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Subject: Annual General Sanitation Inspection Memo

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COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

DATE: March 18, 2026

TO: Assisted Living Facilities (ALFs), Adult Day Centers (ADCs), Children's Residential Facilities (CRFs)

FROM: Tara Ragland, Director, Division of Licensing Programs

SUBJECT: General Sanitation Inspections

The Division of Licensing Programs (DOLP) has worked with the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) to revise and clarify the *Report of Environmental Sanitation Inspection* form and the role of each agency as it applies to environmental sanitation inspections for ALFs, ADCs, and CRFs. Below is a description of the role of the Local Health Departments (LHDs) in conducting these inspections.

LHDs will conduct environmental sanitation health inspections for ALFs, ADCs, and CRFs in accordance with General Procedures and Information for Licensure (22VAC40-80-160-B.3):

At the time of the initial application and at least annually thereafter, the applicant or licensee shall obtain an inspection report from state or local health authorities that shall include approval of general sanitation and, if applicable, water supply, sewage disposal systems, and food service operations for the building or buildings in which the facility is operated.

LHDs will conduct an inspection of facility building(s) and grounds, including observations of:

General sanitation

- Cleanliness and maintenance of all buildings, equipment, fixtures, furnishings, and premises, ensuring they are in good repair and protect the health, safety, and well-being of individuals in the facility.
- Areas related to laundry and laundry equipment, where applicable.
- Garbage and solid waste collection and storage practices.
- Vector control measures (methods to limit insects, rodents, and other pests that can transmit pathogens).
- Safe storage and handling of cleaning supplies and other chemical or toxic substances.

Water supply

- For facilities served by a private well, inspection of the grounds for signs of wellhead damage or other potential sources of contamination.
- May follow up on any observed wellhead damage, contamination concerns, or issues related to well construction or maintenance.

Sewage disposable systems

- Review of documentation for private onsite sewage disposal systems, which may include valid system approvals or a VDH Operations Permit (OP).
- For conventional systems located east of Interstate 95, verification of compliance with the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Requirement (i.e., pumped out within the prior five years or inspected).
- For Alternative Onsite Sewage Systems regulated under 12VAC5-613 et seq., confirm that the system owner is current on required Operation & Maintenance reports.

Food service operations (if present)

- Observation of food service operations at facilities that do not require a permit under Title 35.1 of the Code of Virginia, including evaluation of handwashing facilities, cold holding equipment, and food protection practices.
- Facilities that operate permitted food establishments will continue to be regulated under 12VAC5-421 et seq., and inspections will continue under those regulations.

Swimming pools (if present)

- Inspection of pools or aquatic venues for general health and safety requirements, including water quality, functional fences and gates, life-saving equipment, and overall maintenance.
- Pools determined to be “public pools” will be inspected under Title 32.1 of the Code of Virginia. These inspections will follow the applicable regulation and may occur upon request from the licensed facility or in response to a complaint.
- Local health departments with locally imposed pool ordinances may require permitting and additional inspections.

LHDs will document environmental sanitation health inspections using the revised *Report of Environmental Sanitation Inspection* form on the VDSS public website [here](#).

Licensed providers must request an environmental sanitation health inspection from the LHD in the locality where the facility is located. These inspections are required ***annually***. The request for the inspection must be submitted at least ***30 days*** before the annual inspection is due. If an inspection has not been completed in the past year, the provider must request an inspection within 30 days of this memo. For facilities with food permitted operations, an environmental sanitation health inspection should be requested if not completed during the annual food permit inspection.

Inspectors will determine compliance for these inspections, and use of the new form, beginning September 30, 2026. For facilities that have already obtained their annual general sanitation inspection, a new inspection is not required on the updated form until the annual due date.

Thank you for all you do to serve those in care.

Please contact your licensing inspector with any questions.