

JLARC Workplan

2026



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. The legislature established JLARC 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 several areas of Virginia government.

JLARC uses a structured but flexible process for planning agency work. 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 2026

May 4	JLARC Workplan APA Workplan
June 3	Film, media, and tourism incentives APA prior year results
July 6	VRS Commonwealth Savers
August	<i>No meeting</i>
September 8	Agricultural best management practices Unimplemented JLARC recommendations
October 13	Artificial intelligence State spending VITA
November 9	Assisted living and in-home care Economic development incentives
December 14	Judicial allocation Oversight of managed care organizations VRS State Spending: K–12 Standards of Quality

2 Studies

Major research studies are the agency's primary work. JLARC's topic selection subcommittee recommends research topics, which are then approved by the full Commission. JLARC also receives studies through joint resolutions passed by the General Assembly.

Studies follow project-specific workplans, which are developed by study teams and reviewed by JLARC's project review team—director, associate directors, methodologist, and publications staff—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 study teams on a full-time basis for the duration of the project.

Studies to be completed in 2026 are summarized in this section. Study resolutions are included in the appendix.

Virginia's agricultural best management practices cost-share program

Mandate: Commission resolution

Scheduled publication: September 2026

The Virginia Agricultural Best Management Practices Cost-Share program (VACS) was created in 1984 to mitigate nonpoint source water pollution from agricultural land. Reducing pollution caused by agriculture's nitrogen, phosphorous, and sediment is critical to meeting the state's Chesapeake Bay pollution reduction goals. VACS is a state program that offsets costs for agricultural landowners to implement practices that reduce pollution (e.g., cover crops, riparian buffers, animal waste facilities, or livestock stream-exclusion systems). VACS is administered by the Department of Conservation and Recreation along with Virginia's 47 soil and water conservation districts. VACS funding has grown substantially in recent years; the program was allocated \$223 million in FY26.

The study team will assess whether VACS funding levels and allocations to soil and water conservation districts are reasonable, data-driven, and effectively deployed. The team will examine the program's intent and design, including whether its purpose is clearly defined and has the necessary elements and requirements to ensure effectiveness. The team will assess whether staff provide adequate technical assistance and if the pollution reduction projects are being adequately monitored and tracked over time. Furthermore, the team will evaluate the extent to which VACS projects are effectively

contributing to reductions in nonpoint source pollution and whether the program is effectively coordinated with similar state and federal programs.

Artificial intelligence in the Commonwealth

Mandate: Commission resolution

Scheduled publication: October 2026

Artificial intelligence (AI) is a broad term commonly used to describe machine-based systems that infer how to make predictions, generate content, or act to achieve objectives. AI systems vary in their capabilities, techniques, and applications, but they perform tasks that are commonly associated with human intelligence, such as learning, reasoning, solving problems, and using language. Advances in machine learning have increased AI systems' accessibility and capability but have also introduced new and increased risks.

Virginia and other states have begun taking steps to leverage AI systems' capabilities as well as mitigate AI-related risks to state government and the broader public. In 2024, Executive Order 30 directed the Virginia Information Technologies Agency (VITA) to publish AI Policy and IT Standards for executive branch agencies and to establish an AI registry for state agencies. In addition, the number of AI-related bills introduced in Virginia more than doubled between 2024 and 2025, and approximately 30 AI-related bills were introduced in 2026. (Only a few were enacted.) Recent federal executive actions have created some uncertainty about the future scope of state AI regulation.

The study team will focus on four key areas. The team will assess how Virginia state agencies are using or planning to use AI systems and their challenges implementing them. The team will evaluate AI systems' key risks and opportunities for state agencies and whether Virginia state government is well positioned to implement responsible and trustworthy AI systems. In addition, the team will consider how Virginia legislators can identify and address the most substantial risks AI presents to the public. Finally, the team will identify the key factors that affect the cost and availability of AI systems in the near term, according to reputable sources and relevant stakeholders.

Assisted living and in-home care

Mandate: Commission resolution

Scheduled publication: November 2026

Virginia's aging population is expected to continue placing greater demands on services and supports for older residents. Approximately 16 percent of Virginians are 65 and older, and their proportion of the population is projected to increase across all regions of the state and reach 20 percent by 2030. Assisted living and in-home care are key services and supports individuals may need as they age, and concerns have been raised about their supply and affordability. Little information exists about the

availability, cost, and quality of assisted living and in-home care services, even though both are state-regulated. Publicized evidence of poor-quality skilled nursing facilities has raised questions about the quality of other congregate care settings, particularly assisted living facilities, and the effectiveness of the state's oversight of them.

