

JLARC Workplan

2018



Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission

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1 JLARC Workplan

The Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) is the oversight agency of the Virginia General Assembly. It was established by the legislature in 1973 to review and evaluate the operations and performance of state agencies and programs. Since its establishment, JLARC's responsibilities have been expanded to include oversight and fiscal analysis in a number of areas of Virginia government.

JLARC uses a structured but flexible process for planning the work of the agency. This workplan, which is prepared annually and submitted to the Commission for review and approval, represents a staff proposal for a feasible work schedule. The workplan may be revised to reflect changes in organizational priorities and needs. The sections that follow cover JLARC's major work functions: Studies, Ongoing Evaluation and Oversight, Fiscal Analysis, and Support.

Proposed Commission meeting schedule 2018

May 14	JLARC workplan APA workplan and report on 2017 work
June 11	Director's report Virginia529 reports VITA report
July 9	Economic development incentives report: Workforce and small business incentives VRS reports
August	<i>No meeting</i>
September 10	Department of Elections VITA reports
October 9	Department of Professional & Occupational Regulation State spending report
November 13	Spending on inmate health care Changes to Prepaid529 model (if enacted) Unimplemented JLARC recommendations
December 10	Foster care and adoption Economic development incentives report VRS oversight report Virginia529 investment benchmarks (if enacted) State spending report: K-12 Standards of Quality

2 Studies

Major research studies are the primary work of the agency. Topics of research are developed by a topic selection subcommittee, which is composed of Commission members, and approved by the Commission.

Studies follow individual project workplans, which are developed by study teams and reviewed by JLARC's project review team—director, associate directors, and methodologist—to ensure that high-quality work can be completed in the time allotted. The project review team examines each project at every major stage of the research process. JLARC staff are assigned to the respective study teams on a full-time basis for the duration of the project.

Studies to be completed in 2018 are summarized below. Study resolutions are included in the appendix.

Department of Elections

Mandate: Commission resolution

Scheduled briefing: September 10, 2018

Like most states, Virginia has a state-supervised and locally-administered electoral system. Effective state supervision is critical, given the wide variation in size and experience of the state's 133 general registrars, and given the importance of ensuring security and uniformity of elections across the state. With recent IT security threats to state elections systems, effective state supervision is increasingly crucial.

Virginia's electoral system is supervised by the Department of Elections (ELECT), which is a relatively small state agency responsible for a variety of key electoral functions. ELECT employs about 40 staff and received about \$15.5 million in appropriations in FY17. About one-third of these appropriations pass through to general registrars for operational expenses. Under its statutory mandate, ELECT provides guidance and training to general registrars and local electoral board members, helps maintain the state's list of 5.5 million registered voters, and administers the Virginia Election and Registration Information System (VERIS), the primary IT system used to manage elections in Virginia.

The JLARC study team will assess how well ELECT supervises the local administration of elections, in particular the guidance and training it provides to general registrars. The study team will review ELECT's internal structure and assess whether its operations result in the efficient and effective supervision of elections. The team will assess the efficiency and effectiveness of the processes ELECT uses to ensure the voter registration list is accurate and up-to-date. As part of an evaluation of the VERIS application, the JLARC study team will work with an IT consultant to review the security of VERIS.

Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation

Mandate: Commission resolution

Scheduled briefing: October 9, 2018

Through professional and occupational regulation, governments establish and enforce criteria that must be met to practice an occupation. The purpose of occupational regulation is to protect consumers by (a) ensuring that individuals and businesses have the minimum qualifications to safely practice their occupation and (b) correcting unsafe practices and removing unscrupulous individuals from the marketplace.

In Virginia, most occupational regulation occurs at the state level. The Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation (DPOR) is one of over a dozen state agencies tasked with occupational regulation. DPOR and its 19 boards oversee a wide variety of occupations, the largest of which are contractors, real estate agents, and cosmetologists. In total, DPOR issues 136 different types of credentials and regulates approximately 305,000 individuals and businesses.

The JLARC study team will evaluate whether DPOR's credential requirements and standards of conduct are reasonable to protect consumers, transparent and fair to regulated entities, and appropriately enforced by the agency. The team will examine whether the agency makes regular and appropriate changes to regulations, and whether fees to obtain a credential are reasonable and can be adjusted as necessary. The team will review whether DPOR is organized and staffed to effectively and efficiently process applications for occupational credentials, respond to consumers' complaints, and support the work of its regulatory boards.

