



VIRGINIA COUNSELORS ASSOCIATION

VCA Office
316 Hodges Cove Road
Yorktown, VA 23692

vcaoffice@cox.net www.vcacounselors.org

757-766-5466 office & 757-766-5467 fax

Introduction to the VCA Handbook

Congratulations! You've been recognized as a leader in Virginia's largest counseling association: Virginia Counselors Association (VCA). You bring many skills and ideas to your role in VCA. The VCA Handbook is designed to maximize your potential to put those skills and ideas to work on behalf of VCA. It has been prepared specifically for the Virginia Counselors Association's Leadership Training. Its purpose is to assist VCA leaders in understanding the Association, their individual leadership responsibilities, and ways in which VCA can best serve its members. This Handbook will be a valuable resource to you, and your leadership training is focused on helping you become familiar with the contents. Please save the handbook as a resource that you will refer to frequently in your leadership role with VCA.

Being a leader is both an honor and a privilege that carries a significant amount of responsibility to the members of the organization. VCA members have expressed their faith in you as a leader. What you do as a leader and how you do it will be reflected in the continued health of our professional organization.

REBECCA KADERLI
VIRGINIA COUNSELORS ASSOCIATION
2019-2020 PRESIDENT
RKADERLI@COMCAST.NET
NUMBER: (804) 252-7122

This handbook is the 20th revised edition of the original, which was published in 1966. The first revision was prepared in 1976, the second in 1980, the third in 1982, the fourth in 1984, the fifth in 1987, the sixth in 1990, the seventh in 1993, the eighth in 1995, and the ninth in 1996, the 10th in 1999, 11th in 2000, 12th in 2002, 13th in 2003, 14th in 2004, 15th in 2005, 16th in 2006, 17th in 2007, 18th in 2008, 19th in 2010, 10th in 2011 and the 16th in 2012. The handbook will be distributed throughout the Virginia Counselors Association as needed. This handbook shall serve as a reference for the Association's responsibilities and the manner in which they are enacted.

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WHAT IS VCA?

VCA is the Virginia Counselors Association. VCA was founded in Richmond in 1930 as the Virginia Personnel and Guidance Association (VPGA). VCA is dedicated to the goal of meeting the needs of Virginia counselors in a variety of work settings. It is a dynamic and active organization that has been effective in responding to state-wide issues and in providing opportunities for professional interaction at the state and local levels.



PAST PRESIDENTS OF VCA

| | | | |
|---------|-----------------------|---------|---------------------|
| 1930-31 | Bessie M. Mottley | 1982-83 | Claire Cole |
| 1931-32 | H. I. Willett | 1983-84 | Bob Pate |
| 1932-33 | Bessie M. Mottley | 1984-85 | Carol G. Barr |
| 1933-34 | W. C. Ikenberry | 1985-86 | Janice Clark |
| 1934-35 | W. C. Ikenberry | 1986-87 | Nancy Helms |
| 1935-36 | Bessie M. Mottley | 1987-88 | Lou Talbutt |
| 1938-40 | Martha Reely | 1988-89 | Carl Swanson |
| 1940-41 | Martha Reely | 1989-90 | Pete Warren |
| 1941-42 | Mitchell Dreese | 1990-91 | Libby Hoffman |
| 1942-43 | J. E. Bauserman | 1991-92 | Eleanor Saslaw |
| 1943-45 | Wilbur S. Pence | 1992-93 | Susan D. Leone |
| 1946-48 | John F. Showalter | 1993-94 | Leslie Kaplan |
| 1948-50 | Fred B. Dixon | 1994-95 | Judith Ladd |
| 1950-52 | C. L. Schollenberger | 1995-96 | Dorothy Blum |
| 1952-54 | Alfred J. Mapp | 1996-97 | Patricia Lynn |
| 1954-56 | Rebie H. Lassiter | 1997-98 | Claudia Sowa |
| 1956-58 | Kathryn G. Cook | 1998-99 | Donald Anderson |
| 1959-60 | Donald J. Herrmann | 1999-00 | Paul Galvin |
| 1960-61 | Dallas H. Smith | 2000-01 | Arlene Ingram |
| 1961-62 | George O. McClary | 2001-02 | Laurie Rokutani |
| 1962-63 | Paul E. Behrens | 2002-03 | Michele Dowdy |
| 1963-64 | Virginia B. Goggin | 2003-04 | Loretta Kreps |
| 1964-65 | Marguerite Key | 2004-05 | A. Renee Staton |
| 1965-66 | Walter O. Jewell | 2005-06 | Adele Walker-Blue |
| 1966-67 | Ethel R. Chrisman | 2006-07 | Terry A. Mullinnix |
| 1968-69 | Richard L. Bear | 2007-08 | Lisa M. McDowell |
| 1969-70 | Helen Jones | 2008-09 | Denise J. Jones |
| 1970-71 | Paul B. Walter | 2009-10 | Gerard Lawson |
| 1971-72 | Ellen Chewning | 2010-11 | Marcia Obenshain |
| 1972-73 | Rex Tillotson | 2011-12 | Pamelia Brott |
| 1973-74 | Shirley Downes | 2012-13 | Summer Tetterton |
| 1974-75 | Jack Duncan | 2013-14 | Edward Magalhaes |
| 1975-77 | M. Catherine Cockrill | 2014-15 | Linda Leitch-Alford |
| 1977-78 | Janet W. Dingman | 2015-16 | Hillary Press |
| 1978-79 | Fred Adair | 2016-17 | Helen Runyan |
| 1979-80 | Johnnie Miles | 2017-18 | Linda Grubba |
| 1980-81 | Bonnie Wasmund | 2018-19 | Monica Band |
| 1981-82 | Ted Remley | 2019-20 | Rebecca Kaderli |

VCA is a state branch of the American Counseling Association (ACA). Although not required, many VCA members do belong to ACA. The typical VCA member also holds membership in ACA, one or more ACA and VCA divisions (according to work setting and special interests), and a local VCA chapter. ACA headquarters is located in Alexandria, Virginia. Membership information for ACA is available on-line at www.counseling.org.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF VCA

The vision and mission of VCA will be the driving force as the Association strives to meet the organizational goals with careful consideration of fiscal responsibility in carrying out the work of the Association. The organizational goals set forth shall be reviewed annually to evaluate areas in need as the board engages in work to improve and strengthen the organization.

VCA VISION

The Vision of the Virginia Counselors Association is to strengthen the professional identity of counselors through innovative professional development and collaboration. We strive to empower counselors to live well and serve well.

VCA MISSION

The Virginia Counselors Association exists to promote the counseling profession by supporting, empowering and advocating for the diverse needs of all counselors in Virginia.

ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS (2018-2020)

- To increase membership by 5% with a focus on member benefits and accessibility to other counselors.
- To increase the number of statewide and regional professional development activities on topics relevant to members' needs.
- To identify the needs/interests of members. Increase the usage of social media and technology to reach members.
- To increase the number members involved in advocating for the profession. 5% increase in participation at Legislative Day and a 5% increase in action alert contacts to policy makers.
- To become increasingly fiscally and operationally responsible and accountable to the VCA membership

Association Governance

Since 2005, the VCA Board of Directors has routinely used “consent agendas” as the preferred way of conducting meetings (Renz, *Consent Agenda*). In no way does this replace the use of Robert’s Rules of Order. You may have heard the buzz words “Knowledge Based Governance” being used frequently in recent years. Taking the lead from the American Counseling Association, among so many other leading non-profit organizations, VCA is working towards implementing such principles into our association’s governance style.

VCA LEADERSHIP INFORMATION

Where Do I Start?

If you're reading this Leadership Handbook, it's likely that you've been elected to an office within VCA, been appointed to a leadership committee within VCA, or are interested in having such a role in the future. Some people think carefully about the commitment involved in being a leader within this association. They check with their employer, talk with their family members, and carefully assess the time commitment involved. Other people agree to a leadership position more spontaneously, often at the urging of a professional colleague or at the plea of their favorite division or chapter. Regardless of the process used prior to accepting a leadership role, it is not uncommon to suddenly feel "lost" once you take office.

If you're experience this, you may be asking the following questions:

- Where do I start?
- What is expected of me?
- How am I supposed to know what to do?
- Who can I turn to for help?

If these questions sound familiar to you, don't worry! By participating in Leadership Training and by reading this handbook, you will be answering these questions so that you can enter your leadership role with confidence. This Handbook is designed to help you identify and prioritize what you should be doing in your role.

Learn about VCA as an Organization

A good place to start is to invest some time in learning about VCA as an organization. This will provide you with an understanding of the mission and purpose of VCA; the organizational structure of the Association; and an understanding of how your division, chapter, or committee relates to VCA as a whole. Without this understanding, chapter and division leaders often feel (and behave) as if they are only representing and working for the chapter or division. Indeed, this is misguided and ineffective. It is essential that you enter your position understanding that your chapter, division, or committee is only a part of VCA and being able to articulate the ways in which your smaller group works toward the mission and purpose of VCA.

Learn the Rules (and Follow Them!)

Next, you'll want to review the various sets of rules that govern VCA as well as those of your chapter or division. As a leader in a non-profit organization, you may be legally liable for the finances and conduct of the association and are certainly accountable for the decisions you make. Given this, it is always good to know the rules ahead of time. Indeed, while holding a leadership position in VCA, it is not advisable to follow the philosophy of "better to ask forgiveness than permission."

To learn the rules, you will want to thoroughly read the VCA Bylaws (see Appendix D) and the VCA Rules and Procedures section of this Handbook (pp. 29-43). Committee chairs should take particular note of the VCA Standing Rules (pp. 29-33), VCA Standing Committees (pp. 37-41), and Position Descriptions (p. 41-43).

In addition to learning the VCA rules, your division or chapter probably has a set of Bylaws. If you have any difficulties locating them, you will want to check with the past presidents and the VCA Office. It is safe to assume that the additional bylaws exist, so you will want to invest some energy to locate and read them. Again, you are responsible for adhering to them and could be held liable for violating them.

Study the Strategic Plan

Your next step should be to study the strategic plan of VCA and, if you are a leader of a division or chapter, the strategic plan of your division or chapter. The strategic plan is the document that identifies the priorities of the association and operationalizes the mission and purpose of the organization. In short, it serves as a concrete guide to what is important to VCA and to the chapter or division. It helps answer the question, “How am I supposed to know what to do?” You should always be able to articulate how the activities of your committee, chapter or division are consistent with the strategic plan.

Indeed, as a leader, you may be in a position in which members of your governing board or committee members come to you to ask permission for a specific activity. As a responsible leader, you will want to ask, “How does this activity reflect VCA Strategic Plan and our chapter/division Strategic Plan?”

Develop a Team

As a new leader, you may already have a group of people to work with. At the division level, you probably have other elected offices and may also have a governing board that has been appointed. Or, you may have responsibilities to appoint members to the board. The same holds true for chapters. VCA Committee chairs have been appointed by the VCA President and may or may not already have other people appointed to the committee as members.

In none of these instances, however, is it safe to assume that you have a team. As a leader, you will want to appoint people as necessary and to begin immediately to develop a team. The best way to do this is through frequent communications and meetings. Hold a meeting. Get to know your team members and help them get to know one another. Provide some basic instruction on what they need to know to be productive team members. (Remember how much you needed to learn just to get to this point!) Review the VCA Strategic Plan and, if appropriate, the chapter/division Strategic Plan. Talk about what you would like to accomplish this year. Brainstorm activities that would be appealing to your group and would be consistent with the strategic plan. By the time you do this, in your best counselor/facilitator mode, it is likely that you will have developed a team!

Develop and Implement a Proactive Plan

In developing a proactive plan, you will want to think about the legacy you would like to leave. What, specifically, would you like to accomplish during your year(s) as a leader? What unique contribution would you like to make? Your answer to these questions will likely serve as the basis for your Plan. In developing this plan, you will want to ensure that the plan is (a) consistent with the Strategic Plan, (b) of real value to VCA/Chapter/Division members; and (c) realistically do-able. Rather than making elaborate plans that your group will be unable to accomplish, you will want to make plans that will likely be successful.

In deciding this, you will want to consider the resources necessary to implement the plan. These resources will involve time and energy of you and your team as well as monetary resources. This Handbook includes possible monetary sources that might be used to support your activity. Once you have identified your plan, implement it!

