



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF  
SOCIAL SERVICES

# Family Resources Reference Guide

Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Development

The **Child Care Subsidy Program** helps low income parents pay for child care while they work or participate in approved education or training activities. Subsidy services are child-centered and family-focused, supporting the family goals of economic self-sufficiency and child development by providing for the supervision, protection and well-being of the child while the parent is participating in an approved activity.



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To Apply: [www.commonhelp.virginia.gov](http://www.commonhelp.virginia.gov) or contact your local department of social services.

The **Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)** program provides eligible families with a monthly cash payment to meet their basic needs. For a child to be eligible he must be:

- Under age 18, or if 18, will graduate from high school before age 19
- Going to school regularly if between the ages of five and 18
- Living with a parent or other relative
- A U.S. citizen or an eligible immigrant
- Must be a child in need

## TANF

The Code of Virginia, §63.2, requires that the TANF program be administered in accordance with federal and state statutes and regulations and

policies established by the State Board of Social Services. Virginia's TANF program emphasizes personal responsibility. Participants may be provided with services such as job skills training, work experience, job readiness training, child care assistance, transportation and other work related expenses. More information about the TANF program can be found at <http://www.dss.virginia.gov/benefit/tanf/index.cgi>.

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The **Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)**,

helps eligible low-income households offset expenses associated with heating and/or cooling their home. To be eligible, households must have a heating or cooling expense and gross monthly income may not exceed 130



percent of the federal poverty level. Applications for fuel, crisis, and cooling assistance are accepted at the local departments of social services, online via CommonHelp, and by phone through the Enterprise Customer Service Center. LIHEAP consists of four components: (i) fuel assistance, which offsets heating fuel costs; (ii) crisis assistance, which assists families experiencing an energy crisis by paying fees in a heating emergency; (iii) cooling assistance, which assists families with cooling utility bills and equipment; and (iv) weatherization assistance, which provides services/materials to reduce/improve energy consumption for the housing structure. The Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) administers component (iv). More information on DSS programs: [www.dss.virginia.gov](http://www.dss.virginia.gov). More information on DHCD programs: <http://www.dhcd.virginia.gov/>. To Apply : [www.commonhelp.virginia.gov](http://www.commonhelp.virginia.gov).

**Women, Infants and Children (WIC)** helps pregnant, breastfeeding and new mothers, infants and young children stay healthy and eat right during times of important growth, by educating pregnant women and new moms about nutrition with personalized counseling and support; providing pregnant, breastfeeding and new mothers, infants and children up to age 5 with nutritious supplemental foods; bringing women the support they need to breastfeed their babies; and offering referrals to additional social services and healthcare resources. WIC is administered by the Virginia Department of Health.



More information and how to apply: [www.wicva.com](http://www.wicva.com).

The **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)**, is the program formerly known as food stamps. It is a federal nutrition program that helps stretch your food budget and buy healthy food. SNAP benefits can be used to purchase food at grocery stores, convenience stores, and some farmers' markets and co-op food programs. SNAP benefits are given to you each month on a plastic card called an EBT (electronic benefits transfer) card, which works like a debit card. More information on SNAP is available at <http://www.dss.virginia.gov/benefit/snap.cgi>.



To Apply: [www.commonhelp.virginia.gov](http://www.commonhelp.virginia.gov) or contact your local department of social services.

The **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)** is a federal law ensuring services to children with disabilities throughout the nation. IDEA governs how states and public agencies provide early intervention, special education and related services to more than 6.5 million eligible infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities. Children and youth (ages 3-21) receive special education and related services under IDEA – Part B. Infants and toddlers with disabilities (birth-2) and their families receive early intervention services under IDEA – Part C. Virginia Department of Education oversees programs under IDEA – Part B. The Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services has oversight responsibility for IDEA – Part C programs. For more information on Part B and how to apply: [http://doe.virginia.gov/federal\\_programs/idea/index.shtml](http://doe.virginia.gov/federal_programs/idea/index.shtml).



[http://doe.virginia.gov/federal\\_programs/idea/index.shtml](http://doe.virginia.gov/federal_programs/idea/index.shtml).

**Head Start** is a national child development program for children from birth to age 5, which provides services to promote academic, social and emotional development for income-eligible families. Head Start promotes school readiness of children under 5 through comprehensive education, health, nutrition, dental, mental health, social services and parental involvement opportunities.



Eligibility for Head Start is based upon local and federal income and child age requirements. For more information and a list of Head Start programs in Virginia: <http://www.headstartva.org/>.

There are several **Medical Assistance Programs** offered in Virginia. Each program covers different groups of people and each program has different eligibility requirements. Medicaid and CHIP provide no-cost or low-cost health coverage for eligible children in Virginia. CHIP provide health coverage for children so that they can get routine check-ups, immunizations and dental care to keep them healthy. VDSS works in partnership with the Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS), the state agency responsible for the general administration of the Medicaid program in Virginia.



To Apply: [www.commonhelp.virginia.gov](http://www.commonhelp.virginia.gov)

**Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment Services (EPSDT)** is a comprehensive and preventive child health program for individuals under the age of 21. EPSDT includes periodic screening, vision, dental and hearing services. In addition, under the Social Security Act Section 1905(r)(5), states are required to provide any medically necessary health care services listed at section 1905 (a) of the Social Security Act to correct and ameliorate physical and mental conditions even if the service is not included under the state's Medicaid plan.



Virginia's EPSDT program goals are to keep children as healthy as possible by: (i) assuring that health and developmental concerns are diagnosed as early as possible; (ii) assuring that treatment is provided before problems become complex; and (iii) assuring that medically justified services are provided to treat or correct identified problems. EPSDT is administered by the Virginia Department of Medical Assistance Services. For more information: [www.dmas.virginia.gov](http://www.dmas.virginia.gov).

The **Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI)** distributes state funds to schools and community-based organizations to provide quality preschool programs for at-risk four-year olds not served by Head Start. VPI prepares children for kindergarten and makes sure they have the basic requirements to get off to a good start when they begin kindergarten. VPI understands that foundational learning is established in the early years; the program was developed to support and guide four-year-olds through specific active learning experiences before they go to school. VPI is administered by the Virginia Department of Education.



For more information: [http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/early\\_childhood/](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/early_childhood/).

The **Infant & Toddler Connection** of Virginia provides early intervention supports and services to infants and toddlers from birth through age two who are not developing as expected or who have a medical condition that can delay normal development. Services include the Office of Special Education Programs and Part C Early Intervention Programs. Early intervention supports and services focus on increasing the child's participation in family and community activities that are important to the family. In addition, supports and services focus on helping parents and other caregivers know how to find ways to help the child learn during everyday activities. These supports and services are available for all eligible children and their families regardless of the family's ability to pay.



For more information and how to apply: <http://www.infantva.org/>.

The **Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)** provides year-round federal funding to eligible child care, family day care, HeadStart, at-risk after school care, emergency shelter and adult care centers. This funding is used to provide nutritious meals and snacks to lower income participants in these care programs. Funding for CACFP also helps make these care programs more affordable for families. Nationally, CACFP serves 3.2 million children and 112,000 adults a day. The program is administered by the Virginia Department of Health. For more information: <http://www.vahealth.org/DCN/cacfp/>.

