



## **VACAP NEWS**

July 2024

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### **Plan now to Attend VACAP's Summit: October 22-24 in Richmond**

Plan to join your peers and statewide leaders that partner with Community Action on October 22-24 at the 2024 VACAP Summit. This event will bring you the latest professional development and networking opportunities with Community Action's key funders. We will celebrate 60 years of Community Action! Plan for a full day on October 22 and half day on October 23 with the VACAP Board meeting taking place immediately after the conference ends on October 23. An optional racial equity tour will take place on October 24. The VACAP Summit will take place in Richmond at the Virginia Department of Social Services brand new headquarters in Glen Allen. This very close to the Virginia Housing Center where the event took place last year.

We do not have a conference hotel so book your hotel now. A list of nearby hotels is found below. The draft agenda and registration details will come out in the weeks ahead.

Questions: Contact [info@vacap.org](mailto:info@vacap.org)

### **Nearby hotels**

Short Pump (West) – closest hotels to 2024 VACAP Summit on Cox Road

- [Hyatt House Richmond](#), 11800 W Broad St #1098, 804-360-7021
- [Drury Plaza Hotel](#), 11049 W. Broad St. Glen Allen VA, 804-354-1542
- [Wingate by Wyndham](#), 13991 N. Gayton Rd., 804-381-0028
- [Hilton Richmond- Short Pump](#), 12042 West Broad Street, 804-364-3600
- [Hilton Garden Inn- Innsbrook](#), 4050 Cox Road, 804-521-2900
- [Hampton Inn Richmond-West](#), 10800 West Broad St., Innsbrook Corp Ctr, Glen Allen, 855-271-3622
- [Holiday Inn Express Richmond NW](#), 9933 Mayland Drive, 804-934-9300
- [Fairfield Inn & Suites, Richmond NW](#), 9937 Mayland Drive, 804-545-4200

### **Governor Appoints James Williams as Commissioner of VDSS**

Governor Youngkin announced on July 19 that he has appointed James Williams as Commissioner of the Virginia Department of Social Services. VACAP congratulates Commissioner Williams and especially appreciates his focus on economic mobility. During his brief time at VDSS he has already met with VACAP's board leadership and attended a site visit at THRIVE Virginia where he learned from the agency's leadership, whole family coaches and a program graduate.

### **VDSS Applications for Cooling Assistance are open until August 15, 2024**

The Virginia Department of Social Services is accepting applications from June 15 through August 15.

Assistance Available:

- Air conditioning unit (window) - purchase and install
- Air conditioning unit (central) - repair air conditioning unit or heat pump
- Electric bill - operate cooling equipment
- Security deposit - primary electric expense

Eligibility Requirements

- The household applying must be responsible for cooling costs
- The household must include one vulnerable individual age 60 or older, an individual living with a disability, or a child under age six

How to Apply

- Option 1: Screen for eligibility and/or apply online through [CommonHelp](https://commonhelp.virginia.gov/access/)
  - <https://commonhelp.virginia.gov/access/>
- Option 2: Call the Enterprise Customer Service Center at 855-635-4370 Monday - Friday 7 a.m. - 6 p.m. to apply by phone.
- Option 3: Submit an application manually. Complete the appropriate application and return it to local department of social services

More information including additional eligibility, copies of English and Spanish application and more: [https://www.dss.virginia.gov/benefit/ea/?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMTEAAAR2Q3crr-CV9V0RQPxx8ggjN9qxxM2AcmZSrhJPjkEIz6HUn\\_pCLRXXNu5bQ\\_aem\\_Yhj5quiNf7kFPNnTuj\\_yhTw](https://www.dss.virginia.gov/benefit/ea/?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMTEAAAR2Q3crr-CV9V0RQPxx8ggjN9qxxM2AcmZSrhJPjkEIz6HUn_pCLRXXNu5bQ_aem_Yhj5quiNf7kFPNnTuj_yhTw)

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## **Member News**

Public CAP members from the **City of Alexandria, Arlington County, and Fairfax County** as part of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) received \$3.5 million as a region, to improve access to affordable housing in metropolitan Washington, as part of the Pathways to Removing Obstacles to Housing (PRO Housing) grant program. With this funding, COG and its member jurisdictions will be able to build on bold actions the region has undertaken to address systemic barriers to production and equitable access to affordable housing. <https://www.mwcog.org/newsroom/2024/06/26/dc-region-receives-historic-hud-investment-in-affordable-housing/>