The study team will examine regional demographics of Virginia's aging population, including individuals' income and assets, physical or cognitive limitations, and living arrangements, to help determine demand for assisted living and in-home care services. The team will also quantify the supply, capacity, and cost of assisted living and in-home care services, identifying factors that constrain supply and affordability. Additionally, the team will aggregate disparate data to summarize what is known about the quality of assisted living facilities and assess the state's statutory and regulatory framework for their oversight, including the frequency and rigor of facility inspections and the effectiveness of corrective actions. The team will also evaluate how well the state regulates and ensures the quality of in-home care.

Virginia's judicial allocation methodology

Mandate: SJ 259 (2025 session)

Scheduled publication: December 2026

The General Assembly authorizes, allocates, and funds circuit and district court judges (general district and juvenile and domestic relations) around the state. Currently, Virginia has 175 circuit court judges, 134 general district court judges, and 138 juvenile and domestic relations court judges, which cost the state almost \$140 million in FY26. To inform the legislature's allocation of judges, the General Assembly directed the Office of the Executive Secretary of the Supreme Court to contract with the National Center for State Courts to conduct assessments of judge workloads in 2013, 2017, and 2024. Questions have been raised about the data, methodology, and results of these assessments, especially the 2024 assessment. Moreover, concerns have been raised about whether variation in court practices could lead to allocating fewer or more judges than necessary. For example, some questions have been raised about whether inefficient court practices have resulted in increased workloads for judges.

The study team will evaluate Virginia's past judicial needs assessments, including the data and methodology used. The team will compare Virginia's judicial needs assessments to those of other states and determine whether recent Virginia assessments were well-designed, used reasonable methods, and were adequately informed by available information. The team will also determine how variation in court practices affects judges' workload and the data used in Virginia's assessments, and evaluate the use of best or more efficient practices. The team will then address whether changes should be made to (i) future judicial needs assessments to better estimate judge needs, (ii) the state's broader judicial allocation process, or (iii) certain court practices to better facilitate judge efficiency and improve court data.

Oversight of managed care organizations

Mandate: Commission resolution

Scheduled publication: December 2026

Virginia's Medicaid program provides health coverage to over 1.8 million Virginians, including low-income adults and children, people with disabilities, older adults, and pregnant women. Medicaid services receive the largest total appropriation in the state budget (about \$26 billion in FY25) and the second-largest general fund appropriation (about \$7 billion in FY25). Medicaid enrollment and expenditures have grown significantly in recent years, largely because of Virginia's decision to expand Medicaid eligibility in 2019 and program policies instituted in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. To help the General Assembly plan for future increased Medicaid spending, Virginia's Medicaid agency—the Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS)—issues an annual forecast of these projected costs. The state's most recent forecast predicts that Medicaid spending will continue to increase. In recent years, the DMAS forecast has significantly underestimated future spending needs, which has frustrated elected officials and staff responsible for developing the state's budget.

Most Medicaid recipients are enrolled in managed care, a system where the state contracts with private insurance companies to provide comprehensive benefits for recipients. A key determinant of the Medicaid program's costs is the amount of the "capitation payments" the state pays to these managed care organizations (MCOs) to deliver health care to their members. DMAS is responsible for setting these rates while ensuring MCOs deliver appropriate, timely, and effective health care and avoid unnecessary spending.

The study team will identify the reasons for Medicaid spending increases, evaluate the rigor and reliability of DMAS' forecasting methodology, and assess the process DMAS uses to establish the capitation payments. The study team will also evaluate how well DMAS ensures that MCOs provide good customer service, sufficient access to healthcare providers and services, and appropriate medical services to their members. In addition, the study team will evaluate how well DMAS' policies for paying MCOs promote efficiency, discourage unnecessary service use and program spending, and promote positive health outcomes. Finally, the team will determine whether DMAS' staffing and organizational structure are sufficient to effectively oversee the managed care program.

3 Ongoing Evaluation & Oversight

JLARC provides ongoing evaluation and oversight for the General Assembly. The General Assembly has directed JLARC to evaluate and oversee the following topics. Two JLARC staff members are permanently assigned to evaluation and oversight. Other staff members are assigned as needed.