Engage in Maintenance and Responsive Activities

In addition to working toward implementation of your plan, there are likely other activities you will need to engage in during your leadership term. In short, “maintenance and responsive activities” involve the work of the chapter, division, or committee that is ongoing and necessary, regardless of who is the leader. For example, every chapter, division, and committee should submit a written report for each VCA Board meeting. As a leader, you will want to attend VCA Board meetings as often as possible. You will also need to respond to email and telephone messages from VCA members. Your division or chapter may also have a newsletter to send out on a regular basis, and you may need to write a column for each issue. Legislative issues may arise that require your attention. Your committee may have responsibilities to respond to requests from the VCA Board.

Identify and Lean on Your Sources of Support

Being a leader in VCA can be one of the most rewarding experiences of your career. Simultaneously, it can be stressful and time consuming. It is, therefore, essential that you have a support network. In addition to your friends and family, you will want to identify other sources of support. As a division/chapter president, you may want to develop an informal support network with other division/chapter presidents. Also, be sure to stay in contact and utilize the resources of your Chapter/Division Council Chair, who has been in your shoes as a president of a VCA Chapter/Division. As a VCA Committee Chair, you will want to work closely with the “VCA Presidential Trio” (Past President, President, and President-Elect) -- who will support you! – as well as support from other committee chairs.

An essential source of support will be the VCA staff. The Director of Membership Services is an essential source of information, assistance, and support.

Another source of support can be found easily by utilizing on-line resources. At the end of this section of the handbook you will find a number of printed articles to help you as a leader.

- Board Source “Building Effective Nonprofit Boards” <http://www.boardsource.org>
- Resources for Volunteer Leaders <http://saulcarliner.home.att.net/leadership/index.html>
- Best Association Resources & Tools <http://www.bestassociation.com>
- ASAE & The Center for Association Leadership <http://www.asaecenter.org>

Expectations of All Board Members

1. Maintain good standing as a professional member of VCA by renewing your membership annually, and if applicable, renew additional chapter and/or division memberships.
2. Attend and participate in all scheduled board meetings (see VCA Calendar). This typically includes two meeting in the fall, with one being held on the Wednesday afternoon of the VCA Annual Convention, an end-of-year meeting in early-mid June, and may include additional teleconferences as needed.
3. An alternate delegate should be arranged if any board member is unable to attend a meeting. If a chapter or division president sends an alternate delegate they must submit a written notice permitting the delegate to vote on their behalf.

4. Register and attend the Annual Convention held each November.
5. All chapters, divisions, and committees must prepare and submit board reports for the November and June board meetings, and as directed by the VCA President. Reports should include a summary of activities, problems encountered, recommendations for actions, and names of committee members or chapter/division officers.
6. Participate in Legislative Day held annually in late January or early February (see VCA Calendar).
7. Chapter and Division Presidents should identify members to serve as a liaison on the following committees: Membership, Advocacy, Professional Development, Awards, and Newsletter.
8. Each Chapter and Division is expected to submit at least one article each year to one of the 3 (Winter, Spring, Fall) issues of the VCA newsletter. Each committee is expected to submit an article/ad/notice in each issue.
9. Chapters and Divisions are asked to cover the cost of their board representatives, if fiscally possible, including mileage and/or travel expenses, lodging, and meals outside of meetings. VCA covers the expenses of officers and committee chairs/co-chairs, based on double occupancy accommodations, mileage at the rate established in the VCA Standing Rules, and meals during meetings. VCA will cover meals and refreshments, as well as all training materials and related expenses (including applicable speaker and rental fees), for all board members. If a chapter or division cannot underwrite a representative's expenses, then VCA will assist within its fiscal ability.

Summary

Although this information is by no means comprehensive, I hope it has provided you with an idea of where you can start as a new leader. Remember:

- ✓ Learn about VCA as an Organization
- ✓ Learn the Rules (and follow them)
- ✓ Study the Strategic Plan
- ✓ Develop a Team
- ✓ Develop and Implement an "Action Plan" (proactive activities - your legacy!)
- ✓ Do the Work of the Association (maintenance or responsive activities)
- ✓ Identify and Lean on Your Sources of Support & Utilize Resources
- ✓ Strive to meet the Expectations of Board Members

VCA Office

An integral component of the Virginia Counselors Association is the VCA Office and staff. Because of the size of the association, the administrative responsibilities involved in VCA operations are too extensive for a volunteer leader. For this reason, VCA employs Member Services & Operations Director. An additional benefit of this arrangement is that the personnel associated with the VCA Office tend to remain stable, adding continuity to the organization when VCA leadership changes each July.

Among the many duties of this office, staff at the VCA Office performs the following:

- Handle all calls into VCA's toll-free number
- Compile the VCA calendar
- Maintain and update the VCA website
- Process all membership applications and renewals
- Provide membership reports for VCA, its divisions and chapters
- Mail membership reports to division and chapter presidents
- Provide mailing labels per VCA Policies and Procedures
- Staff the VCA information table at the Annual Convention
- Respond to requests from the VCA Executive Committee
- Offer consultation as needed to the VCA Executive Committee
- Offer general support and consultation regarding an array of member and leader needs
- Provide on-line event registration with or without payment collection (fee or profit sharing may apply)

VCA Office

316 Hodges Cove Road

Yorktown, VA 23692

vcaoffice@cox.net

757-766-5466 (O) ~ 757-766-5467 (fax)

When contacting the VCA Office, you will speak with the Director of Member Services & Operations. As VCA's administrator, this person has the responsibility for the day-to-day operations of VCA. Should you contact the VCA Office, you can always depend upon being treated in a professional manner. You will want to give your name and identify for your position within VCA.

In most cases, the staff at the VCA Office will be able to provide information you request, or you may be referred to a representative from a Division, Chapter, or VCA Committee. At times, however, they may indicate a need for approval from the VCA Executive Committee before giving you information or providing you with services. If this happens, do not take it personally. In certain instances only the VCA Executive Committee can approve "other services" to be provided. This is common practice in professional associations.

Show Me the Money!

Another aspect of effective leadership in VCA involves attention to financial issues. Although we, as counselors, may tend more toward being “people” people than “data” people, money still makes the world go around. Indeed, you’ll want to understand what current resources exist for your committee, chapter or division. In addition, you’ll want to attend to the overall welfare of VCA by paying keen attention to VCA’s financial status.

Event Planning

Many chapters and divisions hold events during the year. Most events are business meetings, educational conferences/trainings, or hospitality suites at the VCA Annual Conference. In addition, some committees plan events. For example, the Professional Development Committee typically organizes training and workshop opportunities across the state.

This section is designed to assist you with event planning. Its intent is not to provide you with a thorough description of how to do event planning, but rather to provide some general information and guidelines that may be helpful for you in planning an event.

Determine a Need

The first step in event planning is to determine a need. After all, unneeded services are not really member services at all! In determining need, you may seek input from members via a newsletter regarding their training needs. You may review past trainings and take note of topics that haven’t been recently addressed. You may have discussions with your leadership team. You may seek input from the Professional Development Committee. Survey attendees at your events to get ideas for future topics.

Select a Date

You’ll next want to select a date for your event. For events at the VCA Annual Conference, you’ll want to make contact with the conference planning committee chair. This individual is responsible for assisting you with identifying which day of the conference would best meet your needs; for making room arrangements; and for assisting you with ordering food or equipment from the conference facility.

For events that are not held at the VCA Annual Conference, your selection of a date will depend upon the availability of a facility, the availability of your trainers/participants, and the VCA calendar. Contact the VCA Office before setting your date in order to check on availability and immediately after you finalize your date to ensure that the date is reserved for you. The VCA Office maintains the master calendar and will ensure that the calendar includes your event. In addition to avoiding scheduling conflicts, this also provides you with some free advertising. The calendar is included on the VCA website and newsletter.

Plan the Event

Invariably, countless hours will go into planning your event. This planning may involve finding and contracting with a facility and working with the facility on issues related to room capacity, seating arrangements, and speaker needs. For example, you will want to decide how many chairs and tables you need and whether you want them in a U-shape, in conference style, or some other arrangement. You will also want to determine whether an overhead projector, screen, microphone, VCR, or computer equipment will be needed for the event.

If you will be serving snacks or a meal, you will want to determine whether the facility allows you to bring in your own food or whether it requires that you use their catering service. In either case, you will need to estimate the number of participants and determine the menu. Always remember to have a vegetarian option available. For religious and/or personal reasons, many VCA members have dietary restrictions. It is essential that we respect their needs by offering appropriate meal accommodations!

Consider whether your event lends itself to the inclusion of an exhibit area. This may involve a separate mailing to potential vendors, and will almost certainly require a separate room or exhibit area. Clearly, this is more to plan, but exhibits can be a good revenue source and provide an enjoyable break for attendees.

Finally, when making arrangements with your speaker(s), there are a number of things you should address. In communicating your needs, be certain to clarify the objectives for this event and to provide information about member training needs. In understanding your speaker's needs, check with him/her regarding preferred room arrangements, equipment needs, and travel information. Also, it is appropriate at this time to ask your speaker(s) to provide a short bio containing information about him/her along with a photo. Explain that this information will be used for advertising purposes and that the bio will be helpful in introducing them at the event.

Set the Cost and Determine your Budget

Once you have set the date, reserved a facility, and planned for any materials, you will have an idea of the total cost of the event. However, you will want to avoid setting the fee so high that it is unaffordable and therefore unlikely to draw a good crowd. Ideally, the entire cost of the event should be covered by the registration fees. Remember, the event should be viewed as a member service. Members, therefore, should get more than they paid for when they attend the event. Otherwise, they will wonder why they pay dues!

For this reason, there are generally separate fees for members and for non-members. You will want to determine the overall cost of the event and the amount of money your division, chapter, or committee is willing to invest in the event before deciding what the registration fees will be.

Arrange for Continuing Education Credit

If appropriate, you will also want to make arrangements for participants to receive continuing education credit for attending your event. Contact the VCA Member Services & Operations about documentation for LPC and NBCC contact hours for licensure renewal.

Advertise the Event

Now you are ready to advertise the event. To do so, you first need to develop the advertisement. At a minimum, the ad should identify the title of the event; any guest speakers; the time, date and location of the event; the registration fees; any available CEUs; and the sponsors of the event. Always identify VCA and/or the relevant chapter or division as a sponsor of the event. In addition, many VCA members report that they appreciate it when ads include information about the agenda and/or actual topics to be addressed.

If possible, you will want to run ads in *The Virginia Counselor* and, if one exists, your Chapter or Division's own newsletter. You may also want to place ads in the newsletters of other professional associations. For example, if the Virginia Alliance for School Counseling were to plan a conference featuring a noted play therapist, event planners might want to place ads in the newsletters of the Virginia Association for Play Therapy and the Virginia Psychological Association, etc. These types of advertisements generally cost a modest amount.

In terms of free advertising, you will want to contact the VCA office to ensure that information about the conference is posted on the web or sent out electronically via “e-blast.”. Finally, if possible you will want to make a written and/or oral report about your event at the preceding VCA Board meeting. By doing so, you alert other VCA leaders to your upcoming. This encourages them to consider attending and to communicate information about your event to members of their division, chapter or committee.

Invite VCA Executive Committee

Speaking of other VCA leaders, you will want to be sure to send an invitation (e-mail is fine) to each member of the VCA Executive Committee. When doing so, you should ask them to RSVP directly to you so that you can acknowledge their presence at your event.

Prepare for the Event

Now that the planning and advertising is done, you will want to prepare for the event. Preparation may involve collection of registration forms and fees; reproduction (legally, of course) of conference materials; tallying of meal requests; inventorying audio-visual equipment needs; final confirmation with the facility; and other last minute details.

As you receive registration forms, be sure you collect pertinent information into a database. From this you can create name badges and attendee lists. Your database will also be a great resource when you plan your next event.

At the Actual Event

On the day of the event, there will be several final details to complete. Pack a few basic office supplies (pens, tape, stapler, notepad) along with your on-site registration forms, extra name badges and attendee packets. You will want to arrive at least an hour early for the event to ensure that the room is arranged as you requested; to do an equipment check (always turn everything on and try it!); and to set up the welcoming/registration table. In addition, you will likely find yourself responding to last minute requests from your speakers. For this reason, it is advisable to have someone else assist you at this time.

When you are ready to start the event, you will want to make welcoming remarks. Before introducing your speaker, you will want to thank participants for taking time out of their busy lives to attend this function; to remind participants that this event is offered as a VCA member benefit; and to introduce any VCA Executive Committee members who are present. Next, you will want to introduce your speaker(s). To help you with this, refer to the bio provided by the speaker.

