

TRAINING & EDUCATION NEWSLETTER



OCTOBER 2026

**VIRGINIA ASSOCIATION OF FIRST RESPONDERS
STRONGER TOGETHER. ALWAYS READY.**

Explore upcoming continuing education, professional development, scholarships, and association events across Virginia.

OCTOBER 31 | The Responder Toolkit: Fall CE Event

Saturday, October 31, 2026 • 2535 Turkey Creek Road, Oilville, VA 23129

Free registration • Lunch provided • Membership not required. Speakers: Jessica Goodman, Tarsha Robinson, and Tamara Moss.

Schedule: 9 AM — Watch Your Step; 10 AM — What Had Happened; 11 AM — Teddy Bears and Tense Moments; noon — lunch; 1 PM — The Truth, the Whole Truth, and Nothing But the Truth; 2 PM — Burn Care Essentials.

Register: <https://form.jotform.com/OldDomEMSAlliance/VAFR-Fall-2026-CE>

NOVEMBER 4 | Monthly Virtual Instructor-Led Training

7:00 PM • Current Trends in Prehospital Management of Reactive Airway Disease • Speaker: Dr. Michael Saccocci

Review respiratory assessment, evolving treatment strategies, reassessment, and escalation of care. Register at vafr.org/vilt. Questions: vilt@vafr.org.

NOVEMBER 14 | IDC and DICO Courses

8:30 AM–4:30 PM • 452 Floyd Highway North, Floyd, VA 24091

Infectious Disease Control (IDC) focuses on infection prevention, exposure control, and response. Designated Infection Control Officer (DICO) prepares agency leaders to support infection-control programs. Register through the VAFR website.

DECEMBER 3–6 | 2026 VAFR Winter Symposium

Kalahari Resorts, Spotsylvania, Virginia. Join fellow responders for training, connections, and professional development. Registration information: vafr.org/winter-symposium.

REGISTRATION IS OPEN — MAKE WINTER SYMPOSIUM YOUR NEXT TRAINING DESTINATION

Four days of high-impact education, hands-on learning, and opportunities to connect with first responders from across Virginia. Whether you are a new EMT, an experienced paramedic, a fire or law enforcement professional, an instructor, or an agency leader, this year's program offers practical skills you can take back to your community.

Registration: VAFR members \$100 • Nonmembers \$200. Members should sign in through the VAFR Member Center to register; nonmembers can use the nonmember registration option. View event details and registration at <https://www.vafr.org/winter-symposium/>.

Course capacity varies, so register early and check the official registration listing for availability.

FEATURED TRAINING — THURSDAY, DECEMBER 3

Pediatric care takes center stage: Pediatric Emergency Care Coordinator Workshop; Pediatric Triage; Pediatric Fear Factor; SAND: Caring for Our Special Kids; pediatric stroke, trauma and surgical emergencies; and a hands-on look at pediatric dosing at the point of care. Additional sessions cover the first 30 minutes of incident/unified command, cancer prevention for responders, legally defensible patient care reports, an EMT legal review and mock trial, and CPR Instructor training.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 4 — CRITICAL SKILLS AND SPECIALTY EDUCATION

Advanced Burn Life Support (ABLS) addresses burn assessment, inhalation injuries, resuscitation, and special populations. NAEMT Prehospital Trauma Life Support (PHTLS) begins its two-day program with assessment, decision-making, and realistic trauma scenarios. Also offered: BLS Provider CPR; medically complex pediatric patients and their home technology; child restraint in emergency vehicles; and Public Safety Chaplaincy: Resilience, Crisis & Family Support.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5 — TACTICAL RESPONSE, DRONES AND YOUTH

Complete the PHTLS program, explore Drone Responder – Basic with FAA/Part 107 fundamentals and hands-on flight skills, or take the law enforcement-focused Tactical Emergency Casualty Care (TECC) Provider Course. Youth Rescue Camp introduces ages 8–16 to EMS, fire, rescue, safety, teamwork and leadership through age-appropriate activities.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6 — FINISH STRONG

Choose from the Fire/EMS Tactical Emergency Casualty Care (TECC) Provider Course, NAEMT Geriatric Education for EMS (GEMS), the Newborn Resuscitation Course, and Breaking Bad News — practical training in clinical care and difficult conversations.

DON'T MISS THE BONUS EVENING SESSIONS

Thursday, Dec. 3, 7–8:30 PM: Behind the Scenes: Emergency Response at Kalahari — guided look at resort and waterpark emergency operations (capacity 20). Friday, Dec. 4, 7–8:30 PM: Building the Next-Generation Volunteer EMS Agency, with Jacob Parcell of Fredericksburg Rescue Squad. Saturday, Dec. 5, 7–8:30 PM: Scholarship Success: Applications & Essays, with Veronica Reddinger.

