

MEMORANDUM

DATE	May 9, 2025
TO	Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology and Hearing Aid Dispensers Board
FROM	Cherise Burns, Executive Officer
SUBJECT	Agenda Item 6: Executive Officer's Report

This report and the statistical information provided by staff is to update you on the current operations of the Board.

a) Administration Update

The Board selected Cherise Burns (me) to fill the Executive Officer position at their February 21, 2025 Board Meeting.

The Assistant Executive Officer position will remain vacant until the next Fiscal Year due to higher-than-expected enforcement costs this fiscal year.

b) Outreach Update

Since the Board's February meeting, Cherise Burns has had conference calls with representatives from the California Speech Language Hearing Association (CSHA) and California Academy of Audiology, at their request, to discuss issues affecting speech-language pathologists and audiologists in California.

In March, Gilda Dominguez, Board Chair, and myself spoke at the CSHA Convergence Conference to provide updates on the Board's Laws and Regulations related to requirements for continuing professional development and supervision of speech-language pathology assistants. Attendance was remote or at no cost to the State. This presentation was extremely well attended, and the Board Chair and I received feedback that licensees found the information on the regulatory process and continuing professional development requirements very informative. During the "Question and Answer" section of the presentation, the Board got two questions, one related to Required Professional Experience (RPE) temporary license holders having documents countersigned by their supervisors and the other related to a delay in a professional development provider application.

In relation to countersigning documents, Title 16 California Code of Regulations Section 1399.153.3 (f) requires the RPE supervisor to review and countersign “all evaluation and assessment reports, treatment plans, progress and discharge reports drafted by the RPE temporary license holder.” These regulations predate electronic signatures of documents; however, the concept is still the same, supervisors should work with their employers to ensure that they are able to review and countersign all required documents during the course of their supervision and keep a copy within their RPE’s supervision folder along with the other written documentation of RPE evaluations and performance reviews.

In relation to the question about a delay in a professional development provider application, the Board found that the delay was caused when the applicant failed to respond with the correct documentation requested by the Board, which was not included in the original application submission. We are sharing this generic information to highlight the importance of closely and thoroughly reading the application questions, uploading all requested documentation during the original application submission process, as well as how crucial it is for the applicant to promptly respond and upload/send the correct documentation when found deficient and specific additional documentation is requested by the Board. The Board’s online licensing system is built to collect all necessary documentation for applications, excluding an applicant uploading official transcripts as the Board must primary source verify the official transcript. When applicants ensure that they submit all requested documentation in a timely fashion, their application can be expected to be processed within one to two weeks, and even if deficient within three to four weeks if they respond promptly with the requested documentation.

c) Budget Report

The Board continues to actively reduce expenditures and closely monitor spending to achieve savings mandated by the Governor and Department of Finance through Budget Letters 24-20 (Vacancy Reduction) and 24-24 (7.95% Budget Efficiency Reduction) in this fiscal year and ongoing. These reductions impact Board operations, travel, and result in holding half of future meetings remotely. Since the Board had no funded vacant positions to eliminate, the Board has to pay its share of the DCA reduction, or \$29,000. Board management is implementing our plan to comply with additional budget reduction requirements that would achieve savings while minimizing the impact on Board operations. Part of this reduction plan includes moving licensee renewal notices to postcard reminders instead of the very expensive renewal notice and coupon mailed out to licensees that require printing and postage costs. Currently, over 73 percent of licensees renew online, with an additional 7.7 percent that renew manually using a form downloaded from the Board’s website, resulting in 80.7 percent of the renewal notices and coupons mailed each year not being utilized. The Board estimates that it could save over \$7,000 next year, and even more savings in the coming years by moving to renewal postcard reminders due to the reduction in printing and postage costs, as well as achieving a reduction in paper and materials costs. This will be implemented in the next few months, with an expected rollout of postcard renewal reminders for Fall 2025.

Due to higher-than-average number of enforcement cases being adjudicated and heard in this fiscal year, and the upcoming cases that will be adjudicated and heard by the end of the fiscal year, the Board will over expend or expend all of these line items. As a result, the Board has requested an augmentation for the Office of Attorney General expenditures to cover this. We are monitoring these caseloads and ensuring that our most critical cases continue to be adjudicated in order to protect California consumers. The DCA Budget Office and Board staff are working together closely to ensure the Board has adequate funding to continue upholding consumer protection as well as fund Board operations.

