



County Administrator





The Position

Orange County, Virginia, is seeking an experienced, service-oriented local government leader to serve as its next County Administrator. The County is balancing its longstanding rural character and small-town identity with increasing service demands, aging infrastructure, economic development opportunities, and growth pressures from neighboring regions. The next County Administrator will help the Board of Supervisors connect policy choices, financial capacity, land use, infrastructure, and service expectations while keeping residents and stakeholders informed.

Appointed by and accountable to the five-member Board of Supervisors, the County Administrator directs the day-to-day operations of County government and carries out the duties established by Virginia law and the Board. The position coordinates departments, supports the annual budget and long-range financial planning, implements Board policy, advises the Board on complex issues, and represents the County in regional and intergovernmental matters. The administrator must bring matters forward at the right time, explain options and consequences clearly, and provide a professional recommendation grounded in law, policy, operations, and community needs.

The County has capable employees and department leaders who have sustained services with limited resources. The next administrator will strengthen coordination across departments, support accountability, develop staff, and create a workplace where employees feel valued and can succeed. The role also requires close, consistent communication with each Board member and a disciplined approach to emerging issues so that the full Board receives timely information and is prepared to act.

Priorities

The next County Administrator should be prepared to establish productive relationships with the Board of Supervisors, employees, community partners, and residents. Early work should include regular briefings with Board members, clear communication protocols, and a shared understanding of when staff should elevate significant or fast-moving issues for Board attention.

Financial stewardship will be central to the role. The administrator will work with the Board and finance staff to assess the County's fiscal position, connect budget choices to service levels and development policy, identify sustainable revenue options, control costs, and communicate the budget in terms residents can understand. This work will require careful attention to public safety, schools, parks and recreation, facilities, equipment, and other needs that have grown as the County has changed.

The administrator will help the County develop a coordinated approach to economic development, land use, infrastructure, and potential data center development. The Board needs clear analysis of how proposed projects may affect revenue, utilities, transmission infrastructure, traffic, landowners, public services, and the County's long-term character. The administrator should organize cross-departmental work, present balanced options, identify risks, and help the Board establish a forward-looking policy direction.

Workforce stability is another immediate priority. The administrator will assess organizational capacity, support recruitment and retention, strengthen communication, clarify accountability, and develop current and future leaders. The goal is to maintain dependable services while creating a healthy culture that can compete for employees with larger and better-resourced neighboring jurisdictions.

The Successful Candidate

The successful candidate will be an experienced local government manager who understands the responsibilities, public visibility, and political context of serving a governing body. They will bring sound judgment, strong financial knowledge, and experience managing people, budgets, operations, and competing priorities. County government experience is preferred, although candidates with relevant leadership experience in a city, town, regional agency, or state government may also be considered.

This leader will communicate directly and in plain language. They will listen carefully, write with concision, make clear public presentations, and translate complex financial, legal, land use, and operational issues into practical choices. The Board expects candid advice, including information it needs to hear when the message is difficult. The administrator should present options, explain consequences, offer a recommendation when appropriate, and avoid surprises.

The successful candidate will be politically astute and professionally impartial. They will understand how policy, elections, public opinion, and stakeholder interests shape the environment without acting as a partisan. They will respect the roles of individual Board members and the authority of the Board as a whole, help members find common ground, and maintain trust through consistent access and information sharing.

As an organizational leader, the administrator will be approachable, fair, accountable, and willing to take responsibility. They will set priorities, coordinate work across departments, recognize strong performance, address problems promptly, and invest in employee development and succession planning. They will value work-life balance, consider flexible work practices where operationally appropriate, and strengthen a culture of service and mutual respect.

The ideal candidate will appreciate Orange County's rural landscape, farms, forests, historic resources, small towns, and established community relationships. They will also recognize that the County is changing. Success will require respect for the past, openness to practical innovation, and the ability to guide growth in a way that supports economic opportunity, essential services, private property rights, and the County's quality of life.



Qualifications

Candidates should have substantial progressively responsible experience in local government administration, including senior management responsibility for employees, budgets, operations, and policy implementation. Prior service as a county, city, or town manager or administrator, deputy or assistant administrator, or executive in a comparable public organization is preferred.

The position requires demonstrated financial and budget management ability, experience advising elected officials, and a record of leading through complex or controversial issues. Knowledge of economic development, land use and planning, public records requirements, human resources, organizational development, and intergovernmental relations is highly valued. Candidates should demonstrate a commitment to ethical public service and the ability to build durable relationships with employees, elected officials, residents, and regional partners.

