



# CALIFORNIA BOARD OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY STRATEGIC PLAN

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## California Board of Occupational Therapy Members

**Richard Bookwalter**, *President*, OT Member

**Jeffrey Ferro**, Public Member

**Denise Miller**, OT Member

**Beata Morcos**, Public Member

**Sharon Pavlovich**, *Vice President*, OTA Member

**Gavin Newsom**, *Governor*

**Lourdes M. Castro Ramírez**, *Secretary*, Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency

**Kimberly Kirchmeyer**, *Director*, Department of Consumer Affairs

**Heather Martin**, *Executive Officer*, California Board of Occupational Therapy

## Message from the Board President

On behalf of the California Board of Occupational Therapy (CBOT), I am grateful for the opportunity to present the 2020-2024 CBOT Strategic Plan. Many thanks to everyone involved in developing the plan, for their vision, focus, and commitment to the Board's mission – to protect California consumers of occupational therapy services through effective regulation, licensing and enforcement.

With the help of the SOLID team, the Board of Occupational Therapy members and staff reviewed a structured survey of key stakeholders, to obtain information on their experiences with the Board's work.

Building on the Board's longtime mission, vision, and values, we used this input to inform, develop, and refine goals in the areas of licensing and renewals, continuing education, policy and advocacy, enforcement, outreach, organizational effectiveness, and applicant qualifications.

The Strategic Plan will guide our work over the coming years, make us accountable to the people of California, and uphold the Board's duties within the Department of Consumer Affairs and the Business, Consumer Services, and Housing Agency. CBOT publishes advance notices of all its meetings and encourages your participation and contribution. As President of the Board of Occupational Therapy, I invite you to join us as we implement the various elements of this plan. We look forward to working with you to achieve these important goals.

Sincerely,

Richard Bookwalter, MS, OTR/L  
President, California Board of Occupational Therapy



## About the Board

Occupational Therapists (OTs) and Occupational Therapy Assistants (OTAs) provide important health, rehabilitation and habilitation services to people of all ages, who, because of illness, injury, or developmental or psychological impairment, need specialized interventions to regain, develop, or build the skills necessary for independent functioning.

Established in 1917, the occupational therapy profession is one of the oldest allied health professions in the United States. SB 1046 created the California Board of Occupational Therapy, effective January 1, 2001, and required license effective January 1, 2003. The Board is responsible for the licensure and regulation of OTs and OTAs in California.

California passed a title control/trademark law for occupational therapy in 1977 Business and Professions Code (BPC), Section 2570, Ch. 836), prohibiting individuals from using the professional titles recognized for Occupational Therapist (OT, OTR) and Occupational Therapy Assistants (OTA, COTA) without appropriate training and education. The law was updated in 1993 (BPC, Ch. 361) to further clarify the minimum education and examination requirements for practicing occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants. The law had no registration process with the state or enforcement structure, nor did it prevent unqualified individuals from practicing occupational therapy as long as they did not refer to themselves as an occupational therapist or occupational therapy assistant.

OTs and OTAs focus on an individual's ability to effectively engage in performance areas that are purposeful and meaningful, such as activities of daily living (ADLs), and instrumental ADLs, including, among other things, work, education, play, leisure, wellness, spirituality, social participation and other productive activities.

# California Board of Occupational Therapy Mission, Vision, and Values

## **Mission**

To protect California consumers of occupational therapy services through effective regulation, licensing and enforcement.

## **Vision**

The California Board of Occupational Therapy, as a model consumer protection agency, aspires to be recognized for our valued commitment to all of our stakeholders.

## **Values**

### ***Consumer Protection***

We make effective and informed decisions in the best interest, and for the safety of Californians.

### ***Efficiency***

We diligently identify the best ways to deliver high quality services with the most efficient use of our resources.

### ***Fairness***

We treat people equally and make decisions without favoritism or prejudice.

### ***Integrity***

We are committed to honesty, ethical conduct and responsibility.

### ***Commitment***

We take responsibility and are accountable to the public.

### ***Transparency***

We hold ourselves accountable to the people of California. We operate openly so that stakeholders can trust that we are fair and honest.

## Strategic Goal Areas

### **Applicant Qualifications**

The Board ensures those seeking licensure meet minimum standards of conduct, education, fieldwork and examination.