Included in your Board meeting materials is the Budget Report (Item 6c) that reflects operating expenditures through the fiscal month 9 (March 2025) of the 2024-25 budget year. Due to the factors explained above, the report shows a reversion of approximately \$6,613, which is a surplus of 0.19 percent of the Board's budget.

Also included in your materials is a Fund Condition Report (Item 6e) prepared May 5, 2025. This report is a snapshot of the Board's fund condition and shows the Board's revenue and budget allocation for the current 2024-25 budget year plus three future years. Despite conservative revenue projections, the Board's fund condition outlook is very healthy for the next three years.

d) Regulations Report

Below is a table with the Board's pending rulemaking files that are either going through the DCA Initial Review Process or already in the Official Rulemaking Process with the Office of Administrative Law. The Board is making great strides in completing rulemaking files with the help of each Board member, staff, and DCA Legal.

Rulemaking File	Final OAL Filing Date	Status	Comments
SLP-AU CPD Requirements	10/5/2024	9/6/2024 – Approved and filed with the Secretary of State by the OAL 7/26/2024 – Submitted to OAL 7/9/2024 – Submitted for Agency review 7/5/2024 – Submitted for DCA review 7/2/2024 – Submitted for Budget review 7/1/2024 – Submitted for Legal review 6/12/2024 – Board approved modified text 5/14/2024 – 15-day comment period 3/8/2024 – 15-day comment period 3/1/2024 – Board approved modified text 12/8/2023 – 15-day comment period 12/1/2023 – Board approved modified text 10/6/2023 – Initial 45-day comment period 7/25/2023 – Submitted for Agency review 7/12/2023 – Submitted for DCA review 5/11/2023 – Submitted for Budget review 5/5/2023 – Submitted for Legal review 4/27/2023 – Board approved language	Effective on January 1, 2025
HAD Advertising Requirements	11/16/2024	12/30/2024 – Approved and filed with the Secretary of State by the OAL 11/12/2024 – Submitted to OAL 11/1/2024 – Board approved modified text 10/16/2024 – 15-day comment period 10/8/2024 – Withdrawn from OAL 8/28/2024 – Submitted to OAL 7/25/2024 – Submitted for Agency review 7/22/2024 – Submitted for DCA review 7/19/2024 – Submitted for Budget review 7/17/2024 – Submitted for Legal review 6/12/2024 – Board approved modified text 3/8/2024 – 15-day comment period 3/1/2024 – Board approved modified text 3/1/2024 – Public hearing pursuant to Government Code section 11346.8 11/17/2023 – Initial 45-day comment period 9/21/2023 – Submitted for Agency review 8/15/2023 – Submitted for DCA review 6/20/2023 – Submitted for Budget review 5/19/2023 – Submitted for Legal review 4/27/2023 – Board approved language	Effective on April 1, 2025

Rulemaking File	Final OAL Filing Date	Status	Comments
Processing Times	3/13/2026	3/14/2025 – Initial 45-day comment period 2/26/2025 – Submitted to OAL 1/29/2025 – Submitted for Agency review 1/27/2025 – Submitted for DCA Director review 12/18/2025 – Submitted for DCA Legal and Budget review 9/6/2024 – Board approved revised language 12/1/2023 – Board approved revised language 10/8/2021 – Board approved language	Comment period ended on April 29, 2025
Audiology Supervised Clinical Experience	5/1/2026	5/2/2025 – Initial 45-day comment period 4/22/2025 – Submitted to OAL 3/13/2025 – Submitted for Agency review 3/5/2025 – Submitted for DCA Director review 1/8/2025 – Submitted for DCA Legal and Budget review 12/6/2024 – Board approved revised language 12/1/2023 – Board approved language	Comment period ends on June 17, 2025

e) Licensing Report

Licensing cycle times continue to be dramatically better than previous years, with an overall reduction of 69 percent compared to 2020, 2021, and 2022. We evaluate the online licensing program and application processes on an ongoing basis.