Economic development incentives

The Economic Development Incentives Oversight Act (Chapter 9, Article 6 of Title 30.1 of the Code of Virginia) Act directs JLARC to review and evaluate economic development initiatives and policies on an ongoing basis. The Commission approves the incentives to evaluate each year. JLARC contracts with the University of Virginia's Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service to perform evaluations. Evaluations analyze

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

JLARC staff will present two reports in 2026:

Evaluation of film, media, and tourism incentives
Scheduled publication: June 2026

Annual economic development incentives report
Scheduled publication: November 2026

Virginia Retirement System

The Virginia Retirement System Oversight Act (Chapter 9, Article 3 of Title 30.1 of the Code of Virginia) authorizes oversight of the Virginia Retirement System (VRS). Under this authority, JLARC evaluates

- 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 fund; 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 the following briefings and reports in 2026.

VRS Oversight Update
Scheduled briefing: July 2026

Independent actuarial audit of VRS
Scheduled publication: July 2026

VRS Oversight Report
Scheduled publication: December 2026

Commonwealth Savers Plan

The Commonwealth Savers Plan Oversight Act (Chapter 9, Article 4 of Title 30.1 of the Code of Virginia) authorizes oversight of Commonwealth Savers. Under this authority, JLARC evaluates

- the structure and governance of the Commonwealth Savers Plan;
- the structure of investment portfolios;
- investment practices, policies, and performance;
- the actuarial policy and the actuarial soundness of the defined benefit college savings programs; and
- the administration and management of the plan.

JLARC staff conduct independent research and attend meetings of the Commonwealth Savers Board and committees to observe agency and board operations. JLARC staff will provide the following report in 2026.

Biennial Commonwealth Savers oversight report
Scheduled publication: July 2026

Virginia Information Technologies Agency

The Virginia Information Technologies Agency Oversight Act (Chapter 9, Article 5 of Title 30.1 of the Code of Virginia) directs JLARC to review and evaluate the Virginia Information Technologies Agency (VITA) on an ongoing basis. Under this authority, JLARC evaluates

- 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 and agency relations meetings to observe VITA's operations. JLARC staff do not plan to present a separate briefing on VITA this year because the AI review will include an examination of VITA's role.

Other evaluation support provided for the General Assembly

JLARC provides additional evaluation and support services for the General Assembly as directed by the Code of Virginia or the Appropriation Act. JLARC staff

- provide reviews of proposed criminal justice legislation to determine the potential disproportionate racial and ethnic impacts in the Commonwealth;
- review the compliance of higher education institutions with their management agreements; and
- provide other evaluation support to the General Assembly as requested.

Several JLARC staff members work part time on other evaluation and support. Activities and reports for this year include:

Racial and ethnic impact statements for proposed criminal justice legislation

Upon request of the House or Senate Courts of Justice chairs

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:

Second opinion fiscal impact reviews of proposed legislation
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 publication: October 2026

This year, the annual state spending report will include an analysis of the flow of revenue and expenditures between the state and localities.

Annual state spending on the K–12 Standards of Quality
Scheduled publication: December 2026

This year, the annual state spending on the K–12 Standards of Quality report may be expanded to include a review of teacher compensation in Virginia, including benefits.

Annual Virginia compared with the other states publication
Scheduled publication: January 2027

Monitoring of major expenditure forecasts
Ongoing and periodic

Review of internal service funds
Upon request of JLARC, House Appropriations Committee, or Senate Finance & Appropriations Committee chairs

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, business and administrative support, and staff training and development.

Research methods

JLARC's methodologist supports teams in developing and evaluating state programs and agencies. The 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 advances 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 JLARC publications team maintains the JLARC website, making sure that public information is current and accurate.

Business operations and administrative support

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

- executing the agency's annual budget and ensuring effective internal financial controls;
- providing human resources, payroll, and benefits services to agency staff;
- managing the agency's fixed assets inventory;
- managing agency records and archives;
- arranging travel for site visits;
- completing administrative preparation, minutes, and follow-up for Commission meetings;
- coordinating staff recruitment efforts;
- coordinating agency updates on implementation of JLARC recommendations; and
- providing 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. JLARC offers several opportunities to help staff meet their training needs and to address organization-wide training needs.

