

## **AGENDA ITEM 16**

**UPDATE ON COMMUNICATION PLAN, MESSAGING, AND DEVELOPMENT OF FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS REGARDING FUTURE FEE INCREASES.**



**DRAFT**

## California Board of Occupational Therapy Proposed Fee Increases/Establishment of New Fees Communications Plan

### Introduction

The California Board of Occupational Therapy (Board) is proposing several fee increases affecting licensees and applicants, effective January 1, 2026. The proposed fee increases will strengthen the Board’s ability to accomplish its consumer protection mandate and improve licensing services.

Fee increases are necessary to address the Board’s structural imbalance and help ensure the Board has sufficient resources to continue its licensing and enforcement process to maintain its highest priority: consumer protection.

### Time Frame

ACTIVITY	LEAD	TIME FRAME	STATUS
Finalize communications plan	Heather	Last week of January	Done
Finalize FAQ	Heather/Jody/Sydney	First week of February	Done
Finalize social media posts and graphics	Renee/Sydney	First week of February	Open
Blog post	Renee	Third Week of February	Open
Finalize list serve message	Renee/Sydney/Heather	March 1st	Open
Finalize announcement	Renee/Sydney/Heather	March 15th	Open

## Strategy

- Raise awareness and educate licensees about the importance of the fee increases.
- Social media campaign with messaging to prepare licensees for the proposed increases.
- Blog Post highlighting proposed changes, probation monitoring, reversions, etc.

## Target Audiences and Topics

<b>Audience</b>	<b>Topic</b>
Licensees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Importance of fee increases and establishment of new fees.</li><li>• Licensing is a fraction of the Board's Budget.</li></ul>
Applicants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Importance of fee increases and establishment of new fees.</li></ul>
Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Brief explanation on reversions</li></ul>

## Promotion Recommendations

- **Web page announcement.**
  - Quick blurb at the top of the homepage on Board's website that links to FAQ.
- **Social media campaign.**
  - Share key messages with supporting graphics.
  - Share link to blog on proposed new fees/establishment of new fees.
  - Tip of the week, Instagram Reels, Instagram Stories.
- **Create e-blasts.**
  - Use Listserve to send out the same messaging including link to blog article.
- **Schedule townhall meetings and meet with stakeholders.**

## Social Media Messages (Examples) *Please note: Twitter's 280 Character Limit*

1. Attention licensees and applicants 📣 – The California Board of Occupational Therapy is proposing fee increases and new fees in 2025. The proposed changes will impact renewals, initial license fees, establish new “user” fees for one-time transactions, etc. Learn more here: (Link to FAQ).

2. Have you heard the news? The California Board of Occupational Therapy is proposing fee increases and new fees in 2025, including a probation monitoring fee for licensees on probation. Get familiar with the proposed fees by visiting the Board's website. (Link to FAQ)
3. The Board is taking steps to help ensure there are sufficient resources to continue its licensing and enforcement process to maintain its highest priority of consumer protection by proposing fee increases and new fees. Learn about proposed fees here: (Link to FAQ)
4. Did you know the Board is proposing a fee for probation monitoring to not burden licensees who are not facing disciplinary action? The fee is just one of several fees the Board is proposing for 2025. Read more: (Link to FAQ)
5. #Update - The Board is proposing to increase several fees affecting licensees and applicants such as:
  - OT and OTA biennial renewal.
  - OT and OTA limited permit.
  - OT and OTA initial application fees
  - OT and OTA initial license fees..
  - Read about the proposed fees here: (Link to FAQ)

#Update - The Board is proposing several new "user" fees for licensees and applicants such as:

- Advanced practice application fee.
  - Fingerprint processing fee.
  - Charging licensees placed on probation a "monitoring" fee.
  - Read about the proposed fees here: (Link to FAQ)
6. Increasing a variety of fees including renewal, application, license verifications, and retired status, will allow the Board to *reduce* the OT and OTA inactive renewal application fees.
  7. The Board has underspent its annual budget the past 14+ years by amounts ranging from \$91,000- \$541,000 *per year*. These cost saving measures are the reason the fee increases were not needed sooner. Read more: (Link to FAQ)
  8. As of October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2021, the Board was projected to have a negative budget in Fiscal year 2022-223. Due to cost saving measures taken by the Board, the need for a fee increase has been delayed to Fiscal year 2025-26. Read more: (Link to FAQ)
  9. Despite cost-saving measures, the annual \*expenditures\* are more than the revenue collected. This means the Board, a consumer protection agency, will run out of money without increases in fees to support operations. The Board must stay solvent in order to protect the public and license OTs and OTAs. Read more: (Link to FAQ)

