

Virginia has 21 planning district commissions (PDCs), voluntary associations of local governments intended to foster intergovernmental cooperation by bringing together local elected and appointed officials and involved citizens to discuss common needs and determine solutions to regional issues.

The Virginia General Assembly created the statutory framework for the creation of the PDCs in 1968 through the passage of the Virginia Area Development Act. In 1995, the General Assembly modified the Area Development Act through the adoption of the [Regional Cooperation Act](#) Chapter 42, Title 15.2 of the Code of Virginia). The Regional Cooperation Act clearly articulates that PDCs were created to provide a forum for state and local government to address issues of a regional nature.

Another purpose of PDCs is to encourage and facilitate local government cooperation in addressing, on a regional basis, problems of greater than local significance. This cooperation is intended to help local governments solve their problems by enhancing the ability to recognize and analyze regional opportunities and take account of regional influences in planning and implementing public policies and services.

One important mechanism in helping localities meet these goals is the requirement that each PDC complete a regional strategic plan with participation from local governing bodies, the business community, citizen organizations and other interested parties. The strategic plan is required to include regional goals and objectives, strategies to meet those goals and mechanisms for measuring progress. The intent of the plan is to help promote the orderly and efficient development of the physical, social and economic elements of the planning district.

In addition to the strategic planning requirement, the Regional Cooperation Act identifies other duties of the planning district commissions:

- To conduct studies on issues and problems of regional significance;
- To identify and study potential opportunities for cost savings and staffing efficiencies through coordinated local government efforts;
- To identify mechanisms for the coordination of local interests on a regional basis;
- To implement services upon the request of member local governments;
- To provide technical assistance to local governments;

- To serve as a liaison between local governments and state agencies as requested;
- To review local government aid applications as required by applicable state and federal law and regulation;
- To develop regional functional area plans as deemed necessary by the commission or as requested by member local governments;
- To assist state agencies, as requested, in the development of substate plans;
- To participate in a statewide geographic information system, the Virginia Geographic Information Network, as directed by the Department of Planning and Budget; and
- To collect and maintain demographic, economic and other data concerning the region and member local governments and act as a state data center affiliate in cooperation with the Virginia Employment Commission.

In support of these duties and pursuant to Va. Code § 36-139.6, the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) distributes state general appropriation funding for each PDC. DHCD will distribute \$1,785,321 in FY 2017 to the 21 PDCs.

Va. Code § 15.2-4215 requires each PDC to submit an annual report to its member local governments and the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) on how the PDC has met the provisions of the Regional Cooperation Act. Further, Va. Code § 36-139.6 provides that DHCD is to submit a biennial report to the Governor and General Assembly, as well as certain other state agencies, which includes findings as to compliance by the PDCs with the Regional Cooperation Act.

BIENNIAL PDC REPORTS:

- [FY 2017 Planning District Commission](#)
- [FY 2017 PDC Performance Spreadsheet](#)
- [FY 2017 Payments](#)
- [2011-2012 Biennial Report](#)
- [2013-2014 Biennial Report](#)

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT VIRGINIA'S PDCS:

- [Links to Virginia's PDC websites](#)
- [Virginia Association of Planning District Commissions](#)
- [Map of Virginia's Planning District Commissions](#)

