



Agency History

Protecting the health, safety, and welfare of Virginians by regulating certain professions and occupations dates back to the seventeenth century, when harbor pilots navigating the Commonwealth's waterways gave "branches" to show a ship's captain they were capable of safely directing the ship to safe harbor. In 1670, Virginia's House of Burgesses formalized the regulation of this profession, and in 1783, the House of Delegates created the Board for Branch Pilots.

The Commonwealth regulated selected occupations through independent boards until 1948. At that time, the Department of Professional and Occupational *Registration* (DPO) was formed by legislative action and charged with the responsibility of providing administrative support to more than 10 boards and commissions.

Over the next 29 years, the General Assembly added 15 more regulatory programs to DPO, and also created the Commission of Professional and Occupational Regulation as an advisory body for the umbrella administrative agency. From 1974-1978, the Commission (the predecessor to the current Board for Professional and Occupational Regulation) evaluated 13 professions to determine the need for regulation.

In 1977, the legislature re-named DPO to the Department of Commerce. At the same time, the General Assembly transitioned the Board for Contractors and the Athletic Commission from independent bodies to the growing number of boards supported by the Department.

Throughout the 1980s, the Department gained and lost a number of regulatory programs, as the legislature added regulation of professions including auctioneers, asbestos workers, and appraisers to its responsibilities; transferred psychology, social work and other health-related professions to the Department of Health Regulatory Boards (now Department of Health Professions); re-assigned librarians to the State Library and commercial driver training schools to the Department of Motor Vehicles; and de-regulated state licensure of employment and collection agencies.

In 1993, the General Assembly christened the agency with its current name, the Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation (DPOR).

Timeline of DPOR Regulatory Programs

	YEAR	
Branch Pilots	1783	
	1920	Architects, Professional Engineers & Land Surveyors*
Real Estate*	1924	
	1928	Accountancy*
Athletic Commission*	1934	
	1938	Contractors*
Dept. of Professional & Occupational <i>Registration</i> (DPO) created	1948	Branch Pilots, APELS, Real Estate & Accountancy assigned to DPO
	1954	Opticians
Barbers	1962	Cosmetology
Polygraph Examiners	1968	
	1970	Hearing Aid Dealers + Fitters
Water & Wastewater Works Operators	1971	
DPO re-named Dept. of Commerce (DOC)	1977	Contractors assigned to DOC (no longer independent)
	1980	Landscape Architects added to APELS
Auctioneers	1983	
	1984	Geologists
Asbestos Contractors + Workers	1988	
	1989	Soil Scientists
Real Estate Appraisers	1990	Certified Interior Designers added to APELSLA
Waste Management Facility Operators	1991	
	1992	Nail Technicians added to Cosmetology
DOC re-named DPOR	1993	
Tradesmen added to Contractors	1994	Lead Abatement added to Asbestos

Cemetery	1998	Professional Boxing & Wrestling
Backflow Prevention Device Workers added to Tradesmen	1998	
Board Merger: Barbers & Cosmetology	2000	
Accountancy <u>removed</u> from DPOR (made independent again)	2001	Home Inspectors added to ALHI as certification program
Gas-fitters added to Tradesmen	2001	
Wax technicians added to Barbers & Cosmetology	2002	
Fair Housing split off from Real Estate (two boards)	2003	
Tattooists + body-piercers added to Barbers & Cosmetology	2004	Wetland delineators added to Soil Scientists
Elevator mechanics added to Tradesmen	2004	
Water well contractors added to Contractors	2007	Estheticians added to Barbers & Cosmetology
Common Interest Communities	2008	
Onsite Soil System Professionals added to Water & Wastewater Works Operators	2009	
Mold remediators added to ALHI	2011	Residential Building Energy Analysts added to Contractors
Mold remediators <u>removed</u> from ALHI (deregulated)	2012	Timeshare re-seller registration to CIC
Hair braiding <u>removed</u> from Barbers & Cosmetology (deregulated)	2012	
Natural gas auto techs certification to DPOR	2014	AMCs to Real Estate Appraisers
Amateur boxing & MMA to DPOR	2015	
Home inspector certification transitioned to licensure program	2016	

**independent board*