### **Community Action Partnership of Staunton, Augusta, and Waynesboro (CAPSAW)**

successfully held their second annual Staunton Augusta and Waynesboro Housing Summit along with other partners. Check out the impact of a homelessness shelter in Staunton and Continuum of Care team that helped a client into affordable housing. [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1xCaDIXNQmbP07u9UhgSc97GK9GxpEpz\\_/view?ts=667b36ad](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1xCaDIXNQmbP07u9UhgSc97GK9GxpEpz_/view?ts=667b36ad)

After almost 60 years of dark colors, mountains, and roofs, **Rooftop of Virginia CAP** received a fresh, new look. Work began with consultants last year to create new foundational messages like the mission, vision, and values as well as branding. The entire RTOV team (staff and board), partners, and the community-at-large came together to create the messaging for how the agency is now and for where they are heading. The new foundations on which the agency works is a better, newer reflection of how RTOV creates change and growth within the counties of Carroll and Grayson and the city of Galax.



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## **Goodreads and Newsworthy Updates**

### **From cocktails to broadband, here are some of the new laws that take effect this week in Virginia**

By Markus Schmidt  
Cardinal News

As Virginia ushers in the second half of the year, a wave of new laws takes effect July 1, impacting various aspects of life for residents across the state.

[https://cardinalnews.org/2024/07/01/from-cocktails-to-broadband-here-are-some-of-the-new-laws-that-take-effect-this-week-in-virginia/?utm\\_source=ActiveCampaign&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_content=Losing%20candidate%20in%20Lynchburg%20Republican%20primary%20for%20council%20files%20suit%20to%20invalidate%20election&utm\\_campaign=Monday%2C%20July%201%2C%202024](https://cardinalnews.org/2024/07/01/from-cocktails-to-broadband-here-are-some-of-the-new-laws-that-take-effect-this-week-in-virginia/?utm_source=ActiveCampaign&utm_medium=email&utm_content=Losing%20candidate%20in%20Lynchburg%20Republican%20primary%20for%20council%20files%20suit%20to%20invalidate%20election&utm_campaign=Monday%2C%20July%201%2C%202024)

### **New Rules for Utilities & Customer Shut-Offs**

By Virginia Poverty Law Center

Check out this page for updates on utilities. Utility providers cannot shut off service for unpaid bills during certain unsafe periods and utilities have to notify customers within 10 days before shutting off service during safe periods. Learn more:

<https://vplc.org/new-rules-for-utilities-customer-shut-offs/?eType=EmailBlastContent&eId=63566a73-5c36-4a73-9b1b-6906baeecd16>

### **Governor Youngkin Recommends 13 Projects for Appalachian Regional Commission Funding, Totaling \$7.4 Million**

Governor Glenn Youngkin today announced 13 projects for funding by the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), totaling \$7.4 million in grants. Check out the link for a full list of projects in the region:

<https://www.governor.virginia.gov/newsroom/news-releases/2024/july/name-1030538-en.html>

### **Governor Youngkin Announces Over \$22 Million in Affordable and Special Needs Housing Loans**

Governor Glenn Youngkin announced today more than \$22 million in Affordable and Special Needs Housing loans for 14 projects across the Commonwealth. The recommended projects will create and preserve 877 total units for low-income and extremely low-income households.

<https://www.governor.virginia.gov/newsroom/news-releases/2024/july/name-1030651-en.html>

### **Dems in Va.: Allow 'direct file'**

By Michael Martz

Richmond Times Dispatch

Democrats in Virginia's congressional delegation urged Gov. Glenn Youngkin on Wednesday to give state taxpayers the option of filing their tax returns through a new "Direct File" program that the IRS offers to save them money.

[https://richmond.com/dems-in-va-allow-direct-file/article\\_64801f07-b104-5759-ad4e-79a280223fcb.html?utm\\_medium=social&utm\\_source=email&utm\\_campaign=user-share](https://richmond.com/dems-in-va-allow-direct-file/article_64801f07-b104-5759-ad4e-79a280223fcb.html?utm_medium=social&utm_source=email&utm_campaign=user-share)

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### **Free Digital Equity Upskills Training Offered by Verizon**

The Verizon Skill Forward program is a collaboration between edX and Verizon aimed at providing career-enhancing online courses focused on high-demand skills to facilitate long-term career growth. The Skill Forward effort is part of Citizen Verizon, Verizon's responsible business plan to prepare 500,000 individuals for in-demand jobs by 2030.

Skill Forward is free for any participant during the 12 months with the program.