Average Processing Times in Weeks (Complete Applications)												
Year	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
2020	4	3	4	3	3	3	5	7	6	4	3	5
2021	5	5	6	4	5	6	6	8	9	8	9	7
2022	4	5	4	3	3	3	4	5	7	7	7	10
2023	11	11	11	13	13	12	11	12	11	10	10	8
2024	5	3	2	1	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1
2025	2	1	1	1	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
Average Reduction	61%	75%	74%	68%	48%	46%	59%	68%	86%	82%	80%	86%

Licensing Cycle Times – The chart below provides a snapshot of the Board’s current and past licensing processing times.

Licensing Cycle Times	3/1/24	6/11/24	8/23/24	11/22/24	2/5/25	5/5/25
Speech-Language Pathologists (SLP) and Audiologists (AUD) Complete Licensing Applications	3 weeks	2 weeks	2 weeks	1 week	1 week	1 week
Review and Process SLP and AUD Supporting Licensing Documents	1 week	1 week	2 weeks	1 week	1 week	1 week
Review and Process RPE Applicant's Verification of Experience Forms for Full Licensure	3 weeks	1 week	2 weeks	1 week	1 week	1 week
Hearing Aid Dispensers (HAD) Complete Applications	9 weeks	2 weeks	2 weeks	1 week	1 week	1 week

f) Practical Examination Report

The previous practical exams were held on January 31, 2025, and February 1, 2025 and April 4-5, 2025. The exam results are noted below.

The next practical exam will be held on June 13 – 14, 2025 the filing period ended on May 8, 2025. Additional future practical exams are posted on the website at https://www.speechandhearing.ca.gov/applicants/exam_dates.shtml

HAD Practical Examination Results for January 31 and February 1, 2025					
Candidate Type	Number of Candidates	Passed	%	Failed	%
Applicants with Supervision (Temporary Trainee License)					
Hearing Aid Dispensers	29	23		6	
Audiologists	3	3			
Required Professional Experience	5	2		3	
Aide					
Applicants Licensed in Another State (Temporary License)					
Hearing Aid Dispenser	2	2			
Audiologist					
Applicants without Supervision					
Hearing Aid Dispensers	5	3		2	
Audiologists	9	6		3	
Total Number of Candidates	53	39	74%	14	26%

HAD Practical Examination Results for April 4 – 5, 2025					
Candidate Type	Number of Candidates	Passed	%	Failed	%
Applicants with Supervision (Temporary Trainee License)					
Hearing Aid Dispensers	31	25		6	
Audiologists	3	3			
Required Professional Experience	5	4		1	
Aide					
Applicants Licensed in Another State (Temporary License)					
Hearing Aid Dispenser	2	2			
Audiologist					
Applicants without Supervision					
Hearing Aid Dispensers	3	1		2	
Audiologists	6	5		1	
Total Number of Candidates	50	40	80%	10	20%

g) Enforcement Report

The Board has received 217 complaints and subsequent arrest notifications through the end of the third quarter of the 2024-2025 reporting year. During this same period, the Board has issued 13 citations and fines (including CE/CPD related citations and fines issued through March 31, 2025).

There are currently 11 formal discipline cases pending with the Attorney General's Office. The Board is currently monitoring 14 probationers of which six (6) probationers require drug or alcohol testing and three (3) are in a tolled status.

The following disciplinary actions have been adopted by the Board during the past 12 months (this list includes actions taken while a licensee was on probation):

Name	License No.	License Type	Case No.	Effective Date	Action Taken
Lenhares, Susannah Corwin	SP 12116	Speech-Language Pathologist	1I-2019-194	March 29, 2025	Revocation of License
Hamburger, Howard	AU 2092	Audiologist	1I-2014-029	March 17, 2025	Voluntary Surrender of License
Berger, Claire	SP 25040	Speech-Language Pathologist	1I-2023-084	February 28, 2025	Revocation Stayed, Three Years Probation with Specified Terms and Conditions
Godinez, Andres	AU 2267	Audiologist	1I-2015-077	January 5, 2025	Probation extended 2.5 Years with Specified Terms and Conditions
Williams, Jacob Tanner	HA 8116	Hearing Aid Dispenser	1C-2021-011	December 15, 2024	Revocation Stayed, Three Years Probation with Specified Terms and Conditions
Malek, Natalia Chojnacka	SP 22694	Speech-Language Pathologist	1I-2019-175	October 21, 2024	Revocation of License
Moreland, Michele Kathleen	HA 7507	Hearing Aid Dispenser	1C-2012-040	August 7, 2024	Revocation of License