PLAN YOUR TRAINING NOW

Many specialty courses have limited seats, including Drone Responder – Basic (12), PHTLS (24), TECC (25 per offering), and the Kalahari behind-the-scenes session (20). Review prerequisites and the full schedule before selecting overlapping courses. Full course catalog: <https://www.vafr.org/wp->

Winter Symposium Scholarships — Apply by November 1

Forest View Volunteer Rescue Squad is sponsoring two scholarships of up to \$2,000 each, for symposium registration and lodging only.

James P. “Mac” McGuire Memorial Youth Scholarship: VAFR members age 22 and younger.

Teresa Thisted Memorial Scholarship: VAFR members age 23 and older.

Download applications at vafr.org and email completed applications to VAFR@vafr.org with subject “2026 Winter Symposium Scholarship Application.”

FEBRUARY 4–6, 2027 | Honor Guard Clinic and Schools

Rockingham, Virginia. Training includes honor guard traditions, uniform standards, drill and ceremony, colors, flag and casket operations, peer support, and dignified arrivals. Registration is open and closes January 4, 2027. Details: hgctraining.org.

VAFR 2026-2027 EVENTS CALENDAR

- 2026 Winter Symposium**
December 3–6, 2026
Kalahari Resorts, Spotsylvania, VA.
- Spring Board of Governors**
March 11–14, 2027
Delta Hotels, Bristol, VA.
- 2027 National EMS Memorial Service**
June 4–6, 2027
Hyatt Crystal City, Arlington, VA.
- 2027 Symposium**
June 12–21, 2027
The Inn at Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA.
- 2027 Camporee**
September 24–26, 2027
Small Country Campground, Louisa, VA.
- 2027 Convention**
September 30–October 3, 2027
Kalahari Resorts, Spotsylvania, VA.



Stronger Together. Always Ready.
www.vafr.org

WE'RE HEADING TO KALAHARI!

VAFR WINTER SYMPOSIUM

DECEMBER 3-6, 2026
SPOTSYLVANIA, VIRGINIA

TRAINING • CONNECTIONS •
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

[VAFR.ORG/WINTER-SYMPOSIUM](https://vafr.org/winter-symposium)





ROCKINGHAM, VIRGINIA

FEBRUARY 4 - 6 2027

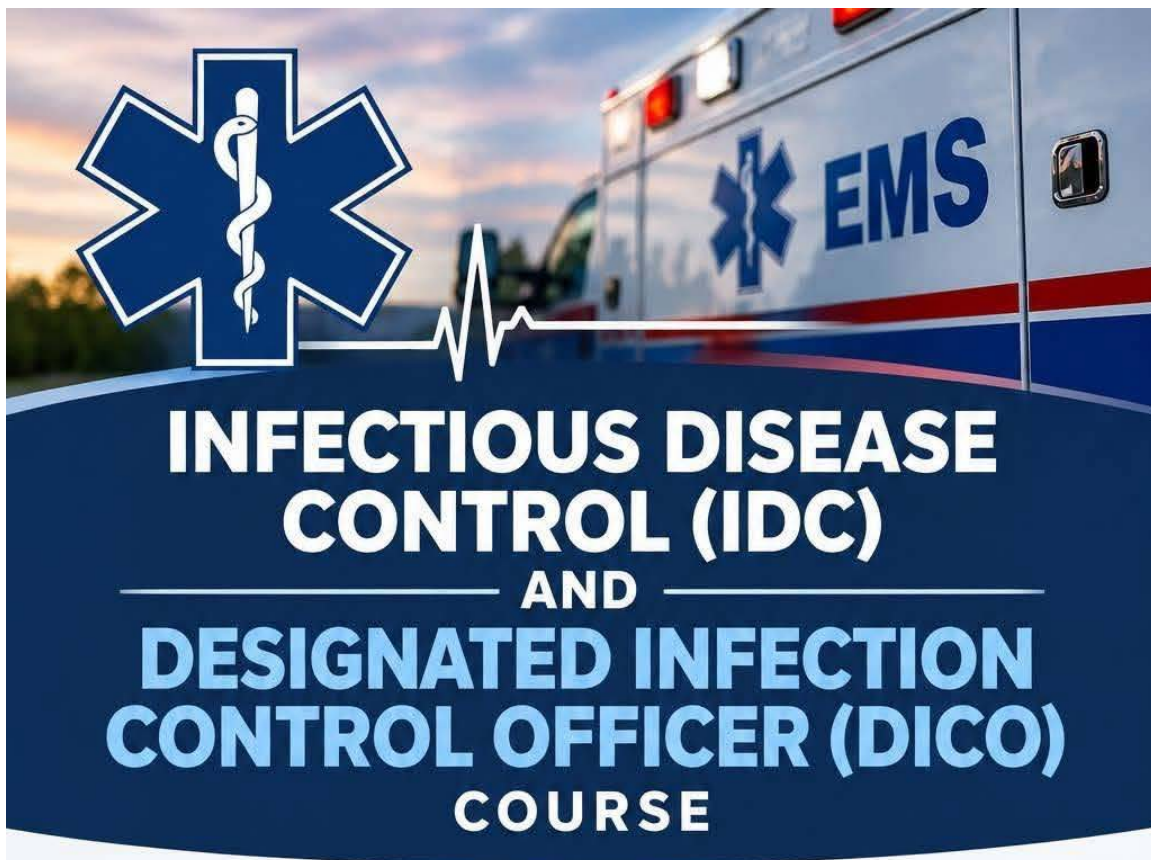
registration open | registration closes January 4, 2027

