

Virginia Campground Permitting Toolkit

Introduction

This toolkit is designed to guide campground developers, owners, and operators through Virginia's permitting process, ensuring compliance with health, safety, environmental, and land-use regulations.

Types of Permits & Regulations

State-Level Permits & Agencies

- Virginia Department of Health (VDH) - Campground Permit
- Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) - Environmental Impact & Stormwater Permits
- Department of Transportation (VDOT) - Entrance & Road Access Permits
- Department of Conservation & Recreation (DCR) - Land Use & Conservation Compliance

Local Zoning & Land Use Permits

- Zoning Approval
- Special Use Permit (SUP)
- Building Permits
- Fire & Safety Inspections

Step-by-Step Permitting Process

1. Research & Pre-Application Planning

- Review local zoning laws
- Schedule a pre-application meeting
- Identify environmental constraints

2. Submit Zoning & Land Use Applications

- If zoning is already permitted -> proceed to permitting
- If rezoning or a Special Use Permit is required -> submit application and attend hearings

3. Secure Health & Environmental Permits

- Submit a campground permit application to VDH
- Obtain septic and water system approval

- Apply for stormwater management permits (if required by DEQ)

4. Building & Fire Code Compliance

- Apply for building permits from the local building department
- Schedule fire safety inspections if required

5. Final Inspections & Business Licensing

- Conduct a final walkthrough with inspectors
- Obtain a business license from the locality
- Receive a Certificate of Occupancy before opening

Common Challenges & Solutions

Zoning restrictions -> Work with planning officials early, apply for a Special Use Permit if needed

Environmental concerns -> Conduct impact assessments and adjust site plans accordingly

Public opposition -> Host community meetings and address concerns proactively

Permitting delays -> Stay in communication with agencies and follow up on applications

Key Contacts & Resources

Virginia Department of Health (VDH) - Campground Permits: www.vdh.virginia.gov

Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) - Stormwater & Wastewater Permits:
www.deq.virginia.gov

Local Zoning & Planning Departments: Virginia Association of Counties (www.vaco.org)