



WEEKLY E-MAILING

May 31, 2023

Table of Contents

[Helpful Links](#)

[DARS IL Impact Newsletter](#)

[New Website for CCC Plus Members](#)

[DMAS Partner Points Newsletter May 2023](#)

[SCC News Release](#)

[DSS: Serve Virginia Honor Roll Celebrates Volunteers](#)

Helpful Links

ACL News & Information

Here is a link to news & information from the Administration for Community Living (ACL):

<https://acl.gov/>

ADvancing States (NASUAD) Information

Here is a link to state technical assistance from ADvancing States:

<http://www.advancingstates.org/state-technical-assistance/enhancedtechnical-assistance>

IMPACT

Empowering Virginians with Disabilities through Centers for Independent Living

May 2023 | Issue 16

Lifetime disability advocate Ralph Shelman retires



Ralph Shelman is a legend in his own time, known nationally for his efforts in enacting the Virginians with Disabilities and Americans with Disabilities Acts. In addition to founding Insight Enterprises in 1982 and directing Peninsula Center for

Independent Living for the past 36 years, he served on the Disability Advisory Committee under former Vice-President Al Gore and co-founded the African-American Disability Project. In 2018, the Hampton City Council honored Ralph with the Distinguished Citizens Medal, including a key to the city. Best of luck Ralph!

"I think anything that's going to continue to grow and be vibrant has to have the commitment of people with disabilities, the intensity of the cause that makes our lives what it is. The value of just being able to live and be a part of the community is so important that we maintain it, and I'm grateful to see that is being understood and that we are building on that."

-Ralph Shelman
[VRWorkforcestudio.com interview, July 2021](#)



Garden Box Project

[Appalachian Independence Center](#) in Abingdon partnered with local nonprofit Appalachian Sustainable Development (ASD) to start a raised bed garden box project to help consumers reduce stress, depression and anxiety through gardening. This spring, 15 consumers are getting raised garden beds, soil, flowers, herbs and vegetables.

Consumers will get initial instruction and ongoing education to maintain their gardens from ASD's "Grow Your Own" staff. To ensure accessibility, AIC also partnered with Virginia Tech's

[AgrAbility program](#) to provide accessible and adapted gardening tools to the consumers who need it.

Five students with disabilities recognized

Appalachian Independence Center (AIC) awarded the 2023 Greg Morrell Education Award to five students in Planning District Three. The award is given to a high school senior with a disability who is going to pursue either a four-year college, community college or an advanced technology or other educational/skills training or certificate. Careful consideration is given to students who show determination, leadership, and service to their communities.



Greg Morrell was AIC's executive director for over 25 years and dedicated his life's work to breaking down barriers. Greg was a fierce advocate in helping people with disabilities to live productive and independent lives in the pursuit of full participation in their communities.

In the past, AIC has selected one student to receive the award, but following the passing of other local disability advocates in recent years, AIC's Board of Directors chose to award four additional Education Awards this year to honor the memory of David Barrett, Jack Owens, Lewis Atkins and Melinda Hawkins.



Home mods make IL possible

A friend of Mr. Smith referred him to [Eastern Shore Center for Independent Living](#). A young man diagnosed with diabetes and neuropathy, Mr. Smith had tried other housing programs, but was unsuccessful in getting funds for home modifications to enable a higher level of independence.

ESCIL accepted Mr. Smith into its program, and he outlined his independent living goals including constructing an accessible bathroom and front-door entrance ramp at his rental home. An ESCIL IL advocate helped him complete the Virginia Housing rental unit accessibility grant application and referred him to a licensed contractor to provide a proposal. The \$7,093 proposal was approved and work was set to begin.

Due to supply chain delays and a course of COVID for Mr. Smith, the IL advocate had to apply for an extension. The project was finally completed, allowing Mr. Smith to enter and exit his home safely as well as shower and bath without assistance. Mr. Smith is extremely grateful for ESCIL's assistance.



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT FOR AGING
AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES

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VIRGINIA'S MEDICAID PROGRAM
DMAS
INNOVATION • QUALITY • VALUE



CardinalCare
Virginia's Medicaid Program



Effective June 1, 2023, Commonwealth Coordinated Care Plus (CCC Plus) members will use a new website to choose a Medicaid health plan, learn about benefits, and search for in-network providers. The website, VirginiaManagedCare.com, will replace the existing CCCPlusva.com website, and is organized in a familiar manner. As of June 1, 2023, CCCPlusva.com will automatically redirect members to the new website going forward.

