



WARREN COUNTY

County Administrator





The Position

Warren County is seeking a County Administrator with the experience, judgment, and commitment to lead a complex local government through a consequential period. The County Administrator serves as the County's chief administrative and operating officer, advising the Board of Supervisors while directing programs and operations across County government. The role includes reviewing departmental budget requests, preparing and submitting the proposed County budget, administering the adopted budget, and helping ensure that resources, staffing, and operations align with the County's strategic direction. The position combines executive leadership, fiscal stewardship, organizational management, and highly visible public service.

The County Administrator attends and participates in Board of Supervisors meetings, committee meetings, and public hearings; prepares written reports and recommendations; and provides the Board with timely, accurate, and practical advice on policy, operations, and governance. The role also requires close coordination with constitutional officers, support for Board-appointed committees and task forces, and representation of the County in meetings with local, state, and federal agencies and organizations. The County Administrator must connect policy direction with operational execution and help maintain clear, professional working relationships throughout the organization.

This recruitment comes at a pivotal time, and the Board is committed to approaching it honestly. Warren County experienced years of stable administrative leadership, followed by a serious institutional strain: a major economic development investigation that resulted in criminal indictments and civil litigation, a prolonged audit backlog, and leadership turnover in the Administrator's role. The County is working through the aftermath of those years and is ready to move forward. The next County Administrator will need strategic perspective and day-to-day discipline and will find a community and staff that are genuinely ready to rebuild.

Priorities

The Board is looking for someone who has done hard things before: a leader who understands that institutional recovery is built through consistent action, who can maintain appropriate boundaries between governance and administration, and who has the patience and skill to move the organization forward without creating new volatility. The role calls for practical judgment, persistence, and the ability to provide candid guidance while keeping the organization focused on results.

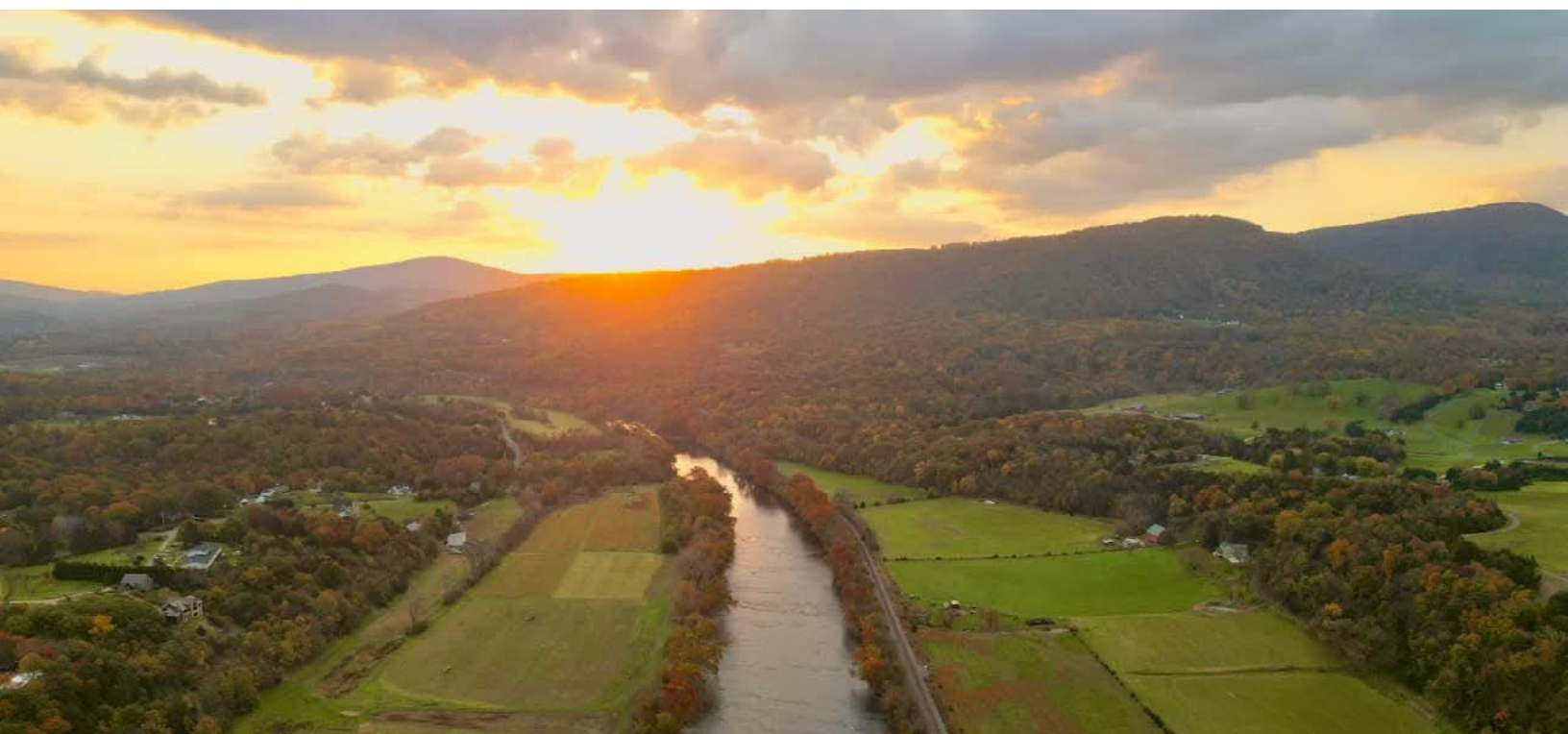
The County's immediate priorities include completing outstanding audits, strengthening financial controls, improving fiscal transparency, and building a more sustainable long-range financial outlook. The next Administrator will have an opportunity to connect budget development more directly to Board priorities, improve internal reporting and coordination, and help the County move from reacting to short-term pressures toward more disciplined planning for capital needs, infrastructure, staffing, and other long-term obligations.