### **Enforcement**

The Board enforces the laws and regulations governing occupational therapy practitioners by effectively investigating complaints, non-compliance and irregularities, and concludes with an appropriate response.

### **Outreach and Communication**

The Board strives to increase communication, education and outreach efforts to consumers, applicants, licensees, and other stakeholders regarding laws, regulations and the practice of occupational therapy.

### **Laws and Regulations**

The Board modifies, implements and enforces statutes and regulations that strengthen and support the Board's mandate and mission.

### **Organizational Effectiveness**

The Board strives to build an excellent organization through proper Board governance, effective leadership, and responsible management by securing necessary funding and ensuring timely staff responses and actions.

## Goal 1: Applicant Qualifications

1.1 Verify the checklist for licensing and renewal process to make sure applicants know what they need and when.

1.2 Reevaluate the application process overview flowchart to make sure applicants know what they need and when.

1.3 Explore BreEZe<sup>1</sup> capabilities to communicate completion of each application requirement to inform applicants of where they are in the application process.

1.4 Evaluate the time period for abandonment of an application to align the requirement with technological advancements that have accelerated the licensing process.

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<sup>1</sup> BreEZe is the Board's licensing and enforcement system.



## Goal 2: Enforcement

2.1 Explore developing a tracking system for code violations to identify trends in violations and enforcement actions.

2.2 Track and report trends in all enforcement-related costs to communicate enforcement related costs to stakeholders and to utilize for budget augmentation.

2.3 Increase practice reviewer (expert witness) pool to ensure diversity in subject area expertise and to reduce investigation cycle times.

## Goal 3: Laws and Regulations

3.1 Obtain stakeholder input on revisions to practice areas to develop appropriate and effective regulations to protect California consumers.

3.2 Monitor the Legislative Committee so that legislation is analyzed, and the committee makes timely recommendations to apprise the Board of pending legislation with potential impact on consumers and occupational therapy practice.

3.3 Seek stakeholder input on licensing compact to evaluate potential impact on consumers and occupational therapy practice.

3.4 Obtain stakeholder input to explore Clinical Doctorate of Occupational Therapy (OTD) capstone requirements to develop appropriate Board response to the stakeholders and to protect California consumers.

## Goal 4: Outreach and Communication

4.1 Obtain public input on web content and usability to improve stakeholder access to clear and relevant information.

4.2 Establish a practice reviewer (expert witness) program outreach and communication plan to ensure recruitment and retention of practice reviewers.

4.3 Acquire licensee email addresses to expand licensee database and improve the Board's ability to conduct outreach and communicate.

4.4 Increase presence in social media to improve and increase information sharing.

4.5 Create an outreach and communication plan (evaluate various communication avenues/methods/channels) to improve and increase information sharing.

## Goal 5: Organizational Effectiveness

5.1 Track and report trends in costs associated with DCA central services to communicate the cost of doing business to stakeholders.

5.2 Evaluate supply of available OT practitioners to monitor access to occupational therapy services and ensure consumer safety.

5.3 Work with appointing authorities to facilitate Board member appointments to maintain a diverse Board profile and quorum.

5.4 Create a succession plan that includes all Board and staff leadership positions to increase business continuity, efficiency, staff acquisition, retention, and development.

5.5 Evaluate and improve the Board's operating processes and procedures to ensure continuous improvement and efficiency.

## Strategic Planning Process

To understand the environment in which the California Board of Occupational Therapy operates and to identify factors that could impact the Board's success, the DCA SOLID Strategic Planning unit conducted an environmental scan of the internal and external environments by collecting information by the following methods:

- An online survey sent to 910 stakeholders including occupational therapy licensees, Professional association representatives, school and college representatives, and members of the public. SOLID received 52 responses.
- An online survey sent to Board staff. SOLID received 9 responses.
- One-on-one interviews with five board members and two executive staff.

Board members and executive staff discussed the most significant themes and trends identified in the environmental during a strategic planning session on January 30-31, 2020. This information guided the Board in developing the goals and objectives outlined in the 2020-2024 plan strategic plan.

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*This strategic plan is based on stakeholder information and discussions facilitated by SOLID for the California Board of Occupational Therapy from October 2019 through January 2020.*