

Virginia Department of Health  
Office of Licensure and Certification

---

## Use of the Hospice Designation

Hospice is a coordinated program of home and inpatient care that provides palliative/supportive medical and health care services to persons diagnosed with a terminal illness. The hospice program is designed to meet the physical, psychological, social, and spiritual needs of these individuals. Hospice services shall be available 24 hours per day 7 days a week. It is medically directed and care is provided by an interdisciplinary team.

*No person or organization shall establish a program of hospice care or operate a hospice program without a license pursuant to 32.1-162.3 issued by the Virginia Department of Health. Any person establishing, conducting, maintaining or operating a hospice program without a license shall be guilty of a Class I misdemeanor pursuant to §32.1-27 of the Code of Virginia. Only licensed hospice programs may advertize themselves as a hospice provider.*

A dedicated hospice facility is an institution, place, or location providing room, board and appropriate patient care 24 hours/7 days per week to terminally ill patients. Respite and supportive care is also provided to these individuals. In Virginia, a dedicated hospice facility intending to be 16 beds or less in size is not required to obtain a Certificate of Public Need (COPN). Facilities greater than 16 beds are classified as a medical institution and must obtain a COPN.

Additional information regarding hospice provider requirements can be found at:

[www.vdh.virginia.gov/olc](http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/olc).