The Board's broader agenda also includes restarting economic development efforts, advancing tourism, improving infrastructure and capital planning, supporting public safety staffing, and strengthening collaboration with the Town of Front Royal and other regional partners. Progress in several areas has already begun, including renewed attention to economic development and tourism, stronger collaboration with the Town and the school system, and continued commitment from employees who have served through difficult periods. The next County Administrator will be expected to build on that progress by aligning people, funding, timing, and accountability around clear priorities.

Warren County's challenges are substantial, but they are manageable and present a meaningful opportunity for the right leader to make a lasting impact.

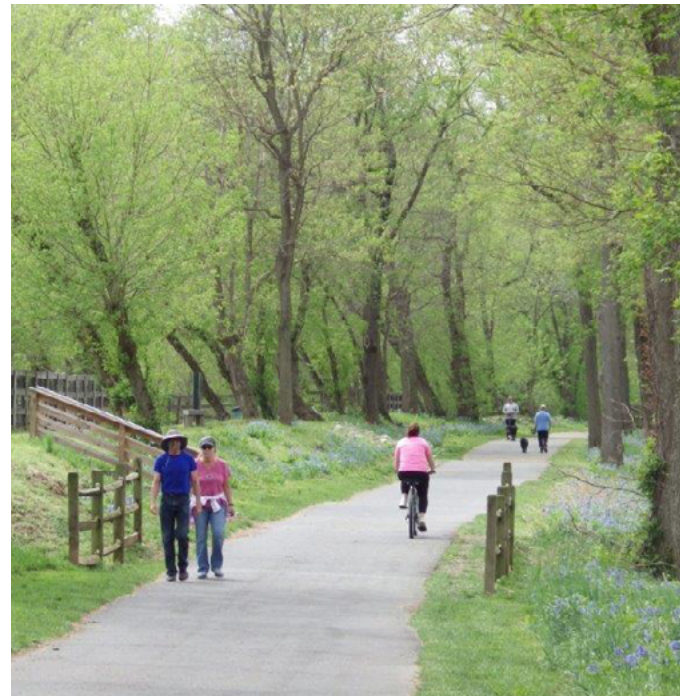
Restore trust, stability, and organizational confidence. Warren County is seeking a leader who can bring consistency, professionalism, and credibility to the organization. That means setting clear expectations, maintaining appropriate boundaries between the Board and staff, and fostering an environment in which department leaders can perform effectively. The next Administrator will be expected to reduce volatility, provide grounded counsel, and help strengthen confidence among residents, stakeholders, elected officials, and employees. This work includes supporting a culture of integrity and transparency.

