



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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New Partnership Results in More Support for Displaced Workers

Roanoke, VA – Virginia Career Works – Blue Ridge and the City of Roanoke are excited to announce their new stabilization and empowerment initiative aimed at supporting individuals who have been part of the recent layoffs at Norfolk Southern, FreightCar America, and General Electric. Virginia Career Works – Blue Ridge and the City are dedicated to helping these individuals as they go through this forced change. This new initiative is aimed at amplifying existing efforts to provide stabilizing support for those recently laid off and empower them take the next step in their careers.

On top of existing services, this new initiative will allow for a broader spectrum of services, including...

- Emergency stability funds – These emergency funds will be available to those that are at risk of eviction or have other immediate needs. These needs might include, but are not limited to, help with food, transportation, housing, and medical care.
- Career counseling and training assistance – All interested individuals will receive assistance identifying available opportunities in the area and determining what their next steps look like. This may include anything from just helping with a job search to paying for an individual to be trained in a new field.
- Small business development – Individuals interested in using their skills to start their own business will have access to mentors and training opportunities about how to do so. Additionally, some seed money will be available to help individuals launch their new businesses.
- Financial education – Working through the City's new Financial Empowerment Centers, all impacted individuals will have access to free financial counseling and education. They will be able to learn about all of the options available to them and how to handle this trying time.

“Being laid off is a traumatic experience for many,” says Morgan Romeo, Executive Director of Virginia Career Works – Blue Ridge. “We’ve been working with individuals going through this tough experience for many years, but this new initiative allows us to broaden the suite of services that we can offer.”

This new effort is made possible through a grant from Norfolk Southern. These new or enhanced services will be available starting this month.

Anyone who is interested in learning more is invited to attend an informational session on the program at 5 PM on Monday, January 13th at the Jefferson Center, 541 Luck Ave SW, Roanoke, VA 24016. More information will be provided on the full suite of services available and how to take advantage of them. If you are interested in the program, but cannot make it to the informational session, please reach out to Brad Stephens with Virginia Career Works – Blue Ridge for more information. He can be reached at (540) 988-3937 or bstephens@vcwblueridge.com.