



Prince William Commission on Aging's Budget & Legislative Priorities For the 2023 Virginia General Assembly Session

The Prince William Commission on Aging approved on September 26, 2023, the following State Budget and Legislative Priorities to support and advocate for in the 2023 General Assembly Session. The items have been grouped into two six topic areas supporting our Older Adults, Persons with Disabilities, their Families and their Caregivers.

The Commission is also a member of the Northern Virginia Aging Network (NVAN) and supports their 2024 Legislative, Budget and Continuing Concerns, included on page 3.

Our Priorities and Positions by topic are:

Housing

Fund the Virginia Housing Trust Fund Homeless Reduction Grant Program. The Commonwealth should provide a source of adequate revenue to operate the Housing Trust Fund Homeless Reduction Grant Program. The Virginia Housing Trust Fund Homeless Reduction Grant Program assist elder residents by preserving the affordability and efficiency of Virginia's homes and buildings, addressing homelessness, reducing eviction rates across the state and fostering innovative solutions to create affordable housing.

Expand use of the Virginia Housing Trust Fund & Local Government Trust Fund to enable Rental Assistance Programs.

The Commission supports the Principles of Universal Design. The Virginia Housing Board views Universal Design not as a building code or accessibility standard but rather as a set of features that should integrate seamlessly into the design of a dwelling unit, providing market appeal and the possibility for residents to **age-in-place**. (www.virginiahousing.com)

Medicaid

Continue Medicaid expansion to include Dental and Vision Services as supported by the Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association (VHHA) which funds the Commonwealth match for Federal funding.

Increase Medicaid Home and Community-Based Waiver Personal Maintenance Allowance. Medicaid Home and Community-based Services (HCBS) waivers are designed to allow individuals who would otherwise qualify for nursing home or other institutional placement to remain in the community. In 2023, the Virginia Medicaid HCBS personal maintenance allowance monthly amount is \$1,509; that amount limits access to the program.

Caregivers

Fund expansion of services which supports Caregivers and Family Members in Personal Care, Education and Information. Expansion should also include Kinship Care and Standardized Caregiver Training.

Resource the development and maintenance of Standardized Guardian Training. While public guardians receive ongoing training, private guardians are not provided with training and statewide training is not available. Private guardianship can be extremely stressful without initial guidance that a training program would provide. Training should focus on private guardianship responsibilities, duties and available resources.

Fund expansion of Project Lifesaver®. Project Lifesaver's mission is to use state-of-the-art technology in assisting those who care for persons with Alzheimer's Disease and related Dementias, other developmental disabilities and persons who become lost. Funding for Project Lifesaver is the result of private and corporate donations and grants, staffing for the program is mainly volunteers. Donations are used directly for programs, rescues and expenses.

Transportation

Support funding of OmniRide/Potomac Rappahannock Transportation Commission Strategic Plan for transportation which enables person-centered support for Activities of Daily Living and reduction of Social Isolation.

Fund sustainability of Assisted Transportation Services to provide vouchers for local commercial transportation to be used by Older Adults and Persons with Disabilities who either cannot use existing public transit services or no such services are available in their community.

Fund expansion of the Paratransit Service and Microtransit Zone programs. Paratransit provides essential transportation for elderly residents and individuals with disabilities who are unable to use regular fixed route transit. Microtransit service uses smaller vehicles that capitalizes on mobile GPS that serves passengers on dynamically generated routes in response to individual or aggregate consumer demand.

Exploitation of Older Adults

Continued Funding of Adult Protective Services (APS) which offer victims of abuse, neglect, and exploitation a range of services. APS enables protection from the maltreatment of vulnerable Older Adults and Adults with Disabilities. Maltreatment includes abuse which is intentional physical, emotional, sexual or financial harm by a Caregiver or any other person which causes harm, or a serious risk of harm, to a vulnerable Older Adult or an Adult with a Disability.

Provide Supplemental State funding for Older Americans Act Educational Programs for crime prevention services, victim assistance programs, and prevention of abuse.

- Financial Abuse, to include awareness to prevent fraud within Medicare and Medicaid. (<http://www.virginiamp.org/>)
- Public Guardianship Program (<https://www.vda.virginia.gov/publicguardianship.htm>)
- Adult Protective Services (<http://www.dss.virginia.gov/family/as/aps.cgi>)

Crisis Receiving Center/Co-Responder Units

The Commission on Aging supports the request of Prince William Community Services for funding to support the Crisis Receiving Center.

2024 NVAN Priorities

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LEGISLATIVE

- To reduce evictions, increase from 5 days to 14 days the grace period before any landlord or property manager may issue a written notice of non-payment of rent, before seeking judicial proceedings.
- Expand public access and transparency by allowing electronic (all-virtual) meetings for advisory boards and commissions, with no restrictions on the number of meetings per year.
- Require all new assisted living facilities to set aside 2% of total units for Auxiliary Grant recipients to expand access for low-income individuals.

BUDGET

- Increase the Auxiliary Grant rate for assisted living facilities to \$2,500.
- Require employers to provide at least ten days of paid sick leave for all workers, including direct care workers in nursing homes, assisted living, and home care.
- Require guardians to complete initial and ongoing training as a condition of their service; and direct DARS to develop such training.

CONTINUING CONCERNS

- Appropriate full funding needed (\$1,748,700) to bring the state's Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program up to the state and national standard.
- Authorize mentally capable adults who are terminally ill to request Medical Aid in Dying.
- Direct the Joint Commission on Health Care (JCHC) to study the comprehensive needs of incarcerated older adults and those returning to the community.
- Fund home and community-based services through Area Agencies on Aging.
- Require Medicaid to cover the cost of hearing aids.
- Require that nursing homes and assisted living facilities employ or have access to a full-time infection preventionist.

ABOUT NVAN

NVAN includes the Commissions on Aging and Area Agencies on Aging of Alexandria, Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun, and Prince William, as well as regional service and advocacy organizations.

Contact NVAN

Northern Virginia Regional Commission, (703) 842-0700, <https://www.novaregion.org/353/Northern-Virginia-Aging-Network>. Or to request this information in an alternative format, call (703) 324-5403 or TTY (703) 499-1186.