

1. Virginia Health Care Resources for Uninsured or Underinsured Low Income Learners

It is important to stress to students that free and low-cost clinics are for **preventive, primary care, not emergency care**. Each clinic has its own policies. It may require an initial appointment to ascertain whether a person is financially eligible (proof of income and local residence are typically required). If a clinic is very busy, there may be a waiting list for an appointment, or the clinic may stop taking new patients temporarily. If your student calls and is told the clinic is not taking new patients, the student can ask if there is a waiting list. If there is no waiting list, you can suggest that the student call back once a week until more patients are being accepted.

Free clinics

An excellent source for information on free clinics for the uninsured and underinsured residents of Virginia is the Virginia Association of Free Clinics website at <http://www.vafreeclinics.org/>. This site provides addresses and phone numbers for 38 free clinics around the state. Many members list PO boxes for addresses, probably to deter walk-in patients. Current member clinics are listed in [Appendix A](#).

Virginia Primary Care Association (VPCA)

VPCA is the state association representing Community Health Centers, Migrant Health Centers, Health Care for the Homeless programs, and other primary care organizations. These programs offer low-cost or free care to the uninsured and underinsured. Current members are listed in [Appendix A](#).

Local health departments

Local health departments in Virginia do not generally provide primary care. Their work includes providing clinical preventive services, such as immunizations, communicable disease treatment and control, and family planning services to low-income women. Some health districts also provide prenatal care to low income women. Some health department preventive services are provided on a sliding scale basis. Others are free. Your local health department can probably provide referrals to other low-cost primary care providers in your community. The 2003 Directory of District and Local Health Departments for the state of Virginia is available online at <http://www.vdh.state.va.us/lhd/Distrdirectory.doc>.

Affordable Legal Services

Negotiating health care bills and treatment issues sometimes requires legal assistance. Low-income learners can contact their local affiliate of the Legal Services Corporation of Virginia to request assistance. Affiliates are listed in Appendix B. Also, individuals can call 1-888-leglaid and the call will automatically be routed to the nearest legal aid office. After hours this number provides access to telephonic legal information which is available in English, Spanish, Vietnamese and Korean. A website which provides useful legal information in simplified English on a wide variety of topics can be found at www.valegalaid.org.

Affordable Dental Health Services

The Virginia Department of Health lists health department providers of public dental health at <http://www.vahealth.org/teeth/servden.htm> . Some free clinics (see Appendix A) also provide dental services. The following organizations might be able to provide affordable dental care or give referrals for affordable providers in different areas of the state.

- Virginia Commonwealth University School of Dentistry
www.dentistry.vcu.edu
- Virginia Dental Association Donated Dental Services Program
www.vadental.org
- Virginia Primary Care Association
www.vpca.com

State Children's Health Insurance Program for working families

Each state has its own Children's Health Insurance Program, or CHIP. Virginia's CHIP program is called Family Access to Medical Insurance Security, or FAMIS. This is for children who are U.S. citizens in low-income families with working parents. Family income is too high to qualify for Medicaid. (Parents need not be U.S. citizens for the children to qualify for coverage.) The FAMIS website is at <http://www.famis.org/english/enter.htm>. The website has a calculator that allows one to plug in information and see if children are likely to qualify based on their parents' income. The phone number for applying by phone is 1-866-87F-AMIS (or 1-866-873-2647).

Workers' Compensation

In Virginia an employee who incurs an “injury by accident” on the job or an “occupational disease” is entitled to workers’ compensation. Terms are defined and claims and appeal procedures are outlined on the website of the Virginia Workers’ Compensation Commission. Go to <http://www.vwc.state.va.us/index.htm> . Click on “Employees’ Guide.”

Virginia Workers’ Compensation Commission (central office)
1000 DMV Drive
Richmond, VA 23220