



**VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRY
AND THE
VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS**

NEWS RELEASE

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VOSH AND THE VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS ANNOUNCE THE VADOC CHALLENGE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

RICHMOND, VA – The Virginia Department of Labor and Industry’s Virginia Occupational Safety and Health (VOSH) program and the Virginia Department of Corrections (VADOC) have entered into a strategic partnership to create a VADOC Challenge Program to recognize safety and health excellence at correctional facilities around the Commonwealth.

Administered by VOSH’s Office of Voluntary Protection Programs (VPP), VADOC Challenge is designed to encourage and recognize correctional facilities that voluntarily implement highly effective safety and health management systems to benefit VADOC workers and reduce or eliminate injuries, illnesses and fatalities at VADOC sites in Virginia.

Commissioner of Labor and Industry C. Ray Davenport and Harold W. Clarke, Director of Corrections, signed a strategic partnership agreement on August 16, 2018. “We are extremely pleased to form this groundbreaking partnership with the outstanding management and staff of

the Virginia Department of Corrections. We applaud VADOC's acceptance of this challenge to dramatically improve workplace safety and health for its workers through the implementation of safety and health management systems that will set a standard of achievement for correctional institutions second to none in the country", said Davenport.

"The Department of Corrections and the Department of Labor and Industry have long enjoyed a working partnership to safeguard health and safety at our facilities. Our two VPP STAR sites are examples of what is possible when management and employees work together to strive for the very best in health and safety," said VADOC Director Harold Clarke. "The Challenge partnership will provide a roadmap for other correctional facilities that choose to pursue STAR certification. The Department's participation in this program ultimately provides us with the opportunity to have an impact on employee safety throughout the Commonwealth."

VPP core elements of the VADOC Challenge Program include:

- 1) Management Leadership and Employee Involvement
- 2) Worksite Analysis
- 3) Hazard Prevention and Control
- 4) Safety and Health Training

Three stages of participation in VADOC Challenge are provided:

Stage I – Assess, Learn and Develop

This is the VADOC Challenge stage in which participants are introduced to the basic VPP elements that are necessary to launch the development and implementation of an effective safety and health management system.

Stage II – Implement, Track, and Control

This is the VADOC Challenge stage in which the basic actions and outcomes of Stage I have been completed and the sites are beginning to implement more thorough safety and health management system processes.

Stage III – Reassess, Monitor, and Improve

This is the VADOC Challenge stage in which the participant site's safety and health management system has been fully implemented and the site is continuing to assess its effectiveness and improving its performance where necessary.

Benefits are provided commensurate with the stage of participation in VADOC Challenge. Participants that achieve Stage III will be ready to apply to Virginia STAR, the highest level of recognition awarded by the Commonwealth of Virginia for excellence in occupational safety and health. VADOC currently has two medium security correctional facilities that have been recognized as Virginia STAR worksites: Lunenburg Correctional Center in Victoria, VA, originally certified on March 1, 2002; and Augusta Correctional Center in Craigsville, VA, originally certified on January 24, 2006; the only correctional facilities in the country to be so honored.

Virginia STAR sites receive an exemption from planned inspections from the VOSH Program, which allows VOSH to focus its limited compliance resources on high injury and illness rate employers.

VADOC correctional facilities that participate in VADOC Challenge will substantially improve safety and health protections for their workers through cooperative efforts to reduce injuries, illnesses and fatal accidents. VADOC Challenge sites will implement safety and health management systems which have consistently demonstrated decreased bottom line costs associated with dramatically reduced injury and illness rates and improved productivity and employee morale and retention.

Reducing a state agency's costs associated with injuries, illnesses and fatal accidents can result in substantial savings to Virginia taxpayers and enhance VADOC's ability to achieve its core mission to improve public safety. Costs avoided include workers' compensation charges, insurance premium increases, property damage, employee replacement and retraining, and other associated expenses.

For more information on the VADOC Challenge Program:

<https://www.doli.virginia.gov/voluntary-protection-program/vadoc-challenge/>

Also, contact Tracy Fitzpatrick, VADOC Challenge Coordinator, at 804.371.3104, ext. 120, or at tracy.fitzpatrick@doli.virginia.gov

For more information on the best practices for preventing fatalities, injuries and illnesses:

<https://www.doli.virginia.gov/vosh-programs/best-practices/>

A Media Packet for the VOSH Program can be found at:

<https://www.doli.virginia.gov/about/media-packet/>

VADOC operates secure correctional facilities and Probation and Parole offices to provide care and supervision to approximately 30,000 offenders in VADOC custody and 66,000 supervised in

the community. At 22.4 percent, Virginia has the lowest three-year recidivism rate among the 45 states that report this rate for State Responsible offenders. The use of evidence-based re-entry programming and treatment during an offender's incarceration and supervision in the community after release from custody directly impacts Virginia's recidivism rate.

For more information about VADOC Challenge, contact Mike Williford, Risk Management Director, at 804-887-8228 or mike.williford@vadoc.virginia.gov.

The Virginia Department of Labor and Industry offers two other voluntary protection recognition programs, the [Virginia Voluntary Protection Program](#) (VPP) generally for larger fixed site employers and the [Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program](#) (SHARP) for businesses of 250 employees or fewer. Both programs recognize Virginia employers that develop and implement exceptional safety and health management systems for their employees. Additional information can be obtained by contacting the Virginia Department of Labor and Industry office closest to you at www.doli.virginia.gov; or for VPP contact Milford Stern, VPP Program Manager, at 540.562.3580, ext. 123, or milford.stern@doli.virginia.gov; and for SHARP contact, Sharon Holmes, General Administrative Coordinator, at 804.786.5873 or sharon.holmes@doli.virginia.gov.

The Virginia Department of Labor and Industry also offers [On-Site Consultation Services](#) to help employers better understand and voluntarily comply with VOSH standards. Priority is given to high hazard workplaces with 250 or fewer employees and all services are offered to employers at no cost. On-Site Consultation Services helps employers identify and correct potential safety and health hazards through walk-through surveys (without citations or penalties), provide abatement advice, provide on-site training, and provide program assistance to develop safety and health programs. Additional information about On-Site Consultation Services can be obtained by contacting the Virginia Department of Labor and Industry office closest to you at www.doli.virginia.gov or by contacting Sharon Holmes, General Administrative Coordinator, at 804.786.5873 or sharon.holmes@doli.virginia.gov.

The Virginia Occupational Safety and Health (VOSH) program is financed with 50% state funds and 50% federal funds in the form of a grant from the U. S. Department of Labor – OSHA, under §23(g) of the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970.

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