

**CALIFORNIA STATE BOARD
OF
BARBERING AND COSMETOLOGY**

LICENSING AND EXAMINATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING

MINUTES OF OCTOBER 10, 2022

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Derick Matos, Chair
Tonya Fairley
Yolanda Jimenez
Steve Weeks

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT

Kristy Underwood, Executive Officer
Carrie Harris, Deputy Executive Officer
Sabina Knight, Board Legal Counsel
Allison Lee, Board Project Manager
Natalie Mitchell, Board Analyst

1. AGENDA ITEM #1, CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL/ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM

Derick Matos, Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at approximately 9:05 a.m. PST (12:05 p.m. EST) and confirmed the presence of a quorum.

2. AGENDA ITEM #2, DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF THE JUNE 13, 2022, COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

MOTION: Ms. Fairley moved to approve the June 13, 2022, Committee meeting minutes. Ms. Jimenez seconded.

No comments were received from the public.

Motion to approve June 13, 2022, Committee meeting minutes carried; 3 yes, 0 no, and 0 abstain, per roll call vote as follows:

The following Committee Members voted "Yes": Derick Matos, Tonya Fairley, and Yolanda Jimenez.

3. AGENDA ITEM #3, REVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF THE CURRENT LICENSING AND EXAMINATION UNIT WORKLOAD

Ms. Underwood stated that the licensing and examination unit's workload is reviewed weekly as the licensing reports are received every Monday. She presented reports for the week of September 19 through September 23. An overview of the workload is summarized as follows:

- Reciprocity applications have increased since Senate Bill 803 because there is no longer a three-year licensure requirement. Anyone who is licensed in another state can get a license in California.
- Ms. Underwood reported that reciprocity applications have a high number of deficiencies because staff must receive certifications from the state they are from.

- Initial apps are exam applications from individuals that went to school in California and are submitting a Proof of Training with their exam application. Paper applications were reported at 425, while online were at 953 for 1,378 currently pending applications. Staff tracks the oldest date to process those first.
- Re-exam applications are submitted on paper and online. Current pending re-exam applications are at 329. Online applications get processed faster because they do not have to go through the waiting period of the cashiering unit.
- Currently, 530 establishment applications are pending. The number is high because many new applications are coming in. This is not necessarily due to opening new salons, but because many salon owners are selling. In California, it was averaged that the number of establishments in the state remained consistent through the years because many salons changed hands instead of opening brand new.
- There were 423 requests of duplicate licenses pending.
- There were 277 name change requests pending.
- There were 115 certification requests pending for both paper and online. These are people looking to get licensed in another state. Staff sends a license certification to that state.
- There were 131 apprentice applications pending.
- The miscellaneous licensing workload includes all of the other kinds of work that staff handles. This includes interpreter requests, pending refunds, et cetera. They are also monitored based on the oldest dates.
- Ms. Underwood presented a chart comparing the workload received versus the applications processed in a week. Another chart compared what was processed in one week versus what was processed the previous week.
- Public contact is also monitored. This includes the number of phone calls received in the customer information center (CIC), the number of people who visit the front counter, and the number of emails received. The number of emails sent is also monitored. This week, 1,447 emails were received.
- Other work volumes are also tracked that are not part of an application process. These include the number of establishment closures processed and mailed returned by the Post Office (RPOs). Government mail cannot be forwarded, so it gets returned and is noted in the BreZE system.
- The number of convictions processed, military fee waivers, military apps processed, asylum apps processed, and CIC escalations are also tracked.
- The number of individuals scheduling their exams with PSI is also tracked to know the number that schedule and take their exams.
- Exam pass rates are monitored weekly.

Chair Matos inquired about the current status of the backlog from COVID. Ms. Underwood stated that it was not necessarily backlogged. There was an increase in applications in general, which might have been due to 1) schools being slow during COVID, so they were getting back to their pre-COVID levels and 2) the thousand-hour impact. Many students had completed around 800 hours, and the schools were transitioning them into a thousand-hour program, which increased the number of applications.

Ms. Underwood stated that this Board doesn't have downtime. Other boards can base their workload on college graduations or twice a year. This Board does not have that because people graduate from cosmetology and barbering school almost daily. She indicated that staff measures the backlog on how long it's taking to process the work. Currently, the backlog for the exam apps dates back to about six or seven weeks. This is far too long and was caused by staffing issues. Ms. Underwood stated that the licensing division was almost fully staffed, and soon, the exam apps would be done within four weeks.

