

2027–2028 Virginia Eviction Reduction Program (VERP) How to Apply FAQ

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Before You Apply

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We have direct service experience, but not specifically in eviction prevention. Are we still an eligible applicant?

A: Yes. Organizations without prior eviction-specific experience may still apply. Use the application to show comparable direct service experience, relevant partnerships or subgrantee relationships, organizational capacity, and outcomes from the most similar program you have administered.

Can a landlord serve as a VERP subgrantee?

A: Yes. A landlord may serve as a subgrantee but may not determine eligibility for or administer financial assistance in a case where the landlord would receive a financial benefit.

Can residents of properties owned by a VERP subgrantee receive VERP assistance?

A: Yes. Residents may receive VERP assistance. However, if the subgrantee would receive a financial benefit, another entity that does not stand to benefit financially must determine eligibility and administer the assistance.

Are Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) eligible to apply for VERP funding?

A: No. Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) are not eligible applicants for VERP funding. However, households that live in PHA-owned or PHA-assisted housing may still be eligible to receive VERP assistance, provided they meet all applicable VERP household eligibility requirements.

Who should we designate as the primary contact in CAMS?

A: Choose someone who is familiar with the application and available during the review process, not simply a general office contact.

We are not registered in CAMS yet. How much lead time should we allow?

A: New CAMS registrations may take **up to 7 business days**.

Where can I find guidance on completing the application in CAMS?

A: For step-by-step instructions on navigating CAMS and completing the application, refer to the [CAMS Portal User Guide](#).

Program Design and Service Delivery

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What is the expected timeline for providing financial assistance to a tenant?

A: DHCD does not set a single statewide maximum number of days. The real deadline is set by the eviction process itself, which varies by case and court. Applicants must describe their own process from first contact through payment issuance in their VERP Policies & Procedures, including the timeline for each step, and report their actual average time to payment if they have administered similar assistance before.

What should we include when describing our process from initial contact through payment?

A: Be specific about each step, who makes each decision, the usual timeframe, what changes when a household is close to a court deadline, and who can approve an expedited payment. If you have provided similar assistance before, include your actual average time from application to payment.

Can we require a Pay or Quit notice or other eviction document before helping a household?

A: No. VERP emphasizes a **low-barrier, high-access approach**. An eviction notice should not be a precondition for assistance, and programs should not build in waiting periods before assistance is provided.

How early is 'Prevention' supposed to happen?

A: Prevention occurs **before an Unlawful Detainer is filed**. Your application should show how your program will identify and reach households early enough to intervene before court involvement begins.

What counts as proactive outreach? Is social media enough?

A: Social media, a website, or flyers can support outreach, but passive methods alone do not meet the requirement. Applicants should implement active strategies by enlisting landlord engagement, court docket data, targeted outreach in high-eviction areas, mailings, schools, and other high-traffic locations.

Does our outreach obligation end once a judgment is entered?

A: No. Appeal periods, redemption rights, and the period before a writ is executed all create additional deadlines where timely outreach and assistance may still prevent displacement.

Court Navigation

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What does DHCD mean by a ‘consistent court presence’?

A: It does not require covering every eviction docket. What is required is a predictable, recurring pattern, for example being present on the same day or days each week, which is reliable enough for courthouse staff, judges, and landlords to know when and where to find a navigator. Grantees document this pattern in their Court Presence Plan. Once navigators are approved and present, they help tenants understand procedures and deadlines, connect them to legal aid, mediation, interpreters, financial assistance, and EDP where available, and create opportunities for less harmful resolutions.

Can we begin Court Navigation services as soon as our VERP contract begins?

A: Not automatically. Court navigation services should not begin inside a courthouse until that specific court has approved the provider’s presence in the courtroom. DHCD urges applicants to begin those conversations early because court approval takes time and relationship-building.

What can a non-attorney Court Navigator say without crossing into legal advice?

