

State of California
Department of Consumer Affairs

**Board of Vocational Nursing and
Psychiatric Technicians**

2015 Strategic Plan



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The Board of Vocational Nursing & Psychiatric Technicians

The Board of Vocational Nursing was established in 1951 and, in 1959, merged with the Psychiatric Technician program to become the California Board of Vocational Nursing and Psychiatric Technicians (BVNPT). The jurisdiction of the Board is mandated by the Vocational Nursing Practice Act (VNPA), Business and Professions Code (B&PC), Division 2, Chapter 6.5, Sections 2840-2895.5, and Psychiatric Technician Law (PTL) B&PC Division 2, Chapter 10, Sections 4500-4548, which are implemented and enforced by the BVNPT.

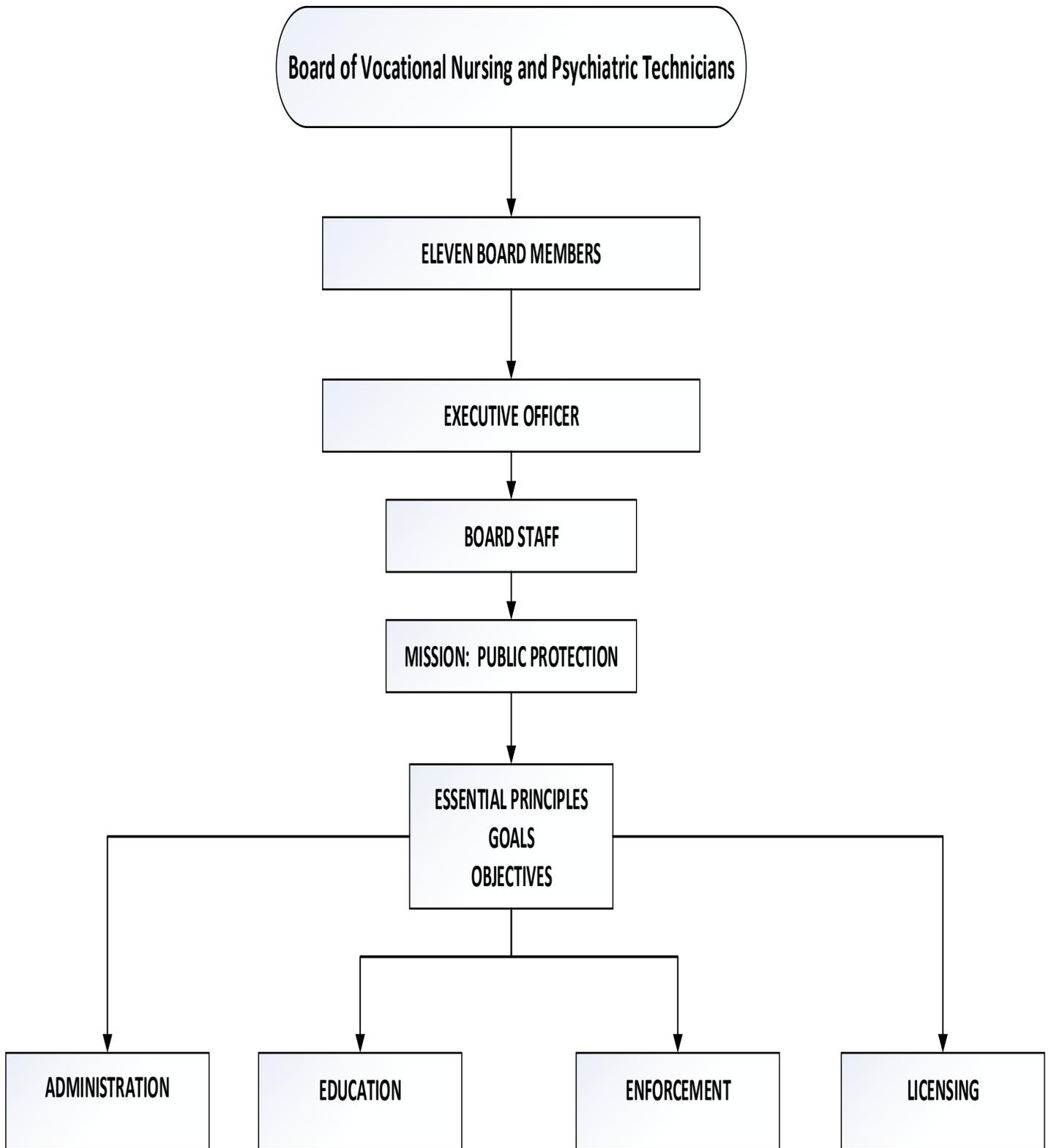
The BVNPT regulates 129,515 licensed vocational nurses (LVNs) and 13,469 psychiatric technicians (PTs); 182 vocational nursing (VN) programs and 17 PT programs. LVNs and PTs care for the very young client to the very old client in a variety of settings. These include hospitals, clinics, nursing homes, home care, licensed community care homes, state and community based psychiatric facilities and prisons. PTs also care for the developmentally challenged and mentally disordered clients/patients found in the above settings.