Spending on inmate health care

Mandate: Commission resolution

Scheduled briefing: November 13, 2018

Virginia's Department of Corrections (VADOC)—like nearly every other organization—has seen health care become a larger part of its budget. In recent years, VADOC's annual spending on inmate health care has grown from \$121 million to \$200 million (FY07-FY17). VADOC must strike a difficult balance in meeting its statutory mandate: providing adequate health care to prison inmates within the constraints of its budget.

VADOC provides health care to about 30,000 inmates at 41 state facilities. At all facilities, VADOC is accountable for providing onsite care, prescription drugs, and offsite care as needed. VADOC directly manages the care at 25 facilities; private vendors manage the care at the remaining 16 facilities.

The JLARC study team will review the major categories of health care spending and assess several VADOC-wide issues, including the effectiveness of VADOC's contracting. The study team will assess whether VADOC is taking reasonable measures to limit the financial and legal exposure from potential lawsuits alleging inadequate care. The

study team will examine how much Virginia spends on health care for prison inmates compared to similar populations (such as individuals held in local jails) and compared to correctional systems in other states. The team will attempt to determine whether certain health care delivery models are more cost-effective than others in providing inmate health care. The team will also attempt to identify ways the state can spend less on onsite care, prescription drugs, offsite care, and health care administration.

Foster care and adoption services

Mandate: Commission resolution

Scheduled briefing: December 10, 2018

Approximately 5,000 Virginia children are in the state's foster care system, which is primarily the responsibility of the Virginia Department of Social Services. Local departments of social services are responsible for bringing children into foster care, planning for reuniting children with their families, or finding alternative permanent placements. The state spends more than \$450 million annually in federal and general funds on maintenance payments for foster care children and their families, services and supports for children and their families, and adoption assistance payments.

Children enter foster care after leaving their families for a variety of reasons, including abuse, neglect, or mental or behavioral health problems. The number of children in Virginia's foster care system decreased steadily between 2008 and 2013, but the population has risen every year since 2013. A key goal of the state's foster care system is to find a permanent home for children as quickly as possible, but children appear to be spending more time in foster care in recent years.

The JLARC study team will evaluate how foster care caseloads have changed in recent years and how these changes have impacted the state's ability to provide effective services and supports to children in foster care. The team will evaluate the current and future capacity of local departments of social services and other government agencies to provide effective foster care and adoption services. The team will assess the current accessibility of services and supports within local communities and the effectiveness of state and local efforts to recruit and retain foster care and adoptive families and to find permanent family placements for children. The study team will evaluate federal, state, and local spending on foster care and adoption services and identify strategies that Virginia could pursue to maximize the impact of this funding.

3 Ongoing Evaluation & Oversight

JLARC provides ongoing evaluation and oversight on behalf of the General Assembly. The General Assembly has specifically directed JLARC to evaluate and oversee each of the following topics. Two JLARC staff members are assigned to evaluation and oversight.

Economic development incentives

The Appropriation Act directs JLARC to review and evaluate economic development initiatives and policies on an ongoing basis. The JLARC Economic Development Subcommittee is the primary entity that receives staff reports, and it selects the incentives to evaluate each year. JLARC contracts with the Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service to perform evaluations. Evaluations focus on

- spending on economic development incentives, such as grants and tax preferences;
- success by businesses in meeting goals in return for incentives;
- economic benefits to Virginia of total spending on incentives; and
- effectiveness of incentives in influencing business activity.

JLARC staff will present two reports in 2018:

Evaluation of workforce and small business incentives

Scheduled briefing: July 9, 2018

Annual economic development incentives report

Scheduled briefing: December 10, 2018

Virginia Retirement System

The Virginia Retirement System Oversight Act (Chapter 10 of Title 30 of the Code of Virginia) authorizes oversight of the Virginia Retirement System (VRS). Under this authority, JLARC is directed to focus on

- the structure and governance of the retirement system;
- the structure of the investment portfolio;
- investment practices, policies, and performance;
- the actuarial policy and the actuarial soundness of the trust funds; and
- the administration and management of the retirement system.

