



**HR Highlights  
January/February 2024**

**Alternative Hiring Process Certificate of Disability Name Change Effective March 1, 2024**

**AHP Background:**

It is DHRM's goal to proactively foster an inclusive workforce culture for the Commonwealth and cultivate a leading-edge roadmap to incorporate diversity and inclusion best practices in attracting and retaining the state workforce. AHP is an alternative application process for the employment of people with disabilities in response to [Code of Virginia § 2.2-1213](#), which was effective July 1, 2021, and was implemented April 2022.

To apply via the AHP, applicants had to attach a Certificate of Disability (COD) they received from [DARS](#) or [DBVI](#) to their applications. However, many people who requested a COD thought they could use a COD as documentation for other requests, such as applying for Medicaid, requesting reasonable accommodations, etc. Therefore, it was decided to change the name of the Certificate of Disability to the AHP Letter. This name was chosen to align with the Schedule A Letter that is used for federal employment for persons with disabilities.

**Below is the new language on the AHP Letter that will be effective March 1, 2024:**

*This letter serves as authorization that NAME OF PARTICIPANT meets the criteria for participation in the Alternative Hiring Process in accordance with the Department of Human resource Management (DHRM) guidelines.*

*Sincerely  
DAR/DBVI Signature*

*Please Note: This letter is only recognized by the Commonwealth for the purposes of applying for jobs with Virginia state government workforce under DHRM Hiring Policy 2.10 for the Alternative Hiring Process.*

**The language currently used on job announcements will also be changed.**

**Below will be the new language:**

*In support of the Commonwealth's commitment to inclusion, we are encouraging individuals with disabilities to apply through the Commonwealth's Alternative Hiring Process. To be considered for this opportunity, applicants will need to provide their AHP Letter (formerly called a Certificate of Disability) provided by the Department for Aging & Rehabilitative Services (DARS), or the Department for the Blind & Vision Impaired (DBVI). Service-Connected Veterans may also apply via the AHP if they also provide an AHP Letter. To request an AHP Letter, use this link: <https://www.dars.virginia.gov/drs/cpid/PWContact.aspx> or call DARS at 800-552-5019, or DBVI at 800-622-2155.*

*Please note: Certificates of Disabilities that were issued between April 2022 & February 29, 2024, will continue to be valid for applying to state jobs.*

**The question on the applications that AHP applicants need to answer will also be changed.**

**Below will be the new question:**

*Are you requesting consideration through the Alternative Hiring Process and have you received an approved AHP Letter from the Department for Aging & Rehabilitative Services (DARS), or from the Department for the Blind & Vision Impaired (DBVI)?*

*Please attach your AHP Letter.*

**Below are AHP Reminders:**

1. The AHP Letter needs to be on DARS or DBVI Letterhead and signed.
2. Approved applicants may receive priority consideration during the recruitment process.
3. As per the AHP Guidelines, agencies are strongly encouraged to provide provisional periods to new AHP hires to ensure accommodation needs are met and employees are set up for success. Review the AHP Guidelines for additional information about the Provisional Period.

**Please review the [AHP Guidelines](#), [FAQs for Hiring Managers](#), and [FAQs for Applicants](#) for details regarding this initiative:**

The AHP is part of a more comprehensive strategy, which includes accommodations, communication, education and awareness, compliance, and retention of individuals with differing abilities. We still expect this process to continue to evolve as we build and implement the comprehensive strategy.

**Questions about the Alternative Hiring Process:** email [rmsinquiry@dhrm.virginia.gov](mailto:rmsinquiry@dhrm.virginia.gov)

**Questions about the AHP Letter:** email [Sandra.Phipps@dars.virginia.gov](mailto:Sandra.Phipps@dars.virginia.gov)