



DBHDS Licensing Process Overview

When applying for a Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS) license, it is important for all applicants to understand the DBHDS licensing process and related issues. Due to the high volume of applications, the entire licensing process could take six to twelve months to complete. This time period should be expected, unless the DBHDS determines that the service and/or location of the service is addressing a priority need. However, in an effort to expedite the licensing process, we are revising the process - the initial application and attachments and the policies and procedures portions will be combined. Please be mindful that incomplete applications, applications that fail to adequately address all licensing regulations or provider delays in providing requested information can further extend the licensing process.

1. *Until you are confident of being near the end of the licensing process, please delay:*

- *buying a home for a service,*
- *renting office space,*
- *buying insurance, &*
- *hiring staff.*

However, you should be collecting and submitting resumes for prospective staff for critical positions, identifying potential property locations and getting insurance quotes because these items will be required during the application phase.

2. *Review your business plan including how you expect to get referrals for your program. A License does not guarantee sufficient referrals to sustain a business. This is especially true where a large number of providers may already exist including Intensive In-Home, Day Treatment for Children, ID Group Homes and Children Residential Group Homes.*

3. *Be sure to provide the requested information listed on the application. Please follow the "Policy and Procedure Review Checklist" when submitting your Policies and Procedures.*

The DBHDS 5-Phase Licensing Process is as follows:

PHASE ONE:

1. New applicants will submit the following information **as one packet** for review:

- A completed **Licensing Application** with the required attachments **AND**
- The **Licensing Policies and Procedures (P & Ps)**

To expedite the licensing process, the focus of the P & P review will be on specific policies, but the applicant is required to complete and submit **ALL** policies and sign the P & P verification information confirming that

all policies have been completed and submitted. The licensing specialist will determine the final approval of the Licensing Policies as part of the onsite inspection.

PHASE TWO:

1. The applicant will complete the **Human Rights Policies and Procedures**/Human Rights Affiliation process. The applicant is issued a letter from the Office Human Rights directing the applicant to pursue a human rights affiliation with the local human committee.
2. The applicant will register with the DBHDS Background Investigation Unit to initiate the **Criminal Background Check** process.
3. The applicant will contact the Virginia Department of Social Services to complete the **Central Registry Check** process.

PHASE THREE:

1. The Office of Licensing will assign a licensing specialist to the applicant.
2. The licensing specialist will complete the **Onsite Inspection Process**. During the inspection, the Licensing Specialist will review the physical facility or administrative office and conduct knowledge based interviews with the Service Director, CEO, licensed staff, etc. to determine if the staff has a working knowledge of the service. The licensing specialist will determine the final approval of the Licensing Policies and procedures as part of the onsite inspection. Once the onsite inspection is completed, the Licensing specialist will make a licensing recommendation to the Office of Licensing management staff for review, who then, will forward the recommendation to the DBHDS Commissioner for the final approval.

PHASE FOUR:

1. While the applicant is waiting for the licensing recommendation's approval from the DBHDS Commissioner, the applicant may request a **Pending Letter** from the specialist. The licensing specialist will initiate the pending letter and will submit it to the applicant via email. The pending letter will serve as the **authorized license** until the finalized license is received. Medicaid is notified via the pending letter, so the new Provider may begin providing services.

PHASE FIVE:

1. The finalized license is mailed to the provider.