



THE VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS

(DHP):

At Work to Ensure Safe and Competent Patient Care in Virginia

The DHP Mission

The Commonwealth of Virginia places a high priority on the health and well being of its eight million citizens.

Under § 54.1-100 of the Code of Virginia the mission of 13 health regulatory boards and the Department of Health Professions is *“To ensure safe and competent patient care by licensing health professionals, enforcing standards of practice, and providing information to health care practitioners and the public.”*

What We Do

Health regulatory boards accomplish this work through the licensure, regulation and discipline of 350,000 healthcare practitioners across 80 professions. Healthcare practitioners regulated by the Department of Health Professions are listed on the next page.

Health regulatory boards also issue permits and licenses to 6,800 facilities such as pharmacies, funeral establishments, and veterinary hospitals.

Access to websites for the Department of Health Professions, its boards and programs is available at <http://www.dhp.virginia.gov>

DHP Supports 13 Health Regulatory Boards and the Board of Health Professions

BOARD OF AUDIOLOGY AND SPEECH - LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY

Audiologists
Speech-Language Pathologists
School Speech-Language Pathologists

BOARD OF COUNSELING

Professional Counselors
Substance Abuse Counselors
Substance Abuse Treatment Practitioners
Marriage and Family Therapists
Rehabilitation Counselors

BOARD OF DENTISTRY

Dentists (DDS, DMD)
Dental Hygienists (RDH)
Dental Assistants II
Oral/Maxillofacial Surgeons

BOARD OF FUNERAL DIRECTORS AND EMBALMERS

Funeral Service Licensees
Embalmers
Funeral Directors
Surface transportation and removal services

*See below

BOARD OF MEDICINE

Medical Doctors (MDs)
Osteopathic Physicians (ODs)
Podiatrists (DPMs)
Chiropractors (DCs)
Physician Assistants
Acupuncturists
Radiological Technologists
Radiological Technologists-Limited
Respiratory Therapists
Occupational Therapists
Athletic Trainers
Midwives
Polysomnographic Technologists

*All related facilities noted online

** Nursing, Nurse Aide & Med Aide Education Programs

BOARD OF NURSING

Registered Nurses (RNs)
Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs)
Licensed Nurse Practitioners
Clinical Nurse Specialists
Certified Nurse Aides
Massage Therapists
Medication Aides (Assisted living facilities)

**See below

BOARD OF LONG-TERM CARE ADMINISTRATORS

Nursing Home Administrators
Assisted Living Facility Administrators

BOARD OF OPTOMETRY

Optometrists

BOARD OF PHARMACY

Pharmacists
Pharmacy Technicians

*See below

BOARD OF PHYSICAL THERAPY

Physical Therapists
Physical Therapists Assistants

BOARD OF PSYCHOLOGY

Clinical Psychologists
School Psychologists
Applied Psychologists
Sex Offender Treatment Providers
School Psychologists –Limited

BOARD OF SOCIAL WORK

Social Workers
Clinical Social Workers

BOARD OF VETERINARY MEDICINE

Veterinarians
Veterinary technicians
Equine dental technicians

*See below

DHP COMPOSITE BOARD

Board of Health Professions

Virginia Department of
Health Professions
Perimeter Center
9960 Mayland Drive, Suite 300
Henrico, VA 23233-1463
Phone: 804/367-4400
Fax: 804/527-4475
<http://www.dhp.virginia.gov>



Who We Are

- In 1977, as part of state government reorganization, health regulatory boards and a composite board, the Board of Health Professions, were centralized in Richmond to form the Department of Health Professions (DHP).
- DHP is a non-general fund executive branch agency in the Health and Human Resources Secretariat. Its work is underwritten by licensure fees, rather than tax dollars.
- DHP is the umbrella agency for health regulatory boards that enforce laws and regulations pertaining to the conduct and practices of health practitioners and select related facilities. Each health regulatory board enforces state laws and regulations specific to its licensees. While they maintain separate operations, health regulatory boards and the Board of Health Professions share support services such as: investigators and inspectors; human resources; a policy analyst; data information systems; administration; adjudication specialists; and, communications.

Virginia's health regulatory boards and the Board of Health Professions are led by 186 volunteers appointed by the Governor. Each board is composed of licensed healthcare practitioners and citizens from various geographic locations statewide. Board members may also serve on related advisory committees.

Fast Facts: The Board of Medicine, established in 1884, is the state's oldest health regulatory board. It was followed by the Boards of Dentistry and Pharmacy in 1886. The Funeral Board was established in 1894. The Board of Physical Therapy created in 2000 is Virginia's newest health regulatory board. With 200,000 practitioners, the Board of Nursing has the greatest number of licensees. In 2011 the BON was presented with the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) Regulatory Achievement Award.