Be sure to touch on any special requirements related to Continuing Education credits. NCC accreditation policies require the collection of a survey from each attendee after the program. Emphasize the importance of this to your audience, and be sure to ask for feedback on topics for future events. (If your event is not accredited, you may want to create your own survey for this purpose.)

Quick Review

As a review, the following checklist should be helpful to you in ensuring a successful event.

- ✓ Determine a need for the event.
- ✓ Check with the VCA Office before setting your date.

- ✓ Ask the VCA Office put your event on the VCA Calendar.
- ✓ Apply for Continuing Education Credit.
- ✓ Remember to offer vegetarian meal options.
- ✓ Offer VCA members a discounted registration rate.
- ✓ Advertise to a broad base of interested professionals.
- ✓ Identify VCA as a sponsor of the event in all written and verbal communications.
- ✓ Invite and introduce VCA Executive Committee members.
- ✓ Enjoy this opportunity to provide such a valuable member service!

Legislative Issues

At first glance, you may be wondering what the Virginia Counselors Association has to do with legislative issues. After all, you may say, VCA is a group of professional counselors that exists for the purpose of improving our skills as counselors. However, because state laws have the ability to deeply affect the counseling profession, it is imperative that VCA focus on legislative issues that are relevant to counselors.

Indeed, one of the primary benefits of belonging to VCA is the opportunity it allows for a member to join other counselors in order to work toward legislative changes that will benefit our profession. Simply put, a group of several thousand professionals has a much stronger voice in Richmond when they represent a united voice from a professional association than if they worked individually toward legislative changes. This section is designed to familiarize you with VCA's involvement in the legislative process.

Who Focuses on Legislative Issues?

Within VCA, there are a number of groups that focus on legislative issues. First and foremost is a lobbying firm with whom VCA contracts. This firm employs professional lobbyists who are experts in the legislative process. Second, the Executive Committee, and more specifically the VCA President, is in frequent contact with our lobbying firm and continually monitors legislative issues of interest to the profession. Third, the Advocacy Relations Committee within VCA is solely focused on legislative issues related to clinical and school counseling and exists for the purpose of monitoring issues, helping VCA set a legislative agenda, and for planning specific events related to legislation.

Lobbyist Firm

Because of the time and skills needed for effective lobbying on behalf of the counseling profession, the Virginia Counselors Association has a long-standing contract with a lobbying firm in Richmond. This lobbying firm focuses exclusively on legislative issues and its lobbyists enjoy an excellent (and well-deserved) reputation in Richmond. In addition to focusing on the primary issues that VCA may target in any given year, the lobbyists also scan the legislative environment continually in order to remain aware of any legislative developments that may relate to the counseling profession. Our

lobbyists maintain close contact with the VCA President and with the chair of the Advocacy Relations Committee.

Your Responsibilities

As a VCA leader, it is essential that you stay up-to-date with legislative issues of relevance to the counseling profession. As a leader, you should be able to inform members of VCA's top legislative priorities and should be aware of VCA's position on various legislative issues. One way in which to stay current with these issues is to read every legislative update that appears in ACA's *Counseling Today*. Another way is to attend VCA Board meetings. You can also access legislative updates on the ACA and VCA Websites.

During January or February of each year, VCA members also congregate in Richmond for VCA Legislative Day. Please plan now to attend this exciting event. VCA members are briefed on relevant issues, and then we disperse to speak directly with our legislators and their aides. Legislative Day is an extremely important opportunity for VCA to ensure that our elected officials understand the importance of professional clinical and school counseling in the state. Don't miss this chance to make a difference!

Whenever representing yourself as a VCA leader and offering your opinions about a legislative issue, it is essential that you communicate VCA's position. At times, of course, it is possible that your own personal opinion will differ from VCA's official position. During these times, it is imperative that you distinguish between the two. If speaking as a leader within VCA, one of its divisions, or one of its chapters, you should communicate VCA's position and not your own personal position.

Finally, it is important that VCA leaders respond to Action Alerts from our lobbyists. Action alerts are generally emailed to VCA membership when an issue is extremely time sensitive and requires our immediate attention. In these instances, you will receive information about the issue, about VCA's position, and a specific request for action. Usually, you are asked to write, email or contact one or more legislators by telephone in order to communicate VCA's position. Because legislators are very aware of and responsive to the sheer number of contacts they receive, it is extremely important that as many VCA leaders follow up on an action alert as possible.

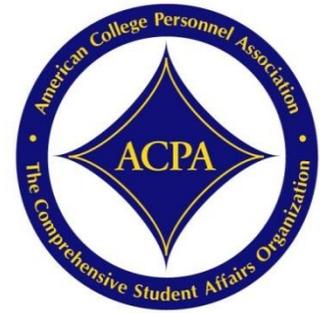
To summarize, your advocacy responsibilities as a VCA leader include the following:

- ✓ Staying up-to-date with legislative issues that pertain to the counseling profession
- ✓ Accurately representing VCA's position (and not your own) when asked about a specific legislative issue
- ✓ Responding to action alerts

Learning More

As you read the preceding section, you may have become worried about your ability to meet these responsibilities. You may have found yourself thinking, "But I don't know enough to contact a legislator," or "I wish I would have listened more in my high school civics class." If you're feeling overwhelmed or in need of additional training, you will be pleased to know that you have two opportunities each year to get trained. Lobbyists and/or VCA's Advocacy Relations Committee Chairs provide training on legislative issues at the VCA Convention, and ACA will also provide legislative training to interested members. These training sessions generally orient participants to

basic civics lessons (such as the difference between the House and the Senate and how to determine who your legislators are); provide specific training with regard to VCA's positions on a variety of legislative issues; and teach proper ways in which to address legislators. These training events are widely touted for their high quality and are an excellent way not only to introduce yourself to legislative issues but also to brush up on things you once knew but have since forgotten.



Professional Organizations

As a VCA Leader, it is important that you are aware of other professional associations. It is especially important for you to be aware of developments at the national level. Listed below are some of the major organizations that you may consider joining. Additional information about joining these associations may be accessed on-line.



AMERICAN COUNSELING ASSOCIATION

American Counseling Association (ACA)

5999 Stevenson Ave.

Alexandria, VA 22304

703.823.9800

800.347.6647

<http://www.counseling.org>

Divisions of the American Counseling Association (ACA)

Association for Assessment in Counseling (AAC)

Association for Adult Development and Aging (AADA)

Association of Child and Adolescent Counseling, ACAC

American College Counseling Association (ACCA)

Association for Counselors and Educators in Government (ACEG)

Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES)

Association for Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Issues in Counseling (AGLBIC)

Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development (AMCD)

American Mental Health Counselor Association (AMHCA)

American Rehabilitation Counseling Association (ARCA)

Association for Spiritual, Ethical, and Religious Values in Counseling (ASERVIC)

Association for Specialists in Group Work (ASGW)

Counseling Association for Humanistic Education and Development (C-AHEAD)

Counselors for Social Justice (CSJ)

International Association of Addiction and Offender Counselors (IAAOC)

International Association of Marriage and Family Counselors (IAMFC)

National Career Development Association (NCDA)

National Employment Counseling Association (NECA)

American College Personnel Association (ACPA)

One Dupont Circle, Suite 360 A
Washington, DC 20036-1110
(202) 835-ACPA (2272)
<http://www.acpa.nche.edu>



American Mental Health Counselors Association (AMHCA)

801 N. Fairfax Street, Suite 304
Alexandria, VA 22314
703.548.6002
800.326.2642
<http://www.amhca.org>

National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC)

3 Terrace Way, Suite D
Greensboro, NC 27403-3660 USA
336.547.0607
<http://www.nbcc.org>



ETHICAL CODES OF CONDUCT

It goes without saying that counselors should be well-versed in the ethical codes that apply to the counseling profession. Especially as a leader in VCA, you will be viewed as a role model for ethical behavior. You should take great care to maintain client confidences, maintain appropriate boundaries (with clients and/or students), and to practice within the boundaries of your competence. The ethical codes, of course, address many other issues to guide you.

Ethical Standards

As VCA leaders, it is essential that you become thoroughly familiar with this code and model ethical behaviors and decision-making. The full text for the respective Codes can be found at the following web sites:

- *ACA Code of Ethics*, American Counseling Association (2010)
<http://www.vcacounselors.org/associations/1500/files/ACA%20Code%20of%20Ethics.pdf>
- *Ethical Standards for School Counselors*, American School Counselor Association (2004)
<http://www.vcacounselors.org/associations/1500/files/ASCA%20Code%20of%20Ethics.pdf>
- *Statement of Ethical Principles and Standards*, American College Personnel Association (2006)
<http://www.vcacounselors.org/associations/1500/files/ACPA%20Ethics%20Statement.pdf>

Additionally, a statement made by the Virginia School Counselor Association, supporting nondiscrimination for all students regarding access to professional school counselors, is provided. For assistance in interpreting these standards or for application to specific situations, you may wish to contact the Chair of the VCA Ethics Committee.

VCA Governance and Structure

OFFICERS OF THE VIRGINIA COUNSELORS ASSOCIATION

PRESIDENT

Term of Office

One fiscal year as President-Elect, one fiscal year as President, and one fiscal year as Past-President.

Responsibilities

1. Is the chief elected officer of the Association.
2. Presides at all meetings of the Association, the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee.
3. Calls meetings of the Board of Directors (unless called by any three members of the Board of Directors); the Executive Committee, and special meetings of the Association. Coordinates with the VCA office about arrangements for meeting space.
4. Appoints all committees, except as otherwise specified in the Bylaws, and serves as ex-officio member of all committees except the Nominations and Elections Committee.
5. Works with the Treasurer, Treasurer-Elect, President-Elect, and the Member Services & Operations Director to prepare a draft budget for presentation to the Board of Directors at the final meeting for the fiscal year.
6. Presents proposals for Bylaws amendments to the Board of Directors and arranges for the membership to vote on proposed amendments.
7. Calls for annual reports of committees for the Board of Directors. A written report should contain: (a) Summary of Activities, (b) Problems Encountered, (c) Recommendations for Action, (d) Names of Members of the Committee, and (e) Expenditures of the Committee.
8. Presents appropriate Association business to the Board of Directors and the Membership at the annual business meeting for consideration and action.
9. Represents the Association at the Southern Region - American Counseling Association and ACA meetings.
10. Shares minutes of the meetings of the ACA Board of Directors and Senate with the VCA Board of Directors and membership as appropriate.
11. Transmits all amendments to VCA Bylaws and a written annual report to the ACA President.
12. Turns over all records, correspondence, committee lists, and other information to the incoming President upon completion of the final meeting of the Board of Directors of the fiscal year. These records are then housed at the VCA central operations office.
13. Submits the names of potential committee members for ACA.
14. Reviews and approves requests for mailing labels of the membership.

PRESIDENT-ELECT

Term of Office

One fiscal year as President-Elect, one fiscal year as President, and one fiscal year as Past-President.

Responsibilities

1. Automatically becomes President of the Association one year after commencement of the office as President-Elect, or upon the death or resignation of the President.
2. Serves as a member of the Board of Directors and of the Executive Committee.
3. Appoints committee chairs well in advance of assuming office as President in order to assure continuity of committee personnel.
4. Performs the duties of the President in the absence or incapacity of the President and such other duties as the President may designate.
5. Organizes and leads the VCA Leadership Training Workshop each year, usually held in May.
6. Works with the Treasurer, Treasurer-Elect, President, the Member Services & Operations Director to prepare a draft budget for presentation to the Board of Directors at the final meeting for the fiscal year.
7. Serves as the VCA liaison to the VCA Foundation Committee.

SECRETARY

Term of Office

One fiscal year as Secretary-Elect and one fiscal year as Secretary.

Responsibilities

1. Records and makes appropriate distribution of all proceedings and resolutions of meetings of the Association, Board of Directors, and the Executive Committee.
2. Serves as a member of the Board of Directors and of the Executive Committee.
3. Assists the President with Association correspondence.
4. Submits to the Association Archives in Richmond the official minutes of the Association and other appropriate documents and publications for the year prior to taking office as Secretary. The official minutes should include reports filed by Committees.
5. Perform other duties as the President may designate.

SECRETARY-ELECT

Term of Office

One fiscal year as Secretary-Elect and one fiscal year as Secretary.

Responsibilities

1. Automatically becomes Secretary of the Association after one year as Secretary-Elect, or upon the death or resignation of the Secretary.
2. Serves as a member of the Board of Directors and of the Executive Committee.
3. Performs the duties of the Secretary in the absence or incapacity of the Secretary.
4. Perform other duties as the President may designate.

