CALIFORNIA STATE BOARD OF OPTOMETRY

STRATEGIC PLAN

Board of Optometry
2450 Del Paso Road, Suite 105
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March 2010
Introduction

The California State Board of Optometry (Board) was created by the California Legislature in 1913 to safeguard the public's health, safety, and welfare through regulation of the practice of optometry. Protection of the public is the highest priority for the Board when exercising its licensing, regulatory and disciplinary functions. Whenever the protection of the public is inconsistent with other interests, the protection of the public is paramount. The Board meets its public protection mandates by regulating the practice of optometry in California and providing public information about its licensees. Board operations are funded entirely by fees collected from applicants and licensees.

Today the Board of Optometry is one of numerous boards, bureaus, commissions, and committees within the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA), part of the State and Consumer Services Agency under the aegis of the Governor. The Department is responsible for consumer protection and representation through the regulation of licensed professions and the provision of consumer services. While the DCA provides administrative oversight and support services, the Board of Optometry has policy autonomy and sets its own policies, procedures, and initiates its own regulations.

The Board is presently comprised of eight members, but there can be up to eleven members. By law, five must be public members and six must be optometry professionals. The Governor appoints three public members and six of the professional members. The Senate Rules Committee and the Speaker of the Assembly each appoint one public member.

With approximately 7,500 practicing optometrists, the largest population of optometrists in the United States, the Board is charged with the following duties and responsibilities:

- Accrediting schools and colleges providing optometric education.
- Establishing educational requirements for admission to the examination for certificates of registration as California licensed optometrists.
- Establishing examination requirements to ensure the competence of individuals licensed to safely practice optometry in California.
- Setting and enforcing standards for continued competency of existing licensees.
- Establishing educational and examination requirements for licensed optometrists seeking certification to use and prescribe authorized therapeutic pharmaceutical agents.
INTRODUCTION (CONTINUED)

• Promulgating regulations governing:
  • Procedures of the Board
  • Admission of applicants for examination for certificate of registration as Optometrists
  • Minimum standards governing the optometric services offered or performed, the equipment, or the sanitary conditions

• Licensing branch offices and issuing fictitious name permits.

• Providing for redress of grievances against licensees by investigating allegations of substance and patient abuse, unprofessional conduct, incompetence, fraudulent action, or unlawful activity.

• Instituting disciplinary action for violations of laws and regulations governing the practice of optometry when warranted.

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

The Board conducted a three formal strategic planning sessions and adopted the new strategic plan on March 25, 2010. Staff and Board members were surveyed regarding long and short-term challenges facing the Board. The input from stakeholders was consulted throughout the planning process.

The revised plan includes mission, vision and value statements, as well as goals and objectives in six key program areas, which are listed below.

• Licensing

• Examinations

• Legal and Regulatory

• Enforcement

• Education and Outreach

• Organizational Effectiveness

This is a multiple-year strategic plan used to guide day to day and long term decision-making. The Board will be provided regular progress reports on implementation of the plan and the Board will revisit the plan on an annual basis.
MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the California State Board of Optometry is to serve the public and optometrists by promoting and enforcing laws and regulations which protect the health and safety of California’s consumers and to ensure high quality care.

VISION STATEMENT

The California State Board of Optometry’s vision is to be the leading health care profession board that continuously provides consumers and optometrists with effective, collaborative and proactive services.

VALUES

The California State Board of Optometry values:

Integrity

Competence Accountability Responsiveness Efficiency

GOALS

Licensing
Provide applicants and licensees a fast, accurate and cost effective process for obtaining and maintaining licensure registration and certifications required to practice optometry in the State of California.

- Develop and implement procedures for routine continuing education audits.
- Establish and clarify categories of licensure via legislation.
- Implement online license renewals
- Establish an appropriate address of record, including a requirement for a valid E-mail address, for board communication and consumer protection.
- Establish methods to deal more effectively with exceptions to the current licensure process.
- Update forms to be more consistent, clear and user friendly.
- Improve efficiency in processing applications.
- Review current accreditations and affirm and apply the accreditation process for new schools of optometry and clinics.

Examinations
Provide a fair, valid and legally defensible licensing exam and exam process to ensure that only qualified and competent individuals are licensed to provide optometric services in the State of California.
- Successfully implement computer based testing for California Laws and Regulations Examinations.
- Perform ongoing exam development and validation workshops of California Laws and regulations Examinations.
- Expand subject matter expert pool.
- Outreach to schools regarding exam information.

**Legal and Regulatory**
Establish and maintain fair and just laws and regulations that provide for the protection of consumer health and safety and reflect current and emerging, efficient and cost-effective practices.

- Pursue legislation necessary to implement strategic goals and objectives.
- Pursue changes to California Code of Regulations to implement new laws affecting optometry.
- Monitor and participate in all legislation that affects the practice of optometry, including new technologies and emerging trends.
- Successfully participate in Sunset Review process and extend the Board’s sunset date.
- Establish process for assessing continuing competency of optometrists.

**Enforcement**
Protect the health and safety of consumers of optometric services through the active enforcement of the laws and regulations governing the safe practice of optometry in the State of California.

- Participate in the development and implementation of DCA’s new enforcement model.
- Train and augment enforcement staff on the implementation of the entire enforcement process.
- Develop and implement training program and retain subject matter experts.
- Explore feasibility of gaining site inspection authority.
- Explore further options for preventing unlicensed practice of optometry.
**Education and Outreach**
Proactively educate, inform and engage consumers, licensees, optometry students and other stakeholders on the practice of optometry and the laws and regulations which govern it.

- Publish summaries of disciplinary actions.
- Develop and disseminate a “Your State Board Starter Kit for New Optometrists”.
- Continue the program for outreach to optometry students in California.
- Continue outreach to licensed optometrists at optometric events.
- Expand involvement in consumer outreach and health fairs.
- Develop regular PR opportunities that highlight timely and pertinent optometric information.
- Develop and disseminate new publications and forms in multiple languages.
- Continue to leverage the Board Web site as a source of education and outreach to consumers and licensees.
- Develop and foster partnerships with health care advocates and stakeholders.
- Proactively participate in DCA’s disaster recovery efforts.

**Organizational Effectiveness**
Develop and maintain an efficient and effective team of professional and public leaders and staff with sufficient resources to improve the Board’s provision of programs and services.

- Identify staff training needs and establish corresponding training plan.
- Solidify the Board’s national presence as a regulator of optometry.
- Implement new Board member orientation and training program.
- Update and revise *Administrative Procedures Manual*.
- Continually update and disseminate *California Laws and Regulations Related to the Practice of Optometry*.
- Develop and implement an online customer service survey.
- Continue to hold Board meetings in geographically diverse areas of the state and invite local stakeholders.