**Virginia CASH Campaign**

**EITC Initiative**

**2024-2025 Earned Income Tax Credit**

**Grant Application**

***Name of Grant Program:*** Virginia CASH Campaign EITC Initiative

***Source of Funds:*** Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Block Grant

***Language:*** Virginia General Assembly appropriated $635,725 in FY 2025 to Virginia Community Action Partnership (VACAP). [Item 331 A.2 states](https://budget.lis.virginia.gov/item/2024/2/HB6001/Chapter/1/331/): “Out of this appropriation, $635,725 the first year and $635,725 the second year from the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant shall be provided to contract with the Virginia Community Action Partnership to provide outreach, education and tax preparation services via the Virginia Earned Income Tax Coalition and other community non-profit organizations to citizens who may be eligible for the federal Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). The contract shall require the Virginia Community Action Partnership to report on its efforts to expand the number of Virginians who are able to claim the federal EITC, including the number of individuals identified who could benefit from the credit, the number of individuals counseled on the availability of federal EITC and the number of individuals assisted with tax preparation to claim the federal EITC. The annual report from the Virginia Community Action Partnership shall also detail actual expenditures for the program including the sub-contractors that were utilized. This report shall be provided to the Governor and the Chairmen of the House Appropriations and Senate Finance and Appropriations Committees by December 1 each year.

***Eligible Grant Recipients:*** Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) partners in Virginia providing traditional VITA, Virtual VITA or Facilitated Self-Assistance delivery models. Organizations that qualify as a nonprofit (501c), state or local government, or regional or local coalitions that provide outreach, education and free income tax preparation services to clients who may be eligible for TANF, federal Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and the Child Tax Credit (CTC) or the Virginia EITC, which is refundable. A current W-9 must be submitted with the application.

***Requirements and Objectives:*** Tax preparation services should focus on serving TANF, EITC and CTC eligible recipients, expanding services, increasing capacity and quality control, improving accuracy of returns and volunteer recruitment, training and management. Grant recipients are expected to show increases in return preparation each year. Please be brief, clear and concise and comment on all items with detail and specificity in the application.

**Completed applications for funding must reflect compliance with Internal Revenue Service (IRS) regulations for VITA sites providing free tax preparation services (refer to IRS Publications 5683, Handbook for Partners and Site Coordinators, Pub. 4012, Volunteer Resource Guide). If you receive a federal IRS VITA grant, you should already be complying with regulations provided in Publication 4671.**

Models of tax preparation have changed and your delivery methods, clients, volunteers, and expectations may change. Consider how you will reach clients with each method and how you will support different delivery methods. If your planned tax season activities or your method of operation changes prior to or during the tax season, you may amend your application. It is strongly recommended that someone from the coalition participate in the Virginia CASH Campaign VITA chats. Someone from your VITA program should be present for IRS SPEC Watercooler chats and webcasts.

All coalitions are asked to use the Virginia CASH Campaign logo in conjunction with their free tax preparation programs. Coalitions are encouraged to engage other community partners in providing financial empowerment and other asset-building initiatives. Data capture is essential for reporting all VITA activities and reports should be submitted in a timely manner. VACAP encourages coalitions to invite local elected officials and community funders to their VITA site so they can see first-hand how the free tax program positively impacts the community and that the appropriated funds are being used wisely.

***EITC/CTC/TANF:* Funding for VACAP’s EITC grant comes from the General Assembly Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) Block Grant. The focus of your outreach campaign should be on assisting clients who may be eligible for EITC, CTC and TANF. While the income limits and the number of children in the home vary for every client, the impact and importance of filing for these credits for your VITA clients ensures that your VITA service is serving the low-moderate income people in your communities who are eligible for these credits. Outreach should also highlight the Virginia Earned Income Tax Credit as an income tax credit that is equal to 15% of the federal EITC and is refundable.**

**To continue receiving TANF funding for the grant you should ensure that you are serving TANF eligible clients with the VACAP grant. Ask/answer/track these two questions and answers on your data sheet. *Does the taxpayer have a child or children under 18 in the home? Does their income fall below 200% of poverty?* Poverty guidelines for 2024 are** [**here**](https://aspe.hhs.gov/topics/poverty-economic-mobility/poverty-guidelines)**. 2025 guidelines will be published in early 2025.**

***Grant Awards:*** If you are a prior grantee, your application should indicate a clear plan of how you plan to serve additional clients. Are you piloting new ideas? Are you adding a new county/area to your existing service area or opening additional VITA sites? Please keep in mind that poorly prepared, incomplete or late reports will have a negative impact on future funding.