In 2026, training may include:

- in-house training for staff on selected topics, to be led by external experts and trainers or experienced and skilled JLARC staff members;
- 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

Agricultural Best Management Practices Cost-Share Program

Authorized by the Commission on December 16, 2025

WHEREAS, the Virginia Agricultural Best Management Practices Cost-Share Program (VACS) offers financial and technical assistance to incentivize agricultural landowners and operators to implement best management practices (BMPs) that reduce nutrient and sediment discharges to improve the water quality of streams, rivers, and the Chesapeake Bay; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) is responsible for implementing VACS, in partnership with the state's 47 soil and water conservation districts (SWCDs); and

WHEREAS, VACS is primarily funded through the state's Water Quality Improvement Fund and Virginia Natural Resources Commitment Fund and received \$223 million for FY26; and

WHEREAS, there are more than 70 BMPs—such as cover crops, nutrient management plans, livestock stream-exclusion systems, and rotation grazing—and individual agricultural landowners and operators can receive up to \$300,000 in financial assistance to implement them; and

WHEREAS, DCR conducts a biennial nonpoint source assessment that identifies and prioritizes watersheds that are most vulnerable to water quality degradation from nonpoint source pollution; and

WHEREAS, DCR is responsible for allocating cost-share and technical assistance funds to SWCDs based on where BMPs can achieve the greatest reductions in surface and groundwater contamination; and

WHEREAS, SWCDs award cost-share funds to individual agricultural landowners and operators based on criteria established by each district that are required to maximize nutrient and sediment pollution reduction using the most cost-effective BMPs; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission that staff be directed to review the VACS. In conducting its study, staff shall evaluate (i) the nonpoint source assessment biennially conducted by DCR; (ii) the criteria and process to allocate cost-share and technical assistance funds to SWCDs; (iii) the criteria and processes used by SWCDs to select agricultural landowners and operators to receive cost-share funds; (iv) the contract development process for specific cost-share awards, including the assignment of costs and determination of award amounts; (v) the quality of technical assistance provided; and (vi) DCR and SWCD efforts to verify compliance with program guidelines and requirements.

JLARC may make recommendations as necessary and may review other issues as warranted.

All agencies and political subdivisions of the Commonwealth, including the Department of Conservation and Recreation and soil and water conservation districts, 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 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.

Study Resolution

Artificial Intelligence in the Commonwealth

Authorized by the Commission on December 16, 2025

WHEREAS, artificial intelligence (AI) can enhance the delivery of government services, reshape private sector business processes and productivity, and significantly impact citizens' day-to-day lives; and

WHEREAS, while AI brings opportunities for improving productivity and government services, it also brings risks such as supplanting human actions and judgment, perpetuating discrimination and inequality, creating security risks such as deepfakes and other illegal activity, and undermining public trust in government institutions; and

WHEREAS, Virginia has started taking actions to oversee and regulate the appropriate use of AI in both the public and private sector, including Executive Order 30 in 2024, the Virginia Information Technologies Agency's (VITA) issuance of AI IT security standards and an AI registry for state agencies, and the Joint Commission on Technology and Science's (JCOTS) reviews of some specific aspects of AI; and

WHEREAS, legislation is being considered and/or adopted in other states and Virginia to appropriately regulate AI to protect citizens while also harnessing opportunities to enhance productivity, processes, and prosperity; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission that staff be directed to review the use, governance, regulation, and oversight of AI in the Commonwealth. In conducting its review, staff shall: (i) determine how and to what extent AI is currently being used and considered in Virginia state government [state agencies and higher education] and the opportunities and risks these uses present; (ii) determine whether state agency staff have the appropriate skills to effectively operationalize the use of AI; (iii) evaluate whether state policies and processes regarding the use of AI in state government enable innovation while also mitigating the risks to state personnel and the public; (iv) identify options for a governance structure and process the state could adopt to ensure continuing rigorous oversight of AI as it evolves; (v) review legislation pertaining to AI that has been considered and passed in other states; (vi) identify areas outside of state government that are likely to be substantially affected by AI that could require state government regulation; and (vii) review how data center capacity and other factors could impact the cost and availability of AI.

JLARC shall make recommendations as necessary and review other issues as warranted.

All agencies of the Commonwealth, including the Virginia Information Technologies Agency, the Office of Regulatory Management, and higher education institutions 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 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 will coordinate as necessary and appropriate with JCOTS.