The Enrollment Helpline is also changing for CCC Plus members to [1-800-643-2273](tel:1-800-643-2273) (TTY: [1-800-817-6608](tel:1-800-817-6608)). The current phone number will forward members to the new helpline during this transition. The helpline hours remain the same: Monday - Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. DMAS will use the VirginiaManagedCare.com address and [1-800-643-2273](tel:1-800-643-2273) (TTY: [1-800-817-6608](tel:1-800-817-6608)) phone number on CCC Plus materials in the future.

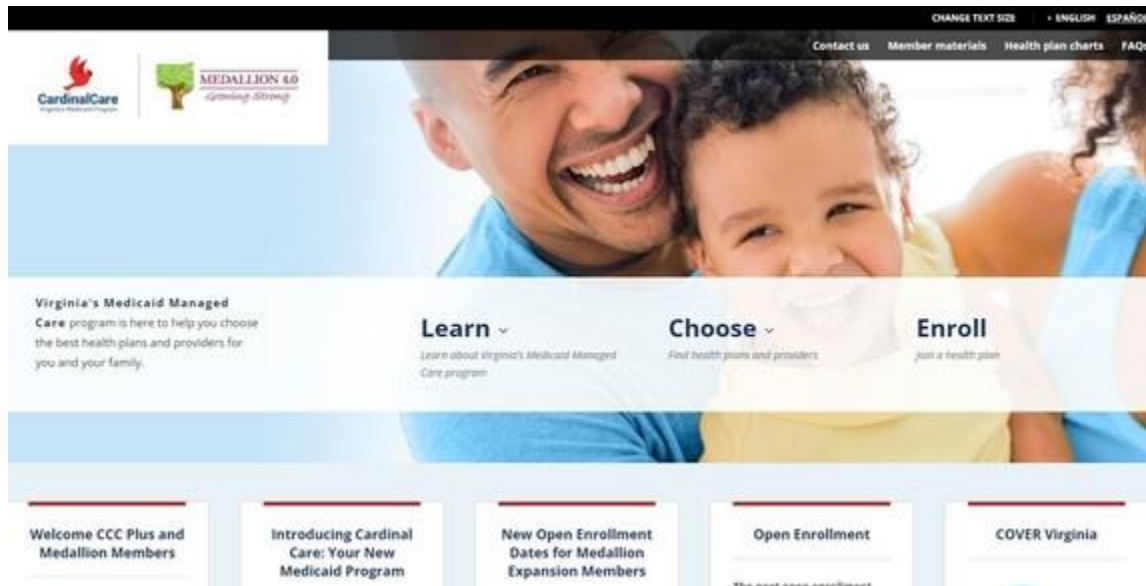
[Visit the Website](https://VirginiaManagedCare.com)



Department of Medical Assistance Services

- Partner Points Newsletter May 2023 -

Important Updates



New Enrollment Site and Helpline for CCC Plus Medicaid Members

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Renewals are Here! Help Members Find their Renewal Date

DMAS returned to its normal renewal operations this March after a nearly three-year pause and has already completed over 196,000 Medicaid renewals. Through mailings, emails and robocalls, DMAS is working quickly to remind members to update their contact information, check their mail, and return any paperwork as quickly as possible.



You can assist members by locating their renewal date so they are prepared when it is their turn. Check the DMAS [renewal calendar](#) that explains when members should expect to receive their information, or call Cover Virginia at 1-833-5CALLVA to find out a member's renewal date.

Providers can find out more information about the renewal process by visiting the [Medicaid Enterprise System \(MES\) portal](#), or by viewing the [provider memo](#) with frequently asked questions about renewals. Visit Cover Virginia to find more information about [the return to normal enrollment process](#).

U.S. Attorney's Office Reminds Healthcare Providers of ADA's Effective Communication Requirements

The United States Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Virginia announced on April 14, 2023, that it sent a [Dear Colleagues Letter](#) reminding healthcare providers of the effective communication requirements under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). To strengthen awareness and understanding of these requirements, the U.S. Attorney's Office is inviting the public, including personnel at healthcare provider offices, to an [informational meeting](#) on June 6, 2023, at 1 p.m.

