



LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACADEMIES

Virginia Community Colleges are working with localities and the Virginia Institute of Government to provide professional development opportunities to local government officials and employees



VIRGINIA
INSTITUTE OF
GOVERNMENT

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

A Local Government Academy is a program of classes, offered by a community college, intended for employees and elected and appointed officials of localities in that college's service region. These programs are called Local Government Academies or Local Government Institutes.

The structure of a Local Government Academy will vary depending on the needs of the locality (ies) involved. Here are some possible formats:

- ▼ an open-enrollment program offering several semester-long classes designed for all levels of employees from localities in a specific region;
- ▼ an open-enrollment seminar of morning and/or afternoon classes for employees and elected officials; or
- ▼ a one-day class held at the request of a locality for selected employees.

Classes are held either at the college, onsite at a local government training facility, or at a regional educational center.

CONTENT FOCUS

A college's Workforce Development or Business and Industry Center works with HR directors and administrators of area local governments to determine the curriculum. The program's focus can be diverse, covering

- ▼ core skills, like customer service, supervising employees, and communication;
- ▼ leadership development; and
- ▼ specialized knowledge, such as emergency management and land-use regulations.

Topics are selected based on the expressed needs of the localities.

ROLE OF THE VA. INSTITUTE OF GOVERNMENT

The Institute's role can include participating in curriculum discussions; enlisting trainers who specialize in developing classes for and delivering training to local governments; acting as liaison between the community college and the locality; identifying sources to assist with content development; and providing general advice.

SAMPLE PROGRAMS

Listed below are some examples of community college/local government programs:

- ▼ *Eastern Shore Community College* held five classes requested by Accomack County for its employees beginning in December 2007. Employees from Northampton County also attended.
- ▼ *Germanna Community College* began its Local Government Academy in fall 2005. To date 41 classes have been held, attended by 663 participants.
- ▼ *Lord Fairfax Community College* has been offering open-enrollment and custom-designed classes to its region's localities since August 2007.
- ▼ *Virginia Highlands Community College* held its first Southwest Virginia Local Government Institute in June 2008. This was a one-day seminar offering four classes designed for elected officials and staff. A second seminar is planned for October 2008.

CONTACT

If the Virginia Institute of Government can help connect you with local governments in your region, please contact Billie Easton at 804/371-0202 or bee2u@virginia.edu.

ABOUT THE VA. INSTITUTE OF GOVERNMENT

The Virginia Institute of Government was established by the General Assembly in 1994 to enhance the resources available to Virginia local governments. The Institute is part of the Cooper Center for Public Service at the University of Virginia.