A: Legal information is general and applies to any tenant in a similar situation: explaining court procedures, terminology, timelines, forms, schedules, and deadlines, and connecting tenants to available resources. Legal advice is specific to one person's case: telling a tenant what to say, advising on legal strategy, offering an opinion about what will happen if a tenant brings their case to court, interpreting a document for them, or telling them how the law applies to their particular situation.

For example, a Court Navigator can explain what a continuance is and how to request one but cannot advise whether requesting one is a good idea. A Court Navigator can provide a tenant with the correct form and check it for completeness but cannot tell the tenant what words to use in it. A Court Navigator can walk a tenant through the general court process but cannot tell them what will happen if they bring their case to court.

Budget

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How should we design our project budget for a two-year VERP grant?

A: Applicants should develop the project budget based on the first year of the two-year grant period. The initial budget should reflect the costs you reasonably expect to incur during Year 1 and align with the activities described in your application. VERP budgets may be revised during the grant cycle as program needs, staffing, spending patterns, or implementation plans change. Any revisions should continue to support the approved VERP program and follow applicable DHCD requirements and approval processes.

Why don't the CAMS budget categories line up neatly with the Prevention and Diversion sections in the application?

A: CAMS organizes costs mainly by expense type, while the VERP program model also distinguishes when activities occur in the eviction process. Applicants should map their program design to CAMS categories before entering numbers and use the narrative to clarify how costs support the model.

Where do Court Navigation costs go in CAMS?

A: Program Operations. Court Navigation is discussed as a Diversion activity in the program model but staffing for this service is budgeted under Program Operations.

How should we handle Outreach and Stabilization Services if we use them during both Prevention and Diversion?

A: Use the standalone CAMS categories for Outreach and Stabilization Services, then explain in the narrative how those costs support activities at both stages.

Prevention and Diversion use the same generic CAMS sub-lines. How do we make clear what belongs where?

A: Use the narrative to distinguish the stage-specific use of landlord outreach and negotiation, mediation, and rent assistance. Your CAMS budget and your narrative must be consistent with each other

What is the Administration cap?

A: Administration is capped at 10% of VERP funds. Accounting, reporting, and audits are examples of administrative costs.

Where would staff, training, subgrantee costs, and required travel go?

A: Place direct-service program staff, court navigation, staff training, subgrantee expenses, and travel—including the required annual VERP retreat—under Program Operations.

Are local governments eligible to apply for VERP, and are there special considerations for a city applicant?

A: Yes. Units of local government are eligible to apply. The key consideration for a unit of local government applying for VERP funding is whether its financial and administrative processes can move assistance quickly enough to prevent eviction. Local governments often use payment systems that may involve centralized finance offices, budget approvals, or multiple levels of review that can add time. Because VERP assistance must move faster than the eviction process, applicants should demonstrate how they will minimize delays between eligibility determination and payment. Delays are particularly important because an Unlawful Detainer filed while assistance is pending may affect a household's rental history even if the eviction is ultimately prevented.

Applicants should also plan for VERP's reimbursement funding structure, including any local budget appropriation requirements, cash-flow needs, and hiring timelines for new positions. Court navigation is a required VERP service, but a local government does not need its own courthouse presence; this function may be provided through a partner or subgrantee. Narrative Information

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What will make a narrative response stand out to reviewers?

A: Specificity. Current local data, concrete examples, actual outcomes, timelines, staffing responsibilities, and established partnerships and subgrantee agreements should be included in your application. Reviewers can only evaluate what is written, so do not assume they know your organization or community.

What sources should we use for the Community Need narrative?

A: The LSC Eviction Tracker or local court records, along with ALICE and Census/ACS data and local court docket data. Also, the Virginia Evictors Catalog from RVA Eviction Lab / UVA Equity Center.

Attachments

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Which attachments are templates from DHCD, and which ones do we create?

A: There are three templates created by DHCD: the VERP Client Eligibility Form, Court Presence Plan, and Community Resource Inventory. Applicant-generated attachments include the Implementation Timeline, VERP Policies and Procedures, Match Documentation if applicable, MOUs/Letters of Commitment or related agreements if applicable, and the Financial Statement.