The Board is a special fund agency. It derives all of its operating revenue from its licensees and applicants. No money is received from the General Fund. The Board has 67.9 authorized positions (57.5 VN Program; 10.4 PT Program) and a total budget of \$12.7 million (\$10.6 million VN Program; \$2.1 million PT program).

Board Members

Eleven members make up the Board: six public; two licensed PTs; two LVNs; and one LVN or registered nurse (RN). Specific requirements are two LVNs licensed for a period of not less than three years; one LVN or RN with no less than five years' experience as a teacher or administrator in an approved school of vocational nursing; two PTs with not less than five years of experience in a psychiatric hospital or in a psychiatric unit of a hospital licensed by the State or a private institution licensed by the State, and six non-licentiate public members of the BVNPT or any other boards. Four public members and all licentiate members are appointed by the Governor. One public member is appointed by the Senate Rules Committee and one by the Speaker of the Assembly. Terms are four years. No one is permitted to serve more than two consecutive terms.

Board members establish public protection policies and render final decisions that are the foundation of all Board programs and their activities. Disciplinary final decisions are based on facts, the applicable law, and only after substantiation that the licensee or respondent received due process.



The Board's Mission

To accomplish the Board's priority and mission of public protection, the Board regulates VN and PT programs located throughout the State; LVNs and PTs who are employed in hospitals, long term care facilities, home health, correctional facilities, outpatient, clinic and school settings, military facilities; the Board's educational programs; and other practice settings.

The Board has no jurisdiction to issue degrees.

Essential Principles

1. Public protection is the highest priority.
2. Fair and timely enforcement of our laws enhances consumer protection and swift justice.
3. Our licensure examinations legally and equitably measure the competence of our licensees for entry level professional practice.
4. Assessment of staff skills, interests and satisfaction substantiate requisite staff development, training, and facilitates implementation of the Board's business processes and successful interaction with our diverse constituency, serving the public interest.
5. Creative and visionary leadership promotes best practices, effective Board governance, and influences organizational changes.
6. Transparent and meaningful interaction with the public, government entities and stakeholders fosters awareness of the Board, its mission and activities and creates opportunities for their engagement.
7. Budgetary prudence assures responsible utilization of resources.
8. Ethical, factually and legally based decisions are in the best interest of all stakeholders.

Strengths of the Board

1. Committed, competent and knowledgeable staff.
2. Collaborative and supportive oversight from the Department of Consumer Affairs.
3. Support from stakeholders.
4. Effective statutory and regulatory scheme.

Challenges in 2015 and Beyond

1. Implementation of BreEZe:
 - A. Impact on budget.
 - B. Impact on current workload.
 - C. Adequate staff resources and sufficient training.
 - D. Public's ability to transition to the new system.
2. Sunset Review:
 - A. Findings result in legislation.
 - B. Potential modification of business processes.
3. Legislation to merge the VN and PT funds.
4. Vagaries of the State's economic condition.

Goals

To achieve its public protection mission, the Board established six major goals to realize within three to five years.

