



ISSUE MEMORANDUM

DATE	February 16, 2024
TO	Board Members, California State Board of Optometry (CSBO)
FROM	Gregory Pruden, Executive Officer
SUBJECT	Agenda Item #7A– Executive Officer’s Report – Program Update

1. Staffing Update:

- The Board’s Policy Analyst, who began in October 2022, accepted a position with another state agency. Their last day was November 24, 2023. The Board advertised the position twice to establish a pool of candidates and is evaluating applications received.
- CSBO Employee DCA Superior Accomplishment Award Winner: Kathleen Gregorio
- A copy of the current organizational chart is included at the end of this memo.

2. Board Items:

On January 19, 2024, Governor Newsom appointed Alex Clemens to the Board. We welcome Member Clemens to his first meeting. A biography of Member Clemens can be found on the [Board's website](#).

Governor’s 2024-25 Budget Proposal and Budget Letter 23-27

On January 10, 2024, the Governor [released](#) the proposed budget for fiscal year 2024-25, projecting a deficit of \$37.9 billion. The budget release officially kicks off the fiscal year 2024-25 budget negotiations that will result in a revised budget proposal released by the Governor, in late spring, known as the May Revise. This process will conclude when the legislature adopts the official budget, which must occur by June 15 prior to the start of the new fiscal year, which begins on July 1, 2024.

Prior to the proposed budget being released, the Department of Finance released [Budget Letter 23-27](#), which directs all agencies and departments under the direct authority of the Governor to take immediate action to reduce current year expenditures. The Board will need to continue to maintain mission critical functions, and the Department of Consumer Affairs has provided an exemption request form and process to secure approval for mission critical-related purchases, contracts, travel, and other expenditure requests. The process is excerpted extensively below.

Accordingly, purchases, contracts, and travel that meet the following criteria will be considered exemptions to the Budget Letter and can be approved:

- Addressing a declared emergency.
- Avoiding a significant revenue loss.
- Achieving significant net cost savings.

Exemption requests require detailed information about the proposal including a justification explaining why the request is mission critical or essential to continue a business required function. All requests must include the consequence if the request is denied and provide details about the cost of the request, which budgetary line item(s) it impacts and the fund source.

The following items must have exemption requests submitted for approval:

Goods and Equipment

All requests for new supplies and equipment must be accompanied by an approved exemption request. This includes information technology and fleet requests. CSBO must provide information explaining why the purchase is essential and required to maintain business operations, and why the purchase cannot be deferred. According to the exemption process, non-essential requests, including equipment refreshes, copier or printer replacements, or new equipment purchases (e.g., cell phones), will not be approved and should not be submitted.

Contracts

All new contracts, or amendments to existing contracts if the changes would increase costs, or extensions of expiring contracts will require an exemption approval. CSBO must provide a detailed justification for why the contracted services are mandated, mission critical, and/or needed for the continuation of essential business functions. Requests without a detailed justification will be returned.

Travel

All travel, both in- and out-of-state must be for the conduct of official state business directly tied to mandated requirements and mission critical. CSBO may continue with in-state travel for mandated activities such as those related to enforcement or exam functions. Non-essential travel will not be approved; therefore, submissions should not be submitted to DCA for such travel, including participation in seminars, conferences, and training (both in-state and out-of-state) unless it meets the criteria in the Budget Letter 23-27. Mission critical travel requests require an approved exemption request. CSBO must provide justification explaining why the travel is mission critical and or essential to state business. Include additional information such as the agenda, whether the attendee is presenting information, who the audience is, why the state representation is critical, etc. Also, CSBO must include why virtual participation is not an option, and whether the venue has been contacted to discuss/request virtual options.

In addition, while CSBO had no approved out-of-state travel requests, all approved discretionary out-of-state travel blanket requests for trips with travel dates after the issuance of the Budget Letter 23-27 have been rescinded. All out-of-state trips must

now meet the requirements in the Budget Letter 23-27 and must be requested through the BL 23-27 exemption process as individual trip requests.

Please note: The BL 23-27 exemption process is required for all requests that were submitted but have not been approved prior to the release of the Budget Letter 23-27.

