

# Environmental Health Services: An Overview

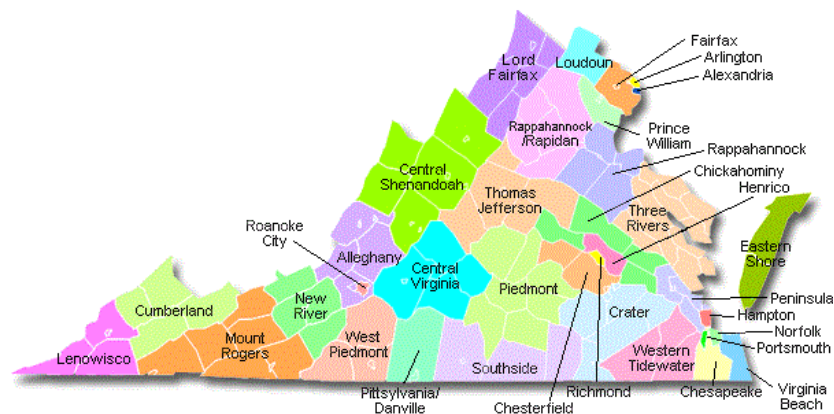
Megan Woods  
Environmental Health Technical Specialist  
Norfolk Department of Public Health

November 2025



1

## Virginia Health Districts



2

## Norfolk Department of Public Health

### Mission:

To protect the health and promote the well-being of all people in Norfolk

### Agency Vision:

We aim to become a flagship Local Health District, bold and catalytic, leveraging community strengths and regional synergies to measurably improve health outcomes for the people we serve.

## Environmental Health Services



Regulatory arm of the  
Norfolk Health  
Department

Tasked with enforcing  
state and local  
regulations and  
environmental ordinances

## Structure of Norfolk Health Department's Environmental Health Services

- State employees
- ~15 program areas
- 15 Environmental Health Specialist (EHS) staff carry out regulatory work. Assigned geographic areas of the city

## Food Program

- Approximately 1,200 permitted food facilities in the City of Norfolk
  - Full-service restaurants
  - Fast food restaurants
  - Hospital Food Service
  - School Food Service
  - Hotel continental breakfast
  - Mobile food vendors (push carts & food trucks)
  - Temporary food events

## Food Establishment Inspections

- Permitting process for new establishments
- Multiple inspections each year
  - Frequency based upon process complexity
- Unannounced routine inspections
  - Follow-up inspections (if needed)
- Complaint investigations
  - 757-683-2712
  - [NorfolkEH@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:NorfolkEH@vdh.virginia.gov)
- Foodborne outbreak investigations

## Food Inspections

Food inspections are available online:

<https://inspections.myhealthdepartment.com/virginia/districts>

**VDH** VIRGINIA  
DEPARTMENT  
OF HEALTH

**A copy of the most recent  
Virginia Department of Health  
inspection report is available  
upon request.**

You may also view recent inspections at  
<https://inspections.myhealthdepartment.com/virginia>  
or use your mobile device to scan:



This notice or similar must be posted in a place that is conspicuous to customers. <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/environmental-health/food-safety-in-virginia/>

## Classes Available

- **Food Handler Classes- twice monthly (1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Weds)**

- 18.1-17: It shall be unlawful for any person to work or be employed in any capacity in any food establishment unless such person shall have first completed the requirements for, and obtained, a food service employee or food service manager card issued by the director of public health of the city or such director's authorized representatives.

- **Certified Food Manager Classes- once a month**

- 18.1-18: It shall be unlawful for any person to operate a food establishment unless such person currently employs a food service manager to supervise the establishment's food service employees; the operator shall post in a conspicuous place in the food establishment, in letters not less than one inch in size, the name of each food service manager currently employed.
- 2-102.11: the Permit Holder shall be the Person in charge or shall designate a Person in charge and shall ensure that a Person in charge is present at the food establishment during all hours of operation.
- 2-102.12: Person in charge shall demonstrate knowledge by being a Certified Food Protection Manager who has shown proficiency of required information through passing a test that is part of an accredited program.

