



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRY

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October 12, 2006

The Honorable Timothy Kaine, Governor
Members of the General Assembly
Commonwealth of Virginia
Capitol Square
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Dear Governor Kaine and Members of the Virginia General Assembly:

I am pleased to transmit the *2006 Report on the Impact of Aging on Services Provided by the Virginia Department of Labor and Industry*, which is submitted pursuant to § 2.2-5510 of the Code of Virginia. The report describes the services provided by the Department of Labor and Industry (DOLI) which are available to assist Virginia's aging population. The services which DOLI provides to the employees and employers of Virginia are available to all who need them. We wish to do all that we can to ensure that Virginia's aging population is able to learn about our services and take advantage of the opportunities which our programs offer.

Sincerely,

C. Ray Davenport

CRD/rdo
Enclosure

**Report on the Impact of Virginia's Aging Population
on the Services Provided by the
Department of Labor and Industry**

2006

Introduction

House Bill 110 (2006) amended the Code of Virginia at § 2.2-5510 to mandate that “each agency shall report by October 1 of each year to the Governor and to the General Assembly its progress for addressing the impact of the aging of the population in at least five specific actions.”

Each agency is required to amend its strategic plan as necessary and shall submit to the Governor and to the General Assembly annually by October 1 a report that includes the following information.

1. To the extent such data is available, the number of persons who received services from the agency in the past fiscal year who fell into each of the following age ranges: 65-74; 75-84; and 85 and older. If the agency can provide data that compares such numbers to numbers of senior citizens served in the past, please do so. If the agency lacks specific information about the numbers of senior citizens it serves, but has other evidence indicating that it is serving more or fewer senior citizens than it has in the past, please describe the basis for that estimation.
2. Identify the agency services that are utilized by senior citizens 65 and older in significant numbers. Indicate whether the agency has the capacity at present to serve all interested seniors or whether the demand for certain services exceeds the agency’s capacity. If so, does the agency maintain waiting lists for services?
3. Identify current agency programs, specifically designed to serve seniors 65 and older, that fall into any of the following six categories: Health Care/Wellness; Education; Public Safety; Recreation; Financial Security (including Housing); and Transportation.
4. Identify the extent to which your agency provides “consumer-oriented” publications and websites online that are designed to be “senior-friendly.” If the information you currently provide is not readily accessible to seniors, identify any steps your agency is taking to improve accessibility.
5. Describe any other services or programs that the agency has implemented or plans to implement in the future to address the impact of the aging of Virginia’s population.

Executive Summary

This document is the report of the Virginia Department of Labor and Industry (DOLI) on the extent to which the department is addressing the impact of Virginia’s aging population. This report includes information on services provided by DOLI that are available to person ages 65 and above, although we do not have specific data on the numbers of people by age groupings who are served by our programs. DOLI administers the following programs:

Registered Apprenticeship
Boiler and Pressure Vessel Safety

Persons Receiving Services

In the past, DOLI has generally not tracked the ages of citizens who participate in our programs and/or use our services. Where appropriate, the agency's services are available to all persons regardless of age.

DOLI's Virginia Occupational Safety and Health Division (VOSH) conducts safety and health inspections of workplaces and investigates occupational safety and health complaints. In addition, VOSH also investigates workplace fatalities, some of which involve older workers. In 2006, there have been three investigations involving workers whose ages were 55 or 56, but none involving deaths of workers who were 65 or older. In 2005, there were investigations of twelve deaths of workers between the ages of 55 and 64, four investigations of deaths of workers whose ages ranged from 65 to 68, and one investigation of the death of a worker who was 76. In 2004, there were investigations of the deaths of four workers between the ages of 55 and 64 and of the deaths of four workers between the ages of 65 and 74. There were no investigations of fatalities of workers older than age 74.