The County will consider the combination of education and experience that best demonstrates readiness for the full scope of the position. A graduate degree in public administration, business administration, or a related field, and ICMA Credentialed Manager status are desirable.

Inside The County

Orange County operates under the traditional Virginia form of government, with a five-member Board of Supervisors serving as the governing body; each member represents one of the County's five magisterial districts. The Board appoints a County Administrator to manage the day-to-day operations of County government and a County Attorney to serve as the County's chief legal officer. The County Attorney reports directly to the Board of Supervisors and works closely with the County Administrator and department heads across all County functions.

Orange County's adopted Fiscal Year 2027 budget is a \$165 million spending plan. The County employs 415 full and part-time staff across a range of departments, with Administration, Development Services, Economic Development & Tourism, Social Services, and FiberLync reporting to the County Administrator and other departments in portfolios with oversight by the Deputy or Assistant County Administrators. View the organizational chart [here](#). The Board of Supervisors recently adopted a new mission and vision centered on four focus areas: A Vibrant Economy, Effective and Reflective Government, Sustainable Land Use, and Enhanced Quality of Life.

The County is actively engaged in several strategic initiatives, including a comprehensive zoning ordinance review, economic development through its industrial park, and continued investment in broadband infrastructure through the FiberLync Broadband Authority.



Orange County has earned consistent recognition at the state and national levels for its commitment to innovation, fiscal discipline, and community-focused service delivery. The County has received the Government Finance Officers Association's (GFOA) Distinguished Budget Presentation Award every year since fiscal year 2018 and holds the GFOA Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting, reflecting a finance operation built on transparency and best practices. GFOA has also profiled the County's transition to program budgeting as a model for how local governments can better communicate the value of public services.

The Center for Digital Government and the National Association of Counties have ranked Orange County in the top 10 nationwide among counties with populations up to 150,000 in the Digital Counties Survey for four consecutive years, recognizing the County's investments in technology, cybersecurity, and digital service delivery. The Virginia Association of Counties has honored Orange County with multiple Achievement Awards in recent years for programs spanning public safety, parks and recreation, tourism, and youth engagement, including a "Best Small County Achievement" designation for the Central Ohio Fire & Emergency Medical Services Organization (COFEMS) Whole Blood Program. These recognitions reflect a county government that sets high standards, invests in creative solutions, and consistently delivers results for its residents.

The Community

Orange County is located in the heart of Virginia's Piedmont region, approximately 60 miles northwest of Richmond, 70 miles southwest of Washington, D.C., and just 20 miles northeast of Charlottesville and the University of Virginia. The County spans 341 square miles of rolling countryside, historic estates, and small-town character, offering residents the rare combination of rural tranquility and easy access to major metropolitan areas.

With a population of approximately 39,000, Orange County is a close-knit community with deep historical roots. The County is home to the birthplaces of two U.S. Presidents, James Madison (Montpelier) and Zachary Taylor, and the Town of Orange and Town of Gordonsville each offer walkable, charming downtowns with local shops, restaurants, and community gathering places. Lake of the Woods, a planned residential community in the northwest portion of the County, is home to roughly 7,200 residents and offers a range of commercial and recreational amenities.

Orange County's economy is among the most diverse in the region, anchored by agribusiness, manufacturing, and commercial and retail services. The County is home to 419 active farms and 10 manufacturing companies employing more than 2,000 workers. A civilian labor force of over 17,000 supports the local economy, and the County's strategic location along key transportation corridors provides employers with access to a regional labor shed of more than 250,000 workers.

The County offers a high quality of life, with access to excellent outdoor recreation, a growing arts and cultural scene, and the natural beauty of the Virginia Piedmont. Residents enjoy a lower cost of living compared to Northern Virginia and the greater D.C. metro area, while remaining within a reasonable commute to those regions. Orange County Public Schools serves approximately 5,000 students and is complemented by private school options in the surrounding area. Germanna Community College maintains a campus in the County, and the University of Virginia and several other colleges and universities are within easy reach.



Compensation and Benefits

The starting salary range for the County Administrator is \$220,000 to \$225,000, depending on qualifications and experience. Relocation assistance is provided.

Orange County offers an excellent benefits package, including the following:

- Participation in the Virginia Retirement System (VRS)
- Medical, dental, and vision insurance
- Life insurance
- Short-term and long-term disability insurance
- Generous paid leave, including vacation, sick, and holiday leave
- Flexible spending accounts
- Employee Assistance Program
- Professional development and continuing legal education support



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 23, 2026**. This will be a confidential recruitment process.



Questions

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