



HR Highlights June 2022

Emerging Talent Pathways

With a labor market that continues to experience low unemployment and increased job movement, the ability to hire and retain talent may present challenges in meeting staffing needs to support agency operational goals. With a tight labor market, the opportunity to explore new talent pathways in addition to the more traditional hiring of experienced talent, can provide new talent options to meet agency hiring needs. Emerging talent pathways may be an option for agencies to consider.

Emerging talent is often considered as talent with limited, related work experience. Emerging talent may include recent high school, post-high school educational program, 2 year college, 4 year college, or graduate school graduates. Emerging talent can include those who are new to the workforce or those who are changing careers. Typically, emerging talent pathways involve additional development to help support workforce skills growth. Three emerging talent pathways for agencies to explore include internships, apprenticeships, and fellowships.

Internship: An internship is a form of experiential learning that integrates knowledge and theory learned in the classroom with practical application and skills development in a professional setting. Internships give students the opportunity to gain valuable applied experience and make connections in professional fields they are considering for career paths, and give employers the opportunity to guide and evaluate talent. Internships provide a learning experience that provides for applying the knowledge gained in the classroom. It does not serve to only advance the operations of the employer or be the work that a regular employee would routinely perform. Internship length may vary and may include several weeks, several months, year-long, and micro-internships that may be structured around a project and the number of hours required to complete that project. To learn more about internships, agencies can reference [DHRM's Workforce Development Webpage](#) or reach out to the [DHRM Workforce Development Team](#) for further discussion.

Apprenticeship: Apprenticeship is occupational training where employers can develop and prepare their future workforce, and individuals can obtain paid work experience, classroom instruction, and a recognized credential. The registered apprenticeship model is occupationally focused and combines on-the-job learning, related technical instruction, and mentorship to develop apprentices. Apprentices are paid while they work and learn skills and receive a credential upon completion of the apprenticeship. Apprenticeships typically require 2,000 on the job hours. Apprenticeships can be applied to most occupations including trades, IT, HR, and many other occupations. To learn more about and discuss how to establish an apprenticeship, agencies can contact the [Virginia Department of Labor and Industry](#). To learn more about HR apprenticeships, agencies can contact the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) which has developed an [HR Apprenticeship Program](#) that is available for employer use.

Fellowship: A Fellowship provides a professional opportunity for emerging talent to gain experience and continue professional development. Fellowships can be paid employment or provide stipends and may last as much as two years. Within state government, Fellowships include the **Virginia Management Fellows (VMF) Program**. The VMF provides an opportunity for recent 4-year college or graduate program graduates to work in state government. The

program, managed by DHRM, hires approximately 10 Fellows each year with the Fellows rotating through positions at 3 agencies over 2 years. During those 2 years, Fellows also participate in development activities facilitated by Virginia Tech. Agencies are able to hire Fellows through an expedited hiring process for ongoing positions in their agencies. To learn more about participating in the VMF and/or hiring VMF Fellows, agencies can contact the [VMF Program Lead](#).

If your agency is interested in collaborating with other agencies and participating in an Emerging Talent Pathways COV Network, please contact deanna.goldstein@dhrm.virginia.gov. This network would serve as a community of practice for agencies to share programs and practices and for agencies to identify how the Commonwealth can best support emerging talent pathways in state government.