

Call for Proposals
2026 DHRM HR Conference Agenda
Theme: CONTROL + ALT + DELETE: HR Reboot & Reimagine
Date: September 28-30, 2026
Location: Greater Richmond Convention Center
403 N 3rd Street, Richmond, VA 23219

The Virginia Department of Human Resource Management invites HR professionals, higher education partners, and subject matter experts to submit proposals for the 2026 HR Conference.

This year's theme - "**Control + Alt + Delete: HR Reboot & Reimagine**" - reflects the evolving role of HR across the Commonwealth. In today's fast changing business and social landscape, and amid a new administration and shifting workplace expectations, HR professionals play a critical role in driving organizational effectiveness and workforce success. As agencies and institutions navigate policy changes, workforce shifts, and increasing operational demands, HR must simultaneously strengthen core foundations, embrace innovation, and reimagine the future of work.

Through engaging sessions, expert insights, and interactive workshops, participants will gain actionable solutions that not only support today's challenges but actively shape the future of HR across the Commonwealth.

We are seeking dynamic speakers for Keynote presentations (75–90 minutes), General sessions and interactive workshops (75–90 minutes), and Concurrent sessions (60–75 minutes). Speakers interested in multiple session types must submit separate proposals for each, with distinct topics.

Conference Goals

- Strengthen HR foundations through control of policy knowledge, compliance tools, and operational excellence.
- Modernize HR practice by embracing alternative and innovative talent strategies, flexible workflow models, and emerging technologies.
- Drive transformation by deleting outdated processes and redesigning HR service for the greatest impact.

Key Focus Areas/Tracks

1 – Policy, Compliance, & Employee Relations (Control)

Potential Session Topics:

- Updates to DHRM Policy and Practical Application Across Agency Environments
 - Navigating Collective Bargaining: What HR Needs to Know
 - Employee Relations Case Management: Documentation, Discipline, and Defensibility
 - Conducting Workplace Investigations with Fairness and Consistency
 - EEO Compliance: Accountability, Consultation Strategies, and Case Examples
 - Common Policy Misinterpretations and How to Avoid Them
 - Managing the Intersection of State Policy and Institutional Practice in Higher Education
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2 – Compensation, Benefits, & Payroll (Control)

Potential Session Topics:

- Compensation and Classification: Ensuring Equity and Organizational Structure
 - Leveraging Commonwealth for Workforce Wellbeing
 - Payroll Accuracy and Compliance: Avoiding Costly Errors
 - Workers' Compensation Essentials: Managing Claims and Reducing Risk
 - Return-to-Work Programs: Strategies for Successful Reintegration
 - Building Audit Readiness and Maintaining Documentation Standards
 - Preparing Employees for Retirement
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3 – Talent Acquisition & Workforce Development (Control + Alt)

Potential Session Topics:

- Competing for Talent: How Government Can Win Against the Private Sector
 - Employer Branding and Recruitment Marketing for Public Sector Organizations
 - Skills-Based Hiring: Moving Beyond the Traditional Job Description
 - Simplifying and Modernizing Hiring Processes to Reduce Time-to-Fill
 - Recruiting Metrics: How to Tell the Talent Story to Leadership
 - Hiring Veterans and Military Spouses: Strategies and Best Practices
 - Building Leadership Pipelines Through Learning Strategy and Succession Planning
 - Leveraging the Commonwealth Mentorship Program (CMP) as a Retention and Development Tool
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4 – HR Technology & Systems (Alt)

Potential Sessions for HR Professionals:

- PageUp Best Practices: Maximizing Your Recruiting and Applicant Tracking Workflows
 - Cardinal HR System: Tips and Best Practices for Agency Operations
 - Using HR Data and Workforce Analytics to Drive Strategic Decisions
 - AI in HR: Practical Applications for Recruiting, Onboarding, and Service Delivery
 - Streamlining HR Workflows Through Automation and System Integration
 - Using Technology to Enhance the Employee Experience Across the Full Employment Lifecycle
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5 – Innovation, Flexibility, & Employee Experience (Alt)

Potential Sessions for HR Professionals:

