



# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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### MEMORANDUM

Date: July 11, 2023

To: Right of Way and Location and Design Division Directors, District ROW Managers, District L&D Engineers

Copied: District Environmental Managers

From: Chris Swanson, P.E. – Environmental Division Director

Subject: VDOT Approach to FHWA's Relocations Policy

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For the last several months, the Environmental Division and VDOT leadership have sought direction from FHWA on how to meet the requirements of FHWA's Relocations Policy for Categorical Exclusions (CEs) under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). This memorandum is to communicate the results of the coordination between VDOT and FHWA - VDOT's approach to FHWA's Relocations Policy. This document summarizes details the information required in order for FHWA to confirm that a CE is the appropriate level of NEPA documentation.

Crucial to the implementation of VDOT's approach is a combined effort to:

- Ensure the number, type, and location of any potential relocations needed for a Federally funded or Federally eligible project are communicated to District Environmental as early as possible (ideally at submittal of the EQ-429 to Environmental, and using worst-case scenario estimation if needed).
- Respond to inquiries from Environmental to assess whether people who were relocated for previous projects objected to the relocation, based on readily available and relevant information.

Absent attention to these activities, there may be delays in completion of NEPA and/or cost and schedule impacts associated with elevating to a higher level of NEPA document.

Please ensure your staff are aware of these updates and contact your District Environmental Section or Central Office NEPA Programs with any questions. This approach will be formalized in materials currently in development by the Environmental Division.