For more information, view the [press release](#) from the United State's Attorney's Office.

New Streamlined Process Simplifies SNAP Application for Elderly



In March 2022, the Department of Social Services (DSS) launched the Elderly Simplified Application Process (ESAP) for [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program \(SNAP\) benefits](#). This streamlined application and recertification process seeks to increase participation for SNAP benefits among the older adult (60+), low-income population.

In Virginia, ESAP will extend the certification from 12 to 36 months for ESAP households; remove the requirement of interim reporting; and simplify the reporting process. Older Virginians who may be eligible for SNAP benefits may apply [online through CommonHelp](#); by completing and submitting the "ESAP Application for Benefits" form on the VDSS [website](#) and returning it to their [local Department of Social Services](#); or by calling the Enterprise Call Center at 1-855-635-4370.

SCC Reminds Virginians to Plan Now as Hurricane Season is Almost Here

Charlotte Arbogast, MS, Senior Policy Analyst

May 25, 2023

RICHMOND – With hurricane season just around the corner, the State Corporation Commission’s (SCC) Bureau of Insurance (Bureau) reminds Virginians that the time to plan is now. Planning includes reviewing your insurance policy and making sure you have the coverage you need if a hurricane or other disaster strikes.

The Atlantic hurricane season runs from June 1 through November 30 each year. Once a hurricane develops in the Atlantic, it may be difficult to find an insurance company willing to write hurricane-related coverage for your home, auto or business until after the storm threat passes.

“Protect yourself, not only physically, but financially,” said Virginia Insurance Commissioner Scott A. White. “Hurricanes can wreak havoc on your property. Review your insurance policies and know what is and is not covered. If you have questions, contact your insurance agency or company or the Bureau of Insurance.”

Even areas hundreds of miles from the coast can experience floods and other damage caused by hurricanes’ high winds and torrential rains. Most hurricane damage is caused by flooding, not high winds. Even minor floods can cause extensive damage to your home, vehicle, business or belongings.

The Bureau offers the following reminders as Virginians prepare for hurricane season:

- Homeowners, renters and commercial insurance policies issued in Virginia typically do not cover damages caused by floods, surface water or storm surges. The federal government sells insurance for direct flood and flood-related damage to homeowners, renters and businesses in eligible communities through the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Keep in mind that there is typically a 30-day waiting period for a new flood insurance policy to take effect. To learn more about this program, contact your insurance agent or the NFIP at 1-800-427-4661 or visit [floodsmart.gov](https://www.floodsmart.gov).
- Some private insurers also offer flood policies, so check with your insurance agent about the availability of a private flood insurance policy.

Flood coverage available through the NFIP may differ from private flood coverage, so it’s important to understand the differences. No matter which

option you consider, ask whether your flood policy covers your personal property.

- Some homeowners policies require a special deductible for wind or hurricane losses. These deductibles may be applied separately from any other deductible on the homeowners policy. Deductibles may, for example, be written as a flat amount, such as \$1,000, or may be applied to the loss as a percentage of the insurance coverage limit on the dwelling. Remember that the deductible is the amount that you must pay before the insurance company pays its portion of a claim.
- Don't wait to prepare a home inventory of your personal property, which should include photographs, videos and serial numbers. Having a home inventory can facilitate the claims process if damage occurs. The National Association of Insurance Commissioners' free [home inventory app](#) - available through the App Store and Google Play - can make creating a home inventory easy. Keep your insurance policies and home inventory together in a safe and secure place.
- Know what to do if your property is damaged by a hurricane. Contact your insurance agent or company as soon as possible. Make any necessary emergency repairs and take reasonable steps to prevent further damage to your property. Additionally, make a list of all damage to your property and include photographs, notes and repair-related receipts.
- If you must evacuate, know the name of your insurance company and take your homeowners, auto and other insurance policies and your home inventory with you, or make sure you can access these important documents electronically. The policies will contain your policy numbers and the phone numbers of your insurance companies in case you have questions or need to file a claim.

