



ISSUE MEMORANDUM

DATE	December 8, 2023
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 recently filled the Receptionist position. On behalf of the Board, I would like to introduce and welcome Deja Littles.
- The Board also filled the Enforcement Analyst position that became open following a staff retirement. On behalf of the Board, I would like to introduce and welcome Sidney Villareal.
- New assigned Board counsel, Brennan Meier, is with us today for his first board meeting. He began with DCA in September 2023, and we are excited to build a lasting partnership with him.
- 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 has begun the recruitment for this position.
- A copy of the current organizational chart is included at the end of this memo.

2. Board Items:

At the March and May 2023 board meetings, I reported on the Board’s partnership with DCA’s Organizational Improvement Office (OIO). Today, we present a mid-project status report.

In February 2023, the Board began a year-long project to review and evaluate the Board’s business processes to identify opportunities for efficiency and best practices for the Board’s licensing, enforcement, and administrative units. OIO facilitated Business Process Mapping (BPM) workshops with Board staff to document their processes and to find and document efficiencies. BPM provides a standard language for modeling business processes in a form that is accessible by management and line staff. During the BPM stage, OIO employed three different mapping techniques: As-Is, Value Stream Analysis, and Could-Be mapping.

The As-Is stage is defined as the visualization of the ‘current state’ of interrelated work tasks initiated in response to an event that will achieve a specific result for an actor in a process. During the As-Is stage, OIO Business Analysts worked with Board SMEs in a series of workshops to map Board processes to determine volume,

roles, systems, tasks, and decisions. Additionally, during the workshops, the following were reviewed: associated activity codes, forms, and letters. At the end of this stage, Board management reviewed and approved the maps before moving onto the next stage of the BPM process.

Once the As-Is stage was complete, OIO conducted Value Stream Analysis (VSA). During this process, OIO engaged the staff in identifying three critical areas of efficiency: value added, business necessity, or non-value added. Any activity in the process that improves the product or service is value added. An activity required by law, regulation, and/or policy is considered a business necessity. An activity that does not contribute to the product or the process and should therefore be eliminated is considered non-value added. The VSA is an interactive process that involves both the SME and OIO staff and typically results in the discovery of operational improvements.

Once VSA was complete, OIO moved to the Could-Be stage. The Could-Be stage is defined as maps built upon existing As-Is maps that include proposed improved efficiencies, automation opportunities, and an envisioned future process. Using CSBO staff recommendations, OIO reviewed the As-Is and VSA maps to propose changes and develop recommendations.

Once these activities were completed, the OIO team, after collaborating with Board staff, analyzed the process maps, recommendations from managers and staff, and interview notes to create recommendations that would help improve the Board's operations.

The OIO Team Licensing and Administration Report makes the following recommendations. Status of the recommendations is also noted.

1. Move the Application and Payment Process onto BreEZe

At the beginning of this project, the Board still used several paper applications and check payments which helped contribute to slower processing time and error. Moving these processes online would improve the application and licensing process for staff and applicants and licensees. The report notes the following processes would benefit:

- Upgrade License – Immunization – **now on BreEZe.**
- Upgrade License – Glaucoma – **now on BreEZe.**
- Letter of Verification – **now on BreEZe.**
- Exam Request, Results, Scheduling – **A BreEZe change is being explored.**
- Redo Law exam – **A BreEZe change is being explored.**
- Set to Active – **on BreEZe via renewal application.**
- Set to Inactive – **on BreEZe via renewal application.**
- Set to Cancel – **Only Board staff can perform.**

2. BreEZe Efficiency Changes

- The report notes that Board applicants and licensees are not required to have a registered email on file. This means that most correspondence is done through regular mail, which adds to processing timelines. Requiring applicants to supply an email would require a change in law but would greatly increase communication between the applicant and Board.
- When an application is deficient, BreEZe can populate a deficiency letter to mail out. However, the letter is not prepopulated so it can be viewed and edited. It must be downloaded and manually edited each time.
- Letters and instructions for applicants should be reviewed and revised, if necessary, to ensure that accurate information is presented.

3. User Acceptance Testing and SME Best Practices: Create Standardized Procedure Manuals and Job Aids

- To promote consistency across the Board, a formal procedure manual should be created. The lack of a written procedure manual has introduced variation in work outputs specifically related to BreEZe activities.
- Using the As-Is and Could-Be Process Maps and Narrative Description of Business Process created with OIO, and in conjunction with the rules and regulations of the Board, create standardized job-aids and a detailed procedure manual for use in training and onboarding new staff and as a reference tool for existing staff members.
- Document existing processes and procedures and continually update documents with workflow and/or policy changes. A Board staff person should be designated a procedure owner who is responsible for updating the written procedures as appropriate.
- CSBO management should review the procedural documents with the procedure owners once a year to ensure they stay up to date with current processes.

As noted, many of these recommendations are already in place or in progress. As the OIO Team continues mapping Board-enforcement processes, staff will continue bringing these updates and recommendations to the full Board.

The Mini Report is attached below.