More information here: [https://partnerships.edx.org/verizon?&utm\\_source=vsf\\_v\\_digital-inclusion-org](https://partnerships.edx.org/verizon?&utm_source=vsf_v_digital-inclusion-org)

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## **RPIC Regional Webinars - Finance Staff Opportunities in July & August**

For the second year, Virginia is partnering with our Region III counterparts in Pennsylvania, Maryland, West Virginia, D.C., and Delaware to provide webinars on a variety of subjects. These trainings will occur twice a month and be attended by Community Action Agency staff from multiple states. Here are some upcoming regional webinars:

7/25/24 @2:00pm Cost Allocation Recovering Agency-wide Admin Costs, & Indirect Rates: A Deeper Drive (RECORDING AVAILABLE)

<https://members.thecaap.org/ap/Events/Register/EqFwJ7wFgC6C9>

8/8/24 @ 2:00pm CAA Financial Management Challenges and Strategies

<https://communityactionassociationofpennsylvania.growthzoneapp.com/ap/Events/Register/mP71vgmr?mode=Attendee>

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## **Virginia Opioid Abatement Authority Grant Workshops**

The VOAA will provide three regional workshops with strategies and best practices for the use of opioid settlement funds to abate and remediate the opioid epidemic at the community level. This workshop is specifically designed for city and county officials who are charged with developing plans (and budgets) for the use of these opioid funds. They are limiting attendance to government and non-profit organizations. Continental breakfast and lunch provided. There is a \$25 registration fee.

September 5, 2024 8:00am-4:45pm: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/5-sep-2024-voaa-workshop-tickets-883325288717?aff=oddttdcreator>

October 10, 2024 8:00am-4:45pm: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/5-sep-2024-voaa-workshop-tickets-883325288717?aff=oddttdcreator>

Click here to look up Estimated Settlement Funds headed to the localities that you serve:

<https://voaa.us21.list-manage.com/track/click?u=ab6ebb4365c7aa5f49f0ed734&id=483084bf56&e=eb5ada8bcd>

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## **Important Updates to FOIA Law**

Below, please find bills passed during the 2024 legislative session that amend the FOIA section of the Code of Virginia and went into effect on July 1, 2024. These provisions apply to electronic participation of publicly held meetings.

**HB 818 and SB 36 Virginia Freedom of Information Act; definitions of meetings and public business:** Exempt certain public meetings from the definition of "meeting" under FOIA to clarify

that three or more members of a public body may appear and participate in such public meeting without violating FOIA, provided that no public business is transacted or discussed. The bills also exempt members of a public body who attend a public meeting of a second public body without violating FOIA, provided that no public business is transacted or discussed. Finally, the bills define "public business" as activity that a public body has undertaken or proposed to undertake on behalf of the people it represents. The bills state that their provisions are declarative of existing law (2024 Acts of Assembly, cc. 733 and 756).

**HB 1040 and SB 85 Virginia Freedom of Information Act; definition of "caregiver":** remote participation in meetings by persons with disabilities and caregivers; remote voting. Provide that for purposes of determining whether a quorum is physically assembled, an individual member of a public body who is a person with a disability or a caregiver, defined in the bills, and uses remote participation counts toward the quorum as if the individual was physically present. The bills also provide that the participation policy adopted by a public body, as required by FOIA, shall not prohibit or restrict any individual member of a public body who is participating in an all-virtual meeting or who is using remote participation from voting on matters before the public body. As introduced, the bills were a recommendation of the Council (2024 Acts of Assembly, cc. 610 and 617).

Relevant Code Section: § 2.2-3701. Definitions.

**HB 894 and SB 734 Virginia Freedom of Information Act; electronic meetings:** Amend the number of all-virtual public meetings that public bodies, with certain exceptions, may convene in a calendar year to no more than two times per calendar year or 50 percent of the meetings held per calendar year rounded up to the next whole number, whichever is greater. Current law limits the number of all-virtual public meetings to no more than two times per calendar year or 25 percent of the meetings held per calendar year rounded up to the next whole number, whichever is greater. The bills also provide that with respect to all-virtual public meetings, when audio-visual 6 technology is available, a member of a public body shall, for purposes of a quorum, be considered absent from any portion of the meeting during which visual communication with the member is voluntarily disconnected or otherwise fails or during which audio communication involuntarily fails (2024 Acts of Assembly, cc. 56 and 129).

Relevant Code section: § 2.2-3708.3 Meetings held through electronic communication means; situations other than declared states of emergency.

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