Strengthen financial stewardship and long-range planning. The County's current priorities include completing outstanding audits, improving fiscal transparency, and building a more sustainable financial outlook. The next Administrator will have an opportunity to strengthen internal controls, improve financial reporting, and connect budget development more directly to the Board's priorities. This work also includes advancing disciplined planning for capital needs, infrastructure maintenance, staffing, and long-term obligations so the County can act proactively rather than react to immediate pressures.



Advance coordinated implementation of the Board's priorities. Warren County has identified a broad set of priorities that include economic development, tourism, infrastructure and capital planning, road improvements, public safety staffing, and long-term facility and service needs. The next County Administrator will play a central role in turning these priorities into coordinated action across departments and partner organizations. This will require clear prioritization, measurable follow-through, and the ability to align people, funding, and timing around shared goals.

Build strong relationships locally and regionally. The position requires a leader who can work effectively with the Board of Supervisors, constitutional officers, staff, residents, the Town of Front Royal, regional partners, state agencies, and private stakeholders. The next Administrator should communicate candidly, listen well, and help bridge differing perspectives. The role also calls for someone comfortable working across jurisdictions and levels of government to address issues such as traffic, tourism, economic development, and other community challenges that extend beyond County boundaries.



Support a healthy organizational culture and develop talent. Warren County has experienced employees who have continued serving the community through difficult periods. Retention, professional development, team cohesion, and succession planning remain important concerns. The next County Administrator can help strengthen the organization by developing leaders, reinforcing accountability, encouraging collaboration, and making employee growth part of the County's long-term strategy.

Balance growth with preservation of community character. As Warren County works to broaden revenues, strengthen its financial position, and plan for the future, residents remain committed to preserving the County's character and quality of life. The next County Administrator will need to help the County pursue practical opportunities for economic growth, tourism, and investment while respecting the qualities that make Warren County distinctive.

Guide difficult community issues with patience and sound judgment. The County Administrator will be called upon to help navigate complex and sensitive issues. This will require careful listening, balanced analysis, and the ability to support constructive dialogue in a divided environment. The next Administrator should be prepared to help the Board evaluate options, build understanding where possible, and move challenging issues forward in a professional manner.



The Successful Candidate

The Board of Supervisors is seeking an accomplished, results-oriented County Administrator who can serve as a trusted advisor and effective partner in advancing the County's priorities. The successful candidate will bring sound judgment, professionalism, and the confidence to offer candid advice, including when the message is difficult. This person must be able to work closely with elected officials, remain focused on outcomes rather than politics, and help the Board translate its vision into clear goals, practical strategies, and measurable progress.

The strongest candidates will be strategic, approachable leaders who inspire trust across the organization and throughout the community. They will communicate clearly, anticipate issues early, and remain visible in County operations and community life. The successful candidate should be able to balance differing viewpoints, build consensus where possible, and maintain consistent communication with the Board, staff, residents, and community partners. Critically, they will bring a track record of staying: the Board is looking for someone with a long-term commitment to Warren County.

Internally, the successful candidate will foster a positive, accountable, and high-performing organizational culture. They should be committed to developing staff, mentoring emerging leaders, making strong hiring decisions, and creating an environment defined by professionalism, collaboration, and service. The ideal candidate will lead by example, encourage a solutions-oriented approach to challenges, and continually look for ways to strengthen County operations, improve service delivery, and support long-term organizational success.

The Board also values a leader with strong management and financial capability. The next County Administrator should bring experience in budgeting, financial stewardship, economic and land development, and intergovernmental coordination. The strongest candidates will combine analytical ability with relationship-building skills and will understand how to lead a complex public organization with both operational discipline and strategic perspective.

Desired Capabilities

The ideal candidate is a grounded, strategic local government executive with strong administrative ability, governance insight, and a clear understanding of how to build trust with elected officials, staff, residents, and community partners. They should be comfortable serving as both strategist and operator, with the judgment to address immediate concerns while keeping the County focused on longer-term goals.