All approved purchases, exemptions, as well as achieved savings from denied requests, will be reported to DOF and the Governor's Office. Additional reporting instructions will be provided in a forthcoming Budget Letter.

Board staff will continue to engage with DCA and Budget Affairs as the budget process unfolds.

Eyeglass Donation Programs

At the December 8, 2023, board meeting, Member Klepa asked for information to come back to the board regarding eyeglass donation programs. Specifically, Member Klepa was interested in the Board helping foster efforts to increase access to these programs.

Board staff research found that there are several organizations operating in this space, engaged in collecting and disseminating donated eyeglasses. Board research has indicated the following organizations engaged in collecting and disseminating used eyeglasses:

- [Lions Clubs International – Lions in Sight](#)
- [Respectacle](#)
- [OneSight](#)
- [Eyes of Hope](#)
- [Goodwill](#)
- [Walmart](#)
- [Costco and Assist International](#)
- [Lens Crafters](#)
- [Salvation Army](#)
- [Volunteer Optometric Services to Humanity](#)

Some of these efforts are part of or associated with longstanding charitable organizations, such as Lions Clubs, Goodwill, and Salvation Army. For example, Lions In Sight, a project endorsed by Lions International, has operated eyeglass donation programs for decades in both California and Nevada. Their program works by partnering with locations to establish drop off boxes that collect used eyeglasses. The boxes are periodically checked and must be delivered to a Lions In Sight affiliated drop-off location or mailed to the Lions In Sight warehouse located in Vallejo, California. Lions In Sight publishes a list of more than 400 drop off locations, which can be accessed here: [Lions In Sight Drop Off Locations](#). More than 95

percent of the locations are in California and donation boxes may be found at diverse places, including a Sprouts Grocery store located in Encinitas, California, to more familiar optometric locations, such as the Southern California College of Optometry and at many licensed locations across the state such as optometric offices and dispensing locations.

Other donation programs are affiliated with companies also engaged in the commerce of optometric goods and services, such as Essilor Luxottica's OneSight and Vision Service Plan's Eyes of Hope. [According to its website](#), Eyes of Hope "provides access to no-cost eye care, eyewear, and disaster relief in places where it's needed most" providing more than 3.8 million people with vision care and more than 2.2 million glasses donated. OneSight, headquartered in France, is more global in their reach. Over the past decade, [their website states](#), they have "created permanent access to vision care for over 762 million people...equipping more than 71.8 million people in underserved regions with eyeglasses."

Next steps: staff is planning an article for publication in The Spectacle which provides information and resources about eyeglass donation programs in California, encouraging licensees and members of the public to participate in them.

3. Outreach and Committees:

- The Practice and Education Committee met on 2-12-2024 to consider applications for continuing education (CE) courses acceptable for continuing education credit. The Board will be updating its list of approved CE courses soon, which can be found here: [Board Approved CE Courses](#).
- The Executive Officer is attending the California Optometric Association House of Delegates on February 9-10, 2024.
- The Board's newsletter, The Spectacle, released its Winter 2024 edition on January 15. It was distributed via ListServ and social media. Board staff are working on the Spring 2024 edition, which is expected to be released in April.
- The California Law and Regulations Candidate Information Bulletin is being updated and is expected to be released in February 2024. Every candidate is provided this bulletin after receiving authorization to take the exam and the Board also publishes it on its website. The Board will also provide the revised document directly to the deans of California's three optometric colleges, the California Optometric Association, and will distribute it via ListServ and social media.
- 2024 Law and Regulations Book: In December 2023 the Board reported it was pursuing a contract to update the law and regulations book. The Board has been approved for a budget letter 23-27 exemption and is negotiating with vendors. We will provide further updates at future board meetings once a contract is in place.
- [The Board and Committee roster](#) have been updated.