DOLI's Virginia Occupational Safety and Health Cooperative Programs Division provides, through a cooperative agreement with the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) of the U. S. Department of Labor, a census of employee fatalities in Virginia (CFOI) and the Annual Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses (SOII) for Virginia. In 2004, the BLS CFOI recorded 18 work-related fatalities of Virginia workers age 65 and over. Also in 2004, the estimated rate among Virginia workers age 65 or over for occupational injuries/illnesses that resulted in days away from work was 4,400.¹

In addition to the programs described above, most of DOLI's programs serve people of all ages. Our Boiler and Pressure Vessel Safety Division works to ensure the safe operation of boilers and pressure vessels, which protects everyone in Virginia. DOLI's Registered Apprenticeship Division makes no distinction in ages of apprentices or apprenticeship sponsors. Our Labor and Employment Law Division resolves payment of wage disputes for employees and employers of all ages, as well as enforcing Virginia's minimum wage statute. However, some of DOLI's services are specifically geared toward protecting younger persons. For example, we enforce Virginia's child labor laws.

Services Utilized By Significant Numbers of Persons 65 Or Older

As noted above, in the past, DOLI has generally not tracked the ages of those who have used our services. Where appropriate, the agency's services are available to all persons regardless of age. Although DOLI's resources have at times been stretched in order to manage

¹ 2004 is the most recent year for which data from the CFOI and the SOII are available.

the Agency's mandated programs and services, the services provided to persons aged 65 and older have not exceeded the Agency's capacity. We do not maintain waiting lists and we serve all eligible persons who request our services.

Programs Designed Specifically for Persons 65 or Older

DOLI has no programs that are designed specifically to serve persons who are age 65 or older. Where appropriate, the agency's services are available to all persons regardless of age.

Publications and Websites

The website of the Virginia Department of Labor and Industry can be accessed at:

<http://www.doli.virginia.gov>

DOLI's publications (which may be downloaded from the website) include the following:

1. Administrative Regulations Manual (ARM)
2. Employer Rights and Responsibilities and Courses of Action Following a VOSH Inspection
3. Required State Poster - Occupational Safety and Health: Job Safety and Health Protection
4. Forms
 - a. Boiler and Pressure Vessel Safety
 - b. Labor and Employment Law
 - c. Lead and Asbestos
5. Virginia Works Newsletter

Any person who has questions concerning DOLI's publications may call the Agency at (804) 371-2327.

Services or Programs That Address The Impact of The Aging Population

At present, DOLI has no services or programs that are designed specifically to address the impact of the aging population. However, as we noted in our most recent strategic plan, Virginia's workforce has become increasingly diverse over the past few decades. In workforce demographics, we expect to see a greater percentage of older workers in the workforce. According to several sources on labor force trends, in the next decade, the numbers of workers at

age 55 and over will grow faster than the numbers of workers whose ages are 16 to 24, while the numbers of workers between the ages of 25 and 54 is expected to decline.

Therefore, we do anticipate that, in the near future, there will be a need for DOLI to develop services that are designed to address the needs of older workers.

Conclusion

Virginia's workforce, even in the group of older workers, is becoming more diverse in terms of gender, race, and nationality. A smaller percentage of these workers are employed in large fixed industries, and higher proportions are employed in small firms, temporary jobs, or at home. More work is now contracted, outsourced, and part time. These trends are expected to continue over the next several decades and will require different strategies to address developing issues.

As the demand for skilled, experienced workers grows in the next two decades, older workers will become an increasingly vital labor resource. These demographic shifts influence occupational injury rates and, therefore, raise issues for DOLI's program strategies. For example, older workers tend to have lower injury and illness rates than the labor force as a whole, although injured older workers generally take longer to recuperate and return to work.

We anticipate that, with greater numbers of older employees and employers, there will be an increasing prevalence of those who are immigrants and/or "hard-to-reach". In such a scenario, that would mean older immigrant workers who may be less literate, unable to read English instructions, yet still working in some of the most inherently dangerous jobs as they age. Hard-to-reach workers and employers include employees who work at a single location for only a few days before moving to a new location, temporary workers, and small business owners.

DOLI recognizes that there is a need to develop programs and services that address the impact of the aging population. DOLI will need to work toward more specific calculations of the number of older persons who are served by the Agency. The demographic and workplace trends that we have noted will complicate the implementation of occupational safety and health programs for older workers. We will need to develop enforcement, training, and delivery systems that are different from those that we have relied upon to date.