



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

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COMMISSIONER

DEPARTMENT OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES

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MEMORANDUM

To: Potential Licensure Applicants

From: Jae Benz, Director, Office of Licensing

Cc: Mackenzie Glassco, Associate Director of Quality & Compliance
Angelica Howard, Associate Director of Administrative & Specialized Units
Christine Morris, Associate Director of State Licensing Operations

Date: October 23, 2025

RE: Initial Applicant Orientation for Priority 1 and Priority 2 Service Applications

Purpose

This memo serves as notification that the Office of Licensing is introducing an Initial Applicant Orientation for applicants applying for Priority 1 or Priority 2 services that aligns with the [Updates to Priority Service Categories and Review Timelines Memo](#) (July 2025).

New Procedure

Effective November 7, 2025, any applicant submitting a new application for a Priority 1 or Priority 2 service must:

- Complete the DBHDS Initial Applicant Orientation; and
- Complete the proctored Comprehensive Knowledge Exam with a score of 85% or better.

Applicants for priority services must complete the Initial Applicant Orientation *prior* to beginning the application. The orientation is specifically designed to facilitate an understanding of DBHDS requirements and support applicants in successfully completing the application process. Applications submitted for Priority 1 or 2 services without prior completion of the Initial Applicant Orientation and Comprehensive Knowledge Exam will not be reviewed under the priority timeline. Instead, they will be placed on the waitlist with non-priority services and pulled in the order in which the application was received, until proof of completion is received.

The Initial Applicant Orientation materials will be posted to the OL website and available for review by November 1, 2025. The orientation consists of 16 self-paced modules. Each module has a video presentation and a self-assessment quiz. Proof of knowledge is secured by successful completion of the proctored Comprehensive Knowledge Exam.

This training is being provided to:

- Guide initial applicants through the application process;
- Ensure applicants understand the regulatory requirements and time commitments associated with licensure;
- Provide applicants with the tools and resources needed to be successful providers; and
- Promote consistent, quality services delivered by knowledgeable and prepared providers.

For questions about the Initial Applicant Orientation process or to sign up for the proctored exam being held on November 21, 2025, please contact the Office of Licensing Training Coordinator at Larisa.Terwilliger@dbhds.virginia.gov. If you are already in the new applicant process and you have licensing-related questions, please contact your assigned Policy Review Specialist via the CONNECT Provider Portal.