JLARC staff conduct independent research and attend meetings of the VRS board of trustees and committees to observe agency and board operations. JLARC staff will present three reports in 2018:

Quadrennial actuarial audit of the VRS trust fund

(prepared by actuarial firm under contract with JLARC)

Scheduled briefing: July 9, 2018

VRS oversight reports

Scheduled briefings: July 9 and December 10, 2018

Virginia529

The Virginia College Savings Plan Oversight Act (Chapter 51 of Title 30 of the Code of Virginia) authorizes oversight of the Virginia College Savings Plan (Virginia529). Under this authority, JLARC focuses on

- the structure and governance of Virginia529;
- the structure of investment portfolios;
- investment practices, policies, and performance;
- the actuarial policy and actuarial soundness of the prepaid tuition program; and
- the administration and management of the plan.

JLARC staff conduct independent research and attend meetings of the Virginia529 board of directors and committees to observe agency and board operations. JLARC staff will present the following report in 2018:

Biennial Virginia529 oversight report

Scheduled briefing: June 11, 2018

Two additional reports are required in the House proposed budget:

Review of proposed changes to Prepaid529 model

Scheduled briefing: November 13, 2018

Third party review of investment benchmarks

(conducted by outside consultant under contract with JLARC)

Scheduled briefing: December 10, 2018

Virginia Information Technologies Agency

The Appropriation Act directs JLARC to review and evaluate the Virginia Information Technologies Agency (VITA) on an ongoing basis. Under this authority, JLARC focuses on

- the state's IT infrastructure outsourcing contracts;
- VITA's planning and oversight responsibilities; and
- VITA's procurement services and oversight of state agency procurement activities.

JLARC staff conduct independent analysis and attend IT advisory meetings to observe agency operations. In 2018, a principal focus of staff attention will be VITA's IT sourcing initiative. JLARC staff will present the following report in 2018:

Update on IT infrastructure sourcing

Scheduled briefing: September 10, 2018

Other evaluation and technical support

House Select Committee on School Safety – technical support

Upon request of the committee

Proposed health insurance mandates – evaluation

Upon request of the Health Insurance Reform Commission

4 Fiscal Analysis

JLARC provides fiscal analysis services to the General Assembly. Under this function, JLARC staff

- provide an independent assessment of the fiscal impact of proposed legislation and executive orders;
- report on state spending and how Virginia compares nationwide;
- monitor and provide technical support for major forecasts related to the state budget; and
- provide other fiscal analysis support to the General Assembly as requested.

Several JLARC staff members work part-time on fiscal analysis. Activities and reports for this year include

Fiscal impact reviews of proposed legislation (second opinions on fiscal impact)

Upon request of a committee chair

Fiscal impact reviews of executive orders issued by the governor

Upon request of a committee chair

Annual state spending report

Scheduled briefing: October 9, 2018

Annual internal service funds memorandum

Scheduled release: November 2018

Annual report on state spending on the K-12 Standards of Quality

Scheduled briefing: December 10, 2018

Annual Virginia Compared to the Other States publication

Scheduled publication: January 2019

Monitoring of major expenditure forecasts

Ongoing and periodic

Debt Capacity Advisory Committee

Participation by JLARC director

5 Support Functions

Several functions support the research and oversight work of JLARC staff: research methods, publications, fiscal and administrative support, and staff training and development.

Research methods

JLARC's chief methodologist supports teams in developing and carrying out evaluations of state programs and agencies. The research methodologist

- supports the conceptualization, design, and implementation of research methods and techniques to improve the accuracy and validity of findings;
- advises study teams on data collection, approaches to analysis, and statistical methods;
- leads complex or critical analyses for teams;
- reviews work products for methodological soundness and accuracy of interpretation;
- develops and implements training to enhance staff capabilities;
- provides technical assistance for the fiscal analysis function; and
- serves as a member of the project review team.

Publications

JLARC's two-person publications team supports the study teams and works to advance the communication of JLARC's work to the legislature and to the public. The publications team

- participates in project review during the development of reports and briefing materials
- edits reports and other documents for clarity, logic, usage, and style;
- contributes to the design of graphics;
- handles design and layout of JLARC documents and publications;
- maintains staff resources for writing and graphics; and
- oversees output and distribution of JLARC publications online and in print.

The publications team maintains the JLARC website, making sure that public information is current and accurate, and monitors media coverage of JLARC's work.

