

# Virginia Mentorship Participants

## Alexandria Department of Health (VA)

### Background

**State:** Virginia

**LHD Population Size Served:** 140,000

**Number of Retail Food Establishments Inspected:** 725

**Retail Program Standards Met/Working On:** 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, Self-Assessment

**Enrolled in the Retail Program Standards:** 2004

**NACCHO Mentorship Program Cohort(s):** 1, 3, and 4

The Alexandria Health Department serves the City of Alexandria, Virginia. The mission of the Alexandria Health Department is "Protecting and Promoting Health and Well-Being In Our Communities".

Alexandria is an ethnically and culturally diverse city of 140,000 people directly across the Potomac River from Washington, D.C. With an area of only 15.4 square miles, Alexandria is the tenth most densely populated municipality in the United States. Alexandria is known for its fine dining restaurants. Alexandria has a total of approximately 725 food establishments including restaurants, groceries and other food service operations.

The Alexandria Health Department is a state-administered local health department operating under a cooperative agreement with the City of Alexandria. The Alexandria Health Department has responsibility for administering both state laws and regulations and local ordinances.

### Role in Mentorship Program

Alexandria Health Department participated in the NACCHO Retail Program Standards Mentorship Program as a mentor in the first, third, and fourth cohorts. Alexandria Health Department mentored St. Louis County Health Department (MO) and County of Lake, Environmental Health Department (CA) during the first cohort and mentored Cape Girardeau County Public Health Center (MO), Cheyenne-Laramie County Health Department (WY), and Prince George's County Health Department (MD) during the third cohort. For the fourth cohort, they mentored Louisville (KY) Metro Public Health and Wellness, Jackson County (NC) Department of Public Health, and Gwinnett, Newton, and Rockdale County (GA) Health Departments.

### Lessons Learned/Tips

One of the key insights was that everyone does not need to (and should not want to) reinvent the wheel. Environmental health (EH) units nationwide are experiencing staff shortages and budget cuts. Working on the Retail Program Standards is resource intensive. By working together sharing policies, forms, ideas and expertise between EH units, the resources needed to implement the Retail Program Standards are substantially reduced.

## Contact

Rachel Stradling, Environmental Health Manager  
Rachel.Stradling@vdh.virginia.gov  
703-746-4970

**Link:** <http://www.alexandriava.gov/FoodSafety>

## **Central Shenandoah Health District**

### Background

**State:** Virginia

**LHD Population Size Served:** 293,000

**Number of Retail Food Establishments Inspected:** 1,068

**Retail Program Standards Met/Working On:** 2 and Self-Assessment

**Enrolled in the Retail Program Standards:** 2016

**NACCHO Mentorship Program Cohort(s):** 6

The Mission of the Virginia Department of Health is to promote and protect the health of all Virginians. The Central Shenandoah Health District (CSHD) works diligently to promote and protect the health of all residents and visitors in our localities.

CSHD's retail food regulatory program encompasses a diverse area geographically and strives to meet the needs of a diverse population. The program reflects both the rural agricultural element (for example; regulating and inspecting establishments at County fairs, an increasing number of farm-to-table businesses, and foodservice at vineyards/breweries) as well as the increasingly diverse urban areas with a growing number of mobile food units and new ethnic restaurants.

There are currently 13 Environmental Health Specialists with duties in the retail food regulatory program working from 7 offices within the CSHD. The CSHD retail food regulatory program includes a program supervisor (with assigned establishments), and a district standardization officer (with assigned establishments). The manager does not have assigned establishments. Factoring in other assigned job duties the full time equivalent staff assigned to the retail food regulatory program is currently less than 6.

Regulated establishments include restaurants, schools and mobile food units, bed and breakfasts, hotel/motels, and summer camp kitchens

The CSHD administers the Virginia Department of Health's Food Regulations (effective July 12, 2016) which were amended to be consistent with the 2013 FDA Food Code. Regulatory authority is statutorily derived (Code of Virginia, Title 35.1) and then delegated by the State Board of Health and the State Health Commissioner (12 VAC5-421. Food Regulations).

### Role in Mentorship Program

The CHSD participated in the NACCHO Retail Program Standards Mentorship Program as a mentee in the sixth cohort. Fairfax County Health Department (VA) mentored CHSD on Standard 2.