DHP's primary mission is supplemented by the Prescription Monitoring Program (PMP), the Healthcare Practitioner's Monitoring Program (HPMP) and the DHP Healthcare Workforce Data Center (HWDC).

PMP, available to prescribers and pharmacists 24/7, is authorized with specific powers and duties in §54.1-2519 of the Code of Virginia to promote the appropriate use of controlled substances for legitimate medical purposes while deterring the misuse, abuse, and diversion of controlled substances. Read more about PMP at http://www.dhp.virginia.gov/dhp_programs/pmp/

HPMP is an alternative to disciplinary action boards can use to transition impaired licensees back to good professional standing. Learn more by visiting <http://www.dhp.virginia.gov/hpmp/>

DHP HWDC works to improve the data collection and measurement of Virginia's healthcare workforce through regular assessment of workforce supply and demand issues among licensed practitioners. Studies and recommendations regarding the regulation of healthcare professionals are conducted for release to the public. To learn more please visit <http://www.dhp.virginia.gov/hwdc/>

Fast Facts: Executive Directors, division heads and the staff of Virginia's health regulatory boards are recognized as leaders in their field and serve in elected posts in national and internationally recognized professional membership societies, health regulatory and enforcement organizations.

Licensure

DHP issues licenses, registrations, certifications and permits to healthcare practitioner applicants that meet qualifications established by law and regulation.

In recent years there has been a growing number of new and emerging health professions. Between June of 2010 and June of 2011, there has been a 4.2 percent increase in the number of healthcare practitioners licensed by DHP's health regulatory boards.

Fast Facts: The Department and its boards have 63 sets of regulations with an average of 70-80 actions to amend regulations each year. Changes are made in regulations in response to changes in the law or in health care practices or as a result of petitions to boards.

Regulation

Under Virginia law, health regulatory boards are authorized to promulgate regulations and make case decisions. Boards typically promulgate regulations that contain requirements for licensure such as education, training and examination for minimum competency to practice the profession safely.

Fast Facts: As a result of the leadership and skill of DHP's Data Division the agency is recognized as an early adaptor of technology. DHP Data staff implemented and designed board specific programs to facilitate online licensure and renewal among licensees. Data also supports technology critical to operation of the Prescription Monitoring Program (PMP).

Discipline

DHP health regulatory boards follow the Administrative Process Act to convene Informal Conferences and Formal Hearings to determine whether there is clear and convincing evidence that a violation of law or regulation has occurred. Board members are charged with protecting the public's health by removing practitioners from service or requiring them to receive additional education when poor decisions result in patient harm. This work is predicated on state statutes, regulations and guidelines regarding standards of care. Use of an internationally recognized Sanction Reference Point (SRP) system, similar to sentencing guidelines used by judges in a court of law, have been customized to meet the regulatory requirements of each board. Virginia's SRP system assists board members in their work to make fair and unbiased decisions. Their work is at the heart of the DHP mission.

Fast Facts: DHP's Sanction Reference Point Program (SRP), is a model for the rest of the nation. It is used by health regulatory boards as part of the review of disciplinary cases involving licensees and is the winner of the 2011 Council for Licensure Enforcement and Regulation (CLEAR) Regulatory Excellence Award.

The **Enforcement Division** is authorized by the Code of Virginia under §54.1 – 2506 to receive and assess complaints, investigate allegations of misconduct on behalf of the health regulatory boards, inspect facilities authorized by the statute and regulations, conduct background checks on applicants and conduct investigations on individuals and facilities applying for reinstatement of licensure.

Complaints regarding healthcare practitioners and regulated facilities are submitted in writing, by email to <http://www.dhp.virginia.gov/Enforcement/compliants.htm> through a toll free number 1-800-553-1560, or in person most often by patients, family members, healthcare providers, law enforcement, the courts or concerned citizens, including members of the press. Once a review is made of the allegations, a decision is made as to whether to conduct a fielded inquiry through sworn investigators and inspectors at work throughout the state. Their findings are submitted as part of a report to the appropriate health regulatory board for its review and action.

The **Administrative Proceedings Division (APD)** processes disciplinary cases to ensure that cases are adjudicated in a fair and timely manner. APD, in conjunction with the Office of the Attorney General, prepares the notices or written allegations of misconduct which are provided to respondents, present evidence at informal conferences, and prepares Orders that reflect the decisions of the Boards.

Fast Facts: DHP has a 94-percent 250 day closure rate on disciplinary cases that come before health regulatory boards for adjudication.