Business operations and administrative support

JLARC's business operations are carried out by a two-person team. The business manager oversees daily operations, which include

- executing the agency's annual budget and ensuring effective internal financial controls;
- providing human resources services to agency staff;
- managing the agency's fixed assets inventory;
- managing agency records and archives;
- arranging travel for site visits;
- conducting administrative preparation and follow-up for Commission meetings; and
- coordinating staff recruiting efforts.

In addition, this function provides administrative support to study teams as needed.

Staff training and development

Staff training activities ensure that staff have the skills and knowledge necessary to perform their work, improve their individual performance, and contribute to the organization's overall performance. Several different types of training are offered to help staff meet their individual training needs and to address organization-wide training needs.

In 2018, training may include

- in-house training for newer staff, to be led by experienced or skilled JLARC staff members;
- external training and skills development courses, designed to address the professional growth or skills development needs of selected staff;
- professional development opportunities offered by the National Legislative Program Evaluation Society at its annual conference; and
- webinars relevant to the work of the agency, available through the National Conference of State Legislatures and other professional organizations.

Appendix: Study resolutions

Operation and performance of the Department of Elections

Authorized by the Commission on July 10, 2017

WHEREAS, the Department of Elections serves a critical role promoting accurate, fair, open, and secure elections for the citizens of the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, the Department (a) supervises and coordinates the work of local electoral boards and general registrars to ensure uniform and legal elections processes, (b) proposes and administers regulations and provides guidance as necessary to promote proper elections, and (c) sets training standards and ensures that electoral board members and general registrars are properly trained; and

WHEREAS, the Department maintains the Virginia Election and Registration Information System (VERIS) that contains information about 5.5 million registered Virginia voters, and the Department is bringing more of its information technology services “in-house”; and

WHEREAS, the Department is authorized to employ up to 43 staff and is appropriated \$14.3 million for FY 2018 to provide electoral services, reflecting recently increased appropriations for VERIS and administrative services; and

WHEREAS, federal Help America Vote Act funds have historically been used to assist with modernizing election systems and technology, but these funds are projected to be depleted by FY 2019; and

WHEREAS, appropriate budgetary and financial management practices are a critical aspect of effective agency operations; and

WHEREAS, the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) completed a limited review of VERIS in 2008 but has not fully reviewed the Department of Elections since 1998; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED by the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission that staff be directed to review the operation and performance of the Department of Elections. In conducting its study, staff shall review whether the Department (i) adequately supervises and coordinates the administration of elections; (ii) sets appropriate training standards and provides adequate training for local electoral boards and general registrars; (iii) adequately fulfills all statutory reporting requirements in a timely manner; (iv) appropriately maintains required lists of registered voter information and employs adequate practices to ensure they are accurate and up-to-date; (v) effectively, efficiently, and securely administers VERIS; and (vi) is organized, staffed, and structured to ensure efficient and effective operations, including internal financial management and records keeping. JLARC staff may review other issues and make recommendations as appropriate.

All agencies of the Commonwealth, including the Department of Elections, State Board of Elections, Virginia Information Technologies Agency, local electoral boards, and general registrars shall provide assistance, information, and data to JLARC for this study, upon request. JLARC staff shall have access to all information in the possession of state agencies pursuant to § 30-59 and § 30-69 of the Code of Virginia including all documents related to disciplinary proceedings or actions of the boards. No provision of the Code of Virginia shall be interpreted as limiting or restricting the access of JLARC staff to information pursuant to its statutory authority.

JLARC shall complete its work and submit a report of its findings and recommendations to the Commission by December 15, 2018.

**Operation and performance of the
Virginia Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation**

Authorized by the Commission on July 10, 2017

WHEREAS, the Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation protects the health, safety, and welfare of the public by licensing qualified individuals and businesses and enforcing standards of professional conduct for professions and occupations, including architects, contractors, cosmetologists, real estate professionals, land surveyors, and many others; and

WHEREAS, the Department oversees the 20 regulatory boards that establish minimum standards and appropriate credentials for the professions and occupations they regulate, and set the amount of fees charged when issuing credentials; and

WHEREAS, the Department issues professional credentials—licenses, certificates, or registrations—to individuals and businesses that meet the minimum standards established by each board; and

WHEREAS, more than 304,000 individuals and businesses held professional credentials issued by the Department as of May 1, 2017; and

WHEREAS, the Department enforces the standards of professional conduct established by the regulatory boards by investigating reports of violations and issuing sanctions and other disciplinary actions, including fines, probationary terms, and license suspension or revocation; and