10. As a special fund agency, the Board relies on the revenue collected from applicants and licensees to pay for *all* operational costs. Despite cost-saving measures, the revenue collected is still less than the Board's annual expenditures. This is why fee increases are coming in 2026 – to support Board operations. Read more about them here: [\(Link to FAQ\)](#)



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## **California Board of Occupational Therapy Proposed Fee Increases and Establishment of New Fees**

The California Board of Occupational Therapy (Board) is proposing several fee increases affecting licensees and applicants, effective January 1, 2026. The proposed fee increases will strengthen the Board's ability to accomplish its consumer protection mandate and improve licensing services.

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

#### **Why is the Board proposing a fee increase?**

The Board is a special fund agency. This means it relies on the revenue collected from applicants and licensees to pay for *all* operational costs. Despite cost-saving measures and underspending its budget, the revenue collected is still less than the Board's annual expenditures. Fee increases are necessary to address the Board's structural imbalance and help ensure the Board has sufficient resources to continue its licensing and enforcement process to maintain its highest priority: Consumer protection.

#### **Didn't the Board just have a fee increase?**

Fee increases in 2017 and 2021 were small, incremental increases that were offset by savings at the Board. But renewal fees were previously reduced when the annual renewal fee of \$150 shifted to a two-year renewal cycle, at the same \$150 rate. The rate of fee increases at the time, was also lower than other health care boards.

#### **When do the new fees go into effect?**

All fees, including new fees and increased fees, will go into effect on or after January 1, 2026.

#### **What will the new renewal fees be?**

For occupational therapist (OT) licenses that expire on or after January 1, 2026, the biennial renewal fee shall be XXX (TBD). For occupational therapy assistant (OTA) licenses that expire on or after January 1, 2026, the biennial renewal fee shall XXX (TBD).

#### **Will the fee increase(s) impact applicants?**

- The fee for an initial OT license application shall be determined following the February 2024 Board meeting.

- The fee for an initial OTA license application shall be determined following the February 2024 Board meeting.
- The initial license fees for OTs and OTAs will be pro-rated and based on the OT or OTA renewal fees, as appropriate.

**What are the new fees the Board is proposing?**

The Board is proposing several new “user” fees for one-time transactions, such as an advanced practice application fee, and replacement wall certificate or a pocket license fees, to defray costs for licensees who do not need those services. The Board is also proposing that licensees on probation shall be charged a fee for probation monitoring to not burden licensees who are not facing disciplinary action. The monitoring fee, to be established in regulation, shall not exceed the cost to the board for the monitoring of licensees placed on probation.

**The proposed increases to current fees are as follows:**

Fee Type	Current Fee	Proposed Fee Effective 1/1/2026
OT Biennial Renewal Fee & Pro-rated Initial License Fee	\$270	TBD
OTA Biennial Renewal Fee & Pro-rated Initial License Fee	\$210	TBD
OT Delinquent Renewal Fee	\$135	TBD
OTA Delinquent Renewal Fee	\$105	TBD
Pocket License Fee	\$25	TBD
Wall Certificate Replacement Fee	\$25	TBD
Fee for Verification of Licensure	\$35	TBD

**The proposed new fee categories are as follows:**

- Fingerprint Processing Fee
- Advanced Practice Application Fee
- Certified Copy of an Official Transcript Fee

***Inactive Renewal Fee Reduction!***

The OT and OTA inactive renewal fees will be reduced to be **one-half** of the biennial renewal fee.

Licensees, stakeholders, or members of the public who wish to provide feedback on the proposed fees are invited to email the Board at [cbot@dca.ca.gov](mailto:cbot@dca.ca.gov) or join an upcoming Board meeting: [https://www.bot.ca.gov/board\\_activity/meetings/index.shtml](https://www.bot.ca.gov/board_activity/meetings/index.shtml)