

At the end of the nineteenth century as Maryland professed a shortage of labor, the State aggressively sought a new work force. In 1896, the Bureau of Immigration was formed to attract European immigrants (Chapter 295, Acts of 1896). The State Superintendent of Immigration was authorized to go to other states and Canada, and to visit Europe each year and “remain at least four months in the prosecution of his work visiting the different countries.” The Bureau secretary was to be conversant in German, Dutch, and French (Chapter 282, Acts of 1898). The office in Baltimore City was to keep well supplied “for ready reference” with maps, pamphlets and other statistics on geography, agriculture, shipping, marketing, and the social, educational and other conditions of each county, as well as the quantities and character of land for sale and its price. Though the Bureau of Immigration was abolished in 1916, by the 1920s the Southern Maryland Immigration Commission continued to seek immigrants for work in Calvert, Charles, Prince George’s and St. Mary’s counties (Chapter 496, Acts of 1922).

*State Board of Labor and Statistics.* The Bureau of Industrial Statistics was reorganized in 1916 as the State Board of Labor and Statistics. In addition to information gathering and employment agency duties, the Board was empowered to mediate labor disputes and enforce laws concerning hours of work and employment of women and minors.

*Department of Employment Security.* A special legislative session in December 1936 enacted Maryland’s unemployment compensation law. In compliance with federal law, it provided for free public re-employment offices. The Unemployment Compensation Board administered the laws with federal funds until 1937, when the Department of Employment Security was created with a Division of Employment Service and a Division of Unemployment Compensation.

Meanwhile, the State Board of Labor and Statistics was reconstituted as the Department of Labor and Industry in 1945, with its information gathering and employment agency functions intact. Its focus, however, gradually shifted towards regulating labor conditions, including issuance of work certificates to minors.

*Department of Employment and Social Services.* The move to improve administration of State government by grouping agencies with related functions under cabinet-level executive departments produced in 1970 the Department of Employment and Social Services.

*Department of Human Resources.* In 1975, the Department of Employment and Social Services became the Department of Human Resources. Later, the Employment Security Administration (direct descendant of the Unemployment Compensation Board of 1936) was abolished and its responsibilities transferred from the Department of Human Resources to a new department.

*Department of Employment and Training.* The Department of Employment and Training was organized in 1983 (Chapter 64, Acts of 1983). Four years later, it was abolished. Nonetheless, its functions shifted to the Division of Employment and Training which formed within the Department of Economic and Employment Development in 1987. The Division joined the Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation in 1995.

*Licensing and Regulatory Boards.* The oldest of the Department’s agencies date to the nineteenth century: the Bureau of Statistics and Information (1884); and the State Board of Examining Engineers (1892). More boards were established in the twentieth century: the Board of Examiners of Public Accountants (1900); the Board of Barber Examiners (1904); the State Board of Commissioners of Practical Plumbing (1910); the Maryland State Board of Censors (1916); the State Athletic Commission and Maryland Racing Commission (1920); the Board of Examiners and Registration of Architects, and the Board of Hairdressers and Beauty Culturists (1935); the State Board of Registration for Professional Engineers, and the Real Estate Commission of Maryland (1939); and the Maryland Home Improvement Commission (1962).

Some early regulatory agencies became obsolete. Functions, for example, of the Examiners of Horseshoers, formed in 1898, and the Board of Examining Moving Picture Machine Operators, established in 1910, were discontinued. Enduring agencies operated as separate entities.

*Central License Office.* The first effort to bring together licensing and regulatory boards came in 1951, when the Central License Office was authorized to house five boards (Chapter 280, Acts of 1951). The Office provided office space and clerical services to the Board of Barber Examiners; the Board of Examining Engineers; the Board of Examiners of Motion Picture Machine Operators; the Board of Electrical Examiners and Supervisors; and the State Board of Commissioners of Practical Plumbing. Boards that licensed and regulated health care and environmental professionals were placed under the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene when that department was organized in 1969. A year later, the Central License Office was abolished.

*Department of Licensing and Regulation.* In 1970, the Department of Licensing and Regulation was formed to consolidate over thirty State agencies and boards responsible for licensing and regulating businesses, professions, and trades (Chapter 402, Acts of 1970). As new boards were created, they were placed under Department supervision: the Maryland Board of Examiners of Landscape Architects (1971);