

Virginia Legislative Update April 2026

With the 2026 Virginia General Assembly session now concluded and the Governor of Virginia having completed review of all legislation, the status of key bills impacting personal injury law is now largely settled. The updates below represent a subset of the legislation we have been closely tracking at Curcio Law, including developments in direct civil liability, expansions in evidence and enforcement, recovery pathways and procedural access, and efforts advancing bicycle and road user safety in Virginia.

Direct Civil Liability Changes

HB 7: Law Enforcement Civil Liability - Failed

This bill would have created a new civil claim against state and federal officers who injured someone while intentionally wearing a prohibited face covering, and removed sovereign immunity as a defense.

HB 21, SB 27: Firearm Industry Liability - Approved

The bill was passed with minor edits, shifting from its original purpose of creating a broad new civil cause of action based on “responsible conduct” standards for firearm manufacturers and sellers to a more refined framework with clearer rules and stronger enforcement. At the same time, some claims, like public nuisance, may require stronger evidence showing that a company knowingly contributed to the harm.

HB 79: Landlord Mold Liability - Continued to 2027

This bill would have amended existing housing enforcement provisions to authorize local governments to initiate civil actions against landlords on behalf of injured tenants for unsafe or noncompliant housing conditions.

HB 14: Local Enforcement of Unsafe Housing - Approved

This bill amends the Virginia Residential Landlord and Tenant Act to expressly authorize tenants, authorized occupants, and their guests or invitees to bring personal injury, wrongful death, and property damage claims arising from mold conditions within a dwelling unit. Compensatory damages, including medical expenses, lost wages, and damage to personal property, are recoverable for mold-related injuries tied to the landlord-tenant relationship. The bill also allows for the recovery of punitive damages and attorney fees where the mold condition is caused solely by the landlord’s or managing agent’s gross negligence or willful misconduct.

Evidence & Enforcement Expansion

HB 55: Automated Noise Monitoring- Approved

The bill was passed with edits, expanding its original scope from limited Northern Virginia and Fredericksburg use to allow additional regions, including Richmond and Charlottesville, to deploy automated noise monitoring systems, while keeping penalties unchanged as a modest civil fine with no impact on license points or insurance. The resulting data could be used in personal injury litigation to support arguments of reckless or habitual unsafe driving behavior.

SB 84 & SB 59: Automated Traffic and Transit Enforcement

Cameras - Approved

The original bill would have expanded automated enforcement to include stop signs and pedestrian crossings. The final version does not do that. Instead, it keeps the focus on speed cameras and requires the state to study how they are being used before making further changes.

SB 12, SB 53: Expanded Authority for Traffic Stops and Admissible Evidence - Failed

These bills would have expanded law enforcement authority to initiate traffic stops for equipment violations and other minor offenses, clarifying that stops for issues like unlighted headlights are lawful and allowing evidence from such stops, while also removing limits on stops based on minor infractions or the odor of marijuana.

HB 561: DUI Enforcement and Ignition Interlocks - Continued to 2027

This bill maintains its focus on expanding eligibility for immediate restricted licenses conditioned on ignition interlock installation and directing a statewide evaluation of Virginia's DUI enforcement framework, while emphasizing earlier driving privileges with safeguards rather than altering penalties.

HB 25: Railroad Crew Requirements - Approved

The bill was passed with edits, retaining the requirement for two-person freight train crews but shifting away from state-imposed penalties by removing fines and instead relying on reporting requirements and federal enforcement, which may still support negligence claims in the event of a violation.

Recovery Pathways and Procedural Access

SB 37, HB 1020: Sexual Abuse Claims Accrual Reform- Approved

The bill was passed with edits, keeping its main goal of allowing survivors of childhood or incapacitated-person sexual abuse to file claims based on when the harm is discovered rather than when it occurred, while adding clearer rules and enforcement tools and slightly narrowing one path to liability, making it easier to apply in practice.

HB 107: UIM Claim Streamlining - Approved

This bill amends existing underinsured motorist procedures to allow a plaintiff to name a previously settled tortfeasor as a nominal defendant for the limited purpose of triggering UIM coverage, without requiring additional personal service. The amendment reduces procedural barriers and delays in pursuing UIM benefits.

HB 66: Modernization of DMAS and DSS Systems - Continued to 2027

This bill would enact a new statutory directive requiring the Department of Medical Assistance Services and the Department of Social Services to modernize their information technology systems.

SB 229: Class Actions and Consumer Protection Expansion - Returned with Governor's Recommendations

This bill would modernize Virginia civil procedure by authorizing class actions in state court, which are not currently available. The Governor's substitute keeps that framework but adds significant guardrails, including stricter procedures, limited venues, and caps on certain damages under the Virginia Consumer Protection Act.

If enacted as currently recommended, the bill would still allow group claims for consumer harm and similar cases, but in a more controlled and structured way that may make them harder to pursue.

HB 1479: Punitive Damages for Hit-and-Run Cases – Approved

This bill was passed with a narrow revision, limiting its scope from personal injury, death, and property damage claims to personal injury and wrongful death only. It allows courts to award punitive damages in cases involving felony hit-and-run conduct.

Advancing Bicycle and Road User Safety in Virginia

HB 812: Bicycle Signal Faces - Passed

This bill allows VDOT to install bicycle-specific traffic signals, requiring cyclists to follow those signals where present to improve safety and clarity at intersections. Kudos to the Virginia Bicycling Federation for championing this legislation and advancing safer infrastructure for cyclists across the Commonwealth.

HB 1120: E-Bike and Micromobility Safety Workgroup - Passed

This bill directs the Department of Motor Vehicles to convene a stakeholder workgroup to study and recommend ways to improve safety for e-bikes, scooters, and similar devices, with findings due by November 1, 2026.

SB 832: Vulnerable Road User Safety Zones - Passed

This bill directs VDOT to develop criteria and recommendations for identifying areas with higher rates of pedestrian and cyclist crashes for potential designation as safety zones, with a report due by November 1, 2026.