The Board is likely to be especially interested in candidates who bring meaningful experience in budgeting, financial management, planning, capital and infrastructure issues, and organizational leadership. Experience with land use, planning, and economic development is also particularly valued, as Warren County's growth management and economic recovery agenda will require comfort with those disciplines alongside financial oversight. A background that reflects movement from technical or financial responsibility into broader executive leadership could be particularly valuable, provided the candidate also demonstrates strong public-sector judgment, communication skill, and the ability to connect policy direction with implementation.

The role calls for a leader with strong interpersonal range. The next County Administrator should be able to mentor staff, support department leaders, work diplomatically with constitutional officers and regional partners, and help maintain productive relationships with the Town of Front Royal and other stakeholders. The right candidate will be community-minded, comfortable with complexity, willing to identify solutions and act on them, and prepared to help the organization move forward with professionalism, accountability, and public confidence.



Qualifications

The position requires, at minimum, a bachelor's degree in public administration, business administration, or a related field from an accredited college or university. A master's degree in public administration, business administration, or a related field is preferred, but not required.

The Board is seeking candidates with significant and progressively responsible leadership experience in local government or in another complex organization that demonstrates comparable executive, operational, and financial responsibility. Experience as a County Administrator, Deputy County Administrator, assistant manager, department director, or in a similarly demanding leadership role will be viewed favorably. The strongest candidates will demonstrate the capacity to lead a public organization, advise elected officials effectively, manage through complexity, and commit to the position with a long-term perspective.

Residency in the County is required. Relocation is negotiable.

Inside The Organization

Warren County operates under a Board-Administrator structure in which a five-member Board of Supervisors, with one member elected from each magisterial district, serves as the County's governing body and sets policy direction. Appointed by and reporting to the Board, the County Administrator serves as the chief administrative officer and is responsible for leading day-to-day government operations, carrying out Board policies and priorities, guiding departmental coordination, and supporting effective service delivery across the organization.

Warren County provides a broad range of local government services through 19 departments, including Building Inspections, Economic Development, Finance and Purchasing, Fire and Rescue, Human Resources, Information Technology, Parks and Recreation, Planning, Public Works, and Social Services. The County Administrator also works closely with elected constitutional officers and supports the work of Board-appointed committees, boards, and task forces. Working at the center of County government, the Administrator's Office serves as a key link among the Board, County departments, boards and commissions, staff, and the public.

Current Board priorities for 2026 through 2028 include completing outstanding audits, strengthening fiscal sustainability, updating infrastructure and capital planning, restarting economic development and tourism efforts, improving regional partnerships, advancing public safety staffing, and strengthening Town-County collaboration. Across these priorities, the organization is seeking steadier execution, clearer alignment between strategy and resources, and stronger public confidence in County government.



The Community

Warren County is situated in the scenic Shenandoah Valley of Northwestern Virginia, surrounded by the Blue Ridge Mountains. The North and South Forks of the Shenandoah River flow northward through the County's lush, green landscape before converging to form the main stem. Front Royal is Warren County's only incorporated community and the county seat. Warren County covers an area of 217 square miles and is conveniently located near three major cities: Washington, D.C., which lies just 70 miles to the east; Baltimore, Maryland, is 110 miles to the northwest; and Richmond, Virginia, is 135 miles to the southeast.

Warren County is known as a gateway for outdoor adventure. Shenandoah National Park is the crown jewel of the County. With over 200,000 acres of protected land, it is a haven for wildlife and visitors alike. Hikers can explore the park's spectacular vistas, cascading waterfalls, and wooded hollows on over 500 miles of trails, while Skyline Drive stretches 105 miles along the crest of the Blue Ridge Mountains with over 70 scenic overlooks. Shenandoah River State Park, situated along the South Fork of the Shenandoah River, encompasses 1,600 acres along 5.2 miles of shoreline. George Washington National Forest provides additional options for hiking, camping, horseback riding, biking, hunting, ATV riding, boating, and swimming.

Golfers have plenty of venues to choose from in Warren County. The Historic Front Royal Golf Club is one of the oldest golf courses in Virginia and the only course with holes right on the Shenandoah River. Blue Ridge Shadows Gold Club offers a classic 18-hole course with breathtaking scenery, and Shenandoah Valley Golf Club is home to two 18-hole courses and the top-ranked Virginia Golf School.

