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## Procedure Regarding Acceptance of High School Diplomas

It is standard West Virginia Division of Personnel (DOP) policy to only accept high school diplomas that are accepted by the West Virginia Department of Education. However, given the current recruitment difficulties encountered by agencies, the DOP will follow the below procedure when evaluating high school diplomas:

### Background Facts:

1. In West Virginia, students may attend public school, private school, or be home schooled.
2. In West Virginia, private schools and home schools are acceptable based on agreements with the COUNTY Board of Education. There is no statewide accreditation of these. Additionally, counties in West Virginia award diplomas.
3. West Virginia currently offers one accredited online high school program (WV Virtual School) with 3 counties offering individual online pilot programs (Greenbrier, Mingo, and Kanawha) with more expected in the next few years.
4. Online high schools across the nation have blossomed in popularity in recent years.
5. Some states do not accredit or endorse private or online schools (i.e. Florida), making research into those schools' credibility as an education institution challenging.
6. Many parents use an online high school as part of their children's home schooling program. As home schools are treated as equivalent to traditional schools in West Virginia, the DOP should make every effort to ensure equal treatment to all groups of applicants.

### Purpose:

The purpose of this procedure is to create a process by which accredited online high school diplomas may be verified and accepted for covered State of West Virginia employment vacancies.

### Procedure:

1. The DOP will continue to accept any diploma from a high school where the student attended a brick and mortar building. This could be a public school, religious school, or private school.
2. The DOP will continue to accept any applicant who claims he/she received a diploma as part of a homeschooling program.
3. The DOP will accept any online high school diploma that is accredited by its home state/county's Department of Education.
4. The DOP will accept any online high school diploma that is accredited by a regional or national accrediting body recognized by the US Department of Education.
5. The DOP will accept any online high school diploma that has a Better Business Bureau rating of A or A+.
6. The DOP will continue to accept any candidate who has been admitted to a post high school education program (vocational school or college).
7. The DOP will research online high schools and maintain lists of acceptable and ineligible online high schools. This list will be updated as new information is researched.
8. The DOP will modify its job announcements with information about diploma mills, FTC lawsuits, and will post the lists of acceptable and ineligible online high schools. This will be done A) to fully inform applicants of DOP standards and minimum qualifications and B) as a public service to those who have been harmed by "diploma mills."
9. The DOP will add additional Supplemental Questions to the online application to gather information to aid in the evaluation of an online high school's acceptability.