3. **Outreach and Committees:**

- **Consumer Alerts:** The Board has been active distributing important alerts regarding dangerous eye drops on the home page, through social media, and List Serv.

- The home page was recently updated to prominently display button links to applications, renewals, and complaint forms, and publicize and make more prominent the ability for optometrist licensees to order Letters of Verification online through BreEZe.
- The home page is also being updated to include the Google translate feature.
- Board staff are presently working on the 2024 Winter Edition of The Spectacle.
- The [Optician Program Student Brochure](#) was updated in November and e-distributed to all the optician programs in California. Physical copies were also mailed to those interested.
- 2024 Law and Regulations Book: To better serve our applicants and licensees, Board staff is initiating an effort to update the law and regulations book, which has not been updated since 2020.

4. CSBO Org Chart, Dated December 1, 2023.

The CSBO Org Chart is attached below.

5. DCA OIO CSBO Licensing and Administration Mini Report

The Mini Report is attached below.

DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS (DCA)
California State Board of Optometry (CSBO)
 December 1, 2023

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

EXECUTIVE OFFICER
 Gregory Pruden
 631-120-8905-001

Enforcement
Staff Services Manager I
 Joely Walker
 631-120-4800-003

Administration/Licensing
Staff Services Manager I
 Randy Love
 631-120-4800-002

Enforcement Unit
Associate Governmental
Program Analyst
 Vacant
 631-120-5393-001
 Kristen Borges
 631-120-5393-002
 Vacant (BCP)
 631-120-5393-005
 Sidney Villareal
 631-120-5393-802
 Vacant (K. Borges)
 631-120-5393-803
 Brad Garding
 631-120-5393-805
Staff Services Analyst
 Scott Kerswell
 631-210-5157-001
Office Technician (T)
 Vacant
 631-120-1139-004 (0.9)*

Administration Unit
Associate Governmental
Program Analyst
 Erica Bautista (LT)
 631-120-5393-907
Staff Services Analyst
 Vacant
 631-120-5157-806
Office Technician (T)
 Kristina Eklund
 631-120-1139-003
Office Technician (G)
 Deja Littles
 631-120-1138-001

Licensing Unit
Associate Governmental
Program Analyst
 Vacant (BCP)
 631-120-5393-003 (.50)
 Vacant (BCP)
 631-120-5393-004
 Arsha Qasmi
 631-120-5393-804
Staff Services Analyst
 Monica Petersen
 631-210-5157-002
 Vacant (BCP)
 631-120-5157-003
Management Services
Technician
 Vacant
 631-120-5278-001 (.50)
Office Technician (T)
 Vacant
 631-120-1139-001
 Kathleen Gregorio (LT)
 631-120-1139-907

 Gregory Pruden, Executive Officer Date

 Classification and Recruitment Analyst Date

Organizational Improvement Office

Administrative & Licensing Report

California State Board of Optometry

November 2023

Ashlee Cortez
Kyle Cabral



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Overview

In November of 2022 the current Executive Officer (EO) came to CSBO and began working to find opportunities for improvement. The EO, has reduced processing times for many of the licensing functions, from 90 days to 6 days on average for optometrist applicants, reduced Exam processing times from 80 days to 20 days, eliminated a backlog in licensing applications, and modernized several applications by bringing them and their payment function on to BreEZe. The EO additionally, established a CE audit process and a citation and fine process where they existed only in name before.

In January of 2023 CSBO requested to work with OIS to map current processes, identify opportunities for efficiency improvement in their daily staff processes, and validate changes already made. CSBO has already began working to implement improvements within BreEZe and are looking for improvement opportunities within the processing of their working tasks. OIO will partner with CSBO to continue the effort of improving BreEZe functionality and help support the effectiveness of CSBO's business processes.

The business consequences of not completing this project will result in potentially missed opportunities for increasing efficiencies, tracking, and accountability within CSBO's business processes.

OIO staff are currently conducting an exploratory review and analysis to identify areas of improvement to increase efficiency, quality, transparency, and accountability regarding all business processes documented in the inventory. This report is a mid-project deliverable to document and deliver recommendations in a timelier fashion to CSBO.

Methodology

The Tools OIO will use to complete the research, analysis and findings are as follows:

- As-Is Mapping sessions
- Could-Be Mapping sessions
- Value-Stream Analysis (VSA) sessions
- Pre and Post project Surveys
- Board performance data analysis
- Job shadowing
- Process Re-engineering (demonstrating what "could-be" with process improvements)
- Report and/or Presentation

OIO facilitated Business Process Mapping (BPM) workshops with CSBO staff to document their processes and to find and document efficiencies. BPM provides a standard language for modeling business processes in a form that is accessible by management and line staff. During the BPM stage, OIO employed three different mapping techniques: As-Is, Value Stream Analysis, and Could-Be mapping.

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Once these activities were completed, the OIO team, after collaborating with CSBO, analyzed the process maps, recommendations from managers and staff, and interview notes to create recommendations that would help improve CSBO's operations.