### **Lessons Learned/Tips**

One lesson learned is that an agency might be surprised at how much they already may be doing toward meeting a Standard. With some effort and focus on improving key areas great progress can be made. Another lesson learned is that you need to stay on top of making sure staff stay committed and focused. Seeking out staff input and making sure to offer opportunity for growth need to be a focus for ensuring full and committed participation

### **.Contact**

Jason Weakley  
Environmental Health manager  
Jason.Weakley@vdh.virginia.gov  
540-332-7830 ext. 348

**Link:** <http://healthspace.com/Clients/VDH/CShenandoah/Web.nsf/home.xsp>

## **Chickahominy Health District**

### **Background**

**State:** Virginia

**LHD Population Size Served:** 150,000

**Number of Retail Food Establishments Inspected:** 545 retail food establishments, 122 temporary events (358 vendors)

**Retail Program Standards Met/Working On:** 2

**Enrolled in the Retail Program Standards:** 2016

**NACCHO Mentorship Program Cohort(s):** 6

Chickahominy Health District's mission statement is to improve the health of our community by preventing disease, promoting healthy lifestyles, and protecting people from the environment & other hazards.

Working under the authority of the Commonwealth of Virginia Health Commissioner, the Chickahominy Health District regulates food establishments, as defined by the Code of Virginia, throughout the region known as the Chickahominy Health District. This is a diverse district spanning Virginia's Piedmont region to the Coastal Plans for a total of 1,191 miles. The Chickahominy Health District serves approximately 150,000 citizens in the counties of Charles City, Goochland, Hanover, New Kent, and the Town of Ashland.

From the wineries and breweries of western Goochland and New Kent Counties to the home of Patrick Henry and Kings Dominion Amusement Park in Hanover County to the James River Plantations and bed and breakfast residences in Charles City County, this

district is a blend of open, rural landscapes and suburbia, agriculture and business, history and tourism. The localities in this District host several large, annual festivals, including the Ashland Strawberry Fair in June, the Hanover Tomato Festival in July and the Goochland Field Days of the Past in September. These three events alone can attract up to 50,000 citizens and tourists.

At current staffing levels, the Chickahominy Health District employs six (6) Full Time Employees (FTE) in the Food Safety Program. There are four (4) Food Safety EHSS, one (1) Technical Specialist/District Standardization Officer (TS/DSO), and one (1) Food Safety Supervisor. The Food Safety Environmental Health personnel are also “generalists” with responsibilities in VDH’s Tourist Establishments Program (TES) and the Rabies Protection program.

Chickahominy Health District follows the Administrative Code of Virginia Chapter 421 Food Regulations which is based off the FDA Food Code 2013. The district derives regulatory authority from Section 35.1 Code of Virginia, 2016 Virginia Food Regulations 12VAC5-421.

### **Role in Mentorship Program**

Chickahominy Health District participated in the NACCHO Retail Program Standards Mentorship Program as a mentee in the sixth cohort. Fairfax County Health Department (VA) mentored CHSD on Standard 2.

### **Lessons Learned/Tips**

The impact from our first verification audit will be felt most immediately internally in having a written and verifiable training plan in place. While our training process has been fairly consistent in the past, we now have a clearly written plan and method for verifying training steps and completion, identifying gaps in training and identifying individual strengths and weakness during the training process. With more consistent training and a better means to identify training needs, our staff will be better prepared to serve our customers.

### **Contact**

Carol Lien  
Environmental Health manager  
Carol.Lien @vdh.virginia.gov  
804-365-4353

**Link:** <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/chickahominy/food-safety-services/>

### **Fairfax County Health Department (VA)**

#### **Background**

**State:** Virginia

**LHD Population Size Served:** 1,176,178

---

**Number of Retail Food Establishments Inspected:** ~4,000

**Retail Program Standards Met/Working On:** Have worked on all the Standards, met all but Standards 5 and 8

**Enrolled in the Retail Program Standards:** 2003

**NACCHO Mentorship Program Cohort(s):** 2-7

---

The Fairfax County Health Department (FCHD) is located in Northern Virginia and serves over 1.17 million people in the Fairfax Health District, a 407 square mile area that includes Fairfax County and the cities of Fairfax and Falls Church. Fairfax County is the most populous jurisdiction in both Virginia and the Washington Metropolitan Area. The FCHD works to protect, promote, and improve the health and quality of life of everyone in the community, striving for its vision of healthy people in healthy communities.