WHEREAS, the Department receives no general fund appropriations, being funded exclusively through credential application fees, which are required by the Callahan Act to be sufficient for operating expenses but not excessive; and

WHEREAS, changes to the Department's credential qualifications or application fees are subject to the Administrative Process Act; and

WHEREAS, the Department employs 203 staff and operates with a non-general fund budget of \$23.4 million; and

WHEREAS, Executive Order 17 issued in 2014 establishes that all regulatory activity should be necessary to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public, and that regulations should be designed to achieve their objectives in the most efficient and cost-effective manner; and

WHEREAS, the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) last completed a review of Virginia's occupational and regulatory boards in 1982; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED by the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission that staff be directed to review the operation and performance of the Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation. In

conducting its study, staff shall (i) review whether the Department is organized and staffed to efficiently and effectively process applications for new and renewed professional credentials, respond to complaints about individuals or businesses, and support the work of each regulatory board; (ii) determine whether the Department's staffing and administration of regulatory board meetings effectively facilitate public participation and access; (iii) determine whether the Department appropriately enforces the standards of professional conduct established by the regulatory boards; (iv) determine whether the standards and fees established by the Department and its regulatory boards, and the requirements of the Administrative Process Act, are reasonable and identify any requirements or fees that unnecessarily prevent or hinder individuals or businesses from entering into or remaining in their professions; (v) determine whether the policies and procedures for modifying fees allow the Department and regulatory boards to respond to changing budgetary needs in a timely manner and ensure that boards are not carrying excessive surpluses or deficits; (vi) compare the Department's regulatory requirements and other provisions and the number and type of professions it regulates to those regulated in other states; and (vii) evaluate whether the Department is effectively contributing to the Commonwealth's economic interests through coordination with other agencies in the Commerce and Trade Secretariat and the Virginia Community College System. JLARC staff may review other issues and make recommendations as appropriate.

All agencies of the Commonwealth, including the Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation and its regulatory boards, the Virginia Board for Workforce Development, and the Virginia Community College System shall provide assistance, information, and data to JLARC for this study, upon request. JLARC staff shall have access to all information in the possession of state agencies pursuant to § 30-59 and § 30-69 of the Code of Virginia including all documents related to disciplinary proceedings or actions of the boards. No provision of the Code of Virginia shall be interpreted as limiting or restricting the access of JLARC staff to information pursuant to its statutory authority.

JLARC shall complete its work and submit a report of its findings and recommendations to the Commission by December 15, 2018.

Study Resolution

Rising cost of providing health care for state prison inmates

Authorized by the Commission on September 11, 2017

WHEREAS, the Virginia Department of Corrections (DOC) is granted custody of persons convicted of felonies sentenced to more than one year, and has recently been responsible for about 30,000 offenders; and

WHEREAS, DOC must provide inmates with medical and mental health care and treatment, and determine how inmates should contribute to the cost of their health care; DOC cannot deny necessary health care services to inmates who cannot afford to pay; and

WHEREAS, inmate health care costs now account for 21 percent (\$199 million) of all funds appropriated to operate correctional facilities (\$949 million), and the vast majority of appropriations are state general funds; and

WHEREAS, medical costs per inmate have risen more than 20 percent during the past five years, outpacing the increase in national health care costs; and

WHEREAS, for about half of inmates, DOC provides health care directly; for the other half, DOC procures services through contracts; DOC has had some difficulty with the cost and quality of services procured through contracts; and

WHEREAS, one DOC facility, the Fluvanna Correctional Center for Women, is currently under a federal court order to monitor the quality of inmate health care, and such increased scrutiny may prompt further increases in inmate health care spending; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED by the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission that staff be directed to review the rising cost of providing health care for state prison inmates. In conducting its study, staff shall (i) compare the cost of providing health care to inmates to the cost of providing health care to other similar populations in Virginia and other states; (ii) identify the factors contributing to health care cost increases at facilities managed by DOC and those managed by contractors; (iii) assess whether DOC efficiently and effectively provides health care to inmates, and procures and administers health care contracts that leverage purchasing power across facilities; (iv) determine whether DOC sufficiently maintains and adequately uses inmate medical records to make strategic health care decisions; (v) assess whether DOC adequately partners with community and other resources to provide care; (vi) determine how well DOC is adapting its facilities and operations to its aging and less healthy inmate population; (vii) as appropriate, make recommendations; and (viii) as appropriate, research other issues.

