

# THE HRHA NEWSLETTER

News, announcements, and more from the  
Harrisonburg Redevelopment & Housing Authority



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## Empowering Financial Growth Through Credit Education

During July, the Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) program placed a strong emphasis on one of the most highly requested topics among participants: credit repair.

Recognizing the importance of financial wellness in achieving long-term self-sufficiency, we partnered with United Bank to host a virtual workshop designed to equip residents with the knowledge and tools needed to build and repair their credit.

Throughout the session, attendees gained valuable insights into how credit scores are calculated and what actions can positively or negatively impact them. Topics included understanding credit utilization, the importance of making timely payments, and strategies for responsible debt management. Participants also walked away with practical tips for building strong credit habits and were encouraged to continue exploring financial resources offered through the FSS program. We're grateful to United Bank for their partnership and look forward to providing more educational opportunities like this in the future.

# Page by Page, Dollar by Dollar: Summer Skills for Youth

The Money Smart Club is back this summer to help youth develop essential financial skills, including saving, budgeting, and smart spending. Through fun, age-appropriate activities, participants gain confidence in managing money and making responsible choices.

The Garden Grove of Books has also returned to encourage young people to cultivate their love of reading and writing. Participants track the pages they read, complete creative prompts, and strengthen their literacy skills throughout the summer. Prizes are given for the most pages read, best writing, and active participation.

Special thanks to our community partners—McDonald's, Kline's Dairy Bar, Massanutten Resort, and the Shenandoah Valley Ladies Auxiliary of the Fraternal Order of Eagles #4150—for their generous support. We are grateful to our local partners for making these rewards possible and helping us support young learners in our community.

## Housing Misconceptions



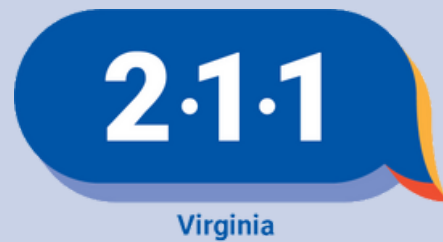
We hope to foster a more informed and supportive community by providing accurate information. It is important to challenge these myths to ensure that all individuals have equal access to the resources they need. Together, we can build a more inclusive and compassionate environment.

### **Misconception:**

*“Housing assistance programs are fully funded to meet demand.”*

The demand for housing assistance typically exceeds the available funding in most areas. As a result, many housing authorities operate waitlists when implementing their programs. Public housing authorities strive to maximize the use of resources while advocating for increased support for local communities.

# Community Resource Spotlight:



In our newsletters, we will be highlighting non-profits and service organizations that help to provide resources in our community and surrounding areas. In this issue, we speak with 211 Virginia Community Engagement Team Lead, Mary Monaco.

## **What role does your organization play in addressing community needs?**

211 Virginia operates a statewide information and referral system that is available 24/7. The service provides assistance in over 250 languages, ensuring accessibility for a diverse population.

As a connector, 211 Virginia helps individuals navigate the often complex process of finding the right services. Many people struggle to identify which organizations best meet their needs. By narrowing down options and making direct connections, the organization allows individuals to spend more time receiving help rather than searching for it.

## **What are some of the most urgent issues facing the community based on recent 211 call trends?**

As a connector, 211 Virginia helps individuals navigate the often complex process of finding the right services. Many people struggle to identify which organizations best meet their needs. By narrowing down options and making direct connections, the organization allows individuals to spend more time receiving help rather than searching for it.

## **What are some of the most urgent issues facing the community based on recent 211 call trends?**

For clients, the most frequent requests involve utility assistance, particularly through partnerships like Dominion Energy's support programs. Housing remains a significant issue due to high rental costs and limited availability. Food insecurity is another critical concern.

For agencies, transportation challenges significantly impact service delivery, particularly in rural areas where public transportation is scarce. Referral success rates are generally high, but transportation assistance has lower success rates, indicating a gap in available resources.

## **How has 211 evolved to better meet the needs of the community?**

**211 Virginia has implemented several technological improvements to enhance accessibility:**

1. A public search tool on the homepage, featuring a prominent search button for easy resource navigation.
2. An agency resources tab that includes 211 University, marketing materials, and service listing updates.
3. Improved real-time updates for seasonal resources, announcements, and news, such as tax-related assistance.



# Harrisonburg Redevelopment & Housing Authority

## Contact Us

+ *HRHA Main Office*

286 Kelley St  
PO Box 1071 (22803)  
Harrisonburg VA, 22802  
Fax: (540)-432-1113

+ *HRHA Reservoir Office*

*FSS Program, HMIS, COC*  
143 Reservoir St  
Harrisonburg VA, 22801  
Fax: (540)-432-1113

+ *HRHA Commerce Village*

21 Elon Rhodes Lane  
Harrisonburg, VA 22802  
Fax: (540)-615-5558  
+ *HRHA JR "Polly"*  
*HRHA Lineweaver and Lineweaver Annex*  
265 N. Main Street  
Harrisonburg, VA 22802



To reach all HRHA offices, call: (540) 434-7386

## Website



[www.harrisonburgrha.com](http://www.harrisonburgrha.com)

## Facebook



@harrisonburgrha

## HRHA Board of Commissioners

HRHA is governed by a seven-member Board of Commissioners appointed by the Harrisonburg City Council. The Board establishes the Authority's policies and procedures and appoints the Executive Director.

Board of Commissioner meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month at 4:00PM. Meeting location/access will be posted prior to meetings and in line with local health guidelines.

+ Michael Wong, (Not a commissioner)  
Executive Director/Secretary-Treasurer

+ Kevin Coffman - Commissioner

Term Expires: November 29, 2027

+ Luciano Benjamin - Commissioner

Term Expires: November 29, 2028

+ Gil Colman - Commissioner

Term Expires: November 29, 2025

+ Shonda Green - Commissioner

Term Expires: November 29, 2025

+ Amanda Leech - Commissioner

Term Expires: October 13, 2028

+ Janet Awkard-Rogers - Commissioner

Term Expires: April 25, 2027