Chair Matos inquired about the backlog of emails that Ms. Underwood had referenced in the past and asked if it was getting better. Ms. Underwood stated that it was not getting better. She mentioned that they had pulled everyone they could to answer the emails this past Friday. There are; however, some new options being put in place. One, the staff is looking to recruit people for a trial program of a communications unit. Limited-term people will be hired to handle the emails and phone calls to relieve the current licensing staff. Two, staff will hold a town hall meeting with schools on October 17. Staff had noticed that most people applying online were not uploading their Proof of Training document (POT). These people would then email their POT, and the emails get mixed in with the general email questions. Since sorting through all those emails to process them separately was a challenge, staff had decided to hold a town hall meeting to demo how to properly update a BreZE record and ensure that the POT is uploaded. Staff is also creating a separate email box for POTs, so they don't get mixed in with the other general emails. This will help in saving time for the application process.

Regarding tracking the number of people who schedule their exams with PSI, Chair Matos asked if staff was working in collaboration with PSI to get those numbers. Ms. Underwood stated that they have a partner site with PSI where staff was given access to pull data out of their system.

No comments were received from the public.

4. AGENDA ITEM #4, REVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF THE SPANISH LANGUAGE EXAM PASS RATES

Ms. Underwood stated that the Board has been trying to improve the Spanish rates for years. She reported that staff recently contacted other states to determine if they had the same issues. Staff found that many states do not track their pass/fail rates. They also found that some other states had difficulties with their Spanish pass rates. In addition, while some states offer examinations in Spanish, they have no idea if anyone requested to take the exams in Spanish.

Ms. Underwood mentioned that staff met with PSI recently and talked to them about the Spanish pass rate concerns. The goal was to try and determine if there were specific content areas that Spanish examiners were doing more poorly in so that schools could be helped to focus on those areas. A ticket has been submitted to the system so

schools will be able to pull their own data. Staff anticipate this change to occur in March of 2023.

Ms. Underwood further reported that there are lower pass rates in the barbering exam than in the past. She met with PSI regarding this issue and is scheduling a Southern California and Northern California town hall specifically for barber schools. PSI will go through the full exam and content area, explaining how the exam was developed. The dates for the town hall were yet to be determined.

Mr. Weeks noted the difference in pass rates and asked if all the states were using the same exam. He wondered if some states' examinations were more difficult than others. Ms. Underwood stated that there are different exam vendors. States that use PSI as the vendor have the same exam.

Chair Matos mentioned that Tennessee uses PSI, and their pass rate is 45%, higher than California's. He stated that California could draw some good data from that. He also asked if the time limit for the exam is broken down into sections in particular questions or if it was for the exam as a whole. He stated that if the time limit is monitored to determine if an examinee was taking longer on a particular section, it could give insight into whether that part of the exam was difficult, and schools could be informed on how they can improve that. Ms. Underwood believed the sections were not timed, but she would double-check.

Chair Matos asked if it was possible to do a comparison with Tennessee and use some of the tools to improve pass rates. Ms. Underwood stated she would contact the executive officer in Tennessee and see what could be compared. She also pointed out that Tennessee does not have the same volume of exam candidates as California.

Mr. Weeks wondered if the health and safety laws differed from state to state and if that could also cause variance. Ms. Underwood stated that even though the health and safety laws might differ, all exams were based on two nationally known textbooks. Ms. Jimenez asked if schools do a pretest to see where their students are struggling before the official test. Ms. Underwood stated they do not as there is no requirement for schools to do that. Ms. Jimenez believed that a pretest would be useful in providing information ahead of time that could be used to fill holes before students take the real exam possibly.

Chair Matos echoed Ms. Jimenez's sentiments. He mentioned that for apprentice programs, students take a series of pretests before being signed out of a particular part. He felt that that should be considered for the regular barber or cosmetology schools. Ms. Fairley also voiced her support for the idea of having pretests.

No comments were received from the public.

5. AGENDA ITEM #5, PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

No comments were received from the public.

6. AGENDA ITEM #6, AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING

None.

7. AGENDA ITEM #7, ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at approximately 9:43 am PST (12:43 p.m. EST).