All agencies of the Commonwealth, including the Department of Corrections and all state correctional facilities, Virginia Commonwealth University, the Department of Medical Assistance Services, and the

Virginia Information Technologies Agency shall provide assistance, information, and data to JLARC for this study, upon request. JLARC staff shall have access to all information in the possession of state agencies pursuant to § 30-59 and § 30-69 of the Code of Virginia including all documents related to disciplinary proceedings or actions of the boards. No provision of the Code of Virginia shall be interpreted as limiting or restricting the access of JLARC staff to information pursuant to its statutory authority.

Private or for-profit entities that receive state funding to provide health care and other services to inmates, including through contractual arrangements, are also requested to provide assistance, information, and data to JLARC for this study, upon request. JLARC staff shall, as needed, work with private entities to develop agreements that sufficiently protect proprietary information during the course of the study.

JLARC staff shall complete their work and submit a report of its findings and recommendations to the Commission by December 15, 2018.

Study Resolution

Foster care and adoption services in Virginia

Authorized by the Commission on September 9, 2017

WHEREAS, nearly 5,000 of Virginia's children and youth are in foster care placements; and

WHEREAS, Virginia's foster care caseloads have recently begun to increase after a 10-year decline, but for undetermined reasons; and

WHEREAS, caseload increases in other states have been tied to accelerating rates of opioid abuse, and opioid abuse has also risen quickly in Virginia; and

WHEREAS, Virginia ranks low (49th) in the proportion of foster care youth who are adopted, even though the number of adoptions has increased; and

WHEREAS, foster care youth who are never adopted face greater lifetime challenges, and the proportion of these youth in Virginia is higher than in many other states; and

WHEREAS, adoption and foster care programs are administered by the Virginia Department of Social Services and its 121 local departments of social services (LDSS); and

WHEREAS, youth in foster care are mandated recipients of services through the Children's Services Act (CSA), which is administered at the state level by the Office of Comprehensive Services and at the local level by LDSS; and

WHEREAS, concern has been expressed about the provision of services for those children and youth with the most complex needs, many of whom are likely recipients of CSA services; and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly appropriates more than \$200 million for "Child Welfare Services" and \$330 million for services provided under the CSA; and

WHEREAS, the Children's Services Transformation, a major initiative to reform the provision of child welfare services, was undertaken in 2007, but a follow-up evaluation has not occurred; and

WHEREAS, the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission identified gaps in case management services and an inadequate number of foster families for children and youth in its 2007 report *Evaluation of Children's Residential Services Delivered through the Comprehensive Services Act*, preventing some children from receiving the most appropriate services to meet their needs; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED by the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) that staff be directed to review the administration of the state's adoption and foster care programs and the provision of those programs' services to youth and their families. In conducting its study, staff shall (i) summarize changes and trends in foster care caseloads over time and identify the reasons for any recent increases, either statewide or regionally; (ii) examine the current and future capacity of local departments of

social services and other government agencies to provide foster care, foster care prevention, and adoption services, including effective case management services for children and families with the most complex needs, such as those served through the Children's Services Act; (iii) evaluate the effectiveness of state and local efforts to recruit and retain foster care and adoptive families and place foster youth in permanent homes through successful adoptions; (iv) evaluate how well government agencies are measuring the effectiveness of services provided to foster care youth; (v) determine whether agencies currently maximize the availability of federal funds and coordinate the various funding streams involved in foster care and adoption service delivery; (vi) propose options or make recommendations to improve the administration and delivery of foster care and adoption services to the state's youth and increase the rate of successful adoptions; and (vii) review other issues as appropriate.

All agencies of the Commonwealth, including the Virginia Department of Social Services and its local departments, the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, and the state's 40 Comprehensive Services Boards shall provide assistance, information, and data to JLARC for this study, upon request. JLARC staff shall have access to all information in the possession of state agencies pursuant to § 30-59 and § 30-69 of the Code of Virginia. No provision of the Code of Virginia shall be interpreted as limiting or restricting the access of JLARC staff to information pursuant to its statutory authority.

JLARC staff shall complete their work and submit a report of findings and recommendations to the Commission by December 15, 2018.



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