The County's Parks and Recreation Department supports a wide range of programs for youth and adults, from baseball, football, lacrosse, and softball to beekeeping, tap dance, Mahjong, and functional fitness. County residents have access to several parks with amenities including outdoor fitness equipment, disc golf, basketball courts, sand volleyball, a horseshoe pit, a fitness trail, a splash pad, botanical gardens, a z-shaped pool with 25-meter lanes and a diving board, a dog park, and a skatepark. The Virginia State Arboretum is just a 15-minute drive outside the County.

Downtown Front Royal offers entertainment, shopping, and dining for residents and visitors alike. Entertainment options include bowling, skating, live music, an old-fashioned arcade, and the historic Royal Cinemas. The Front Royal Cardinals play at the historic Bing Crosby Stadium. Front Royal's downtown is home to antique shops, thrift shops, and farmers' markets, while the broader area includes major retailers, specialty shops, and a wide variety of restaurants ranging from local favorites to well-known chains. The Bentonville area is known for Heard's Cedar Hill Farm Market, offering fresh, local food and crafts.

Warren County hosts several popular events throughout the year. The Warren County Fair offers a full week of competitions, music, rides, and shows. The Front Royal Wine and Craft Festival draws wineries from across the state along with local producers of cider and mead. The Canoe Capital Paddle Palooza celebrates Front Royal's designation as the "Canoe Capital of Virginia." Athletes can put themselves to the test at Shenandoah Epic, a 24-hour adventure race combining trekking, biking, paddling, and orienteering. The Festival of Leaves is an annual celebration of the fall beauty with local crafts, food, live entertainment and family-friendly activities.

Warren County's history stretches back thousands of years to the Native Americans who settled on the South Fork of the Shenandoah River. The first European settlers were Scots-Irish immigrants and English Quakers who arrived around 1730. The County was officially established in 1836. From the beginning, the area served as an important center for trade, situated at the intersection of land and water trade routes. The surrounding area is full of Civil War sites, including Prospect Hill Cemetery, the Thomas McKay House, and the Shenandoah Valley Civil War Museum in Winchester, which boasts a nationally recognized collection of over 3,000 Civil War artifacts.



Home to 41,531 residents, Warren County combines established neighborhoods, public schools, local events, and a historic downtown with a growing economy supported by tourism, logistics, manufacturing, healthcare, education, and public service. The County's location near the Virginia Inland Port and major transportation routes adds to its regional importance, while its history and community character continue to shape local identity. The median household income of \$84,331 exceeds the national median, and the overall and violent crime rates are meaningfully below national averages.

Warren County has a strong economy anchored by transportation, manufacturing, food production, and logistics. The County is a hub for domestic and international shipping in the Shenandoah Valley region, with Interstates 66 and 81 providing four-lane access to the Virginia Inland Port. Three fully developed industrial parks make it a prime location for manufacturing and food production. Axalta Specialty Coatings, Toray Plastics, Sysco Foods, Hearthside Foods, and Nature's Touch maintain significant production facilities in the County. Many County residents work in the IT sector, commuting to the Washington, D.C., area or working remotely, representing an underutilized economic development opportunity.

For a County Administrator who values visible public service, organizational leadership, and the opportunity to help guide a community through an important period of transition and growth, Warren County offers a meaningful and distinctive professional setting.



Compensation and Benefits

The expected hiring range is \$190,000 to \$225,000, depending on qualifications, with a competitive executive benefits package. Benefits include participation in the Virginia Retirement System, optional 457(b) retirement savings, optional group life insurance, medical, prescription, vision, and dental coverage, Flexible Spending Accounts, voluntary supplemental insurance options, and access to health and wellness resources and an Employee Assistance Program.

- Virginia Retirement System
- Optional 457(b) Retirement
- Optional Group Life Insurance
- Health and Wellness Resources
- Medical, Prescription, Vision, and Dental
- Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA)
- Voluntary Accident, Critical Illness, Cancer, and/or Disability Insurances
- Employee Assistance Program (EAP)



How to Apply

Applications will be accepted electronically by Raftelis at raftelis.com. Applicants complete a brief online form and are prompted to provide a cover letter and resume. The position will be open until filled with a first review of applications beginning **October 15, 2026**.



Questions

Please direct questions to Anne Lewis at 540.757.0316 or alewis@raftelis.com or Kelsey Batt at kbatt@raftelis.com.