***Application Deadline:*** VACAP will post the application to the [website](https://www.vacap.org/grants/) on **October 1, 2024**. Carolyn Spohrer will host **Zoom office hours on October 16, 2024** **from 9:00 AM – to 11:00 AM** to review the application process, answer questions and meet with grantees seeking additional guidance. There will be additional time for grant discussion at the Virginia CASH Campaign Fall Classic on **October 22, 2024**. Applications must be received on or before **November 4, 2024.** Carefully proofread your application before submitting it. Please submit completed application in PDF format to Carolyn Spohrer via email at cspohrer@vacap.org.

***Decisions made by:*** Grant recipients will be notified by **December 9, 2024**. Funds will be disbursed via ACH beginning **December 9, 2024. Decisions made by grant reviewers are final and there is no appeal process.**

***VACAP contact:*** For assistance or questions please contact Carolyn Spohrer: 804-644-0417 or cspohrer@vacap.org.

**Project Summary**

**Organization Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Coalition Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Primary Contact Person/Project Director: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Address: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

 **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

 **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Telephone: office: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_cell:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Your email: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Who else should receive emails regarding the EITC grant and deadlines and general information during tax season (list name and email address):**

**­­­­**

**Grant deadline emails:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**General VITA information:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**You are strongly encouraged to participate in the bi-weekly/monthly VITA Chats and the IRS Watercooler chats. Who should be participating and what is their email address? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

­­­­­­­­­­­­­

**Name, address, email and phone number for Virginia CASH Campaign Partner list:**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Agency federal Tax ID#: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Grant Amount Requested: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Virginia General Assembly Senator(s) and Delegate(s) in area to be served by grant:**

**Short summary of your VITA Program:**

**Project Description**

VACAP has funding to double each current coalition annual grant for agencies that can demonstrate that they will serve more taxpayers than last year. This funding should help to stabilize and strengthen existing programs. Sites must demonstrate they will serve more individuals than last year to apply.

In addition, coalitions may request up to $10,000 if you will increase taxpayers served by a significant amount through establishing new VITA sites either in the existing footprint or in localities not currently served by a CASH Campaign program and not duplicative of existing efforts. This final award amount will be determined based on the funds available, grant application criteria, proposed numbers served and overall review of the application.

1. What localities did you serve last year? Are there any new localities you plan to serve this year or localities that you no longer serve?
2. How many VITA sites did you operate last year? How many total sites do you plan to operate this year?
3. Document the need for free tax preparation services in your area including population and localities to be served.
4. If you plan to expand services through new sites or in a new locality, explain the process for site selection. What data did you use to determine a new site?
5. Describe your plan to expand VITA operations to serve more clients.
6. Are your objectives for this year clearly stated and based on measurable outcomes or overcoming challenges you voiced in the final report last year? How and why?
	1. How many federal and state tax returns do you anticipate filing for your clients?
7. How will you overcome challenges to meet your new measurable outcomes?

1. Is the VITA program part of your agency strategic plan? Is it one of your core programs? Briefly explain how and why or why not. Are your VITA results regularly shared with agency leadership and board?
2. What is your plan to use alternative tax preparation models, such as Free File, Facilitated Self-Assistance, MyFreeTaxes, Drop off, Virtual VITA or Get Your Refund? Please define what Virtual filing means to your coalition.
3. Describe your VITA program structure regarding staff and volunteers. How are roles defined? Do you have full or part time paid staff? Paid site staff or all non-paid volunteers? (pre-season, and post season).

1. Did you meet your volunteer needs last tax season? If not, how will you adjust your volunteer recruitment strategy? If you are expanding services describe your plan for recruiting volunteers and staff to meet that need.
2. What is your volunteer training process?
3. Describe your process for referring clients to other potential benefit programs i.e., fuel assistance, housing, Medicaid, SNAP or similar programs.

