This analysis of the Hospitality and Tourism cluster in the Commonwealth highlights important information for each of its career pathways—Lodging; Recreation, Amusements & Attractions; Restaurant and Food/Beverage Services; and Travel & Tourism. Data and analysis relied on the most recent employment projections for 2026 developed by the Virginia Employment Commission in 2018. The short- and long-term impact of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic is not and cannot be incorporated. Nonetheless, the analysis presents a possible outlook if all employment sectors quickly recover six years from now from current economic downturns as a result of the pandemic.

What trends do we currently see? What trends may we anticipate?

- In 2016, about 486,000 jobs were associated with the Hospitality and Tourism cluster statewide, and about 58,000 new positions are expected by 2026.
- The Hospitality and Tourism Cluster is projected to have the greatest number of annual job openings among all the clusters between 2016 and 2026.
- Among all the pathways, the Restaurant and Food/Beverage Services pathway is projected to have the highest percentage of job growth through 2026 (13%).
- The predominant education level of most occupations within this cluster is high school or less. However, training/certification or work experience is required for all occupations in the Hospitality and Tourism cluster.
Figure 1 shows the predominant level of education and training in each pathway. Education data was determined by Trailblazers based on U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics occupational education and training data. The percentages in the graph below reflect the number of occupations, not the number of workers. For example, the Restaurants and Food/Beverage Services pathway consists of twenty occupations: eighteen of them require a bachelor’s degree or more and training/certification/work experience (90%), and two of them require an associate degree or some college with training/certification/work experience (10%).

Figure 1: Predominant Education Level for Hospitality and Tourism, 2016-2026

Figure 2 compares the estimated 2016 employment for each pathway to projected 2026 employment levels. Data are provided by the Virginia Employment Commission.

Figure 2: Employment in Virginia for the Hospitality and Tourism Cluster, 2016-2026
In the Hospitality and Tourism cluster, the following Local Workforce Investment Areas (LWIAs) will experience higher occupational growth rates than the state average:

- Northern Virginia
- Bay Consortium
- Capital Region Workforce Partnerships
- Piedmont Workforce Network
- Crater Area