



Virginia Career Works Referral Portal

Communications Toolkit

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Overview

The COVID-19 pandemic has created a greater need for workforce programs to quickly and easily connect clients with critical unemployment and other state services. State and local orders forcing workforce program closures have increased the need for virtual tools to ensure clients get the services they need. The Virginia Career Works Referral Portal, launching statewide on May 11, 2020, is a valuable tool for responding to the increased demand for services as we begin the recovery process.

The resources in this Communications Toolkit will help you understand and communicate about the Virginia Career Works Referral Portal, ensuring an effective rollout.

Key messages

Overview

The Virginia Career Works Referral Portal better connects Virginia residents to the resources they need to recover and succeed.

The portal is a centralized place to capture client information and share relevant information with agency-specific systems. This reduces duplicative paperwork required by the various state agencies and dramatically increases service efficiency by sharing information with professionals who are serving the same clients. In addition, one unified system increases transparency and generates data for ongoing program improvements.

Workforce professionals can access client information through Virginia Career Works Dashboards.

How does the Virginia Career Works Referral Portal work?

When a client creates an account, the portal asks them a number of questions developed with the assistance of frontline staff to mimic the experience of coming into a workforce center. The language is simplified to avoid bureaucratic jargon. These questions capture the client's information and barriers to personalize service recommendations. As clients provide more data, portal recommendations grow more accurate.

Once the client completes the user profile setup, the portal recommends optional referrals and other service possibilities, which the client can review and add to their "My Journey" page. Each referral and service option guides clients to explore different program resources. In most cases, the step-by-step guidance within the referrals tells the client what paperwork to bring to their appointment with a workforce professional.



What information will appear in the Virginia Career Works Dashboards?

When a client completes the portal setup process and accepts a referral, their information populates the Per-Client Dashboard reports. These reports share the client's contact information, accepted referrals (with program and provider information), and the individual's specific barriers. Workforce professionals can use the Dashboard reports to reach out to clients and connect them to services.

Is client data shared with any eligibility systems?

Currently, client data is also being shared with the Geographic Solutions Eligibility system. This will expedite the client experience, and allow professionals to quickly determine eligibility.

When will the Virginia Career Works Referral Portal go live?

The Virginia Career Works Referral Portal was tested by three regions and then implemented across the Commonwealth on May 11, 2020. The Commonwealth accelerated the rollout from June 30, 2020 to May 11, 2020 due to the increased demand and conditions created by the COVID-19 pandemic. The portal has tremendous potential to assist Virginians during this time of crisis by connecting them to opportunities for workforce assistance, and will also be available to connect clients to services beyond the immediate concerns (e.g., unemployment benefits).

Who is involved in the Virginia Career Works Referral Portal project?

The following six agencies are involved in the project:

Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services

Virginia Community College System

Virginia Employment Commission

Virginia Department of Education

Virginia Department of Social Services

Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired

Additional agencies and partnerships will be added to this project.

Recommended process during COVID-19

Clients access Virginia Career Works Referral Portal

Clients across the Commonwealth will be able to access the Virginia Career Works Referral Portal on the Virginia Career Works website and local sites. From their homes, clients can create



accounts, answer questions, receive referral recommendations, and determine which referrals to pursue.

Workforce professionals monitor Dashboards

Each of Virginia's 15 Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDA) identified five workforce professionals to receive access to the Virginia Career Works Dashboards. These individuals monitor the Referral Detail Report for new clients seeking workforce assistance.

Workforce professionals reach out to clients

The Referral Detail Report contains a client's:

- Phone number or email
- Accepted referrals
- Barriers

The workforce professional emails or calls the client to schedule an appointment to review their service offerings.

Note: A client will not show up in a workforce center's Referral Detail Report until they affiliate with that workforce center and accept a referral.

Workforce professionals meet with clients

The workforce professional conducts client meetings in the same way as before, and can now refer the client back to the portal to explore more services.

Collateral and resources

Webpage and Onboarding

[Virginia Career Works Referral Portal](#)

[Virginia Career Works Referral Portal onboarding video script](#)

Email Content

Template 1: For workforce center staff

We are excited to announce the launch of the [Virginia Career Works Referral Portal](#), a new tool that quickly and easily connects clients with training, career and support resources during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond. This portal is a valuable tool for responding to the increased demand for services as we begin the recovery process, and will launch across the Commonwealth of Virginia on May 11, 2020.



The portal provides personalized referral and service recommendations, along with step-by-step guidance on preparing paperwork for a meeting with a workforce professional. You can learn more about the portal in [this video](#), and about the professional Dashboards in [this video](#).

We are excited about the ease of access this system will provide currently, as well as the opportunities it presents for future scalability. Please let us know if you have any questions. We hope you find this portal useful and impactful for those you serve!

Template 2: For inclusion in newsletters or emails to clients

We are excited to announce the May 11 launch of the [Virginia Career Works Referral Portal](#), a new tool that quickly and easily connects individuals across the Commonwealth of Virginia to critical training, career and support resources during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond. You can learn more [here](#).

Videos

- [Virginia Career Works Referral Portal Client onboarding](#)
- [Virginia Career Works Referral Portal overview for Clients](#)
- [Virginia Career Works Referral Portal Professional onboarding](#)
- [Dashboards onboarding](#)

Presentation Deck

[Workforce Professional overview presentation](#)

Brand standards

The Virginia Career Works Referral Portal follows the same [brand standards as Virginia Career Works](#). The Virginia Career Works Referral Portal logo is [here](#).

Website linking

We encourage all agencies and regions to add the portal link to their local workforce center websites.

- **Headline:** New Workforce Services Referral Portal launches
- **Subtext:** A free resource, the Virginia Career Works Referral Portal connects Virginians to career, education and support resources.
- **Additional subtext:** The Virginia Career Works Referral Portal is a groundbreaking statewide platform that refers individuals to programs that assist them in



advancing their career paths and financial independence through training, certification, education and employment services.

- [Image](#)
- [Link](#)

Implementation checklist

Activity	To-do items
Staff communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Email staff (templates above) <input type="checkbox"/> Share rollout plan with staff in a meeting prior to launch <input type="checkbox"/> Designate staff responsible for triage and dissemination of portal referrals to appropriate program leads
Staff training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Provide overview of purpose of portal <input type="checkbox"/> Show client video <input type="checkbox"/> Discuss process, and adjust as needed for your workforce center <input type="checkbox"/> Determine necessary resources for the portal process
Client communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Add portal link to website <input type="checkbox"/> Add portal link to staff email signatures <input type="checkbox"/> Share portal information in newsletter
Staff process reflection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Reconvene monthly with staff to gather feedback on portal process and adjust as needed <input type="checkbox"/> Complete Experience Report and submit to State-level point of contact

Ongoing support

Help Center

Available 24/7, the [Help Center](#) is an online resource center with how-to articles and videos.

Support button

Workforce professionals and clients can ask questions or report any issues using the Support button in the bottom right corner of the portal.



Virginia Career Works Staff

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