TREASURER

Term of Office

One fiscal year as Treasurer-Elect and one fiscal year as Treasurer.

Responsibilities

1. Serves as a member of the VCA Board of Directors and of the Executive Committee.
2. Works with the President, President-Elect, Treasurer-Elect, and the Member Services & Operations Director to prepare a draft budget for presentation to the Board of Directors at the final meeting for the fiscal year.
3. Perform internal control procedures to monitor, review, and report the Association's financial accounts and records.
4. May recommend to the Board any changes in the fiscal year budget.
5. Provides a budget report at each meeting of the VCA Executive Committee and the VCA Board of Directors.
6. Fosters the generation of non-dues revenue for the Association.
7. Assumes responsibility for maintaining continuity of the bonding of the members of the Association who have control over Association money.
8. Perform other duties as the President may designate.

TREASURER-ELECT

Term of Office

One fiscal year as Treasurer-Elect and one fiscal year as Treasurer.

Responsibilities

1. Automatically becomes Treasurer of the Association after one year as Treasurer-Elect, or upon the death or resignation of the Treasurer.
2. Serves as a member of the Board of Directors and of the Executive Committee.
3. Performs the duties of the Treasurer in the absence or incapacity of the Treasurer.
4. Serves on the Membership Committee.
5. Works with the Treasurer, President-Elect, and the Member Services & Operations Director to prepare a draft budget for presentation to the Board of Directors at the final meeting for the fiscal year.
6. Perform other duties as the President may designate.

DIRECTOR OF MEMBER SERVICES & OPERATIONS

The Director of Member Services & Operations of the Virginia Counselors Association is responsible to the President and the members for matters pertaining to all membership service functions. The duties of the Director of Member Services & Operations include:

1. Collecting and depositing dues money for VCA, chapters and divisions, and disbursing the monies on a predetermined schedule. Each time funds are disbursed, a financial transaction will be provided. The transaction report will list the chapter and division members who have paid dues during the time period for which the check is written.
2. Assisting the VCA Treasurer in paying the Association bills.
3. Maintaining membership database, including data entry, updates and compilation of membership reports, labels and directories.
4. Planning and implementing membership recruitment and retention activities.
5. Managing VCA office operations, including: office budget management, accounts payable/receivable, equipment and materials purchase and maintenance, printing and mailing, records upkeep.
6. Serving as customer service liaison to membership (actual and potential) and Board.
7. *The Virginia Counselor*; arranging for printing and mailing.
8. Assisting with planning of scheduled meetings and functions.
9. Assisting with the publication and printing of *The Virginia Counselors' Journal*.
10. Providing assistance with preparing for annual VCA Convention.
11. Maintaining files for the Association.
12. Designing promotional materials for actual and potential members.
13. Serving as central communications person for various Board and Committee projects.

Hiring, Evaluation and Compensation

The Director of Member Services & Operations is hired by the Board of Directors or the Executive Committee thereof. The Director of Member Services & Operations shall be under such bond as may be determined by the Board of Directors or Executive Committee thereof, and shall perform such duties as may be delegated by the President. The Director of Member Services & Operations shall be evaluated annually by the President. The Director of Member Services & Operations shall receive such compensation from VCA as may be fixed by the Board of Directors. Such compensation shall include hourly wages, fringe benefits, and reimbursement for expenses incurred in the performance of his/her duties.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Composition

Voting members of the Board of Directors shall be the President, President-Elect, Immediate Past President, Secretary, Secretary-Elect, Treasurer, Treasurer-Elect, President of the Chapters and Divisions and Chairs of Division and Chapter Councils. Ex-officio members may be appointed as the President deems advisable; ex-officio members have no vote. Ex-officio members may include Committee Chairs and Director of Member Services & Operations, the VCA Convention Coordinator, and *The Virginia Counselor* Editor.

1. The President shall serve as Chair.
2. The President determines the time and place of all Executive Committee and Board of Directors meetings.

Functions

1. Formulates and approves policies within the provisions of the Bylaws of the Association.
2. Formulates policies appropriate for executive action and directs their execution.
3. Executes Association business between general meetings in accordance with the Bylaws of the Association, or as assigned to them by a vote of the membership.
4. Determines the time and place of the annual convention.
5. Makes decisions on items of major importance in the Association.
6. Has the overall responsibility for the control and management of all association properties and funds.

Meetings

1. The Board of Directors shall meet often enough to carry on the business of the Association but shall meet not less than twice a year. The meetings shall be held at such time and place as designated by the President.
2. The Board of Directors must have a quorum of not less than one-half of the membership to carry on the business of the Association. No more than three (3) proxy votes, duly designated in writing, may be counted in determining a quorum.
3. Meetings of the Board of Directors shall be called by the President or by any three members of the Board of Directors. Fifteen days' notice of a meeting of the Board of Directors shall be mailed to the last known address of each member thereof, and such notice shall, as far as practical, contain a statement of the business to be transacted at such meetings.
4. The annual Leadership Conference, held in conjunction with the final meeting of the fiscal year, should include outgoing and incoming Branch, Chapter, and Division officers to provide better continuity and communication.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Voting members of the Executive Committee shall consist of the President, President-Elect, Immediate Past President, Secretary, Treasurer, Secretary-Elect, Treasurer-Elect, and Chairs of the Division and Chapter Councils. Non-voting members shall consist of the Advocacy Relations Chair(s), the Director of Member Services & Operations, the VCA Convention Coordinator, and *The Virginia Counselor* Editor. The VCA Executive Committee shall have full authority to act for the Board of Directors.

DIVISIONS

| | |
|---|------------------------------|
| Virginia Alliance for School Counseling (VASC) replaced <i>Virginia School Counselor Association (VSCA)</i> | founded 2013 founded 1962 |
| Virginia Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (VACES) | founded 1971 |
| Virginia Career Development Association (VCDA) | founded 1971 |
| Virginia Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development (VAMCD) | founded 1975 |
| Virginia Association for Specialists in Group Work (VASGW) | founded 1976 |
| Virginia Association for Spiritual, Ethical and Religious Values in Counseling (VA-ASERVIC) | founded 1990 |
| Virginia Association for Couples and Family Counseling (VACFC) formerly <i>Virginia Association of Marriage and Family Counseling</i> | founded 1993 |
| Virginia Clinical Counselors Alliance (VCCA) replaced <i>Virginia Association of Clinical Counselors (VACC)</i> | founded 2004 founded 1980 |
| Virginia Association for Gay, Lesbian & Bisexual Issues in Counseling (VA-AGLBIC) | founded 2015 |

Organization of State Divisions

Existing national divisions of ACA may be chartered within the state, provided the following requirements are met:

1. A group of division members must indicate a desire to form a state division.
2. An organization committee must set up purposes, objectives, and plans for organization.
3. A letter of intent must be drafted and signed by this committee and forwarded to the VCA Board of Directors for its approval.
4. Policies, procedures, and requirements for chartering that have been established by the national division must be followed.

5. VCA must notify the appropriate national division of ACA of its approval of the formation of each division.
6. The charter for the new division shall be granted by the national division at their annual convention.

State Division Officers

1. All officers of a state division shall be members in good standing of VCA, ACA, and the corresponding national division.
2. An elected state division officer may not simultaneously hold an elected VCA office.

State Division Dues

1. State division dues shall be established by the division.
2. VCA will lend a division \$200 to begin operations.

Dissolution of a State Division

Divisional status may be revoked by a two-thirds vote of the VCA membership at a regular business meeting. Such a state division must receive written notice at least thirty (30) days prior to the meeting at which such action might be taken. Representatives of the state division may present evidence that the division is fulfilling its purposes satisfactorily.

CHAPTERS

| <u>Chapter</u> | <u>Year Chartered</u> |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Apple Valley | 1969 |
| Blue Ridge Area | 1991 <i>inactive</i> |
| Central Valley | 1962 |
| Eastern Shore | 1991 <i>inactive</i> |
| Fauquier | 2008 <i>inactive</i> |
| Golden Leaf | 1978 <i>inactive</i> |
| Hampton Roads | 1950 |
| Lynchburg Area | 1968 |
| New River Valley | 1969 |
| Northern Virginia | 1950 |
| Peninsula | 1963 |
| Piedmont Region (formerly Jefferson) | 1962 |
| Prince William | 1991 |
| Rappahannock | 1972 <i>inactive</i> |
| Richmond | 1950 |
| Roanoke | 1962 |
| Southside | 1971 <i>inactive</i> |
| Southwest | 1968 |
| Western Tidewater | 1984 |

Organization of Chapters

VCA members are encouraged to promote and formally organize local chapters. The purposes of such groups are as follows:

1. Foster the professional growth of members.
2. Improve cooperation and understanding among counseling professionals in the community or communities involved.
3. Hold regular meetings throughout the year.

The following is the procedure by which a local or regional group can become a chapter of the Virginia Counselors Association:

1. Application through a petition addressed to the President of VCA accompanied by:
 - a. A list of officers who shall be members in good standing of the chapter and of VCA.
 - b. A membership list with at least fifteen (15) members.
 - c. A constitution if available.
 - d. A description of the current or planned program of the group.
2. Consideration and approval by a majority of the members of the Board of Directors of VCA and a two-thirds vote of the members present at a business meeting of the Association.

Relationship to VCA

The President of each recognized VCA Chapter serves as a member of the VCA Board of Directors. The VCA President communicates business matters and information relating to ACA

and its divisions through VCA Chapter Presidents. The Chapter President serves as a representative who "feels the pulse" of his/her members regarding vital issues confronting VCA. The Chapter President also presents a report of Chapter activities at meetings of the Board of Directors and encourages the sharing of Chapter information through the VCA newsletter, *The Virginia Counselor*.

Chapter Finances

1. A Chapter's dues shall be collected by the Director of Membership Services. A Chapter shall have management of its funds to be expended for local purposes.
2. The VCA and Chapter membership year shall be twelve months with renewal on the anniversary of the date joined each year.
3. Start-up funds may be loaned to chapters by VCA at the rate of \$2.00 per member with a \$200 minimum per year. Payments from chapter membership dues will be deducted before reimbursing chapters. Funds are granted by request. Requests must be submitted to the President.

Guidelines for Organizing a VCA Chapter

1. Secure the assistance of two or three people in the area who are members of the ACA and of VCA.
2. Obtain copies of the VCA Leadership Handbook.
3. Develop a mailing list for potential membership:
 - a. Secure lists of any college or community college counseling centers or student services personnel.
 - b. Get lists of all elementary, junior, and senior high school guidance counselors with names and addresses.
 - c. Invite managers of the Virginia Employment Commission offices and their Employment Counselors.
 - d. Invite Rehabilitation Counselors from the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation.
 - e. Invite all professional counselors licensed by the state of Virginia who reside or practice in the area.
 - f. Secure lists of personnel in all community counseling or mental health centers.
 - g. Secure lists of the area's major employers, managers and personnel managers from the Virginia Employment Commission office.
 - h. Check VCA and ACA state mailing lists to determine VCA and ACA members living in the area.
4. Call an organizational meeting to explain the purposes and benefits of a local chapter.

VCA FOUNDATION



In May 1991, the Virginia Counselors Association Board of Directors voted to establish the VCA Foundation. The Foundation's major initial contributor is John C. Cook, a nationally recognized leader in guidance and counseling, who served as the Supervisor of Guidance in the State Department of

Education until his retirement in 1981. The Virginia Counselors Association is second only to California in having a state branch foundation.

The VCA Foundation is an endowment fund holding a tax status of 501(c)3 not-for-profit with all contributions being 100% tax-deductible. Its primary purpose is to promulgate, promote and foster professional education and development in the field of counseling and to establish, maintain and operate educational programs for the dissemination of information and knowledge relative to counseling. To achieve this goal, the Foundation's principal activities are receiving and investing contributions for financing special programs and projects related to VCA objectives.

The business and affairs of the VCA Foundation are managed and controlled by its Board of Directors. All directors are elected annually by a majority of the Board at its annual meeting which takes place in July. In addition to this annual meeting, special meetings may be called by the Foundation President. Officers of the Foundation include a President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer who serve terms one year in length. The Board controls the Foundation's funds and has the power to authorize and conduct fund-raising activities. The Board also accepts contributions for specific purposes related to the general goals and objectives of the VCA.

VCA STANDING RULES

The Standing Rules listed in the handbook without dates were incorporated into a revised handbook effective January, 1984. The other rules with specific dates listed were adopted as noted.