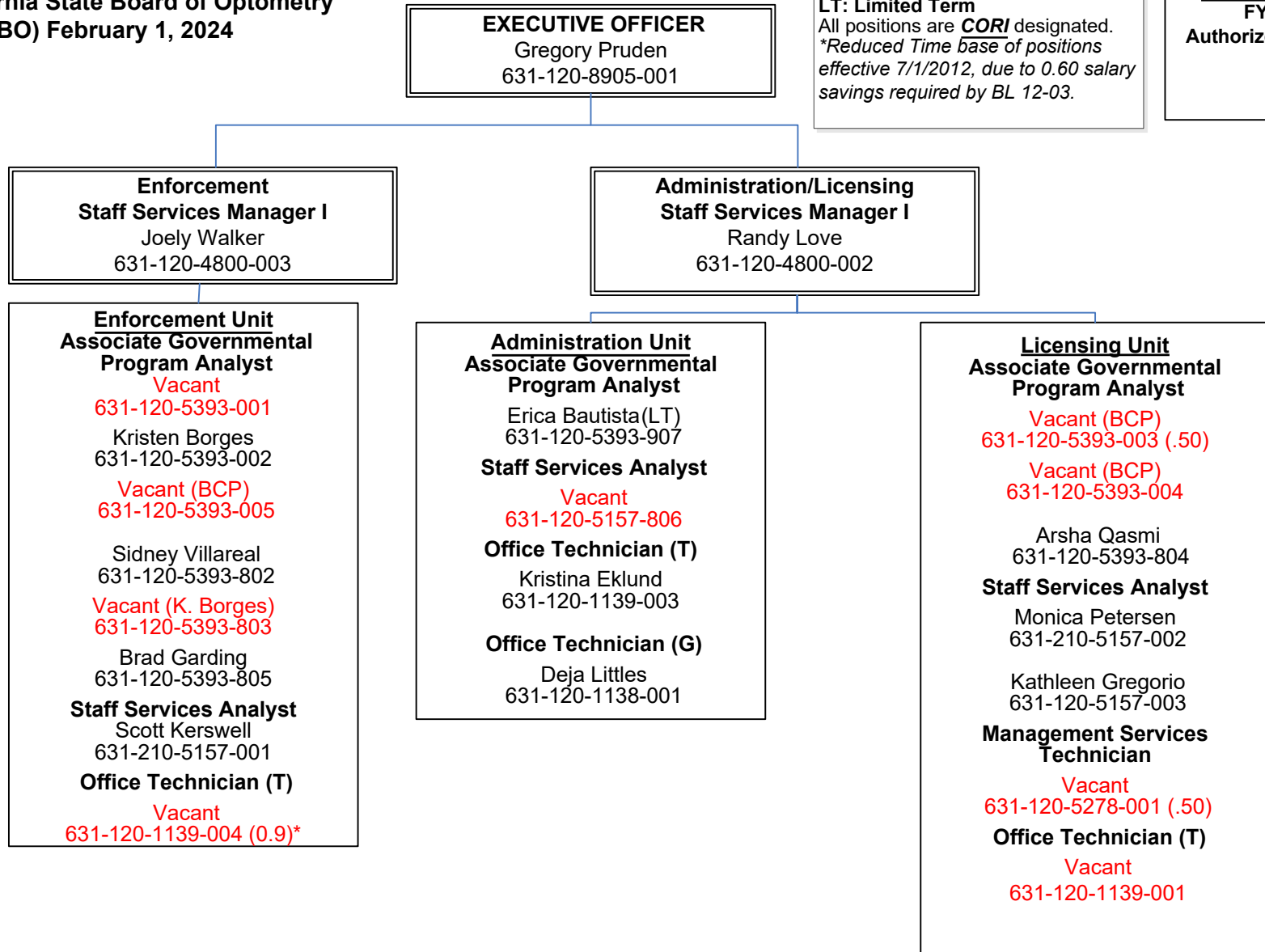
4. CSBO Org Chart, Dated February 1, 2024.

The CSBO Org Chart is attached below.

**DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS
(DCA) California State Board of Optometry
(CSBO) February 1, 2024**

LEGEND
Red: VACANT
LT: Limited Term
 All positions are **CORI** designated.
**Reduced Time base of positions effective 7/1/2012, due to 0.60 salary savings required by BL 12-03.*

**Current CSBO Staffing
 FY 2023/2024
 Authorized Positions: 19.9**



 Gregory Pruden, Executive Officer Date

 Classification and Recruitment Analyst Date