## Other Environmental Health Programs: Rabies Program

Investigation of animal to human exposures (usually bites, less commonly scratches)

- Placing offending domestic animal into a ten day quarantine
- Ensuring domestic animal is properly vaccinated as required by law

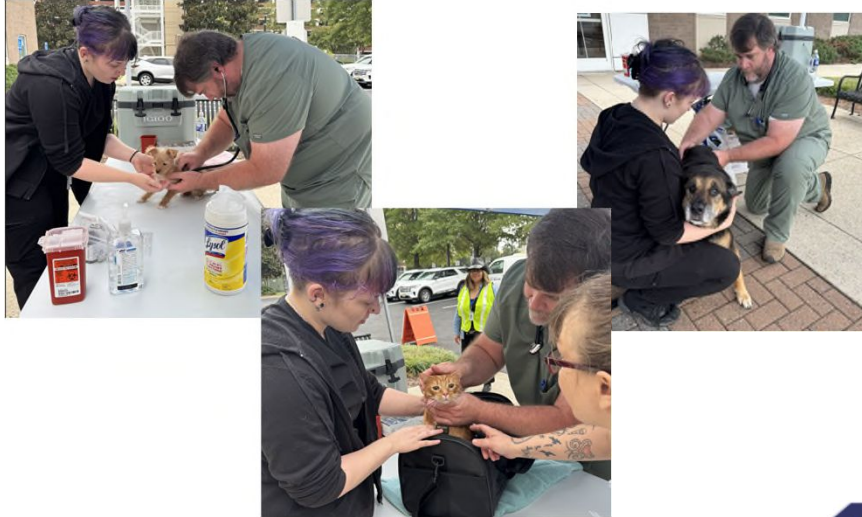
Investigation of wild to domestic animal exposures

- Test wild animal if available
- Quarantine/vaccinate domestic animal as necessary

Facilitating rabies testing of suspect rabid animals at state laboratory

EH investigates between 400-500 reported exposures each year

## Rabies Vaccination Clinic



11

## Other Environmental Health Programs

- Hotels & motel inspections
- Barber and Beauty shop inspections
- Public swimming pool inspections
- Private well applications (irrigation only)
- Body Art/tattoo parlors
- Massage Parlors
- Bulk Refuse (Dumpster) Program
- Complaint investigations

Collaboration with stakeholders on permitting/inspection processes

12

## Other EH Program, Part II

- Septic tank systems
- Recreational water quality standards/beach monitoring
- Marina Inspections
- Backyard Chicken program
- Lead abatement (elevated blood lead levels in children)
- Communicable disease investigations
  - Conducted in partnership with Epidemiology Office

## Bulk Refuse (Dumpster) Program

City of Norfolk Code Chapter 41 Solid Waste  
Article II- Private Collection

Health Department regulates trash collection by private waste companies  
Dumpsters or 90-gallon roll-out containers

Annual permits/inspection  
Complaint investigation



15

## **Environmental Programs: Vector Control**

Vector Control is a division of Environmental Health

- Mosquito surveillance and control city-wide (public and private property)
- Service request/complaint via myNorfolk
- Rodent surveillance on city property

Environmental Health has enforcement responsibilities related to mosquito and rodent issues.

- Legal authority: Chapter 36: Rats and Mosquitoes

16



## Mosquito Breeding

It is unlawful under Chapter 36.16 of the City of Norfolk Code to allow mosquito breeding or allowing conditions favorable for mosquito breeding (Class 1 Misdemeanor)

Authority to enforce is granted to director of public health and their designee (Environmental Health Specialist), as well as any other City of Norfolk official holding a police or special police commission (coextensive authority)

17



18

## Rats

City of Norfolk Code Chapter 36: Rat and Mosquito Control  
Violations are a Class 1 Misdemeanor

Responsibility of the property owner to control rats on  
their property (rat proofing of structures)

Elimination of food sources/harborage (Sec 36-12 and -13.)

Rat Free Inspections (Sec. 36.11.)

### Investigations/Inspections generated in a number of ways:

- System scheduled (prescribed routine inspections)
- Complaint-based
  - (foodborne illness, unsanitary hotel room, illegal tattooing, etc.)
- Animal exposures reported via Epidemiology, animal control, medical providers, bite victims, etc.
- Referrals
  - City Agencies, City Council
  - VDH Central Office (Richmond)
- Norfolk Cares Call Center
  - myNorfolk

## Compliance Tools

Many items in the toolbox for gaining compliance:

- Education
- Notice of Violation (with a correction timeframe)
- Summons (for city/local ordinances)
- Informal Fact Finding Conference (IFFC)- common with state permitted programs
  - Permit suspension and/or revocation
- Partnerships (Other State and City Departments)

21

## Outreach

Environmental Health Specialists are one of the faces of public health out in the community

Civic Leagues Presentations

Community Fairs/Events  
(educational outreach)

Special Food Handler Classes

22

## Questions?



23

## For more information:

<https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/norfolk/>

Environmental Health Services: 683-2712

Email: [NorfolkEH@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:NorfolkEH@vdh.virginia.gov)

Megan Woods  
Environmental Health Technical Specialist  
757-683-2832  
[Megan.Woods@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:Megan.Woods@vdh.virginia.gov)

24