1.0 AWARDS

The Association will present the awards listed below at its annual convention. Establishment and changes of awards and awards criteria must be approved by the VCA Board of Directors. The VCA Awards Committee has full responsibility for publicizing criteria, soliciting nominations, selecting recipients, and preparing the plaques or certificates to be given to recipients. The Awards Committee, in conjunction with the President and Convention Chair, shall select individuals who will present the awards in a dignified and ceremonious manner at the annual convention awards ceremony.

1.1. Awards Given

- a. **William H. Van Hoose Career Service Award**: Gives recognition to a member whose contributions to the professional aims of the organization have been substantial.
- b. **Humanitarian and Caring Person Award**: Given recognition to a member who truly cares for the welfare of others and who cares about social issues and problems.
- c. **Counselor of the Year**: Given recognition to a member who has provided outstanding guidance and/or counseling services to his/her client in a school, clinic, industrial or other work setting.
- d. **Chapter of the Year**: Gives recognition to outstanding activities by a chapter during the twelve month period September 1 - August 31.
- e. **Chapter Member of the Year**: Gives recognition to members selected by their chapters as having contributed substantially to the success of their chapter.
- f. **Division Member of the Year**: Gives recognition to members selected by their divisions as having contributed substantially to the success of their divisions.

2.0 COMMITTEES

Reimbursement for face-to-face meetings of VCA Committees must be approved in advance by the VCA President. Conference calls and written communications are encouraged.

3.0 CONVENTION

Policies set forth in the official VCA Convention Handbook shall be binding on the Association.

4.0 ETHICS

Policies set forth in the VCA Ethics Implementation Model shall be binding on the Association.

5.0 FISCAL POLICIES

- 5.1 **Reimbursement**: The following guidelines shall be followed in reimbursing VCA members and employees for Association-related expenses:

- 5.1.1 Official VCA vouchers for reimbursement shall be submitted directly to the VCA offices by VCA Board of Directors members who are responsible for line items in the official VCA Budget (officers, committee chairs, employee, etc.). The VCA office shall issue checks for the expenditures if they meet the requirements set forth below and if the expenditures do not exceed the amount allocated in the official VCA budget and the approved VCA committee budget.
- 5.1.2 Board of Directors members and Committee chairs attending a meeting called by the President shall be reimbursed for expenditures according to the following schedule: (a) round trip mileage will be paid at the rate of .46 cents per mile without carpooling and .51 cents per mile for the individual who has permitted others to carpool with him or her; (b) one meal will either be furnished or reimbursed; and (c) one overnight lodging will be paid for members who live more than 150 miles one way from the location of a single day meeting. Car pooling and room sharing will be encouraged. No mileage or lodging will be reimbursed if a meeting is in conjunction with the VCA convention, except that the VCA President's suite will be provided if the hotel does not provide one for free; (d) overnight lodging will be paid for members who live more than 35 miles one way from the site for multiple day meetings.
- 5.1.3 Official travel by VCA officers, Board of Directors members, and VCA employees will be reimbursed at the following rates: (a) travel at .46 cents per mile or round-trip public transportation fare (this rate shall be increased to .51 cents per mile if a carpool situation is used); (b) lodging at a reasonable rate for half of a double room or at a reasonable rate for a single room if one person is traveling; (c) a maximum of \$8.00 for breakfast, \$10.00 for lunch, and \$20.00 for dinner including tax.
- 5.1.4 Committee chairs may spend their allocated amounts after their committee budgets have been approved in writing by the VCA President and a copy has been forwarded to the VCA Member Services & Operations Director.
- 5.1.5 Receipts or copies of canceled checks must accompany all vouchers for purchases of items over \$5, public transportation costs, and lodging costs.
- 5.1.6 All expenses for travel, meals and room accommodations based on room sharing will be paid by VCA for the Annual Leadership Training. Individuals requesting single rooms will be reimbursed as if they had shared a room and may make up the cost difference between a double and a single on their own
- 5.1.8 The expenses of the Member Service & Operations Director will be paid by the VCA Board of Directors following the fiscal policies set forth in 5.1.1 through 5.1.3 to attend the Executive Committee and VCA Board of Directors meetings; the VCA Legislative Day; the VCA Convention, including mileage and lodging at the Convention rate for a single room; the ACA Southern Region meeting; and the ACA Convention.
- 5.1.9 The registration fee and the expenses of the VCA President and the President-elect will be paid by the VCA Board of Directors following the fiscal policies set forth in 5.1.1 through 5.1.3 and consistent with the budget approved by the Board of Directors.

- 5.2 The President has the authority to modify line items on the official VCA budget as needed.

6.0 HUMAN RIGHTS/DIGNITY

Authors of VCA correspondence, editors of VCA publications, and chairs of VCA-sponsored conventions, programs or events are responsible for reviewing official activities of the organization in an attempt to avoid anything that may be offensive to members because of their race, gender, or religious creed. This policy applies to divisions, chapters, and committees of VCA as well.

7.0 RESOLUTIONS

Resolutions must be submitted in writing to the VCA Resolutions Committee Chair before the call to order of meetings of the Executive Committee, Board of Directors, or Membership (Annual Meeting). The Resolutions Committee Chair or a designee are the only individuals authorized to submit resolutions for consideration at a meeting.

8.0 VOTE SOLICITATION

Candidates for VCA office may solicit votes in a professionally appropriate manner.

9.0 ARCHIVES (Adopted 7/18/1985)

The VCA Secretary, upon completion of the term of office, shall transfer to the State Library Archives Branch, all VCA documents deemed appropriate for the Archives.

- 9.1 Data to be transferred include minutes of the Board of Directors meetings and the minutes of the Annual Convention; chapter, division, and committee annual reports; special committee reports; official publications and other special publications; such as organizational handbooks, journals, handbooks, newsletters, and other data deemed appropriate by the organization for the Archives.
- 9.2 The State Library archivist will classify the documents into appropriate categories. (No fee is charged by the State Library for processing and maintenance of records.)
- 9.3 The VCA documents may be used by interested persons for research purposes and such documents may be photocopied. The State Library is authorized to grant permission to researchers to publish these records in part or full. Proper citation will be required.
- 9.4 The State Library is permitted to return to the VCA secretary any past and future documents it deems not needed for the Archives.
- 9.5 Should questions arise in the future relative to the VCA Archives, the State Archivist may contact the Guidance Service, Virginia Department of Education, Richmond, which will refer such questions to appropriate VCA officers.

10.0 PROCEDURE FOR LEGISLATIVE DAY

The following is a model to help in planning the annual VCA Legislative Day. The primary goal of this event is to convey to state legislators the position of VCA and its divisions on legislative issues of concern and interest and to enlist their support for our position. A secondary, but highly important, goal is to help members become well-informed about these issues and acquire the skill

and confidence necessary for lobbying effectively. For most members, the VCA Legislative Day is likely to be the only time during a legislative session that they will come to Richmond to meet with their legislators. It is, therefore, of critical importance that the session content and related activities planned for this event be as productive as possible.

To accomplish this, the Legislative Day Chair(s), in collaboration with the VCA Member Services & Operations Director, must plan and make arrangements for this event well in advance. Of particular importance in this planning are the following:

1. Date and site;
2. Schedule of activities;
3. Content and presenters;
4. Hospitality;
5. Public relations activities for informing members of the event and actions they must take prior to the event, such as writing or telephoning to make appointments to see their legislators during the VCA Legislative Day;
6. Registering the event on the legislative calendar;
7. Registration procedures for participants; and
8. The development and printing of informational materials for the participants.

Because of the scope of this undertaking, it is advisable for the Advocacy Relations Chair(s) to have a small committee to participate in planning and implementing the various aspects of this activity. This committee should include representatives or divisions that are working on particular legislation issues of interest or concern, as well as others. Prior to the first meeting of this committee, the Chair(s) shall have met for consultation with the VCA Executive Board regarding the scheduling and content of the Legislative Day.

11.0 OTHER POLICIES

This is a complete list of VCA policies. With the exception of the Membership Services policies, no other policies exist. Policies may be added, deleted, or amended by majority vote of the VCA Board of Directors.

FISCAL GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

This document provides principles and procedures for the financial operation of VCA. Job descriptions of the VCA Treasurer and Treasurer-elect, along with the guidelines for their support of the VCA office in managing the fiscal affairs of the Association, are found in the main body of the Leadership Handbook under “Governance and Structure.”

The Virginia Counselors Association has several fund accounts. The General Account is the fund for each current fiscal year. These funds are used to pay Association expenses incurred in a given fiscal year. Leftover funds at the end of the fiscal year are carried forward into the subsequent program year. The Membership Fund has the dues collections for VCA chapters and divisions. These funds are kept in a separate account and are disbursed to the appropriate groups on a predetermined schedule.

The VCA Foundation Account has its separate account which is managed by the Foundation Board of Directors. VCA assists in fund raising for the Foundation.

GENERAL PROCEDURES

1. The Virginia Counselors Association is a not-for-profit organization. Its federal tax ID number is 54-6076167.
2. The fiscal year for the Association is July 1 - June 30.
3. All payments are made by check, good for 60 days, after which the funds will be rolled back into the General account.
4. All reimbursements and/or payments will have a reimbursement voucher or receipt as a back-up document.
5. Claim reimbursements for VCA expenses, including purchases and travel, must be submitted to the VCA Office within 60 days of when the expense occurs.
6. A Treasurer’s Report will be given at each Board meeting.
7. Pursuant to the bylaws, an official financial compilation shall be performed annually of a Association accounts by an independent accounting agency or organization.
8. The budget approved by the VCA Board of Directors is the official fiscal document of the Association.
9. The budget process for the ensuing fiscal year will begin in April annually. The Budget Planning Committee will consist of at least the President, President-Elect, Treasurer, Treasurer-Elect, and the Member Services & Operations Director. The proposed budget will be presented to the Board at the final yearly meeting (typically June).
10. The VCA accounting firm will prepare or review all tax documents required for the Association.
11. The VCA financial records shall be managed by the Director of Member Services & Operations. At the conclusion of each month, the bank statement will be reconciled by the Member Services & Operations Director, and verified by the VCA Treasurer.

Additions were amended and adopted as association policy at the VCA Board Meeting on June 5, 2010, adding the following to the standing financial guidelines and procedures:

1. Any purchase, contract, or arrangement that will exceed \$1,000 must be approved in advance in writing (electronic communication is acceptable) by the current president and treasurer.
2. Any payment, remittance, or disbursement, that exceeds \$500, which is not a regularly occurring expense specifically identified in the approved budget (e.g. payroll), will require approval by an elected officer of the association (e.g. President, President-elect, Treasurer, or Treasurer-elect). Checks exceeding \$500 will require two signatures, and debit payments exceeding \$500 require written authorization in advance.
3. No electronic transfers from Association accounts to external accounts shall be made. All payments and remittance will be made by check or debit card, within the limits described above.

For additional information on the financial procedures for VCA, please see sections in the Leadership Handbook regarding “Governance and Structure.”

MEMBERSHIP POLICIES/PROCEDURES

MEMBERSHIP PROCESSING GUIDELINES

All memberships must be processed through the VCA Membership Services office. Memberships not processed through the VCA office will not appear in any VCA records, rosters, or directories.

1. All VCA chapters and divisions should have a Membership Chair or person(s) who handle that task for their group. This person should be well-versed in membership policies and procedures in order to better serve applicants to that group, and to smooth transitions in working with VCA Membership Services. Applicants are welcome to send their information directly to the VCA office, but if there is a chapter or division membership person in attendance at group meetings, he or she can answer questions that potential members may have-- which can help them avoid the possibility of having their applications sent back due to small errors (i.e.; outdated forms, incorrect dues amounts, etc.). If a chapter or division does not have such a person, one should be appointed.
2. Chapter and division presidents must ensure that their groups are using the most recent VCA membership form, especially when using it for newsletters or in other publications put out by that group. The use of individual chapter or division forms is strongly discouraged, as they have been a past source of great confusion for new members. VCA members who are counselor educators/supervisors should check each student application they sign, so that they may catch outdated forms before the student sends them in to VCA.
3. Student members are eligible for reduced rates **only** under the following conditions:
 - a) if the instructor has signed and dated the application form
 - b) if he/she is engaged in at least nine credit hours in an undergraduate or are enrolled in an advanced degree counseling program in Virginia
 - c) if the student is a member of or is joining VCA.
4. Emeritus status is only for those who have had active, full VCA memberships for 10 of the past 15 years (this includes retired VCA members). Nomination forms are available from Membership Services.

