

# VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY -- 2023 SESSION

## CHAPTER 132

*An Act to amend and reenact §§ 15.2-1806 and 15.2-1809.1 of the Code of Virginia, relating to local parks; walking trails; liability; property owners.*

[S 807]

Approved March 21, 2023

**Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**

**1. That §§ 15.2-1806 and 15.2-1809.1 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted as follows:**

**§ 15.2-1806. Parks, recreation facilities, playgrounds, etc.**

A. A locality may establish parks, recreation facilities and playgrounds; set apart for such use any land or buildings owned or leased by it; and acquire land, buildings and other facilities pursuant to § 15.2-1800 for the aforesaid purposes.

In regard to its parks, recreation facilities and playgrounds, a locality may:

1. Fix, prescribe, and provide for the collection of fees for their use;
2. Levy and collect an annual tax upon all property in the locality subject to local taxation to pay, in whole or in part, the expenses incident to their maintenance and operation;
3. Operate their use through a department or bureau of recreation or delegate the operation thereof to a recreation board created by it, to a school board, or any other appropriate existing board or commission.

B. A locality may also establish, conduct, and regulate a system of *walking*, hiking, biking, and horseback riding trails and may set apart for such use any land or buildings owned or leased by it and may obtain licenses or permits for such use on land not owned or leased by it. A locality may also establish, conduct, and regulate a system of trails for all-terrain vehicles, off-road motorcycles, or both, as those terms are defined in § 46.2-100, and may set apart for such use any land or buildings owned or leased by it and may obtain licenses, easements, leases, or permits for such use on land not owned or leased by it. A locality may also establish, conduct, and regulate a system of boating, canoeing, kayaking, or tubing activities on waterways and may set apart for such use any land or buildings owned or leased by it and may obtain licenses or permits for such use on land not owned or leased by it.

In furtherance of the purposes of this subsection, a locality may provide for the protection of persons whose property interests, or personal liability, may be related to or affected by the use of such trails or waterways. Nothing contained in this subsection shall be construed to interfere with the use and enjoyment of private property.

**§ 15.2-1809.1. Liability of localities for the site of trails or waterways.**

A locality, or a park authority created by the Park Authorities Act (§ 15.2-5700 et seq.), that establishes, conducts, and regulates a system of *walking*, hiking, biking, or horseback riding trails, a system of trails for all-terrain vehicles, off-road motorcycles, or a system of boating, canoeing, kayaking, or tubing activities on waterways, as provided in subsection B of § 15.2-1806, and the owner or licensor or permit issuer of any property leased ~~or~~, licensed, *or provided by easement* for any such use, shall not be liable for damages resulting from any injury to the person or from a loss of or damage to the property of any person arising from the condition of the property used for such trails or waterways, in the absence of gross negligence or willful misconduct.