---

As a locally administered health department operating under a Memorandum of Agreement with the Virginia Department of Health, the FCHD has 653 full-time employees. The FCHD has five core functions on which service activities are based: preventing epidemics and the spread of disease, protecting the public against environmental hazards, promoting and encouraging healthy behaviors, assuring the quality and accessibility of health services, and responding to disasters and assisting communities in recovery. The FCHD is structured into four main divisions: 1) Community Health Development and Preparedness; 2) Environmental Health; 3) Laboratory Services; and 4) Patient Care Services. The Division of Environmental Health (DEH) administers the retail food regulatory program with 35 employees who perform work related to the program.

---

The retail food regulatory program serves to safeguard public health through the prevention of foodborne illness and ensure that food is safe, unadulterated, prepared under sanitary conditions and honestly presented to the consumer. The Fairfax County Food and Food Handling Code is based on the 2005 FDA Model Food Code. The scope of the program includes issuance of permits and the inspection of nearly 3500 food establishments such as full service restaurants, fast food restaurants, public and private school cafeterias, hospital kitchens, child and adult care food service, hotel continental breakfast, jail food service, mobile food units, temporary food vendors and certain aspects of grocery and convenience stores. The program uses a risk and performance-based inspection frequency in an effort to focus its resources on the food establishments with complex food operations and a history of non-compliance with the control of foodborne illness risk factors.

---

The FCHD's strategic planning initiatives are in place to achieve a healthier community. These initiatives align with and support activities related to the FDA Voluntary National Retail Food Regulatory Program Standards (Retail Program Standards). The department strategically seeks opportunities to leverage resources through enhanced partnerships and grant funding. In May 2016, the department was accredited by the Public Health Accreditation Board. The FCHD accreditation team submitted multiple Retail Program Standards documents as examples to demonstrate measures across the accreditation domains.

---

The FCHD enrolled in the Retail Program Standards in 2003 and conducted the initial self-assessment in 2004. Activities over the last ten years include self-assessments and self-assessment updates in 2007, 2012, and 2014; completion of risk factor studies in 2005, 2010 and 2016; and verification audits in 2006, 2014, 2015 and 2016. The FCHD has also conducted verification audits for other enrolled local health departments and state regulatory agencies in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

---

Management and staff continue to work collaboratively to develop policies and procedures to progress towards meeting additional standards. Participation in the NACCHO Program Standards Mentorship (Cohorts 2 through 6) as a mentor to a total of 22 LHDs has provided the primary means for the FCHD to expand its level of expertise and experience with each of the Retail Program Standards and the Administrative Procedures. Through the NACCHO mentorship program and the AFDO Retail Program Standards Grant Program, many department staff, MPH practicum students and interns have been engaged in Retail Program Standards activities, self-assessments, and verification audits. The department has established the capacity to sustain activities related to the Retail Program Standards and is using the Standards as the model for other environmental public health programs such as the water recreation facilities program.

---

The FCHD has expertise and experience with all of the Program Standards and the Administrative Procedures. Fairfax County's self-assessment activities have found that Standards 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, and 9 have been met. Verification audits conducted in 2014, 2015 and 2016 confirmed that Standards 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, and 9 were met. For 2016, a third risk factor study was completed for Standard 9 along with a trends report on the occurrence of foodborne illness risk factors.

### **Role in Mentorship Program**

---

FCHD participated in the NACCHO Retail Program Standards Mentorship Program as a mentor in the second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh cohorts. In the second cohort, FCHD mentored Jefferson County Health Department (MO), Summit County Environmental Health (CO), and Cumberland County Health Department (IL) and was shadowed by St. Charles County Department of Community Health and the Environment. In the third cohort, FCHD mentored Thomas Jefferson Health District (VA), County of Monterey, Environmental Health Bureau (CA), Frederick County Health Department (MD), St. Charles County Department of Community Health and the Environment (MO) and was shadowed by Kanawha-Charleston Health Department (WV). In the fourth cohort, FCHD mentored the County of San Bernardino Department of Public Health (CA), Division of Environmental Health Services, Southern Nevada Health District (NV), Erie County Health Department (OH), and Lord Fairfax Health District (VA). In the fifth cohort, FCHD mentored Mid-Ohio Valley Health Department (WV), New River Health District (VA), Oakland County Health Division (MI), Rockingham County Environmental Health (NC), and Wilkes County Health Department (NC). In the sixth cohort, FCHD mentored District of Columbia Department of Health, Englewood Department of Health (NJ), Central Shenandoah Health District (VA),

