

Acupuncture Board

Strategic Plan

2018-2022



Acupuncture Board

Board Members

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John Harabedian, Public Member

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Vacant, Licensed Member

Vacant, Public Member

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About the Acupuncture Board

The Acupuncture Board's (Board) legal mandate is to regulate the practice of acupuncture and Asian medicine in the State of California. The Board establishes and maintains entry standards of qualification and conduct within the acupuncture profession, primarily through its authority to license. The Acupuncture Licensure Act commences with Business and Professions Code section 4925 et seq. The Board's regulations appear in Title 16, Division 13.7, of the California Code of Regulations.

The primary responsibility of the Board is to protect California consumers from incompetent, and/or fraudulent practice through the enforcement of the Acupuncture Licensure Act and the Board's regulations. The Board promotes safe practice through the improvement of educational training standards, continuing education, enforcement of the Business and Professions Code, and public outreach.

Mission, Vision, and Values

Mission

To protect the people of California by upholding acupuncture practice standards through the oversight and enforcement of the Acupuncture Licensure Act.

Vision

The exemplary practice of acupuncture for the health and safety of the people of California.

Values

Consumer Protection

Collaboration

Excellence

Integrity

Professionalism

Strategic Goal Areas

1. Licensing

Establishes and maintains licensing requirements that protect consumers through improving standards in licensing examination, continuing education, and reasonable access to the profession.

2. Enforcement

Protects the health and safety of consumers through the enforcement of the laws and regulations governing the practice of acupuncture.

3. Education

Advances education standards to increase the quality of education and ensure consumer protection.

4. Legislation and Regulation

Advocates for statutes and adopts regulations, policies, and procedures that strengthen and support its mandate, mission, and vision.

5. Outreach

Educates consumers, licensees, and stakeholders about the practice and regulation of the acupuncture profession.

6. Board Administration

Continues to build and maintain an excellent organization through the development of staff, responsible management, strong leadership, and effective Board governance.

Goal 1: Licensing

Establishes and maintains licensing requirements that protect consumers through improving standards in licensing examination, continuing education, and access to the profession.

- I.1 Develop and implement a computerized licensing examination to increase access and facilitate entry into the profession.
- I.2 Seek legislative or regulatory authority to require a passing Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) score for applicants who have completed their education in a language other than English to enhance communication with the healthcare industry.
- I.3 Research the feasibility of establishing a clinical inspection program to promote compliance with the laws and regulations governing the practice of acupuncture in California
- I.4 Improve pocket license material quality to reduce fraudulent activity.

Goal 2: Enforcement

Protects the health and safety of consumers through the enforcement of the laws and regulations governing the practice of acupuncture.

- 2.1 Develop and implement the continuing education provider audit process to increase compliance.
- 2.2 Recruit additional Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) to meet the needs of the Examination, Enforcement, and Education Units to increase enforcement resources.
- 2.3 Research the feasibility of requiring licensees to maintain medical records in English to facilitate enforcement efforts and increase accessibility.
- 2.4 Update the Board's Disciplinary Guidelines to preserve consistency, fairness, and ensure effective consumer protection when taking disciplinary actions against licensees.
- 2.5 Amend regulations to implement the Uniform Standards Regarding Substance-Abusing Healing Arts Licensees, developed pursuant to Senate Bill No. 1441 (2007-2008 Sess.), to safeguard the health and safety of licensees and consumers.

Goal 3: Education

Advance education standards to increase the quality of education and ensure consumer protection.

- 3.1 Research and develop transfer credit evaluation policies and procedures to ensure compliance with education requirements.
- 3.2 Conduct a cost analysis on training program curriculum application reviews to properly allocate costs and ensure training program compliance.
- 3.3 Review current curriculum standards to ensure it prepares licensees for entry level practice and consumer safety.
- 3.4 Define what constitutes “live continuing education courses” to ensure that hands-on training for continuing education in treatment methods is received in the proper setting with the appropriate supervision to practice on the public.

Goal 4: Legislation and Regulation

Advocates for statutes and adopts regulations, policies, and procedures that strengthen and support its mandate, mission, and vision.

- 4.1 Recommend legislation relating to the number of times an applicant can take the examination for licensure to reduce fraud and enhance qualification of licensees.
- 4.2 Investigate the feasibility of obtaining site inspection authority of licensees to increase enforcement resources and access.
- 4.3 Seek legislative citation authority over curriculum violations of training programs to enforce existing curriculum requirements established in regulation.
- 4.4 Review and update regulations to align with existing statutory requirements.
- 4.5 Research and seek amendments to Business and Professions Code section 4935, subdivision (a)(2) to increase the penalty for violations to be equivalent with the penalty provided by Business and Professions Code section 585 and to further deter violations and enhance consumer protection.
- 4.6 Implement a continuing education course and monitoring fee structure pursuant to Business and Professions Code section 4945, subdivision (b) to allocate the cost of the process to the continuing education provider applicant.

Goal 5: Outreach

Educates consumers, licensees, and stakeholders about the practice and regulation of the acupuncture profession.

- 5.1 Develop and implement a communication plan to inform the public about the practice and regulation of the acupuncture profession.
- 5.2 Develop and release a digital newsletter to inform, educate, and update the public on the practice of acupuncture in California.
- 5.3 Determine and communicate licensing reciprocity to and from California to convey California's standards to the public and ensure consumer protection.
- 5.4 Update and publish an informational brochure to educate the public on the standards of practice.

Goal 6: Board Administration

Continues to build and maintain an excellent organization through the development of staff, responsible management, strong leadership, and effective Board governance.

- 6.1 Conduct a yearly workload study to ensure adequate staffing levels.
- 6.2 Map the Board's business processes to procure an information technology system that addresses the Board's functions.
- 6.3 Conduct a fee study at the appropriate time to address the Board's budgetary structural imbalance.
- 6.4 Respond to the Department of Consumer Affairs' routine internal audit to address any findings.
- 6.5 Expand targeted training and materials to educate Board members on Board governance and subject matter.

Strategic Planning Process

To understand the environment in which the Board operates, and to identify factors that could impact the Board's success in carrying out its regulatory duties, the Department of Consumer Affairs' SOLID Unit conducted an environmental scan of the Board's internal and external environments by collecting information through the following methods:

- ◆ Interviews conducted with current and former Board members in August 2017. There was a total of four responses from a population of eight for a 50%¹ response rate.
- ◆ Interview conducted with Board Executive Officer in August 2017. There was a total of one participant from a population of one for a 100% response rate.
- ◆ Online survey sent to Board staff in August 2017. There was a total of twelve responses from a population of twelve for a 100% response rate.
- ◆ Online survey sent to the Board's stakeholders via several resources² in August 2017. There was a total of 156 responses from a sample size³ of 1,394 for an 11% response rate.

The most significant themes and trends identified from the environmental scan were discussed by the Board Members, Executive Officer, Board staff, and stakeholders during the strategic planning sessions facilitated by SOLID on December 15, 2017 and March 30, 2018. This information guided the Board in the development of its strategic objectives outlined in this 2018 – 2022 Strategic Plan.

¹ All response rates are rounded to the nearest one (whole number).

² Listserv subscribers and schools lists.

³ Sample size is an approximation.



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Strategic plan adopted June 29, 2018.

This Strategic Plan is based on stakeholder information and discussions facilitated by SOLID for the Acupuncture Board in December 2017 and March 30, 2018. Subsequent amendments may have been made after the Board's adoption of this plan.