Recommendations

1. Move the Application and Payment Process onto BreEZe:

The continued use of paper applications and check payments are contributing to slower processing times due to the sending, receiving, and distributing of regular mail and the need to keep and eventually store any documents that aren't scanned into BreEZe.

Moving the applications onto BreEZe and requiring payment to be done prior to submission of the application via BreEZe would eliminate the time it takes to send, receive, and distribute the physical application documents to the processing analyst and eliminate the need for paper resources and storage of physical files. This process improvement opportunity will help eliminate the need for processing checks both in house and Central Cashiering.

The following processes would benefit, in part or whole, from this recommendation:

- Upgrade License – Immunization
- Upgrade License – Glaucoma

- Letter of Verification
- Retired License Status
- Retired Volunteer License Status

2. BreEZe Efficiency Updates:

- Currently, the applicants are not required to have a registered email. This means that most correspondence are done through regular mail which takes considerably longer to process. If a regulation can be implemented to require an email to apply for licensure, then correspondence between the Board and the applicants would reduce application processing times.
- When an item is deficient due to responses submitted in BreEZe or marked so by the processing Analyst, BreEZe should be able to prepopulate a letter with the marked deficiencies and allow for emailing the Deficiency letter through BreEZe.
- There is a lot of confusion from both the applicants and licensees around what needs to be submitted along with application, (particularly the Fictitious Name Permit) or that there are two parts to the process to secure a license/registration (particularly on the optician side) Clear and prominent instructions for all online applications should be implemented and/or be placed in BreEZe with required data and documents being required before submission is allowed by the system.

3. User Acceptance Testing and SME Best Practices:

- Currently, testing new BreEZe system functionality is done without a test script from the development team. A lot of updates are being implemented in BreEZe and many improvements to BreEZe functionality. A part of this implementation process is User Acceptance Testing (UAT). UAT is usually done from a test script. The test script, written by the system developer team, allows for the tester to know what changes are made in the system, what exactly needs to be tested, and gives a step-by-step guide on how to complete UAT on the new functionality. This more targeted scripted approach can save the Subject Matter Expert (SME) time and potential the guess work, while the SME's are testing a process that has been part of a BreEZe update. The use of the script can also mean that the use of a SME isn't always necessary for testing and can free up their time on more specialized tasks.
- Currently, the SMEs are testing by creating and running through an application in the test environment. Doing this may not catch every permutation of an application process. It is also time consuming for a SME to create an application. Having a less specialized team member create a few generic applications in the test environment that testers can then assign to themselves for testing may be advisable.
- When reviewing continued education compliance, there is no standard list of courses that are required or being checked against. It is reviewed by the expertise of the SMEs. While the current staff have the expertise to do this efficiently and accurately, they are irreplaceable as this

knowledge is not documented in a manual or quick reference guide. Compiling a list of trusted sources and required classes eliminates a single point of failure if the institutional knowledge of one individual is lost. The creation of job aids and/or desk-level procedures would ensure that new staff are able to execute tasks with the same knowledge available to them as current SMEs.

Create Standardized Procedure Manuals and Job Aids.

To promote consistency across CSBO units, a formal procedure manual should be created. The lack of a written standard procedure manual has introduced variation in work outputs specifically related to BreEze activities. A formal procedure manual would eliminate variation and improve the accuracy and ease of timely processing of applications.

- *Using the As-Is and Could-Be Process Maps and Narrative Description of Business Process created with OIO, and in conjunction with the rules and regulations of CSBO, create standardized job-aids and a detailed procedure manual for use in training and onboarding new staff and as a reference tool for existing staff members.*
- *Document existing processes and procedures and continually update documents with workflow and/or policy changes. A CSBO staff person should be designated a procedure owner who is responsible for updating the written procedures as appropriate.*
- *CSBO management should review the procedural documents with the procedure owners once a year to ensure necessary updates are being made.*

4. Process Maps

The table below displays the process map inventory list for the Licensing and Administrative unit.

Licensing and Administrative Process Map Inventory	
Process No.	Process Map Name
1	Upgrade License - Immunization
2	Upgrade License - Glaucoma
3	Change of Address Spectacle Lens Dispenser or Contact Lens Dispenser
4	Change of Name
5	Exam Request, Results, Scheduling
6	Redo Law Exam
8	Initial License Application
9	Initial Licensing Application - OPT
9a	Initial Application SLD CLD
10	Issue License - Glaucoma

11	License Renewal
12	Set to Active
13	Set to Inactive
14	Set to Cancel
15	Continuing Education Audit
16	Fingerprint Results
39	Cashiering
40	Duplicate/Replacement License
41	License Verification
42	Non-Complaint Inquiries
43	Refunds
45	Archiving/Records Retention
46	Personnel Actions (RPAs)
48	Scanning
49	Reinstatement for In and Out of State Licensees
50	Redo Law Exam for Probationers
51	Fictitious Name Permits Applications
52	Statement of Licensure
53	Fictitious Name Permits Cancellations
54	Exam Appeals
55	Change of Address Registered Dispensing Ophthalmic Business
56	Initial Application RDO