CE/CPD Audits

In December 2024, the Board completed its first continuing education audit since 2018. The first audit was a 5 percent random selection of Speech-Language Pathologists, Speech-Language Pathology Assistants, Audiologists, and Hearing Aid Dispensers who renewed in January of 2024.

The results for the January through March 2024 audits are provided in the table below. On May 6, 2025 Board staff started the next audit of 5 percent of licensees that renewed in April through June of 2024, which resulted in 129 licensees being selected for audit.

CE/CPD Audit Results									
Audit Period	Number Audited	Passed	%	Failed	%	Exemption Granted	%	Citation Issued	%
January 2024	38	23	61%	9	24%	5	18%	8	21%
February 2024	40	22	55%	10	25%	6	15%	5	13%
March 2024	43	20	48%	15	35%	6	14%	8	19%

Speech-Language Pathology & Audiology & Hearing Aid Dispensers Board

LICENSES ISSUED	FY 17/18	FY 18/19	FY 19/20	FY 20/21	FY 21/22	FY 22/23	FY 23/24	FY 24/25
								QTR 3
AIDE	33	32	44	22	44	52	60	38
AU	77	63	63	71	79	51	89	60
DAU	30	35	31	23	28	26	33	26
AUT	2	4	3	1	4	1	0	1
PDP	20	15	5	13	14	10	29	14
RPE	945	977	1,059	1,039	1,177	1,095	1,469	1,001
SLP	1,482	1,446	1,444	1,621	1,782	1,664	2,129	1,660
SPT	0	0	0	0	1	1	4	1
SLPA	558	602	615	505	649	640	914	575
HAD	137	135	95	55	108	83	145	107
HAD Trainee	169	156	116	93	124	142	173	118
HAD Licensed in Another State	20	17	12	11	22	7	13	8
HAD Branch	341	333	312	249	263	162	256	192
TSA (Military Temporary)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2	0
TSP (Military Temporary)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	6	0
TOTAL LICENSES ISSUED	3,781	3,783	3,755	3,681	4,251	3,934	5,322	3,801

LICENSEE POPULATION	FY 17/18	FY 18/19	FY 19/20	FY 20/21	FY 21/22	FY 22/23	FY 23/24	FY 24/25
								QTR 3
AIDE	216	245	273	290	306	310	344	294
AU	720	831	837	830	869	840	869	884
DAU	1,246	1,334	1,384	1,375	1,416	1,453	1,487	1,507
<i>Both License Types</i>	<i>1,966</i>	<i>2,165</i>	<i>2,221</i>	<i>2,205</i>	<i>2,285</i>	<i>2,293</i>	<i>2,356</i>	<i>2,391</i>
AUT	2	4	7	8	8	7	7	8
PDP	177	178	165	160	152	141	160	164
RPE	1,232	1,364	1,595	1,626	1,740	1,871	2,304	1,714
SLP	19,161	21,374	22,527	23,309	24,894	25,929	27,403	28,662
SPT	0	0	0	0	1	1	5	3
SLPA	4,118	4,822	5,297	5,538	5,962	6,260	6,825	7,136
HAD	1,266	1,380	1,407	1,398	1,439	1,399	1,429	1,480
HAD Trainees	204	214	237	243	267	297	314	209
HAD Licensed in Another State	28	31	42	47	66	59	66	74
HAD Branch Office	1,297	1,347	1,401	1,411	1,429	1,267	1,297	1,260
TSA (Military Temporary)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2	0
TSP (Military Temporary)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	4	0
TOTAL LICENSEES	29,451	32,879	34,899	35,945	38,243	39,834	42,516	43,395

* Data as of May 9, 2025

Legend:

AID = Speech-Language Pathology/Audiology Aide

AU = Audiologist

DAU = Dispensing Audiologist

AUT = Audiologist (6-month Temporary)

