



Virginia State President's Report
October 2020 - December 2019

Virginia Legislative Issues

- VAHCDO agencies continue to implement changes to Virginia laws from the 2019 General Assembly to address the previously reported high eviction rates in Virginia cities. Although the PHA's eviction rates are drastically lower than those across their respective cities, Virginia PHA's are adjusting to new reporting requirements and eviction diversion programs in Danville, Hampton, Petersburg and Richmond.
- The VAHCDO Public Policy Committee has been focused on proposed legislation as we enter into the 2020 General Assembly with a political landscape that is expected to be more supportive of the following initiatives:
 - Fighting Discrimination – several lawmakers are proposing bills to fight discrimination against protected classes, specifically discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.
 - Source of Income Discrimination – a bill is being supported by VAHCDO and other agencies to protect against source of income discrimination. This will make it possible for voucher holders to expand their housing options outside of historically low-income communities.
 - Housing Trust Fund – VAHCDO has consistently advocated for \$20 million in additional funding to the Virginia Housing Trust Fund to allow for development of housing and housing services.
 - Accessible Dwelling Units – A shortage of affordable housing could be impacted greatly by a zoning change to allow ADU's on existing lots. VAHCDO is supportive of the additional supply and aware of the potential issues with existing infrastructure.
 - Communities of Opportunity – this Virginia tax credit program was enacted in 2010 as an incentive to decentralize poverty by providing tax credits to landlords. VAHCDO is working to expand the program beyond the Greater Richmond MSA.
- A partnership between VAHCDO, the Virginia Housing Commission and the Virginia Housing Development Authority (VHDA) was formed to make state legislators aware of HUD's notice and intent to Reposition Public Housing. A research study was released in November 2019 that captures and quantifies the estimated capital investment needed to bring Virginia's public housing to market standards.

Conferences and Special Events

- The Virginia Governor's Housing Conference was held on November 20 – 22, 2019 in Hampton, VA and featured two sessions sponsored by VAHCDO. The primary session included VAHCDO agencies and representation from the HUD-Richmond Field Office to discuss revitalization activities for PHA's converting Public Housing under the four (4) new tools offered by HUD.



- Preceding the Virginia Governor’s Housing Conference in November 2019, it was announced that the Little Ten Housing Authorities of Southwest Virginia had been accepted into the Acquire, Renovate, Sell (ARS) 2019 Round 2 Program. The program will assist the ten public housing authorities in far Southwest Virginia to acquire, renovate and sell quality housing to increase homeownership opportunities for qualified low and moderate-income families.
- Two Virginia PHA’s were awarded Choice Neighborhood Initiative (CNI) grants. Multiple year funding awards totaling \$30 million each were allocated to the Marshall-Ridley community in Newport News, VA and the St. Paul’s community in Norfolk, VA. PHA’s in both communities have already begun implementation which includes initiation of the ‘people’ portion of the plan as well as the related development.
- The Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority selected Ronald Jackson (formerly of Hampton, VA) as their new Executive Director. The Roanoke Redevelopment and Housing Authority selected David Bustamante (formerly of Miami, FL) as their new Executive Director. The Hampton and Charlottesville Redevelopment and Housing Authorities will be announcing new Executive Directors soon.

Training and Education

- VAHCDO held its 2019 Legal and Policy Seminar on December 5 - 6, 2019 in Richmond, VA. Speakers included Lisa Walker (HDLI) to perform a legal review of case law related to affordable housing and Richard “Chip” Dicks (Future Law) to give an annual update on housing management and tenant issues for PHA’s. The keynote speaker was Cynthia Hudson, Deputy Virginia Attorney General.
- Planned training for VAHCDO members includes a two (2) day session on HUD REAC Physical Assessment Subsystem (PHAS) and Uniform Physical Conditions Standards (UPCS). Two trainings will be held on May 13-14, 2020 (Bristol, VA) and May 19 – 19, 2020 (Hampton, VA).
- Planned training for VAHCDO members includes a multi-day session on HCV/Public Housing Rent Calculations in partnership with Nan McKay and Associates. Two trainings will be held on June 16 - 18, 2020 (Chesapeake, VA) and July 20 – 24, 2020 (Richmond, VA).
- The 2020 Annual VAHCDO Conference is scheduled for April 22 – 24, 2020 in Virginia Beach, VA. The conference will include a Commissioner Training track on April 23, 2020 for new and experienced Commissioners. Specific training and updates will be provided by HUD staff and policy updates will be given by Virginia legislators and the Central Virginia Legal Aid Society. A fundraising event will be held at Topgolf to support VAHCDO and its scholarship fund.