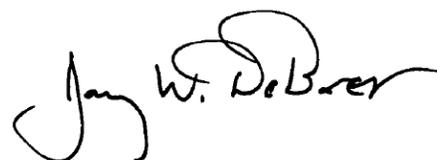

**Report on the Response of the
Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation
to the Impact of the Aging of Virginia's Population**

November 10, 2014

Pursuant to *Code of Virginia* §§ 2.2-5510 and 51.5-136, the Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation submits this report of its progress in addressing the impact of the aging of Virginia's population.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jay W. DeBoer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jay" being the most prominent.

Jay W. DeBoer
Director

November 10, 2014

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation meets all service demands of interested older Virginians, with special emphasis on the need to prevent fraud and discrimination against this growing population.

Agency efforts targeted toward older Virginians and their families include processing complaints against licensees, working with local authorities to pursue charges of fraudulent criminal (unlicensed) activity, enforcement of the Fair Housing Law prohibition against age-based housing discrimination, and specialized communications and outreach partnerships.

AGENCY DESCRIPTION

The Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation's mission is to protect the health, safety and welfare of the public by licensing qualified individuals and businesses and enforcing standards of professional conduct for professions and occupations as designated by statute.

A Commerce and Trade secretariat agency, the Department and its 200 employees perform administrative functions for 18 boards comprised of practitioners and citizens. The agency and its regulatory boards verify minimum competency, investigates complaints, and upholds professional compliance with state laws and regulations.

The Department comprises three major service areas:

- Licensure, Certification and Registration of Professions and Occupations;
- Enforcement of Licensing, Regulating and Certifying Professions and Occupations; and
- Administrative Services.

INFORMATION REQUESTED

This report responds to the October 9, 2014, guidance from Secretary of Health and Human Resources William A. Hazel, Jr., M.D.

1. *If your agency has undertaken any actions to respond to the current and future impact of an aging population, such as needs assessments, strategic planning, or use of best practices, please briefly describe those actions. Please indicate what assistance from DARS could help your agency as it prepares to serve an aging Virginia population.*

The Department has not initiated programmatic or operational actions specific to older Virginians, nor does it require additional assistance from DARS for service delivery.

2. *Briefly describe your agency's services that are used primarily by older Virginians and the funding streams (types and amounts) that support those services. If these particular services or funding streams are provided in conjunction with other state or local agencies or other for profit or non-profit organizations, please list them.*

While consumers of all ages are served through and affected by the agency's services, older Virginians intersect most frequently with five particular areas under the Department's

purview: construction and home repair; hearing aid specialists; cemeteries and pre-need burial contracts; opticians; and fair housing.

With the exception of fair housing, which receives some federal support as a HUD-certified “substantially equivalent” investigative and enforcement entity, DPOR is a non-general fund agency financed by revenue collected through licensing fees, not by any tax revenues.

3. *Identify current agency programs specifically designed to serve older Virginians that fall into any of the following eight categories:*
 - *Health Care/Wellness*
 - *Education*
 - *Public Safety (including Adult Abuse Prevention)*
 - *Recreation*
 - *Housing*
 - *Accessibility (including Livable Communities <http://www.vadrs.org/vblc/>)*
 - *Financial Security*
 - *Transportation*

Public Safety

The Department partners with law enforcement, other state agencies, and private-sector/non-profit advocates to promote adult abuse prevention, primarily in the area of home repair/contractor scams, and consumer protection initiatives generally. In addition, Department staff offer presentations to senior citizen organizations throughout the Commonwealth upon request.

Housing and Accessibility

The Department administers and enforces the Virginia Fair Housing Law (Title 36, Chapter 5.1 of the *Code of Virginia*), which prohibits housing discrimination on the basis of “elderliness,” defined as age 55 and older. Equally significant for an aging population, however, is the fair housing law’s protected class covering disability and requiring reasonable accommodations and modifications.

Financial Security

While consumers of all ages are served through and affected by the agency’s services, the Department places special emphasis on the need to prevent fraud and discrimination against older Virginians. Senior citizens are often targets for unscrupulous business practices, particularly in five areas under the Department’s purview: construction and home repair; hearing aid specialists; cemeteries and pre-need burial contracts; opticians; and fair housing.

4. *Is your agency able to meet all of the service demands of older Virginians for the services listed above? If there are any instances where the demand for services exceeds your agency’s ability to meet the demand, please indicate the service and the extent of the unmet demand. Also, if your agency maintains waiting lists for services, please provide this information, including the waiting list numbers for each service.*

The Department currently meets all service demands of eligible Virginians age 60 and older.

5. *Provide the number of persons, by gender if available, who received services from the agency in each of the past five state fiscal years (FY 2010 through FY 2014) who fell into each of the following age ranges: 60-64; 65-74; 75-84; and 85 and older. If your agency lacks specific information about the numbers of older Virginians it serves but has other evidence indicating that it is serving more or fewer older Virginians than it has in the past, please describe the basis for that estimation.*

The Department does not collect demographic data on its service population.

6. *Referring to the services or funding you described in item two, describe any services or funding provided to older Virginians for which the accessibility or availability varies considerably in different parts of the Commonwealth.*

Service provision and funding do not differ based on geographic location. In addition to the central office in Richmond, the Department staffs regional field investigators in various parts of the Commonwealth.

7. *Over the next five to 10 years, in what ways do you anticipate that an aging population will impact your agency's services, funding streams, or policies? Consider the impact from an increase in the number of older Virginians and whether the needs of older Virginians will differ from those of today's older adults. Please include any anticipated impacts upon the cost of services, changes in types of services or the manner of service delivery, or modifications to agency policies, staffing needs, or procedures.*

An increase in the number of older Virginians, and an attendant demand for accessibility and livable communities, may affect the Department's service areas of fair housing and regulation of design-build professionals. No changes are anticipated in the cost or manner of service delivery.

8. *Please describe the primary steps that should be taken at the federal, state, or local levels to meet the future demands of older Virginians and to make service delivery more effective and efficient.*

Universal design and livable community initiatives are beneficial not only to older Virginians but to improving service delivery for a variety of populations.

9. *Identify the extent to which your agency provides "customer-oriented" publications and websites online that are designed to be "senior-friendly." If the information you currently provide is not readily accessible to older Virginians, please identify any steps your agency is taking to improve their access to this information.*

The Department offers senior-oriented consumer guides on its website and PDF print-friendly versions formatted for audiences of older Virginians and their families.

10. Describe any other services or programs that your agency plans to implement in the future to address the impact of the aging of Virginia's population.

The Department does not currently have plans for future programs specific to older Virginians.

11. Please indicate if your agency is experiencing an increase in employees retiring later and describe any actions your agency is taking or plans to take to accommodate its aging workforce with innovative practices.

As in public agencies throughout Virginia and the federal government, the Department faces a potential staff shortage and loss of institutional knowledge due to a “graying” workforce. Approximately one-third of agency classified employees are retirement-eligible this decade, with no trend suggesting individuals are choosing to retire later.

The Department uses tools such as succession planning, telecommuting, compensation factors, and professional development training to accommodate all its employees.