PDP = Continuing Education Provider

RPE = Required Professional Experience

SP = Speech-Language Pathologist

SPT = Speech-Language Pathologist (6-Month Temporary)

SPA = Speech-Language Pathology Assistant

HAD = Hearing Aid Dispenser

HTL = Hearing Aid Dispenser Temporary (1-year)

HT = Hearing Aid Dispenser Trainee

BR = Hearing Aid Dispenser Branch

TIA = Military Spouse/Domestic Partner 1- Year Temporary AID

TAU = Military Spouse/Domestic Partner 1- Year Temporary AU

TRP = Military Spouse/Domestic Partner 1- Year Temporary RPE

TSP = Military Spouse/Domestic Partner 1- Year Temporary SP

TSA = Military Spouse/Domestic Partner 1- Year Temporary SPA

THA = Military Spouse/Domestic Partner 1- Year Temporary HAD

THT = Military Spouse/Domestic Partner 1- Year Temporary HT

Speech-Language Pathology & Audiology & Hearing Aid Dispensers Board Enforcement Report

COMPLAINTS AND CONVICTIONS	FY 2019-20	FY 2020-21	FY 2021-22	FY 2022-23	FY 2023-24	FY 2024-25 Q3
Complaints Received	164	91	79	89	80	159
Convictions Received	103	45	48	60	67	58
Average Days to Intake	1	5	7	4	5	5
Closed	17	2	0	0	0	0
Pending	1	6	0	0	4	3

INVESTIGATIONS	Desk	FY 2019-20	FY 2020-21	FY 2021-22	FY 2022-23	FY 2023-24	FY 2024-25 Q3
Assigned		260	131	131	151	148	218
Closed		189	193	178	143	113	138
Average Days to Complete		222	380	598	289	185	189
Pending		260	198	132	130	149	223

INVESTIGATIONS	DOI	FY 2019-20	FY 2020-21	FY 2021-22	FY 2022-23	FY 2023-24	FY 2024-25 Q3
Assigned		9	0	1	0	8	6
Closed		10	8	6	1	8	3
Average Days to Complete		770	839	1,409	150	207	191
Pending		19	11	2	1	6	9

ALL TYPES OF INVESTIGATIONS	FY 2019-20	FY 2020-21	FY 2021-22	FY 2022-23	FY 2023-24	FY 2024-25 Q3
Closed w/o Discipline Referral	181	187	178	140	104	132
Cycle Time - No Discipline	251	368	491	285	147	177

CITATIONS/CEASE & DESIST	FY 2019-20	FY 2020-21	FY 2021-22	FY 2022-23	FY 2023-24	FY 2024-25 Q3
Citations Issued	11	6	7	6	4	13
Avg Days to Citation & Fine	336	429	1,138	439	211	213
Cease & Desist Letters Issued	0	2	0	1	0	0

ATTORNEY GENERAL CASES	FY 2019-20	FY 2020-21	FY 2021-22	FY 2022-23	FY 2023-24	FY 2024-25 Q3
Pending at the AG	23	21	10	3	10	11
Accusations Filed	8	8	5	1	4	2
Statement of Issue (SOI) Filed	1	2	0	0	0	0
Accusation Withdrawn, Dismissed, Declined	1	0	1	3	0	0
SOI Withdrawn, Dismissed, Declined	1	0	0	0	0	0
Average Days to Discipline	824	2,245	1,362	1,221	405	1300

Speech-Language Pathology & Audiology & Hearing Aid Dispensers Board Enforcement Report

ATTORNEY GENERAL FINAL OUTCOMES	FY 2019-20	FY 2020-21	FY 2021-22	FY 2022-23	FY 2023-24	FY 2024-25 Q3
Probation Only	5	1	1	4	2	3
Surrender of License	3	3	2	0	0	1
License Denied (SOI)	1	0	1	0	0	0
Suspension & Probation	0	0	2	0	0	0
Revocation-No Stay of Order	3	2	4	1	0	3
Public Reprimand/Reproval	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Disciplinary Actions Taken	12	6	10	5	2	7

Note: All data provided prior to FY 2022-23 uses complaint open date as the start to any "Days to" data provided in this report.