In-home and residential congregate care services for aging Virginians

Authorized by the Commission on December 16, 2025

WHEREAS, Virginia's population will continue aging, with more than 600,000 Virginians projected to be 80 years old or older by 2040; and

WHEREAS, localities in each of Virginia's economic development regions are projected to experience large increases in the age 80-plus population by 2040; and

WHEREAS, about one-quarter of the population in each region is age 60 or older and living alone, and an even higher proportion is age 60 or older and disabled; and

WHEREAS, many of the state's aging residents will be unable to remain in their homes without external services and supports or will need congregate care residential living options, such as assisted living and memory care units, to ensure their safety and well-being; and

WHEREAS, no data exists about whether existing home- and community-based services and supports, and congregate care residential living options, will be sufficient to meet the demands of aging Virginians; and

WHEREAS, state government is responsible for establishing operation regulations for these services, ensuring their quality and, in some cases funding them; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission that staff be directed to review the availability and quality of non-medical services and supports available for aging Virginians. These services and supports include those designed to allow individuals to age safely in their own homes and congregate care housing, such as assisted living and memory care units, for those who cannot remain in their homes. In conducting its review, staff shall: (i) determine the current number of service providers, their services, and their existing capacity, by region and by whether they accept public funding; (ii) estimate existing and future service shortages, by service type and by region, and determine the reasons for these shortages; (iii) summarize what is known about the quality of these services, by service type and by region, and determine the primary contributors to poor quality; (iv) evaluate the effectiveness of the state's quality assurance mechanisms, especially its facility inspections and available sanctions/incentives; and (v) develop options for expanding the availability of services for aging Virginians, including through a potential Medicaid waiver.

JLARC shall make recommendations as necessary and review other issues as warranted.

All agencies of the Commonwealth, including the Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services, the Department of Social Services, the Department of Medical Assistance Services, and the secretary of health and human resources, 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 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.

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 259

Directing the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission to study the methodology used to determine judicial allocations within the Commonwealth. Report.

Agreed to by the Senate, January 29, 2025
Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 20, 2025

WHEREAS, the General Assembly has a constitutional responsibility to provide for judges of courts of record and judges of courts not of record, and acts to ensure the proper allocation of funds and resources to equip the courts of the Commonwealth to carry out justice effectively and efficiently; and

WHEREAS, methods of determining the proper number of authorized judges in courts across the Commonwealth, clerk staff, and other resources necessary for the courts to operate optimally has evolved over time; and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly provided funds for the Supreme Court of Virginia to contract with the National Center for State Courts to conduct a judicial workload assessment study and provide recommendations for any judicial boundary realignment and the recommended number of authorized judgeships for each circuit, general district, and juvenile and domestic relations district court in 2013, and again provided funds for additional judicial workload assessment studies that were conducted by the National Center for State Courts in 2017 and 2024; and

WHEREAS, the current study does not sufficiently account for the lack of standardization across courts, various differences in population size, case complexities, and docketing practices of the courts and locality investments in court systems for law clerks, court clerks, judicial assistants, court administrators, and other services, and possibly relied upon incomplete variables in data used to determine the results of the judicial workload assessment, which impacts the allocations of funds and resources to state courts across the Commonwealth; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission be directed to study the methodology used to determine judicial allocations within the Commonwealth.

In conducting its study, the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission shall (i) analyze the data gathered and utilized in the three judicial workload assessment studies conducted within the Commonwealth by the National Center for State Courts to determine: (a) the extent to which the lack of standardization in case opening, filing, and coding practices as used by clerks in different circuit, general district, and juvenile and domestic relations district courts across the Commonwealth inhibits the ability of third parties to accurately measure judicial effort and need; (b) if case weights factoring in case complexity were properly calculated and assigned given the actual variations in case complexity across the Commonwealth; (c) if local investments in law clerks, judicial-attorney support, and other locally funded judicial support measures are adequately taken into account in measuring the need for state-funded positions; (d) whether the amount of time, both during court hours and during personal time, that judges spend performing judicial work, and the type of work being performed, is accurately captured, evaluated, assessed, or considered, and, conversely, if the amount of time during court hours that judges are not performing judicial tasks is being captured, evaluated, assessed, or considered; (e) whether the present study is capable of being influenced intentionally or accidentally by practices and systems implemented by judges or court staff; and (f) if the averaging of judicial effort across the entire Commonwealth is an accurate or fair method to approximate needed judicial positions for purposes of appropriating funds for judicial positions; (ii) examine the following: (a) existing court efficiency measures to determine if judges are using time during work hours efficiently to hear and properly decide the maximum number of cases within appropriate time frames, and identify those judicial circuits or districts already utilizing docketing practices that create maximum efficiency in processing caseloads that should be considered potential models in establishing statewide court efficiency measures, statewide best practices, and accountability measures; (b) if there are other contributing factors substantially impacting court efficiency, such as regional or local practices of Commonwealth's attorneys, delays in required services performed outside the courtroom, such as drug screening conducted by local or regional jails, or policy changes within the Department of Social Services or other agencies that impact court appearances or filings; and (c) the use of technology, such as virtual appearances, that streamlines the ability to conduct hearings and reduces conflicts in scheduled appearances for attorneys in cases, motions, or other court appearances; (iii) upon taking into consideration the findings of this study, (a) determine whether state funds would be more appropriately allocated if the Office of the Executive Secretary of the Supreme Court of Virginia standardized case processing and coding procedures through either a uniform electronic case filing system as is utilized in the Federal Courts and by other states or implemented a data analysis program to

