

# **VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRY**

## **VIRGINIA OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH**

### **VOSH Consultation Services and Cooperative Programs**

The Department of Labor and Industry (DOLI) operates the Virginia State Plan for Occupational Safety and Health (VOSH) and is required by federal OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) laws and regulations to maintain a program that is “at least as effective” as that of federal OSHA. See [www.doli.virginia.gov](http://www.doli.virginia.gov) for more information.

#### **Consultation Services**

VOSH provides free and confidential On-Site Consultation services. This program helps employers identify and correct potential safety and health hazards. The on-site survey is conducted without citations or penalties. Priority is given to high hazard workplaces with 250 or fewer employees. Services include:

- **Safety and Health Walk-Through Surveys:** At your request, a safety and /or health specialist will visit your business to explain the survey process. If you agree to participate, hazards and violations will be identified during a walk-through at your place of business. This walk-through is similar to a VOSH compliance inspection, except no citations or penalties will be issued.
- **Abatement Advice:** Any hazards or violations identified by the consultant will be discussed during the walk-through. A written report of the findings will be presented, including advice for eliminating existing and potential safety or health hazards.
- **Training:** In addition, training will be conducted on-site and recommendations for ongoing training will be provided.
- **Program Assistance:** Assistance will be provided to develop safety and health programs that will prevent injuries and illnesses by eliminating and controlling hazards.

#### **Employer’s Obligations**

Employers requesting consultation services must:

- Appoint a designated representative to opening and closing conferences
- Correct serious hazards identified by the consultant
- Post the list of hazards the consultant identifies
- Submit a written report verifying hazard correction

#### **Safety & Health Achievement Recognition Program**

Through a spirit of cooperation, employers, employees, and the Virginia Department of Labor and Industry can work together to reduce injuries and illnesses in our workplaces. The Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program (SHARP) was developed to provide incentives and support to smaller (no more than 250 employees at the site and not more than 500 total employees nationwide), high-hazard employers to work with employees to develop, implement, and continuously improve safety and health programs. More information on SHARP can be found at [www.doli.virginia.gov](http://www.doli.virginia.gov).

SHARP recognizes worksites that operate exemplary safety and health programs that result in the immediate and long-term prevention of job related injuries and illnesses. This is achieved by:

- Encouraging employers to use Virginia Occupational Safety and Health (VOSH) funded consultation service and to involve their employees in establishing fully effective safety and health programs;
- Providing public recognition for employers and employees who have worked together successfully to establish effective and exemplary safety and health programs; and
- Removing the company’s name from general schedule compliance inspection lists.


**Virginia Voluntary Protection Programs**


On June 3, 2015, the Virginia General Assembly passed a bill for the historic Voluntary Protection Programs (VPP) Act in Virginia. The Act acknowledges the unique and successful Virginia VPP system, which encourages the Department and Virginia business to work cooperatively to take safety and health above and beyond the minimum protections provided by OSHA safety and health requirements. See [www.doli.virginia.gov](http://www.doli.virginia.gov) for more information.


Virginia VPP is designed to recognize and promote exceptional safety and health management systems. In Virginia VPP, DOLI, VOSH, management and labor establish a cooperative relationship at a general industry or public sector workplace that has implemented a strong safety and health program.


- Management agrees to operate an effective program that meets an established set of criteria.
- Employees agree to participate in the program and work with management to ensure a safe and healthful workplace.
- VOSH verifies that the program meets VPP criteria, publicly recognizes the site’s exemplary program, and removes the site from the programmed compliance inspections.
- VOSH also reassesses periodically to confirm that the site continues to meet VPP criteria.
- VPP recognizes that enforcement alone can never fully achieve the objectives of the OSH Act. Good safety and management systems that go beyond VOSH standards can protect workers more effectively than simple compliance.

Virginia Voluntary Protection Programs include:

	<p>In Virginia STAR, management, labor, and the Department’s Virginia Occupational Safety and Health (VOSH) Program, establish cooperative relationships at workplaces that have implemented an exceptional comprehensive safety and health management system. STAR participants meet all Virginia STAR requirements. MERIT participants have demonstrated the potential and willingness to achieve Virginia STAR program status, and are implementing planned steps to fully meet all STAR requirements.</p>
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	<p>Virginia Challenge is a three stage process that provides employers a step by step process to dramatically improve safety and health management systems to reduce or eliminate injuries, illnesses and fatalities and the substantial costs associated with them. When a company completes Virginia Challenge, it will have an exemplary safety and health management system (SHMS) that will also prepare it to apply for VPP STAR recognition.</p>
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	<p>Virginia BEST Program (Building Excellence in Safety, Health and Training) is a strategic partnership between the VOSH Program and the Associated General Contractors of Virginia (AGCVA) designed to encourage and recognize AGCVA members who voluntarily implement highly effective safety and health management systems to benefit construction workers and reduce or eliminate injuries, illnesses and fatalities on construction sites in Virginia.</p>
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	<p>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 first in the nation VADOC Challenge program to recognize safety and health excellence at correctional facilities around the Commonwealth. Three stages of participation in VADOC Challenge are provided.</p>
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