MEMBERSHIP SERVICES POLICIES/PROCEDURES

Mailing Labels

Each VCA chapter and division is entitled to as many sets of mailing labels a year as needed. Chapters and division are urged to avoid ordering all their mailing labels at one time or too far in advance, because new members who join later **will not be included, nor will any changes of address**. Also discouraged is the practice of obtaining a set of labels for a group and using them to set up a personal label file for the same reasons listed above.

Rosters/Directories

Chapters and divisions may request membership rosters as needed. Labels and rosters are free of charge to those persons who are approved to order them for each group. **Under no circumstances is any group or individual authorized to sell or transfer membership lists to any organization outside VCA unless written permission from either the Member Services & Operations Director or President is obtained.**

MEMBERSHIP DUES COLLECTION POLICIES/PROCEDURES

All dues must be processed through VCA Membership Services. The database software will not accept or process record entries which are not accompanied by the correct dues. Chapters and divisions should not collect dues at meetings and deposit them into the group's account, while sending those members' applications to the VCA office. This practice is discouraged so that the transaction reports will be correct. The practice of keeping chapter/division monies while sending the rest to VCA is prohibited and partial memberships will not be processed. Each group will always have its monies disbursed in full, so there is no need to separate these monies. **All dues must be paid through VCA Membership Services *first*.**

Checks must be made out to VCA; it is not necessary for members to make out separate checks for VCA & chapters and divisions (except for any functions a chapter or division might be holding - i.e. luncheons, fundraisers, etc.). When monies are collected at group meetings, members need make out only one check to VCA for all their dues.

HOW DO I BECOME A MEMBER OF VCA, ITS CHAPTERS AND/OR DIVISIONS?

On-line membership applications (new and renewing professional/regular, student, and retired) are available at www.vcacounselors.org (click on Membership Information). Alternately, an application form can be obtained by contacting the VCA office in writing at 316 Hodges Cove Rd., Yorktown, VA 23692, or by telephoning 757-766-5466.

Application Tips

- Complete the application fully, including e-mail address. We are now collecting applicant's personal information to better assess our membership population. This information is optional.
- Make check payable to VCA. This includes all membership fees for chapters and divisions.
- Payment for on-line applications can be made with credit card (VISA, MasterCard or American Express) or payment can be mailed to the VCA Office. Hard copy applications can be mailed or faxed (757-766-5467 fax).
- **DO** include any donations to the VCA Foundation in the same check with your dues.
- **DON'T** make check payable to any of the chapters or divisions even if a chapter is the only thing you are joining. All monies are disbursed from this office to the chapters.
- **DON'T** forget to have your instructor sign and date the application form if you are requesting student membership rates.

VCA STANDING COMMITTEES

Committees of the Association, both standing and special, may be created to promote the purposes of the Association and shall consist of members of the Association with their number, jurisdiction, method of selection, and tenure determined in accordance with the Bylaws of the Association.

1. The duties of committee chairs are as follows:
 - a. Select committee members in conjunction with the President and notify by letter.
 - b. Call meetings as necessary to accomplish tasks. Telephone meetings and meetings at the annual convention are encouraged.
 - c. Allow for full participation of committee members.
 - d. Prepare budget and send to President.
 - e. Clearly delineate goals/purposes of committee at first meeting or before.
 - f. Attend Board of Directors meeting or send written report to President.
 - g. Prepare a final written report of committee's work which should contain a Summary of Activities, Problems Encountered, Recommendations for Action, and names of Members of the Committee. This shall be submitted at the final Board meeting of the year. An itemization of expenditures for the year should be included in the report.
2. Special committees to perform specific tasks may be appointed at the President's discretion.
3. The Association shall have the following standing committees, each of which shall perform such functions as may be prescribed by the Board of Directors and the Bylaws.

Ethics/Human Rights Committee

The Ethics Committee has the responsibility to receive and investigate complaints of unethical professional conduct of VCA members. The Ethics Committee shall be bound by the "Responsibilities and Procedures" document adopted by the VCA Board of Directors.

Nominations & Elections Committee

The Nominations and Elections Committee shall be appointed by the President of VCA, with the exception of the immediate Past President, who shall serve as Chair. There shall be no fewer than five and no more than eight persons appointed. As nearly as possible, divisional and geographical representation will be important considerations. There shall be at least one meeting or telephone conference call of the Committee to determine the nominees for each of the elective offices. The Nominations and Elections Committee shall solicit from the membership the nominations for each of the elective offices of the Branch. The Committee shall screen nominees for eligibility and willingness to serve. The Committee shall present a final slate of nominees containing two eligible names for each office. In every instance, provision shall be made for write-in candidates.

The election shall be conducted by ballot, distributed to voting members of the Association by April 15 annually, with results communicated to the Chair of the Nominations and Elections Committee no later than May 10. Results will be certified to the President as soon as possible. Candidates shall be notified of the election results by the President or Chair as soon as possible. Elected officers shall take office July 1.

Awards Committee

The six members of this committee shall serve three-year terms, with two members rotating off the Committee each year. One of the two persons serving in the third year shall be appointed Chair of this Committee, and the Chair shall take office on January 1 of each year. The Committee shall receive nominations and choose awards recipients as provided in the Standing Rules (see pages 28-31).

Advocacy Relations Committee

The Advocacy Relations Committee shall be responsible for monitoring, reviewing, and taking appropriate action in consultation with the President, regarding state legislation and regulations that affect counseling. Federal legislation and regulation shall also be monitored with action as appropriate in concert with the American Counseling Association. The Chair(s) of this Committee shall be appointed for a three-year term and shall serve as the Government Relations representative for Virginia and contact person with the ACA Advocacy Relations Committee through the regional chair. There are two Advocacy Relations Chairpersons. One chairperson focuses primarily on school counseling concerns while the other concentrates on clinical counseling issues. The Chair(s) of this Committee is/are encouraged to attend the ACA Convention and to be active in the American Counseling Association-Southern Region (ACASR). Coverage of expenses is a yearly budget consideration. The Advocacy Committee chair(s) shall be responsible for the following tasks:

1. Develop advocacy relations training for chapters and divisions;
2. Facilitate the formulation and writing of VCA's legislative platform;
3. Plan and host an annual Legislative Day to inform members about proposed laws or public policies that affect counselors, advocate for counselors through lobbying visits to elected representatives, and cultivate relationships between counselors and legislators during a VCA sponsored reception;
4. Watch legislation of counseling concern in close liaison with VCA's lobbyist, help formulate strategies and positions, and direct lobbying efforts;
5. Organize an advocacy relations telephone tree to alert chapters and divisions about evolving legislative and public policy issues of counseling concern that require a constituent response;
6. Solicit, review, and approve or disapprove local legislative mini-grant program requests from chapters or divisions.

Convention Coordinating Committee

The responsibility for Virginia Counselors Association conventions rests with the Convention Coordinating Committee. The committee membership consists of the VCA Convention Coordinator, the VCA Professional Development Committee Chair, the current President-elect, the VCA Member Services & Operations Director, the chair of the On-Site Committee for a given convention, a representative from VCCA, VASC, and the Division Council Chair. The Convention Coordinator represents the VCA Convention on the VCA Board of Directors. The work of the Committee is directed by the VCA Convention Manual.

Newsletter Committee

The Newsletter Committee shall consist of an Editor and other staff members as required. The Editor of the VCA Newsletter, The Virginia Counselor, is appointed by the President. The

editor(s) will be responsible for the following: establishing a timeline for submitting materials, and for publishing and mailing each issue; the identification of the theme and content of each issue; the acceptance and accuracy of each issue; informing submitters or advertisers of guideline or fee changes which may affect the articles or ads submitted. The editor(s) will forward the information to the graphic designer for layout and design. The VCA Office will coordinate with the editor(s) and graphic designer on services needed and member distribution. (See Appendix II for additional guidelines and tips).

Guidelines

1. Articles - Articles submitted to the editor(s) of The Virginia Counselor must be typed. Handwritten articles will not be published in the issue for which they were submitted.
2. Photographs – Photographs, preferably digital images, are gladly accepted. Actual photos will not be returned unless they are accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope.
3. Advertisements/Announcements - All advertisements must be provided electronically in accordance with standards set by the graphic designer. The VCA Office is unable to design or develop advertisements, however the VCA’s graphic designer may assist with such needs on a free-lance basis. Advertisements are to be in keeping with the philosophies and objectives of the VCA membership. The VCA has the right to refuse an advertisement. The ad sizes and costs as approved by the Executive Committee March, 1999, are as follows:

| | |
|--------------------------------|-------|
| Full Page (7 1/2" X 10") | \$225 |
| Half Page (7 1/2" X 4 7/8") | \$175 |
| Quarter Page (3 5/8" X 4 7/8") | \$100 |
| Business Card (3 1/2" X 2") | \$ 75 |

Journal Committee

The Journal Committee shall consist of an Editor and an Editorial Board. The Editor and the Editorial Board shall serve three-year terms. The Editor shall appoint the five-member Editorial Board, which should represent a cross-section of the Association membership. The Journal shall be published at least once each year, generally in May. The Editor shall be responsible for solicitation of manuscripts; selection of manuscripts for the perusal/critique of the editorial board; assembling articles in the format desired for the journal; selecting design of cover and journal; forwarding materials, on diskette, for each edition to the VCA office for final preparation. The VCA office will prepare a camera-ready copy of the journal, and the editor will have several opportunities at various stages of print to edit the copy. The VCA office will deliver the print-ready copy to the printer and to the mailing service to be sent out. A competitive bid will be obtained for printing of the journal. (See Appendix III for guidelines).

Liaison Coordinator

The Virginia Counselors Association (VCA) has members who act as liaisons between the VCA and other organizations and groups. These liaisons establish and maintain professional relationships between VCA and the other organizations and groups and service as links to them. In collaboration with other members of VCA, the Liaison Coordinator maintains ongoing contact and communication with the VCA liaisons, collects information from them, and reports this information to the VCA Board of Directors at its meetings. The Liaison Coordinator serves as a nonvoting member of the VCA Board of Directors.

POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

CHAPTER/DIVISION COUNCIL CHAIR

1. The Chapter/Division Council Chair shall be responsible for disseminating any relevant information from the Board of Directors to Chapter and Division Presidents.
2. The Chair shall serve as a liaison between the Board and the Chapter and Division Presidents and bring any concerns and issues to the Board.
3. The Chair should maintain on-going communication and provide support to Chapter and Division Presidents as necessary.
4. The Chair is expected to work with the Membership Committee and the Member Services & Operations Director regarding activation or deactivation of a chapter or division.

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

The duties of all committee chairs are as follows:

1. Select committee members and notify the VCA President of those agreeing to serve as committee members.
2. Call meetings as necessary to accomplish tasks of the committee. Regular meetings of the membership are encouraged. Meetings may take place via telephone conference and/or electronic forms of communication.
3. Establish year-long goals for the committee and communicate those goals to the board at the first board meeting following Leadership Training.
4. Attend scheduled meetings of the VCA Board of Directors. If unable to attend, a representative may be sent or a written report submitted to the VCA President prior to the meeting.
5. Submit information to the newsletter regarding work of the committee and including any information that may be relevant for membership at large.
6. Prepare a final written report of committee's work, which should contain a summary of activities, problems encountered, recommendations for action, and names of members of the committee. An itemization of any expenditures for the year should be included in the report.

COMMITTEES

Professional Development Committee

1. The committee shall be responsible for planning ongoing professional development opportunities for VCA members.
2. Committee chair and members should determine appropriate regional sites for trainings and making all arrangements for meeting place, meals and advertising events. All information should be communicated to the Member Services & Operations Director to be placed on the professional development calendar.

3. Committee shall be responsible for contacting presenters for such trainings, organizing logistics of trainings and communicating with presenters to implement trainings.
4. The Committee Chair shall maintain appropriate correspondence with all guest speakers. The Committee Chair shall develop a file of events to include sites utilized, contact information for sites, names of presenters, addresses, phone numbers, and topics covered. This file will be passed along to next Committee Chair.
5. The Chair is responsible for submission of a clinical or experiential article for every newsletter. This can be based on a recent training summation or adapted from other resources available.