identify discrepancies in case processing procedures; (b) if maximum time limits should be statutorily mandated in the Code of Virginia or the Rules of Supreme Court of Virginia for various case types so that cases are resolved in a predictable time frame and inefficient practices within various judicial circuits or districts can be better identified, especially in the instance of cases that are time sensitive, place extensive burdens on families and government services and resources, and do not already have statutorily mandated time limits triggering reviews or emergency docketing, such as in cases involving divorce, child support, custody or temporary custody cases, personal injury cases, or the scheduling of preliminary injunctions; (c) provide recommendations to improve the quality and consistency of data used in future judicial workload assessment studies; (d) consider if updates to the Code of Virginia, Rules of Supreme Court of Virginia, Benchbooks utilized by judges, and trainings provided to judges, court clerks, and other court staff would assist in standardizing practices across courts in the Commonwealth and positively impact the resulting data gathered from courts during workload assessments; (e) determine if there are other more accurate means of assessing the workload of judges not previously used in the 2013, 2017, and 2024 judicial workload assessments, and provide suggestions to revise the current method of allocating resources to develop a fair method of allocating resources that is not subject to the influence of self-reported data that may contain inaccuracies, or data that reflects the individual nonstandard practices of court staff or systems implemented by each court; and (g) determine if any other third-party organizations exist to conduct comprehensive judicial workload assessments for state courts, or if the creation or establishment of a commission, agency, or a department within the Office of the Executive Secretary of the Supreme Court of Virginia to act as a permanent independent auditor would be better suited to conduct future judicial workload assessments.

Technical assistance shall be provided to the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission by the Office of the Executive Secretary of the Supreme Court of Virginia, the Virginia Circuit Court Clerks' Association, and the Virginia Association of Commonwealth's Attorneys. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission for this study, upon request.

The Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission shall complete its meetings by November 30, 2026, and the chairman shall submit to the Division of Legislative Automated Systems an executive summary of its findings and recommendations no later than the first day of the 2027 Regular Session of the General Assembly. The executive summary shall state whether the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission intends to submit to the General Assembly and the Governor a report of its findings and recommendations for publication as a House or Senate document. The executive summary and report shall be submitted as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents and reports and shall be posted on the General Assembly's website.

Study Resolution

Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program managed care oversight

Authorized by the Commission on December 16, 2025

WHEREAS, Virginia's Medicaid program and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), which are known together as Cardinal Care and administered by the Department of Medical Assistance Services, provide health care coverage to over 1.8 million Virginians, including low-income adults and children, people with disabilities, older adults, and pregnant women; and

WHEREAS, Medicaid and CHIP services together receive the largest total fund appropriation, about \$26 billion, and the second largest general fund appropriation, about \$7 billion, accounting for 20 percent of the state's total general fund appropriations (FY25); and

WHEREAS, most Virginia Medicaid and CHIP recipients, including individuals with long-term care and complex care needs, are served through managed care, a delivery system through which the state contracts with private insurance companies to provide and manage comprehensive benefits for recipients; and

WHEREAS, managed care has the potential to improve care coordination and health outcomes, reduce administrative responsibilities, streamline care delivery, slow spending growth, and enhance budget predictability; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission that staff be directed to review how well the Department of Medical Assistance Services manages and oversees the managed care program and the managed care organizations. In conducting its review, staff shall: (i) evaluate the department's approach to ensuring and validating that recipients have access to care; (ii) determine the extent to which managed care organizations and providers are paid based on outcomes and quality of care; (iii) examine how the department ensures that Medicaid and CHIP enrollees access medically appropriate care while also detecting and preventing overutilization, inefficiencies, fraud, waste, and abuse; (iv) evaluate the department's approach to financial oversight, rate setting, and expenditure forecasting; and (v) identify opportunities for the department to improve the quality and efficiency of service delivery and facilitate budget predictability.

JLARC shall make recommendations as necessary and review other issues as warranted.

All agencies of the Commonwealth, including the Department of Medical Assistance Services, Department of Social Services, and secretary of health and human resources, 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 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.



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919 East Main St. Suite 2101
Richmond, VA 23219