

VIRGINIA HEALTH CATALYST LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Virginia's General Assembly ended its session on March 9th, passing over 2,000 bills, including the state budget. Virginia Health Catalyst supported several bills to improve healthcare access, specifically oral health. This resource summarizes those proposals and indicates which ones passed.

The Governor will now review the bills. He can sign them into law, reject them (veto), or suggest changes. Lawmakers will reconvene on April 17th, 2024, to address any actions taken by the Governor.

Priority Bills at Adjournment

This table displays the bills that were approved and rejected in the House and Senate. Bills that passed both chambers have gone to the Governor for his consideration.

Bill	Passed in House	Passed in Senate	Signed by Governor
HB 225 / SB 22 : Dentist and Dental Hygienist Compact	YES	YES	YES
HB 594 : Community Health Worker Medicaid Benefit Workgroup	NO	N/A	N/A
SB 615 : Community Health Worker Medicaid Benefit Workgroup	NO	YES	N/A
HB 605 : Remote Supervision	YES	YES	UNDER REVIEW
HB 970 : Cover All Kids	NO	N/A	N/A
SB 231 : Cover All Kids	NO	YES	N/A
HB 1499 / SB 155 : Virginia Health Workforce Development Authority	YES	YES	UNDER REVIEW

Priority Budget Proposals

The Conference budget is a final spending plan hammered out by representatives from the House Appropriations Committee and the Senate Finance & Appropriations Committee. After the House and Senate each pass their own versions of the Governor's proposed budget, these committees reconcile the differences to create a compromise bill. This table summarizes how our budget priorities fared in the final agreement.

Budget Proposal	Included in Conference Budget	Conference Budget Amount
Community Health Workers at Local Health Districts	YES	\$6.4 million in general funds to support Community Health Worker positions at Virginia's local health districts ¹
DMAS Workgroup to Design Community Health Worker Medicaid Benefit	NO	N/A
Cover All Kids	NO	N/A
Virginia Health Workforce Development Authority (VHWDA)	YES	\$3.2 million in general funds for health workforce initiatives, including a state match for federal Area Health Education Centers Program funding ²
Medicaid Dental Reimbursement Rates	YES	\$11.3 million in general funds to increase Medicaid and FAMIS dental reimbursement rates by three percent.
VCU School of Dentistry New Building	YES	\$5.2 million in general funds to plan the construction of a new VCU School of Dentistry building.
Free and Charitable Clinics	YES	\$3 million in general funds to support free and charitable clinics.
Care Coordination	YES	Language only. Authorizes Virginia's Medicaid agency to require Medicaid Managed Care organizations (MCOs) to submit an annual plan on how they will coordinate with the Medicaid program's Dental Benefit Administrator (DBA).
Maternal & Child Health	YES	Language only. Authorizes Virginia's Medicaid agency to require MCOs to implement the federal Maternal Core Quality Measure Set and increase maternal and child health value-based payment targets.
Federally Qualified Health Centers	YES	\$3 million in general funds to support federally qualified health centers.
Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF)	YES	\$13 million in general funds to draw down \$183 million in federal DWSRF infrastructure funds.

¹General funds are conditioned on VDH not receiving approval from the federal government to continue using federal funds to support these positions in the first year.

²This funding includes a transfer of \$600,000 of base funding included in the Governor's introduced budget.

Detailed Summary of Priority Bills and Budget Proposals

Bills and Budget Amendments (BA)

Virginia Health Workforce Development Authority

Bills: [HB 1499 \(Willett\)](#) & [SB 155 \(Head\)](#).

BA: [279 #5c](#)

These bills, as approved by the legislature, will create the Virginia Health Care Career and Technical Training and Education Fund (the Fund), to be administered by the Director of the Department of Workforce Development and Advancement. The Fund may only support the mission of the Virginia Health Workforce Development Authority (VHWDA). Earlier versions of these bills included language directing VHWDA to develop an employer-led collective impact program to strengthen the health and health sciences workforce. The current version does not include this language.

Cover All Kids

Bills: [HB 970 \(Tran\)](#) & [SB 231 \(Hashmi\)](#).

BA: [289 #1s](#)

These bills would have extended comprehensive health care coverage to low-income children regardless of their immigration status.

Community Health Worker (CHW) Medicaid Benefit

Bills: [HB 594 \(Sickles\)](#) & [SB 615 \(Pillion\)](#).

BA: [292 #3s](#)

These bills would have directed Virginia’s Medicaid agency to design a Medicaid benefit for CHW services.

Bills (No BA)

Dentist and Dental Hygienist Compact

Bills: [HB 225 \(Sickles\)](#) & [SB 22 \(Locke\)](#).

These bills will authorize Virginia to become a signatory to the Dentist and Dental Hygienist Compact. The Compact increases public access to dental services by permitting eligible licensed dentists and dental hygienists to practice in Compact participating states provided that they are licensed in at least one participating state.

Remote Supervision

Bills: [HB 605 \(Price\)](#).

This bill will increase the number of days dentists have to examine a patient who was seen by a hygienist working under remote supervision from 90 days to 180 days. This will allow more time for a dentist to integrate a patient first seen under remote supervision into his or her practice. Remote supervision makes oral health care more accessible to underserved populations by allowing dental hygienists to treat patients in safety net and community-based settings.

Detailed Summary of Priority Bills and Budget Proposals

Budget Amendments (No Bills)

VCU School of Dentistry New Building

BA: [C-14 #1c](#)

This budget amendment will provide \$5.2 million in general funds to plan the construction of a new VCU School of Dentistry building.

CHW at Local Health Districts

BA: [278 #1c](#)

This budget amendment will provide \$6.4 million in general funds to support CHW positions in Virginia’s local health districts, provided federal funds are not available.

Medicaid Dental Reimbursement Rates

BA: [288 #7c](#)

This budget amendment will provide \$11.3 million in general funds and \$21.3 million in non-general funds to increase Medicaid and FAMIS dental reimbursement rates by three percent. Rates for dental services were increased by 30 percent in FY 2023.

Federally Qualified Health Centers

BA: [279 #1c](#)

This budget amendment will provide \$3 million in general funds to support federally qualified health centers. The additional funding would be used to continue providing comprehensive medical, dental, and mental health services to uninsured Virginians.

Free and Charitable Clinics

BA: [279 #2c](#)

This budget amendment will provide \$3 million in general funds to support the operating costs of free clinics that are members of the Virginia Association of Free and Charitable Clinics. The funding will be used to provide uninsured and underinsured patients with medical, dental, vision, speech, hearing, and behavioral health care, prescription medications, and substance use disorder services.

Included in Governor’s Budget (No Bills or BA)

Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF)

The Governor’s budget includes \$13 million in general funds as a state match for additional federal awards under the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.