIPAL PLANT OPERATOR \(NIGHT SHIFT\)](#) | Chesterfield County | Posted September 23

[MHSS EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANT \(Part-time\)](#) | Chesterfield County
| Posted September 22

[ACT PEER RECOVERY SPECIALIST](#) | Chesterfield County | Posted September 22

[SENIOR ACCOUNTING TECHNICIAN \(MEDICAL BILLING SPECIALIST\)](#) | Chesterfield County | Posted September 22

[RESIDENTIAL AIDE \(RIDGE RUN\)](#) | Chesterfield County | Posted September 22

[RESIDENTIAL COUNSELOR](#) | Chesterfield County | Posted September 22

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| Posted September 22

[HEAVY EQUIPMENT OPERATOR \(ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEERING\)](#) | Chesterfield County | Posted September 22

[VAN DRIVER/CHESTER HOUSE](#) | Chesterfield County | Posted September 22

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[COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR](#) | Middlesex County | Posted September 22

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[CLIMATE ACTION PROJECT MANAGER](#) | Albemarle County
| Posted September 22

[HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR](#) | Fluvanna County | Posted September 17

[AIRPORT MANAGER](#) | New Kent County | Posted September 17

[EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS RADIO SYSTEM TECHNICIAN](#) | Botetourt County | Posted September 16

[RESIDENTIAL COUNSELOR \(WOODPECKER\)](#) | Chesterfield County | Posted September 16

[SENIOR CLINICIAN - BFOQ - BILINGUAL \(ENGLISH & SPANISH\)](#) | Chesterfield County | Posted September 16

[SENIOR CLINICIAN \(PREVENTION SERVICES\)](#) | Chesterfield County
| Posted September 16

[UTILITY WORKER I - WASTEWATER COLLECTIONS](#) | Chesterfield County
| Posted September 15

[PRINCIPAL ENGINEER \(UTILITIES\)](#) | Chesterfield County | Posted September 15

[EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES](#) | King George County | Posted September 15

[ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SPECIALIST](#) | King George County
| Posted September 15

[ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MANAGER](#) | King George County
| Posted September 15

[DIRECTOR OF FINANCE](#) | Westmoreland County | Posted September 15

[EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR - ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY](#) | Henrico County | Posted September 15

[EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES](#) | Spotsylvania County | Posted September 15

[ACCOUNTS PAYABLE CLERK](#) | Northumberland County | Posted September 15

[PAYROLL CLERK & BENEFITS ADMINISTRATOR](#) | Northumberland County | Posted September 15

[DIRECTOR OF FINANCE](#) | Northumberland County | Posted September 15

[EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES](#) | King William County | Posted September 15

[LANDFILL OPERATIONS MANAGER](#) | Shenandoah County | Posted September 11

[SECTION CHIEF, TRANSPORTATION DESIGN DIVISION \(ENGINEER V\)](#) | Fairfax County | Posted September 11

[EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES](#) | Hanover County - Pamunkey Regional Jail | Posted September 11

[SENIOR EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT \(ON-SITE\)](#) | Virginia Housing | Posted September 11

[SENIOR CLINICIAN \(RECOVERY COURT\)](#) | Chesterfield County
| Posted September 11

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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Ruth Larson
James City County



President-Elect
Victor S. Angry
Prince William County



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Director of Programs and Development | Karie Walker, CAE

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

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