To Be a Virginian...

Commonwealth of Virginia

[Map of Virginia]
Lee County is closer to the capitals of 7 other states than to Richmond: Columbus, Frankfort, Charleston, Nashville, Raleigh, Columbia, and Atlanta.

Mountain Region – 19 counties, 4 independent cities
Population: 557,000
7% of VA population

Lee County is closer to the capitals of 7 other states than to Richmond: Columbus, Frankfort, Charleston, Nashville, Raleigh, Columbia, and Atlanta.

Valley Region – 14 counties and 9 independent cities
Population: 778,200
9% of VA population

Something Special about Highland County
- Location of “Dividing Waters” farm
- The origins of the Potomac and James Rivers are less than ¼ mile apart
- Virginia was “almost” an island.
Northern Region – 10 counties and 6 independent cities

Population: 2,803,000
34% of VA population

Coastal Region – (also known as Tidewater) – 19 counties and 9 independent cities

Population: 1,627,900
42% of VA population
And this area is called "The Eastern Shore" – and don’t you forget it!

Central Region – 35 counties and 11 independent cities
Population: 1,600,000
20% of VA population

50% of Virginians live in the green area, 50% live in the orange area.
Things to Understand about Virginia Politics

- Virginia is a Commonwealth (as are Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and Kentucky)
  - Significant to the Virginians who declared independence in 1776 – probably looking at the “commonwealth” (no king) during the English Civil War of the 1640s – 1650s.
  - No current significance

- Voters do not register by political party
- Elections are held in odd-numbered years
  - House of Delegates every 2 years
  - State-wide offices—every 4 years (in the year AFTER a Presidential election)
  - State Senate—every 4 years (in the year BEFORE a Presidential election)

More Things to Understand

- Voter turnout:
  - Presidential
  - Statewide and House of Delegates
  - Mid-term federal
  - State House and Senate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>TURNOUT (% Voting of Total Registered)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>74.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>40.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>44.01%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>28.61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>71.06%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>43.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>19.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>29.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>72.96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>47.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
More Things to Understand about Virginia Politics

- "Right to Work" state
- "Dillon Rule" state
- Independent Cities
- "Pay as you go" history
- Impacted by gerrymandering
- No campaign finance limitations
Virginia State Government

Executive Branch: Governor
- Position dates from 1776
- First elected governor—Patrick Henry
- Last elected governor to serve in Williamsburg—Thomas Jefferson

Executive Branch: Governor
- Current governor: Ralph Northam (D)
- Elected in 2017
- 4-year term
- Term limited
- Ineligible to run in 2021
Lieutenant Governor
- Justin Fairfax (D)
- Elected at the same time, same term as the governor
- No term limits
- Power—preside over the Senate; cast tie-breaking vote

Attorney General
- Mark Herring (D) — elected 2013, reelected 2017
- Elected at the same time, same term as the governor
- No term limits
- Function—to give legal advice to the state government

Executive Mansion (1813)
The General Assembly

- The official name of the State Legislature
- Dates from 1619
- Senate and a House of Delegates
- Meets annually, beginning in January,
  - 60 days in even-numbered years (long session)
  - 30 days in odd-numbered years (short session)

Virginia State Capitol, Richmond, VA

- Designed by Thomas Jefferson
- Dedicated in 1788
House of Delegates

- 100 members.
- Annual salary--$17,640.++
Senate of Virginia

- 40 members.
- Four year term
- Annual salary -- $18,000 ++
Which court are you in? Depends on who wrote the law or regulation you violated. Derives from Article I, Section 8 of the US Constitution.