Newsletter

1. The Newsletter Committee shall consist of an editor and other staff members as necessary.
2. The Editor shall be responsible for publication of at least four issues of the newsletter each year to be posted on the VCA website and e-blasted to membership at large.
3. The Editor will assign or solicit information for the newsletter from Chapters, Divisions, Board Members and membership at large. The Editor shall make all individuals aware of deadlines for submission and publish the newsletter according to a schedule presented to the President of VCA and the Board of Directors at the first annual board meeting. The Editor of the newsletter selects the materials that will appear in each issue, and arranges the materials so that they will adhere to an attractive format.
4. News on the state and national levels should be included in each issue if appropriate.
5. Every newsletter shall contain the following information:
 - President's Message
 - Advocacy Relations Information
 - Membership Updates and Information (from Membership Committee)
 - ACA Updates and Information
 - Professional Development Information – Updated Calendar of Events/Convention Information
 - School and/or Clinical Article or Resource (submitted by assigned chapters and division)
 - Chapter News
 - Division News

Advocacy/Government Relations

1. The Committee shall be responsible for maintaining a liaison with VCA lobbyists regarding proposed state legislation, as well as state and federal government operations that may affect the counseling profession.
2. The Chair(s) shall be responsible for ongoing dissemination of relevant issues to the membership through e-blasts and submission of newsletter articles on an ongoing basis.

3. The Chair and Committee is responsible for making arrangements for annual Legislative Day activities. This should include scheduling events, disseminating information, sending invitations to general membership and encouraging participation.
4. The Chair and Committee shall be responsible for scheduling and determining content of all meetings with volunteers and lobbyists, training volunteers, creating information packets (to include a small token of appreciation such as candy, etc.) to be disseminated to legislators. This should be coordinated with the Member Services & Operations Director so that appropriate arrangements may be made for lodging and meeting space.
5. The Chair should disseminate information at the annual convention and arrange for any relevant sessions during the convention. The Chair and/or Committee may address membership at large during convention prior to keynote address to inform membership of ongoing legislative issues.
6. The Chair shall keep relevant records that can be passed along to incoming Committee regarding progress and participation in legislative/governmental progress.
7. The Chair shall prepare written reports to be presented to the Board of Directors at Board Meetings regarding relevant legislation and issues to be addressed. The Committee will also inform the Board of any relevant legislation that the Board should take action on or provide information for members.
8. The Committee Chair(s) will be responsible for keeping up with Legislative issues on a National Level via the ACA website and passing on any relevant information to membership and the Board of Directors. The Chair(s) may participate in ACA Legislative Training if funding allows.

Membership

1. The Chair is responsible for ongoing activities and dissemination of information to improve membership.
2. The Chair and Committee shall monitor membership trends through the VCA Director of Membership Services and report these to the Board of Directors.
3. The Committee shall develop ways to inform non-members of the advantages of membership and recruit new members.
4. The Committee shall communicate with Chapter/Division Presidents to assist them in dissemination of information and improving membership.
5. The Committee shall develop ways to reach out to those members that have not renewed membership to determine why members have not renewed and to encourage them to renew.
6. The Committee shall create or update any membership materials as necessary.

VCA Action Plan

VCA Committee/Division/Chapter: (specify) _____

The person overseeing this Action Plan is: _____

Activity: _____

Relationship of Activity to VCA Strategic Plan:

Definable Benefit of this Activity to VCA Members:

Resources Needed:

People: _____

Space: _____

Money: _____

Marketing: _____

Other: _____

Time Line:

Start Date: _____ End Date: _____

Benchmarks: _____

Indicators of Success:



VIRGINIA COUNSELORS ASSOCIATION

EMERITUS STATUS NOMINATION FORM

Requirements for Nominees (as specified in the By-Laws of the Virginia Counselors Association, Article III, Section 2{c}):

- 1) ACTIVE VCA membership for ten of the past 15 years
- 2) Age 60 or above
- 3) Retired from active service as a counselor or human development professional
- 4) Made significant contributions to the profession as evidenced by a letter of support from the nominating chapter or division

Instructions for Nominating Chapter or Division:

- 1) Complete this form and attach letter of support (see 4, above).
- 2) Make out a check for \$50 payable to the Virginia Counselors Association. This money will underwrite the ongoing administrative costs of maintaining the emeritus membership.
- 3) Mail form, attached letter and check to: VCA, 316 Hodges Cove Road, Yorktown, VA 23692.

Decisions on acceptance of the nomination and conferring of the emeritus status will be made at the meeting of the VCA Board of Directors following receipt of the nomination form. Nominating chapter or division will be informed of the Board's decision, the Membership Services Director will update the member's status, and a confirmation letter will be sent from the Membership Services Office to the emeritus member.

Please PRINT the following information:

I, _____, President of _____,

am submitting this member for Emeritus status for VCA:

NAME:

____ Letter of Support Enclosed

____ Check Enclosed

VIRGINIA COUNSELORS ASSOCIATION BYLAWS

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**BYLAWS of the
Virginia Counselors Association
A Branch of The American Counseling Association
*November 2012 Revision***

ARTICLE I - Name

Section 1. The name of this Association shall be the Virginia Counselors Association (hereafter referred to as Branch).

Section 2. This Association is organized as The Virginia Branch of the American Counseling Association and is a member of the American Counseling Association Southern Region. The name of the Virginia Branch shall be employed in connection with all official business and activities of the Association. The name of the Virginia Branch shall not be used by organizations or agencies without the approval of the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE II - Purpose

Section 1. The purposes of the Virginia Counselors Association, acting in accordance with the purposes and objectives of the American Counseling Association, are to advance the professional and scientific discipline of counseling in the State of Virginia; to maintain, improve and encourage high professional standards and conduct in the field of counseling in Virginia; to unite persons engaged or interested in any phase of counseling in Virginia; to encourage and coordinate counseling activities in Virginia, functioning through public or private agencies; to function as a central clearing agency for pertinent information related to present or contemplated counseling programs in Virginia; to disseminate information and focus public attention on legislation which would in any way affect counseling activities in Virginia; to encourage research, creative, and experimental activities, and the publishing of educational and professional literature; and to conduct educational and professional meetings, workshops, and conferences.

Section 2. The Virginia Branch shall be autonomous in the conduct of its affairs, consistent with the by-laws of the American Counseling Association (ACA).

ARTICLE III - Membership

Section 1. Individual Membership. Membership in the Virginia Counselors Association shall be individual.

Section 2. Types of Membership.

(a) Professional. Any individual who holds a master's degree or higher in counseling or a closely related field from a college or university accredited by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, and who actively engages in (or is interested in) counseling. A professional member shall be eligible to vote.

(b) Regular. Any individual whose interest and activities are consistent with those of the Association but who do not meet the criteria for professional membership. A regular member shall be eligible to vote.

(c) New Professional. Any individual who meets the qualifications for a regular member and was holding a student title within the previous 12 months prior to graduating from a counseling program. This newly graduated student as a new professional may hold this classification for up to two years, shall pay reduced dues as determined by the VCA Board of Directors, and shall be eligible to vote.

(d) Student. Any individual who is a full- or part-time student in a program related to counseling, may become a student member of the Branch upon verification of student status. A student member shall pay reduced dues as determined by the VCA Board of Directors and shall be eligible to vote.

(e) Emeritus: VCA members who have had an active membership in VCA for 10 of the past 15 years, who have reached the age of 55 and are retired from active service as a counselor or human development provider, and who have made significant contributions to our profession as attested to by a letter of support from the individual's chapter or division, may be given Emeritus status on the vote of the VCA Board of Directors. Recommendations for Emeritus Status will come to the Board of Directors from Chapters and Divisions, along with a fee as established by the board. Emeritus members will receive all services and benefits afforded regular members. The membership annual fee will be waived. Emeritus members will have to file a membership renewal form each year.

(f) Retired: VCA members may apply for retired status after reaching the age of 55 and retiring from the counseling profession. Persons who are granted retired status will have a membership fee one-half ($\frac{1}{2}$) the amount of the dues paid by regular members. Members must apply for retired status to the VCA office.

Section 3. Procedure. Applicants for Branch membership should direct their applications to the Director of Member Services & Operations of the Association.

Section 4. Dues.

(a) Dues for members of the Association shall be reassessed every three years by the Board of Directors. Dues changes shall be recommended by the Executive Committee of the Board and shall be approved by the Board of Directors.

(b) A membership will last for 12 months.

(c) A member who has been dropped from the Association rolls may become active by paying current dues.

(d) Chapter and Division dues shall be established by Chapters and Divisions.

ARTICLE IV - Officers

Section 1. Officers and Terms of Officers.

(a) The officers of this Association shall be the President, President-elect, Immediate Past President, Secretary, Secretary-elect, Treasurer, and Treasurer-elect.

(b) All officers of the Association shall be elected at large from among the members of the Association. They must hold ACA membership and they shall serve for one-year terms, commencing July 1, or until their successors are elected.

(c) The President-elect shall automatically become President of the Association one year after commencement of the office as President-elect, or upon the death or resignation of the President. The Secretary-elect shall automatically become Secretary of the Association one year after the commencement of the term in office as Secretary-Elect, or upon the death or resignation of the Secretary. The Treasurer-elect shall automatically become Treasurer of the Association one year after the commencement of the term of office as Treasurer-Elect, or upon the death or resignation of the Treasurer.

(d) If any officer-elect should resign or be unable to serve by the beginning of their term of office, the next ranking candidate on the election return shall assume that position. If that person is unable, unwilling or ineligible to serve, then the Board of Directors or the Executive Committee shall have the authority to appoint a person to fill the term of office.

(e) Appointed officers shall execute the business of the Association as specified in these by-laws.

(f) An elected officer shall not be a candidate for the same office for at least five years, except, however, that an officer-elect succeeding to an office by reason of death or resignation of the officer shall serve the full one-year term in addition to serving the unexpired term of the resigned or deceased officer.

(g) An elected Association officer may not simultaneously hold an elective office in a Branch Chapter or Division.

Section 2. VCA Staff. The Board of Directors may empower the Executive Committee to hire staff. When so authorized, the Executive Committee may hire staff to support the mission and to ensure the efficient day to day operation of the Association.

Section 3. Qualifications of Officers. An officer shall have been a member of the Association for at least two (2) years, and shall hold memberships in Virginia Counselors Association and the American Counseling Association.

Section 4. Duties of Officers.

(a) The President shall be the chief elected officer of the Association, shall preside at all meetings of the Association, all meetings of the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors. The President shall appoint the chair(s) of all committees, except as otherwise specified in the bylaws, and shall be an ex-officio member of all committees, except the Nominations and Elections Committee. The President shall endeavor to represent the State Branch at the American Counseling Association Southern Region and American Counseling Association meetings. The President shall transmit all amendments to Branch bylaws and a written annual report to the ACA President.

(b) The President-elect shall perform the duties of the President in the absence or incapacity of the President, and such other duties as the President or Board may designate.

(c) The Secretary shall record all proceedings of the Association, shall handle correspondence as directed by the President, and shall transmit to the President of ACA the names of officers upon their election or appointment, and such other duties as the President or the Board may designate.

(d) The Secretary-elect shall perform the duties of the Secretary in the absence or incapacity of the Secretary, and such other duties as the President or the Board may designate.

(e) The Treasurer shall perform internal control procedures to monitor, review and report the association's financial accounts and records, and such other duties as the President or the Board may designate.

(f) The Treasurer-elect shall perform the duties of the Treasurer in the absence or incapacity of the Treasurer, and such other duties as the President or the Board may designate.

Section 5. Compensation and Expenses of Officers.

(a) None of the officers of the Association shall receive any compensation for services to the Association. The necessary expenses of the elected officers of the Association may be paid from the funds of the Association in accordance with the approved budget.

(b) The Treasurer or the designated VCA employee shall authorize payment of the normal expenses for the Association. Payment for unbudgeted expenses must be approved by the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE V - Board of Directors

Section 1. Composition of the Board of Directors.

(a) The members of the Board of Directors shall be President, President-elect, immediate Past-President, Secretary, Secretary-elect, Treasurer, Treasurer-elect, chairs of the Chapter and Division/Interest Section Councils, and the Presidents of the Chapters, Divisions and Interest Sections.

(b) The President shall serve as Chair of the Board of Directors.

(c) The Board of Directors or President may invite the attendance of committee chairs and resource persons as deemed necessary. These committee members and resource persons shall be ex-officio members without vote unless they are otherwise elected.

Section 2. Functions of the Board of Directors.

(a) The Board of Directors shall formulate and approve policies within the provisions of the bylaws of the Association.

(b) The Board of Directors shall formulate policies appropriate for executive action and direct their execution.