---

Chickahominy Health District (VA), Rappahannock-Rapidan Health District (VA), and Northwest Georgia Public Health District (GA). During the seventh cohort, FCHD mentored Angelina County (TX) on Standards 1, 4, 7; Rappahannock-Rapidan (VA) on Standards 4; Cumberland County (NJ) on Standards 2,4 and 9; District of Columbia on Standards 2 and 3; and Marion County (IN) on Standards 3, 4, and 6.

---

## Mentorship Program Lessons Learned/Tips

Our involvement in the NACCHO Mentorship Program re-engaged the importance of the Retail Program Standards to our agency and our stakeholders by creating a conversation around the topic in staff and management meetings. This is very important to establish a succession plan to sustain the activities related to the Retail Program Standards. We would also recommend using the Retail Program Standards as a model to enhance other environmental health programs.

---

## Project Contact

Pieter Sheehan, Director, Division of Environmental Health  
pieter.sheehan@fairfaxcounty.gov  
703-246-8470703-246-8470

### Link:

---

<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hd/eh>

---

## Lenowisco Health District (VA)

### Background

**State:** Virginia

**LHD Population Size Served:** 70,000

**Number of Retail Food Establishments Inspected:** 300

**Retail Program Standards Met/Working On:** 2

**Enrolled in the Retail Program Standards:** 2016

**NACCHO Mentorship Program Cohort(s):** 6

Lenowisco Health District's mission statement is to "Provide leadership and service to enable our citizens and communities to improve their health and well-being."

The Virginia Department of Health's Health Commissioner delegates authority to the LENOWISCO Health District (LHD) to regulate Food Establishments as defined by the Code of Virginia throughout the district's four individual localities: Lee County, Scott County, Wise County, and the City of Norton. The LHD covers approximately 1371 square miles and shares borders with the states of Tennessee and Kentucky. The Environmental Health (EH) staff of the LHD lead food safety efforts as our Food Safety Inspection Officers (FSIO); however, with the exception of one EH staff, all are

generalists with responsibilities in each of our regulatory program areas. The LHD employs five Environmental Health Specialist, Sr.'s, devoting approximately two Full-Time Equivalents or FTEs to its Food Safety Program, one Environmental Health Technical Specialist who acts as the District Standardization Officer, and one Environmental Health Manager with programmatic supervision, devoting approximately 0.25 FTEs to the Food Safety Program. The five Environmental Health Specialists, Sr. have an establishment caseload between thirty-five and forty-five. The Environmental Health Technical Specialist has an establishment caseload between eighty and ninety. The Environmental Health Manager does not carry an establishment caseload. These caseloads do not include temporary food service establishments which are assigned according to the event assignment. Each Environmental Health Specialist, Sr. and the Environmental Technical Specialist have event assignment with each event having one and fifteen temporary food establishments, typically.

The retail program includes 8 staff members: the Health Director, the Environmental Health Manager, the Environmental Health Technical Specialist, and five Environmental Health Specialists, Sr.

The food safety program includes nearly any facility offering food to the public with a few codified exceptions. Regulated facilities include daycare food service, hospital food service, institutional food service (public schools, private schools, college dining, local jails, assisted living, etc.), retail food service, catering operations, mobile units, hotel foodservice, bed and breakfasts, summer camp foodservice, and temporary food establishments. The LHD regulates approximately 300 food facilities.

### **Role in Mentorship Program**

Lenowisco participated in the NACCHO Retail Program Standards Mentorship Program as a mentee in the sixth cohort. New River Health District (VA) mentored Lenowisco on Standard 2.

### **Lessons Learned/Tips**

The biggest lesson we learned was the need to better track our training efforts during our quarterly meetings.

### **Contact**

Bradley Stallard  
Environmental Health manager  
brad.stallard@vdh.virginia.gov  
(276) 328-1933

**Link:** <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/lenowisco/environmental-health-services/>

## **Lord Fairfax Health District (VA)**

### **Background**

**State:** Virginia

**LHD Population Size Served:** 228,000

**Number of Retail Food Establishments Inspected:** 852

**Retail Program Standards Met/Working On:** Self-Assessment, 2, 3

**Enrolled in the Retail Program Standards:** 2014

**NACCHO Mentorship Program Cohort(s):** 4

Lord Fairfax Health District's mission is to provide public health leadership with and for the communities we serve. The environmental health division has 14 staff members (including management) working in the food safety program.