Can we change the VERP Client Eligibility Form for local conditions?

A: Yes, but any adaptation should be supported by data and approved by DHCD first. The DHCD form is the starting structure.

What should our Implementation Timeline demonstrate?

A: It should show when major activities will occur, such as program launch, staffing, outreach, court presence, service delivery, partnership activity, and reporting—and demonstrate that your implementation plan is realistic.

What should be in our VERP Policies and Procedures attachment?

A: This document should detail the VERP applicant's operating framework for the program: eligibility, assistance decisions, award amounts, tenant contribution expectations, stabilization services, approvals, documentation, and other internal controls.

When do we need an MOU, letter of commitment, or other agreement?

A: Use these for organizations that will play a substantial role in delivering VERP services. The documentation should make clear who the organization is and what role it will perform. If the organization is a subgrantee, the agreement should also state its VERP-funded compensation. If it is a partner providing in-kind or no-cost services, the agreement should state that instead. Where required, an executed agreement or signed letter of intent must be in place before the grant period begins.

Do we need formal documentation for wraparound-service partners listed under Commonwealth Priorities?

A: No. Formal documentation is not required for that section. However, the partner information should be complete and specific, and those wraparound partners should be separate from the organizations implementing the core VERP eviction-prevention process.

Scoring

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Can a stronger narrative improve our Community Priority score?

A: The 40 Community Priority points are not evaluated for narrative quality the way Program Approach and Organizational Capacity are, but the two components work differently. The 20 Community Need points come entirely from DHCD's own statewide data, eviction filing rate, ALICE Threshold, and cost burden indicators, and cannot be affected by anything in your application. The 20 Community Access points come from your Community Resource Inventory attachment, where you report the availability and capacity of resources in

your service area. DHCD scores that inventory using standardized criteria rather than narrative quality, but it is still built from what you submit, so accuracy and completeness in that attachment do affect this half of the score.

How is Community Need handled if we propose to serve multiple localities?

A: DHCD will use the average Community Need Index across all proposed localities.

Why would fewer available eviction-prevention resources result in a higher Community Access score?

A: DHCD uses the Community Priority score to identify how underserved a community is, based on objective, comparable measures rather than a general impression of need. Community Access specifically measures the availability and capacity of eviction-prevention resources already present in a service area. A community with fewer available resources, or resources that are capacity-limited, has fewer options for residents facing eviction risk. The score is designed to reflect that gap, so lower resource availability results in a higher Community Access score.

What does the 32-point combined score threshold mean?

A: Applicants must earn at least 32 combined points in Program Approach and Organizational Capacity to be considered for funding. Preference points and Commonwealth Priority points are not included in that calculation.

Is a funding match required?

A: No. Match funding is optional. However, documented match funding earns preference points based on the match amount as a percentage of the requested VERP award, 5 points for 25 percent or more, 3 points for 10 to 24 percent, and 1 point for match below 10 percent. To receive these points, the match must be entered into the Other Funding field of the Project Budget and supported by board-approved match documentation submitted as an attachment.

What do we need to do for match funding to count toward preference points?

A: Enter the match in the Other Funding field of the CAMS Project Budget and provide the required documentation. For in-kind contributions, use fair market value with a reasonable, documented basis and explain how the contribution was valued. Application Submission

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How do we know CAMS has accepted our submission?

A: The application status changes from Incomplete to Pending only after submission. Until then, it remains editable.

Can applicants rely on CAMS support on the deadline day?

A: The CAMS help inbox is staffed during normal business hours, not around the clock, and DHCD cannot guarantee a same-day response. Applicants should plan to submit with enough time to reach support if a question comes up, rather than assuming help will be available right up to the deadline.

Who should we contact for program questions versus CAMS problems?

A: For program questions such as guidelines interpretation, eligibility, or application strategy, contact **Senta Leslie or Caroline Stokes**. For CAMS technical issues, use camshelp@dhcd.virginia.gov.

Contacts

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CAMS Technical Assistance — camshelp@dhcd.virginia.gov