- Designing Hybrid and Remote Work Models That Balance Flexibility with Accountability
 - Implementing Alternative Work Schedules Within State Government Frameworks
 - Building an Employee Experience Strategy That Drives Retention and Engagement
 - Cross-Agency Collaboration Models That Break Down Organizational Silos
 - Modernizing Workplace Culture to Compete for Top Talent
 - Mental Health and Resilience Strategies in Times of Organizational Change
 - Communicating Change: Creating a Compelling Message That Moves People
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6 – Transformation, Simplification, & Organizational Design (Delete)

Potential Sessions for HR Professionals:

- What to Stop Doing in HR: Identifying and Eliminating Low-Value Work
 - Redesigning HR Service Delivery Models for Greater Efficiency and Impact
 - Performance Management Reboot: Making the System Work in Real Practice
 - Change Management for HR Leaders: Driving Adoption at Scale
 - Future Workforce Planning: Addressing Skill Gaps, Demographic Shifts, and Evolving Roles
 - Organizational Design Principles to Support Workforce Restructuring and Realignment
 - Streamlining Hiring and Reducing Administrative Burden in Decentralized Environments
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7 – Other

Proposal Submission Guidelines for Keynote/General Session Speakers

- **Who Should Apply:** HR Professionals, Business Leaders, Consultants, Motivational Speakers, etc.
- **Title:** Provide a clear and compelling session title.
- **Summary:** Submit a 150-250 word abstract outlining key content and objectives. Highlight the relevance to strategic decision-making and HR processes. Include a track selection (Control, Alt, or Delete) if applicable, and target audience (Agency, Higher Ed, or both) if applicable.
- **Speaker(s):** Include name, title, resume, brief bio.
- **Learning Outcomes:** Detail 3-5 specific takeaways for attendees.
- **Session Length:** Sessions should be approximately 75-90 minutes long. The session length includes introductions and Q&A.
- **Session Format:** Indicate your preferred format (e.g., workshop, panel discussion, case study presentation, interactive session). Provide a sample of material that will be presented. Standard PowerPoint template to be used, unless approval is granted for another format.

Proposal Submission Guidelines for Concurrent Session Presenters

- **Title:** Provide a clear and compelling session title.
- **Summary:** Submit a 150-250 word abstract outlining key content and objectives. Highlight the relevance to strategic decision-making and HR processes. Include a track selection (Control, Alt, or Delete) and target audience (Agency, Higher Ed, or Both).
- **Presenter(s):** Include names, titles, resumes, and brief bios of all speakers.

- **Learning Outcomes:** Detail 3-5 specific takeaways for attendees.
- **Session Length:** Sessions should be approximately 60-75 minutes long. The session length includes introductions and Q&A.
- **Session Format:** Indicate your preferred format (e.g., workshop, panel discussion, case study presentation, interactive session). Standard PowerPoint template to be used, unless approval is granted for another format.

Helpful Tips for Proposals:

- Provide case studies, real-world scenarios, and practical solutions.
- Offer hands-on workshops with actionable tools and techniques.
- Highlight success stories and best practices to inspire new approaches.
- Sessions must be educational and non-commercial.
- Joint proposals across agencies or institutions are encouraged
- Content should be applicable to public sector HR environments

Submission Deadline: All proposals must be submitted by **Friday, May 29, 2026**.

Submission Instructions: Submit your proposals via email to hrevents@dhrm.virginia.gov with a subject line **“DHRM Conference 2026 – Proposal Name (Track Selection and Keynote, General, or Concurrent Session)”**. Please note in the subject line of your email if the proposal is for a Keynote, General, or Concurrent Session. For questions or additional information, contact the Virginia Department of Human Resource Management team at hrevents@dhrm.virginia.gov.

Proposals will be evaluated based on (not exclusively):

- Alignment with conference theme and track
- Relevance to public sector HR
- Practical application and usability
- Clarity and strength of learning objectives
- Presenter expertise and perspective
- Level of audience engagement and interactivity

Decisions will be made by Wednesday, June 10, 2026.

Selected proposals may require a signed Speaker Agreement, including final presentation deadlines.

We look forward to your contributions and to shaping the future of HR together!