The Lord Fairfax Health District (LFHD) is comprised of the City of Winchester and the counties of Clarke, Frederick, Page, Shenandoah, and Warren. It includes approximately 228,000 people living in 1,652 square miles of urban, suburban, and rural environments. Additionally, the area includes multiple national and state tourist attractions and is in close proximity to the metropolitan D.C. region.

The goal of their food safety program is to prevent foodborne illness by ensuring that foods prepared and served by food establishments are safe, unadulterated, and prepared under sanitary conditions. This is accomplished by reviewing plans and conducting pre-operational inspections for new or remodeled establishments before granting approval for their operation, conducting routine inspections, responding to citizen complaints, and providing food safety information to the community and permitted facilities. The food safety inspection program includes daycare food-service, hospital food-service, retail restaurant food-service, private and public schools, residential long-term care facilities, hotels and bed and breakfast facilities, summer camps, and caterers as well as mobile units, pushcarts, and temporary event food-service. The total number of food service establishments served is: 852. Additionally, each year about 800 temporary food establishment permits are issued.

Regulatory authority for the local health department food inspection program: Sec. 35.1, Code of Virginia, 2010 Virginia Food Regulations 12 VAC 5-421-10 et seq.

### **Role in Mentorship Program**

Lord Fairfax participated in the NACCHO Retail Program Standards Mentorship Program as a mentee in the fourth cohort. They were mentored by Fairfax County Health Department (VA).

### **Lessons Learned/Tips**

The final findings are that being part of this mentorship program allowed us to have another LHD to lean on when completing the process. This was integral to our success in the program. Additionally, we had a timeline in which we were required to meet our goals. This helped to ensure that it remained a priority throughout the grant period. Our main lesson learned was that it is imperative to set aside the time as a group to work towards the selected goals.

**Contact**

Virginia H. Jeffries, Environmental Health Technical Specialist

[virginia.jeffries@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:virginia.jeffries@vdh.virginia.gov)

(540) 459-3733

**Link:** <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/LHD/LordFairfax/>

**Lynchburg Health Department, VA**

## Background

**State:** Virginia

**HD Population Size Served:** 261,600

**Number of Retail Food Establishments Inspected:** 900

**Retail Program Standards Met/Working On:** Met Standard 2, working on Standard 1

**Year Enrolled in the Retail Program Standards:** 2017

**NACCHO Mentorship Program Cohort(s):** none

**Version of Food Code:** 2013

## Mission and Background:

Mission Statement: "We nurture the community's well-being by practicing public health, meeting the needs of the present while planning for the future."

Background: The Central Virginia Health District (CVHD) regulates retail food safety in the counties of Amherst, Appomattox, Bedford and Campbell, as well as the city of Lynchburg. The district is administratively part of the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) and receives general policy direction from the VDH Office of Environmental Health Services. Through routine inspections, training and education our main role is to regulate and ensure the retail food establishments operate in accordance with the Virginia Food Regulations, which reference the 2013 FDA Food Code.

## Role in Mentorship Program

- Mentee
- New River Health District
- Standard 2

## Lessons Learned/Tips

- Documentation of training inspections is important
- Formulating the ledger for Standard verification is important. Presenting the information to the auditor in a clear and linear way makes the process exponentially easier.

## Contact

- Name: Justin B. Holder
- Email: Justin.holder@vdh.virginia.gov
- Phone number: 434-477-5928

**Link to food safety program website:** [www.vdh.virginia.gov](http://www.vdh.virginia.gov)

## **New River Health District (VA)**

### **Background**

**State:** Virginia

**LHD Population Size Served:** 178,000

**Number of Retail Food Establishments Inspected:** 660

**Retail Program Standards Met/Working On:** Self-assessment, 1, 2, 4, 9

**Enrolled in the Retail Program Standards:** 2015

**NACCHO Mentorship Program Cohort(s):** 5-7

New River Health District's Mission Statement: As an agency, and as individuals, we value hospitality, responsiveness, accountability, compassion, integrity, and cutting-edge expertise. We are committed to protecting all citizens in the New River Valley at all times, preventing disease, and promoting health and wellness.