1. Given that VACAP EITC funding comes from a TANF Block Grant, please describe how your outreach will focus on clients who may be eligible to receive:
	1. TANF
	2. EITC and/or CTC
	3. Virginia refundable EITC
2. Describe your marketing/publicity plan. Ensure that your VITA program is listed is the [211 Virginia](https://www.211virginia.org/consite/index.php) search database.
3. VACAP has additional funds to implement centralized services to support each site in their effort to recruit more volunteers and serve more clients. Do you commit to utilizing VACAP’s new outreach and marketing assistance?
4. If you are planning to participate with any financial empowerment initiatives, tell us who and what, why and how. What is your plan to include financial empowerment or financial coaching?
5. If applicable, list other community organizations that will collaborate with you. Include a brief description and what activities/programs they will provide. (Include one sample copy of Memoranda of Understanding as attachment)
6. Did your coalition apply for a federal VITA grant this year? How much will you receive?
7. If you’ve chosen to not apply for a federal VITA grant, please explain your reasoning.
8. What are your other VITA program funding sources?
9. What else do you want the grant reviewers to know about your VITA program for tax year 2024?

**Project Budget**

Funding for the VACAP EITC grant covers the state fiscal year, July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025. The VACAP grant may make up a small part of your overall VITA program budget. **Please complete both columns. Once the VACAP grant is awarded we will ask that you amend the VACAP grant column.**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Budget Category** | **VACAP Grant** | **Overall Budget for VITA** |
| Rent/office space |  |  |
| Personnel (salary) |  |  |
| Fringe benefits |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| Technology (computers/printing) |  |  |
| Publicity |  |  |
| Web Design/Maintenance |  |  |
| Telephone/Internet |  |  |
| General office supplies |  |  |
| Mailing costs |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| Training |  |  |
| Volunteer Recruitment |  |  |
| Volunteer food |  |  |
| Volunteer recognition |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| Conferences |  |  |
| Travel |  |  |
| Financial Empowerment |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| Indirect Costs (10% or less) |  |  |
| Other (define) |  |  |
| **Total** |  |  |

In addition to attending the VITA chats, IRS SPEC Watercooler chats, IRS SPEC webcasts, Taxpayer Opportunity Network and Prosperity Now webinars and other training opportunities, VACAP recommends that your budget include amounts that will allow coalition representatives to attend state, regional and national conferences relating to free tax preparation programs, VITA, FSA and financial empowerment and financial coaching.

**Activities/Outcomes Plan**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Goal** | **Measurable Outcome** | **Evaluation** |
|  | **Must include:****Number of federal and state tax returns you will process****May include goals such as:** **Increase the number of volunteers by x people.****Reduce our error rate from x% to y%.** |  |  |

**Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Director/President/CEO: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Important Application Dates**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Event** | **Outcome** |
| **October 1, 2024** | Application posted vacap.org | Grant announcement |
| **October 16, 2024** | Carolyn office hours 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM | <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84769208673?pwd=xs0aLelvrBPtNGZa1a0acwZOCFna9a.1> |
| **November 4, 2024** | Grant application deadline | Email PDF to Carolyn -cspohrer@vacap.org  |
| **December 9, 2024** | Grant recipients notified | Via email |
| **December 9, 2024** | Grant funds disbursed after new budget is submitted and accepted | Paid via ACH  |
| **December 31, 2024** | Pre-season report | Submit online |
| **January 31, 2025** | Report #1 | Submit online  |
| **February 28, 2025** | Report #2 (cumulative) | Submit online |
| **March 31, 2025** | Report #3 (cumulative) | Submit online |
| **April 30, 2025** | Report #4 (cumulative) | Submit online |
| **May 20, 2025** | Final coalition report – data and narrative | Submit online, PDF with data and narrative emailed to Carolyn at cspohrer@vacap.org |

**Grant Application Checklist**

**\_\_\_\_ Has the Grant application been completed?**

 **\_\_\_\_ all information in Project Summary (p. 4)**

 **\_\_\_\_ other email recipients (p. 4)**

 **\_\_\_\_ all questions of Project Description (p. 5,6)**

 **\_\_\_\_ both columns of Project Budget (p. 7)**

 **\_\_\_\_ all sections of Activities/Outcomes Plan (p. 8)**

**\_\_\_\_ Have the Important Dates been reviewed? (p. 9)**

**\_\_\_\_ Has the Director/President/CEO signed the grant application? (p. 9)**

**\_\_\_\_ Has the PDF application been emailed to** **cspohrer@vacap.org** **by the deadline?**

**\_\_\_\_ Have you included a copy of your W-9? (Download** [**here**](https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/fw9.pdf) **or submit your own)**