

Dear employees of the Commonwealth of Virginia and participating TLC agencies,

We are excited to announce the “Walk into the New Year” challenge! This challenge was created in partnership by CommonHealth, Virginia Department of Health and Department of Conservation and Recreation. This movement challenge will encourage employees to visit state parks, get out and enjoy nature all while getting in their steps. This challenge begins on November 27<sup>th</sup> to help celebrate the Opt Outside initiative which encourages people to get outside rather than waiting in a line to shop. The 6 week challenge will also run through January 1<sup>st</sup>, when all state parks are free to visit for that day! Walk into the New Year will end on January 8<sup>th</sup> and three lucky people will win a one year pass good for entry at any of the Virginia State Parks!

**How to participate:**

Participants can complete the challenge in two ways. **First, you can just walk, track your steps and submit your self-reported steps at the end of the challenge. The second way to participate is to fill out the Bingo card.** The Bingo card will have a wide range of physical activities you can complete and also some chances to just sit and enjoy your surroundings in one of Virginia's beautiful state parks. Find a park near you by following this link to the Virginia State Parks website: <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/state-parks/find-a-park>.

Use these links to log your steps on a weekly basis and submit your completed Bingo card.

[Walk-Into-the-New-Year-Challenge-Weekly-Log](#)

[Click Here: S Walk into the New Year BINGO Card](#)

**How to play the Bingo card:**

A copy of the Bingo card is included on this email. In order to get a bingo and qualify for a raffle entry, you must complete all items in a vertical, horizontal or diagonal row. Bingo activities are all self-reported and you will submit a copy of your completed bingo card at the end of the challenge between January 8<sup>th</sup> and January 12, 2021 in order to be entered in the raffle.

**Step goal and how to track and report your steps:**

The weekly goal for each participant is to complete 20,000 steps. This is based on the American Heart Association’s advice to be active 30 minutes a day for 5 days a week. An average person typically walks one mile in fifteen minutes which equates to 2000 steps. Step tracking will be self-reported; however, we encourage you to use a pedometer, fitness app or other device to assist in your tracking.

**Other ways to participate:**

We realize that some people have difficulty walking and that the weather may not always cooperate so you can also count steps by doing the following ways (physical activity can be anything that gets up and moving from time in the gym to vigorous vacuuming):

15 minutes of physical activity = 1000 steps  
30 minutes of physical activity = 2000 steps  
45 minutes of physical activity = 2000 steps  
60 minutes of physical activity = 4000 steps

### **What will be raffled?**

The raffle will be for three 1-year Virginia state park passes! Each pass is good for one year and will get you into any Virginia State Park.

### **How to Register:**

State employees and participating TLC agencies should register to participate **between November 9th and Wednesday, November 25th**. Click on the registration link below to register for the challenge. All participants will receive weekly emails with wellness tips and to track progress of activities, including reminders and opportunities in Virginia's Parks and Trails.

<https://survey.alchemer.com/s3/5993176/Walk-Into-The-New-Year-Challenge>

For employees who have Arthritis, Chronic Pain, or need additional support during this challenge, we encourage you to participate in the Self Guided Walk with Ease Program (WWE) . The registration link will automatically ask if you would like to participate in this part of the challenge. Below is more information about WWE. **Participation in WWE is limited.**

**Self-Guided Walk With Ease:** Self-Guided WWE is a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) funded 6-week walking program that can easily be integrated into the workplace. Self-Guided WWE was developed by the Arthritis Foundation and is the only walking program identified as an arthritis-appropriate evidence-based intervention by the CDC. WWE has been proven effective in increasing balance, reducing pain, improving mental health, flexibility and overall physical health. While walking is the central activity, Self-Guided WWE is a multi-component program that includes six weekly motivational emails that address health education, strengthening, and stretching exercises, and motivational strategies.

### **Important dates:**

- Registration opens November 9<sup>th</sup> 2020
- Registration closes November 26<sup>th</sup> 2020
- Challenge begins November 27<sup>th</sup> 2020
- Challenge ends January 8<sup>th</sup> 2021
- Submit Bingo cards and/or steps January 12<sup>th</sup> 2021

### **Contacts:**

- Questions about registration: [mona.burwell@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:mona.burwell@vdh.virginia.gov)
- General questions about the challenge: [Commonhealth.challenges@dhrm.virginia.gov](mailto:Commonhealth.challenges@dhrm.virginia.gov)