Working under the authority of the Commonwealth of Virginia Health Commissioner, the New River Health District (NRHD) regulates Food Establishments, as defined by the Code of Virginia, throughout the region known as the New River Valley. The New River Valley is comprised of five (5) individual localities; four (4) counties: Floyd, Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski, and the City of Radford. The NRHD is also home to two (2) major universities, Radford University and Virginia Tech, and a community college. The NRHD spans approximately 1477 square miles, and shares a border with the state of West Virginia. The Environmental Health Staff of the NRHD lead its food safety efforts as our Food Safety Inspection Officers (FSIO); however, they are also "generalists" with responsibilities in each of our regulatory program areas. At current staffing levels, the NRHD employs eight (8) Environmental Health Specialists or FSIOs, devoting approximately 4 Full-Time Equivalents or FTEs to its Food Safety Program in particular. The food safety program has recently implemented some specific changes, for instance, although we have had a Standardization Officer since 2008 that role has historically co-resided with the Environmental Health Supervisor. In the winter of 2014-15, we were able to segregate those two critical functions when we were able to recruit an Environmental Health Technical Specialist to fulfill the role and duties of District Standardization Officer (DSO). Another recent change has been to alter workload assignments and reorder the priority of food safety assignments near the very top of our Environmental Health Specialists' duties.

### **Role in Mentorship Program**

New River participated in the NACCHO Retail Program Standards Mentorship Program as a mentee in the fifth cohort and was mentored by Fairfax County Health Department (VA). In the sixth cohort, New River mentored Lenowisco Health District (VA) on Standards 2 and in the seventh cohort they mentored Central Virginia Health District (VA) on Standard 2.

### **Lessons Learned/Tips**

We learned so much through this Mentorship, much of which will bear fruit for many years to come. First, we developed a Training Program Manual to ensure our Food Safety Program both has and can maintain a uniform trained staff, which has subsequently been documented through Self-Assessment and Audit. Second, we developed a robust understanding of the Program Standards which will allow us to

continue to work towards building the best Food Safety Program we can for the New River Health District. We learned there are a lot of resources, in the form of templates, guides, manuals, and people available to aid in our work towards meeting the Program Standards. We developed relationships with likeminded LHD partners, who have faced or are facing many of the struggles and barriers we ourselves faced. We also learned the value of the Program Standards themselves and in the pursuit of them. Our Self-Assessment revealed there remain a great many gaps between our program and the Program Standards. With that said, however, the Self-Assessment also provided three important revelations. One, we are closer to meeting certain Program Standards than previously thought. Two, the critical evaluation of our Food Safety Program through the Self-

Assessment process is a value in and of itself, as it clearly identifies areas of program strength and weakness. And lastly, there are a lot of really great colleagues working through these and both, they, themselves and their tools/ideas are great resources we can tap as we look to improve our Food Safety Program.

We borrowed from our own experience and from our Mentor and attempted to emulate their game plan for Mentoring. It was very effective for us, and we were confident it would translate well for our Mentee. It did. Having a structured plan, with date/times established and targeted is extremely helpful in establishing and maintaining momentum. This concept of establishing and maintaining momentum seems to weave throughout the Retail Program Standards. I've found it is very important within the Mentorship Program, and absolutely critical in the Retail Program Standards themselves. Another lesson from our Mentoring experience was the importance of relationships and was reinforced from our previous experiences as a Mentee. Mentoring for the first time - we did not hesitate to reach out to those relationships we had established as a Mentee. The relationships built with the team at NACCHO, and the relationship with our own Mentor and cohort members was invaluable as always. Everyone involved in the Mentorship Program is genuinely invested in everyone else's success through the Program and the Retail Program Standards.

## Contact

Gary Coggins, Environmental Health Manager Senior  
[Gary.Coggins@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:Gary.Coggins@vdh.virginia.gov)  
(540) 585-3342

**Link:** <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/LHD/newriver/>

## **Rappahannock-Rapidan Health District (VA)**

### **Background**

**State:** Virginia

**LHD Population Size Served:** 172,388

**Number of Retail Food Establishments Inspected:** 477

**Retail Program Standards Met/Working On:** Self-assessment, 2 and 4

**Enrolled in the Retail Program Standards:** 2016

**NACCHO Mentorship Program Cohort(s):** 6 and 7

Rappahannock-Rapidan Health District values hospitality, responsiveness, accountability, compassion, integrity, and cutting-edge experience. We are committed to protecting all citizens in the Rappahannock Rapidan Health District at all times, preventing disease, and promoting health and wellness.