(c) The Board of Directors is responsible for execution of the Association business between general meetings in accordance with the bylaws of this Association, or as assigned to them by a vote of the membership.

(d) The Board of Directors is responsible for decision making, or making appropriate referrals for decisions.

(e) The Board of Directors shall take charge, control, and manage all assets acquired by the Association.

Section 3. Meetings of the Board of Directors.

(a) The Board of Directors shall meet often enough to carry on the business of the Association but shall meet not less than twice a year. The meetings shall be held at such time and place as designated by the President.

(b) The Board of Directors must have a quorum of not less than one-half of its membership to carry on the business of the Association. No more than three (3) proxy votes, duly designated in writing, may be counted in determining a quorum.

(c) Meetings of the Board of Directors shall be called by the President, or by any three members of the Board of Directors. Fifteen days notice of a meeting of the Board of Directors shall be mailed to the last known address of each member thereof, and such notice shall, as far as is practical, contain a statement of the business to be transacted at such meetings.

Section 4. Executive Committee. The Executive Committee of the Board of Directors shall consist of the President, President-elect, immediate Past-President, Secretary, Secretary-elect, Treasurer, Treasurer-elect and Chairs of the Chapter and Division/Interest Section Councils. The Executive Committee shall act for the Board of Directors but within the limits of such written policies as may be established by the Board of Directors. The President of the Branch shall call and preside at meetings of the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE VI - Committees

Section 1. Appointment of Committees. Committees of the Association, both standing and special committees, may be created to promote the purposes of the Association, and shall consist of members of the Association, with their number, jurisdiction, method of selection, and tenure determined in accordance with the bylaws of the Association.

Section 2. Standing Committees. The Association shall have the following standing committees, each of which shall perform such functions as may be prescribed by the Board of Directors and by these bylaws:

Advocacy Relations. The Advocacy Relations Committee shall be responsible for monitoring, reviewing, and taking appropriate action in consultation with the President or Board of Directors regarding state legislation and public policy.

Awards. The Awards Committee shall be responsible for implementing and following the procedures for the branch and national awards.

Convention. The Convention Coordinating Committee is responsible for proposing and implementing convention policies and procedures.

Ethics. The Ethics Committee shall be responsible for promoting ethical standards and behavior of Branch members.

Journal. The Journal Committee is responsible for the annual publication of the referred Branch journal.

Membership. The Membership Committee shall consist of at least five (5) members who shall serve three (3) year terms. At least one member shall rotate off the committee annually. One of the members shall be appointed Chair of the committee. The Director of Member Services & Operations shall be an ex-officio member of the committee. This committee shall be responsible for membership recruitment, retention, and member services.

Newsletter. The Newsletter Committee is responsible for the quarterly publication of the Branch newsletter.

(h) Nominations and Elections. The Nominations and Elections Committee shall develop and implement fair nominations and elections.

Section 3. Special Committees. Special Committees to perform specific tasks may be appointed at the President's discretion.

ARTICLE VII - Divisions

Section 1. Organization of State Divisions. Existing national divisions of ACA may be chartered within the state, provided the following requirements are met:

- (a) A group of division members must indicate a desire to form a State Division.
- (b) An organization Committee must set up purposes, objectives, and plans for organization.
- (c) A letter of intent must be drafted and signed by this Committee and forwarded to the Branch Board of Directors for its approval, as well as to the National Division.
- (d) The Branch must notify the National Division of ACA of its approval of the formation of each Division.
- (e) The charter for these Divisions shall be granted by the National Division at the National Convention.

Section 2. State Division Officers. All officers of a State Division shall be members in good standing of the Branch, ACA, and the corresponding National Division.

Section 3. Membership. All members of a State Division must hold concurrent membership in the Branch.

Section 4. Dissolution of a Division. Divisional status may be revoked by a two-thirds vote of the Branch membership at a regular business meeting if the Division fails to provide organized programs or services or if its membership drops below fifteen (15). Such a Division must receive written notice at least thirty (30) days prior to the meeting at which such action might be taken. Representatives of the Division may present evidence that the Division is fulfilling its purposes satisfactorily.

Section 5. Division/Interest Council. Each division will be represented on the division/interest council by their President. The divisions will select a chair who will represent them on the Executive Committee of the VCA Board of Directors.

ARTICLE VIII - Chapters

Section 1. Organization of Chapters. A Branch Chapter shall consist of persons who organize on the basis of a local geographic area within a Branch. All members of a Branch Chapter must hold concurrent membership in the Branch. A Chapter may be established by petition to the President, with a subsequent majority vote of the Board of Directors and a two-thirds vote of the members present at a business meeting. A Chapter must be composed of at least fifteen (15) Branch members.

Section 2. Chapter Officers. Elected Chapter officers shall be members in good standing of the Chapter and the Branch.

Section 3. Chapter Finances. A Chapter shall have control and management of funds as dispersed by VCA to be expended for local purposes.

Section 4. Dissolution of a Chapter. A Chapter may have its charter revoked by a two-thirds vote of the Branch membership at a regular business meeting, if the Chapter fails to provide organized programs or services or if its membership drops below fifteen (15). Such a Chapter must receive written notice at least thirty (30) days prior to the meeting at which such action might be taken. Representatives of the Chapter may present evidence that the Chapter is fulfilling its purposes satisfactorily.

Section 5. Chapter Council. Each chapter will be represented on the chapter council by their President. The chapters will select a chair who will represent them on the Executive Committee of the VCA Board of Directors.

ARTICLE IX - Interest Sections

Section 1. Organization of State Interest Sections. An Interest Section may be established to promote a professional interest not otherwise provided for in the Divisional structure of ACA. The guidelines for chartering an Interest Section are:

(a) A group of individual members may petition the President indicating a desire to form an Interest Section. The group wishing to initiate an Interest Section must set up purposes, objectives, Mission statement, and develop bylaws of the Interest Section. A proposed Interest Section which is already established in Virginia as a separate professional association and has a desire to join VCA should submit the following credentials: Letter to the President stating the association's request to become an Interest Section; Mission statement, purposes, and objectives of the organization; Bylaws of the organization; List of any national or state organizations with whom the organization is affiliated; Information concerning the educational background, training, and work settings of the organizations members; and a List of the officers and members. The Membership Committee will review the credentials of the proposed Interest Section and will make a recommendation to the Board of Directors. A majority vote of the Board of Directors and a two-thirds vote of the members present at a business meeting is required for action on an Interest Section petition.

Section 2. State Interest Section Officers. All officers of a State Interest Section shall be members in good standing of the Branch.

Section 3. Membership. All members of a State Interest Section shall hold concurrent membership in the Branch.

Section 4. Dissolution of an Interest Section. An Interest Section may have its charter revoked by a two-thirds vote of the Branch membership at a regular business meeting if the Interest Section fails to provide organized programs or services or if its membership drops below fifteen (15). Such an Interest Section must receive written notice at least thirty (30) days prior to the meeting at which such action might be taken.. Representatives of the Interest Section may present evidence that the Interest Section is fulfilling its purposes satisfactorily.

Section 5. Division Council/Interest Section Council. Each Interest Section will be represented on the Division/Interest Section Council by their President. The divisions

and interest sections will select a chair who will represent them on the Executive Committee of the VCA Board of Directors.

ARTICLE X - Nominations and Elections

Section 1. Committee Appointment. The Nominations and Elections Committee shall be appointed by the Executive Committee. The Immediate Past-President shall serve as Chair. There shall be no fewer than five and no more than eight persons appointed. As nearly as possible, divisional and geographic representation will be important considerations.

Section 2. Nominations. The Nominations and Elections Committee shall solicit nominees for eligibility and willingness to serve, screen and present a final slate of nominees containing two eligible names for each office. There shall be at least one meeting (phone and electronic conferencing permissible) of the committee.

Section 3. Elections. Biographical information for each candidate with election ballot instructions shall be posted on the website and be distributed via e-mail to the membership no later than April 15. Members without a valid e-mail address will be mailed a postcard notification of elections with instructions on how to vote. Members may vote electronically via the secure, password-controlled website until 11:59 p.m. EST on April 30, or they may request an alternative ballot (paper, electronic, facsimile) from the VCA office. Alternative ballots mailed to the VCA office must bear a postmark no later than April 30 or be received by the VCA Office via e-mail or facsimile no later than 11:59 p.m. EST on April 30. Election results shall be tallied by the VCA office and communicated to the nominations and elections chair no later than May 10. Provisions shall be made for write-in candidates.

ARTICLE XI - Meetings of the Membership

Section 1. Annual Meeting. There shall be an annual meeting at which the Association's business shall be conducted. The time and place of the meeting shall be determined by the Board of Directors.

Section 2. Special Meetings. Special meetings may be called at any time by the President, with the approval of the majority of the Board of Directors.

Section 3. Notice of Meetings. An announcement of each meeting shall be sent to each member, published in the newsletter and/or pre-convention materials, at least thirty (30) days prior to the date of such meeting.

Section 4. Quorum for Meetings. The members present at any Association meeting for which an announcement has been made shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

ARTICLE XII - ACA Representation

Section 1. ACA. The Virginia Branch has no direct representation as such in ACA executive or legislative bodies. Possibilities for representation exist through elections conducted by the American Counseling Association Southern Region (ACASR).

Section 2. American Counseling Association Southern Region. The President may nominate Branch members for American Counseling Association Southern Region elected offices.

Section 3. Representation by the President. The President or a designee appointed by the President shall represent the Branch as its delegate in meetings of the American Counseling Association Southern Region and special business sessions called during the national meeting of ACA.

Section 4. Dues. The Association shall pay assessed dues to the American Counseling Association Southern Region.

ARTICLE XIII - Association Business Affairs

Section 1. Budget. At the final meeting for the fiscal year of the Board of Directors, the Budget Committee, consisting of the President, President-elect, Treasurer, Treasurer-elect and the designated VCA employee (an ex-officio member of this committee) shall submit a budget for consideration and approval by the Board of Directors. A report of the approved budget shall be available to Association members.

Section 2. Insurance. The Association shall purchase and retain in force directors and officers liability, convention events insurance and a multi-peril policy that at a minimum provides coverage for the following potential loss exposures: employee dishonesty, computers and media, accounts receivable, property off premises, temperature change, forgery or alteration, money orders and counterfeit paper currency, personal property of others, and valuable papers and records.

Section 3. Financial Review. An official financial compilation shall be performed for all Association accounts by an independent accounting agent or organization. The VCA Treasurer shall present a report of said compilation for review and consideration by the Executive Committee.

Section 4. Not-for-Profit Organization. This Association is granted exempt status by the Internal Revenue Service under Section 501(c)(6) effective February 1969.

Section 5. Disposal upon Dissolution. Upon dissolution of the Association, none of its property shall be distributed to any of the members, and all of such property shall be transferred to such other organization or organizations as the Board of Directors shall determine to have purpose and activities most nearly consonant with those of the Association, provided that such other organizations shall be exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding provisions of the Internal Revenue Laws.

Section 6. Association Year. The fiscal year of the Association shall be July 1 - June 30.

ARTICLE XIV - Amendments

Section 1. Annual Meetings. Except as provided in Section 2 below, amendments to the bylaws may be acted upon only at the annual business meeting of the Association. If presented in writing to all members of the Association at least thirty (30) days prior to the annual meeting at which the proposed change is to be considered, such an amendment may be adopted by a two-thirds vote of the membership present. Any amendments to such proposed amendments or any amendments not presented in writing to all members of the Association thirty (30) days in advance of the annual meeting may be adopted by at least a four-fifths vote of the members present.

Section 2. Mail Ballot. If a proposed amendment is desirable before the next annual meeting, the board of directors may approve a mail ballot. The mail ballot shall include a written presentation of the amendment to all members. If two-thirds of the members returning ballots within the succeeding thirty (30) days vote affirmatively, the amendment shall be adopted.

Section 3. Report to ACA. Amendments to the bylaws shall be reported by the VCA President to the ACA President for approval by the ACA Board of Directors at least thirty (30) days prior to the effective date of adoption.

ARTICLE XV - Rules of Order

Section 1. Robert's Rules of Order. The most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the proceedings of the Association not otherwise specified in the bylaws.

ARTICLE XVI - Date of Effect

Section 1. Date of Effect. These bylaws and any amendments thereto become effective immediately upon adoption by a vote of the membership and approval by ACA, as specified in Article XIV, in accordance with the procedures as established in these revised bylaws.

November 2012 revision