Key Features:

- History of traditions of the honor guard
- Wear and appearance of the uniform
- Basic drill and ceremony (marching, facing, salutes, etc.)
- Posting and retrieving of the colors (flag operations)
- Draping and folding of flags on a casket
- Casket operations (movement of a casket, loading and unloading of a funeral car)
- Peer support operations (understanding the mental health of our members)
- Dignified arrivals and airport training

All class, hotel, pricing info can be found on our website
<https://www.hgcstraining.org/>





INFECTIOUS DISEASE CONTROL (IDC) AND DESIGNATED INFECTION CONTROL OFFICER (DICO) COURSE

Build the knowledge and skills needed to prevent and control infectious diseases in the EMS setting.



Infectious Disease Control (IDC)

Learn best practices for infection prevention, exposure control, and response.



Designated Infection Control Officer (DICO)

Gain the tools to lead and support infection control programs in your agency.



DATE
**November 14th,
2026**



TIME
0830 to 1630



LOCATION
**452 Floyd highway north
Floyd, VA 24091**



**Register for the courses
on the VAFR site.**



WINTER SYMPOSIUM SCHOLARSHIPS

Forest View Volunteer Rescue Squad

is sponsoring two scholarships to help VAFR members attend the 2026 Winter Symposium.



James P. "Mac" McGuire Memorial Youth Scholarship

VAFR members age 22 and younger

Up to \$2,000



Teresa Thisted Memorial Scholarship

VAFR members age 23 and older

Up to \$2,000



Scholarship funding is available for Symposium registration and lodging only.

2026 WINTER SYMPOSIUM DECEMBER 3 – 6, 2026

Kalahari Resorts
Spotsylvania, Virginia



**APPLICATION DEADLINE
NOVEMBER 1, 2026**



Download the application at
vafr.org



Completed applications should be emailed to
VAFR@vafr.org
with the subject line 2026 Winter Symposium Scholarship Application.





UPCOMING EDUCATIONAL VILT EVENT



Monthly Virtual
Instructor Led
Training (VILT)



Date:
11/04/2026



Time:
1900 hours

CURRENT TRENDS IN PREHOSPITAL MANAGEMENT OF REACTIVE AIRWAY DISEASE

Speaker: **Dr. Michael Saccocci**



Wheezing is only part of the picture. Explore evolving approaches to respiratory assessment and treatment, and what current evidence means for managing patients with reactive airway disease in the field.

WHAT YOU'LL LEARN



ASSESSMENT & RECOGNITION

Recognize respiratory distress and assess severity in the prehospital setting.



CURRENT TREATMENT STRATEGIES

Explore evolving approaches to medication and respiratory care.



WHEN TREATMENT ISN'T ENOUGH

Consider reassessment, response to treatment, and escalation of care.

REGISTER NOW



vafr.org/vilt



QUESTIONS?
vilt@vafr.org

Sponsored by:

WVEMS
Western Virginia Emergency Medical Services Council, Inc.



VIRGINIA ASSOCIATION OF FIRST RESPONDERS THE RESPONDER TOOLKIT FALL 2026 CONTINUING EDUCATION EVENT

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 31, 2026

2535 Turkey Creek Road, Oilville, VA 23129

Event Speakers

Jessica Goodman

Tarsha Robinson

Tamara Moss

Join us for The Responder Toolkit: VAFR Fall CE 2026, a day of practical continuing education designed to strengthen the skills first responders rely on both on scene and beyond.

Come build your toolkit, earn valuable CE, and take away real-world knowledge you can use on your next call.

FREE REGISTRATION

LUNCH PROVIDED

MEMBERSHIP NOT REQUIRED

9:00 AM



Watch Your Step

Recognizing a Crime Scene and How to Navigate Strangulation Emergencies

10:00 AM



What Had Happened

11:00 AM



Teddy Bears and Tense Moments

Parent Communication for First Responders

12:00 PM



Lunch Provided

1:00 PM



The Truth, the Whole Truth, and Nothing But the Truth

Effective Court Testimony for Fire and EMS Professionals

2:00 PM



Burn Care Essentials



REGISTER NOW!

Choose the sessions you plan to attend and reserve your seat.

To register, scan the QR code or visit:

<https://form.jotform.com/OldDomEMSAlliance/VAFR-Fall-2026-CE>