Working under the authority of the Commonwealth of Virginia Health Commissioner, the Rappahannock Rapidan Health District (RRHD) regulates Food Establishments, as defined by the Code of Virginia, throughout the region known as the RRHD comprised of five (5) individual counties Fauquier, Culpeper, Madison, Orange, and Rappahannock. Our District spans approximately 1,950 square miles of area. The Environmental Health Staff of the RRHD that lead its food safety efforts are comprised of one (1) full time Food Safety inspector and three (3) "generalist" with responsibilities in each of our regulatory programs. We also have one (1) District Standardization Officer (DSO) and two (2) Environmental Health Supervisors who lead our field staff and area also all standardized in the food safety program. This past year we were able to perform risk reassessments of all permitted food establishments in RRHD in an effort to improve the accuracy of our food safety inspection frequencies. Another recent change has been that we upgraded computer equipment for the Environmental Health Staff to allow inspections to be completed onsite and provided to food establishment operators electronically.

There are 9 staff members in the retail food program, including the Health Director, the Environmental Health Manager, two (2) Environmental Health Supervisors, the District Standardization Officer, and four (4) Environmental Health Specialists.

The food safety program regulates approximately 480 facilities/operations. The RRHD is responsible for regulating daycare food service, hospital, and other institutional food service (i.e. private and public schools, university dining, local/regional jails, assisted living, etc.), retail restaurant food service, catering operations, mobile and pushcart units, food service at hotels, bed and breakfasts, summer camps, and temporary and/or event food service.

The RRHD uses the Administrative Code of Virginia Chapter 421 Food Regulations based on the 2013 FDA Food Code. They derive regulatory authority from Sec. 35.1 Code of Virginia, 2010 Virginia Food Regulations 12 VAC-5-421

### **Role in Mentorship Program**

The RRHD participated in the NACCHO Retail Program Standards Mentorship Program as a mentee in the sixth cohort. Fairfax County Health Department (VA) mentored RRHD on Standard 6. In cohort seven, Fairfax County mentored RRHD on Standard 4.

### **Lessons Learned/Tips**

Our district has been very fortunate that the turnover rate had, until recently, been very low. As of last year we have hired 4 new employees for the Food Program and having a "training guide" has been immensely useful to us in proceeding with their training.

### **Contact**

Whitney Wright  
Environmental Health manager  
Whitney.Wright@vdh.virginia.gov  
540-316-6275

**Link:** <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/rappahannock-rapidan/environmental-health-services/>

## **Thomas Jefferson Health District (VA)**

### **Background**

**State:** Virginia

**LHD Population Size Served:** 235,000

**Number of Retail Food Establishments Inspected:** 860

**Retail Program Standards Met/Working On:** 4, Self-Assessment

**Enrolled in the Retail Program Standards:** 2013

**NACCHO Mentorship Program Cohort(s):** 3

The Virginia Department of Health is dedicated to promoting and protecting the health of Virginians. The Thomas Jefferson Health District (TJHD), Virginia's Planning District 10, is comprised of the City of Charlottesville and the counties of Albemarle, Fluvanna, Greene, Louisa and Nelson. It includes approximately 235,000 people living in urban, suburban, and rural environments.

### **Role in Mentorship Program**

TJHD participated in the NACCHO Retail Program Standards Mentorship Program as a mentee in third cohort and was mentored by Fairfax County Health Department (VA).

### **Lessons Learned/Tips**

Having a full-time permanent data analyst position for each health district would make it easier for health districts to meet the FDA Regulatory Food Standards.

Thomas Jefferson is currently working towards obtaining PHAB accreditation. Some of the documentation that that meet the FDA Program Standards was useful for PHAB

accreditation as well. For instance, the QA policy was able to be used as an example of Thomas Jefferson incorporating evidence-based practices for PHAB Measure 10.1.1A

**Contact**

Elizabeth Campbell, EH Food Consultant  
elizabetha.campbell@vdh.virginia.gov  
(434) 972-6256

**Link:** <http://www.vdh.state.va.us/LHD/ThomasJefferson/EnvironmentalHealth.htm#Food>