VCA is dedicated to meeting the needs of Virginia counselors in a variety of work settings. The Association’s mission is to advocate for the best counseling practices that enhance human development and functioning throughout the lifespan and promote public confidence in the counseling profession. VCA supports the following public policy/advocacy priorities:

**School/Career Development Counseling**
- Continue to support measures that increase access to school counselors for all public-school children
- Support state and federal funding support for schools to increase student mental and physical health and safety
- Monitor and support Dept of Education policies that promote student, and staff and school counselor wholeness and wellness.

**Clinical Counseling**
- Support policies and funding that would increase the numbers of clinical counselors to meet the mental health and behavioral health needs of Virginians. These include increasing Medicaid payment rates at actual cost, parity in reimbursement rates, and including clinical counselors in loan repayment programs funded by the Commonwealth.
- Continue to advocate for federal legislation that provides for Medicare reimbursement for services rendered by clinical counselors.

**Health and Equity**
- Monitor and advocate in support of policies of promoting mental health, wholeness, and wellness while honoring gender identity, sexual/affectional-orientation, race, ethnicity, national origin, immigration status, religion, disability status and/or physical, emotional, and mental ability, medical condition, pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions, age, marital status, and military status.
- Advocate with an anti-racist perspective affecting individuals and communities impacted by systemic racial oppression with the goal of constantly striving towards racial equity
- Advocate for policies that promote mental health and well-being for individuals impacted by immigration status from an anti-xenophobic perspective.
- Support and encourage legislation and policies that facilitate the mental health, worth, well-being, and dignity of all, especially LGBTQIA+ individuals, communities, and their families.
- Support legislation, regulations, and public policies that assure that individuals have access to counseling services, including but not limited to mental health, substance use disorder, school, marriage and family, and career development.
- Support legislation, funding, and policies that promote equitable access to mental health resources, prevent mental health crises, and adequately treat all individuals with mental and behavioral health conditions.
- Promote policies that increase access to mental health and substance use disorder services for incarcerated individuals.

**Promotion of the profession**
- Actively promote the passage of the counseling compact in the 2023 General Assembly session.
- Assure that policymakers understand the role of counselors working in all settings, the services counselors provide, and the impact of counseling on the health and welfare of Virginians.
- Increase the visibility of counselors in the public arena through participation in stakeholder coalitions and membership in policy boards.
- Work to assure that VCA members are represented in public policy arenas where decisions are made on access to counselor services.
- Encourage counselors to seek appointments to commissions and other public bodies.