The Bureau of Insurance offers free consumer guides for homeowners and commercial property owners with information about what to do when a disaster strikes. These and many other consumer insurance guides are available at scc.virginia.gov/pages/Insurance. The Bureau's specially trained staff can assist consumers with their insurance-related questions and concerns. To learn more, contact the Consumer Services Section of the Bureau's Property and Casualty Division toll-free at 1-877-310-6560 or in Richmond at 804-371-9185.

For additional emergency preparedness information regarding hurricanes and other types of disasters and hazards, visit vaemergency.gov.

DSS: Serve Virginia Honor Roll Celebrates Volunteers

Charlotte Arbogast, MS, Senior Policy Analyst

Richmond, Virginia (May 31, 2023) – The [Serve Virginia Honor Roll](#), released May, 31, 2023, celebrates the valuable contributions of more than 2.2 million volunteers across the Commonwealth. In recognition of their service, totaling more than 231 million hours annually, the Serve Virginia Honor Roll spotlights above and beyond volunteers that serve their communities in a variety of ways, promoting quality of life and creating a lasting impact for others. More than 400 volunteers and organizations will be honored in this year’s inaugural honor roll, representing volunteer efforts and community involvement aligned with the services of the Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS), including educating and mentoring youth, coordinating food drives, and leading projects to support refugee and immigrant resettlement.

[Serve Virginia](#) is a new campaign created as a more intentional partnership between the Virginia Service Commission, which operates within VDSS’ Office on Volunteerism and Community Services, and the Virginia Service Foundation, an independent 501(c)3 organization. Serve Virginia exists to inspire individuals and organizations to engage in volunteerism, connect groups with the tools they need to make a difference, and celebrate the tremendous impact of volunteers throughout the Commonwealth.

“As the lead agency for volunteerism and service for the Commonwealth, it is our sincerest honor to recognize the volunteers who support our partners and help our resources go further in Virginia’s communities,” said Fran Inge, director of the Division of Community & Volunteer Services for VDSS. “The more than 400 volunteers and organizations recognized this year represent the critical safety net that exists thanks to communities coming together to pool resources and make lasting change.”

“Volunteer recognition is an opportunity to say ‘thank you’ to community members who step up to serve others and inspire us all to join them in making a difference,” said Kathy Spangler, director of the VDSS Office on Volunteerism and Community Service and director of Serve Virginia. “By showcasing the stories of dedicated volunteers, we can provide examples for other Virginians to follow and motivate even more Virginians to become involved in addressing the needs of their communities.”

“It is important to recognize and thank those who have donated their time, talents, and energy to serve others. They inspire us to make a difference in our communities and the world,” said Marion Brunken, executive director of Volunteer Alexandria, a partner volunteer organization connecting Serve Virginia to the local community.

Volunteers and community members will also be recognized later this year through the Governor’s Awards on Volunteerism and Community Service. The nomination period is open now and available online through the [Serve Virginia webpage](#). The Governor’s Awards highlight the outstanding contributions of individuals, groups and organizations involved in community

service, and recognizes the lasting impact made through their commitment to serving within local communities.

Join Serve Virginia in celebrating volunteerism by following them on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), and [LinkedIn](#). To personally recognize volunteers making a difference in your community, share pictures and stories on Twitter using #AmeriCorpsWeek. Learn more about Serve Virginia at [ServeVirginia.org](#).

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About the Virginia Department of Social Services

The Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS), one of the Commonwealth's largest government agencies, is comprised of approximately 2,000 state staff who proudly serve alongside more than 10,000 employees of 120 local departments of social services and community action agencies to deliver critical social services to Virginia's most vulnerable citizens. VDSS is committed to ensuring Virginians have access to the high-quality human services and resources needed to enhance their individual and collective well-being, and shape strong futures for themselves, their families and communities. The agency provides a wide range of services and resources in the areas of food and energy assistance, foster care and adoption, child support, and abuse and neglect prevention, among others. For more information, visit dss.virginia.gov.

Serve Virginia supports national service and community volunteerism across the Commonwealth. In addition to overseeing the annual grant competition that awards funding to AmeriCorps State and other national service programs, Serve Virginia actively works to support volunteerism through policy and program priorities, training and assistance, and recognizing individuals and organizations from all sectors for their contributions within their communities. Serve Virginia is supported by the Virginia Service Foundation and is guided by the Governor's Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism. For more about the work of Serve Virginia, please visit <http://servevirginia.org>.