- A. **Enforcement** – Methodically assess the causes of case aging and systematically remove them with the assistance of the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA), Attorney General’s Office (AG), and Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH).
- B. **Legislation & Regulation** – The Board’s targeted legislative and regulatory agendas strengthen its public protection priority, hasten the Board’s ability to take disciplinary action, assure budgetary integrity, and support its authority over the Board’s VN and PT programs.
- C. **Education** – Underlying the administration of the Vocational Nursing Practice Act (VNPA) and the Psychiatric Technician Law (PTL) is the Board’s public protection priority and, with regard to due process, approval of programs and removal of non-compliant programs.
- D. **Administration** – The Board’s public protection priority is apparent in all Board programs, goals and accomplishments; actions reflect leadership, vision, budget integrity, and partnerships with DCA, governmental agencies, the legislature and stakeholders.
- E. **Examinations and Licensing** – The Board’s application, licensure, and renewal processes are consumer friendly and timely. The VN and PT licensure examinations are psychometrically sound and consistent with current California VN and PT education and practice. Examination administration is consistent with vendor timelines and sufficient testing centers.
- F. **Automation** – The Board “goes live” with BreEZe in December 2015 with the technology, equipment, resources and trained staff to implement a new, successful IT system with less problems as seen in Release 1.

Objectives

A. ENFORCEMENT

Methodically assess the causes of case aging and systematically remove them with the assistance of the DCA, AG, and OAH and maintain timely completion of the current complaints, investigations and disciplinary process.

Objectives:

1. Systematically review old cases to determine causes for aging and pursue a written plan of action with timelines to correct.
2. Prioritize over 5,000 complaints in order of importance based on the criticality and nature of the complaint and complete their initial review within 30 days.
3. Investigate all complaints in an objective, timely and cost-effective manner to be completed in 12 months.
4. Take administrative and disciplinary action as warranted by law and by prescribed timelines specified in the Administrative Procedures Act.
5. Strengthen collaborative relationships with other State and law enforcement agencies to enhance our field investigations and support legislation that enhances our consumer protection priority.
6. Collaborate with the AG's Office, OAH, and DCA to establish mutual goals for efficiency, effectiveness, and expeditious processing of actions.
7. Utilize innovative disciplinary techniques designed to protect the public from unprofessional, incompetent and negligent practitioners.
8. Ensure public disciplinary information is reported to the Healthcare Integrity and Protection Data Bank, the National Council of State Boards of Nursing's Nursys, and on the Board's web site.
9. Expand the Board's Expert Witness Program by recruiting and training at least 10 additional experts to review enforcement cases, provide quality expert opinions, and testify at administrative hearings.

10. Seek and utilize creative solutions to mitigate an increasing workload exceeding 5,000 cases received per year.
11. Establish procedures for actions based on managerial analysis and assessment.
12. Provide staff training to enhance knowledge, skills, and awareness of the Board's consumer protection priority.

B. LEGISLATION AND REGULATION

The Board's targeted legislative and regulatory agendas strengthen its consumer protection priority, assures budgetary integrity, and supports its authority over the Board's VN and PT programs by clearly articulating the Board's expectations and enhancing the Board's ability to act swiftly.

Objectives:

1. Legislative Proposals – Initiate a statutory amendment to merge the VN and PT funds by July 1, 2016.
2. Regulatory Proposals – Exercise the Board's authority [Business and Professions Code sections 2854 (VN) and 4504 (PT)] to adopt, amend, or repeal the following regulations:
 - a. Waiver of Renewal Requirements for Licensees on Active Duty – Implement regulations to waive the renewal requirements for a licensee, including renewal fees, continuing education, and other requirements determined by the Board, if the licensee is serving on active duty in the Armed Forces or California National Guard. The goal is to implement these regulations during 2015.
 - b. Disclosure Requirements for Renewal of License – Adopt and implement regulations to increase the level of reportable infraction fine amounts, at the time of license renewal, from \$300 to \$1,000. The goal is to obtain approval from the Office of Administrative Law during 2015 to implement these regulations.
 - c. Provisional Approval & General Requirements – Adopt and implement regulations to specify that a program on provisional approval may not admit new classes without prior Board approval and adds that it is grounds for revocation of approval if a program fails to correct violations or if additional violations are committed during the provisional period.

C. EDUCATION

Consumer protection principles, quality educational and practice standards and due process are evident in the approval, removal and oversight procedures of the Board's proposed and approved programs. This is an ongoing goal.

Objectives:

1. Conduct onsite surveys of 19 VN programs to determine program compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements and Board decisions by May 31, 2015.
2. Complete surveys of 44 VN and PT programs to determine program compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements by December 31, 2015.
3. Complete the initial, detailed analysis of 48 proposed VN and PT programs, communicate deficiencies and required corrections by May 31, 2015.
4. Interpret VN and PT statutes and regulations for programs, health care practitioners, educators, consumers, governmental agencies, and other stakeholders.
5. Facilitate development and administration of VN and PT licensure examinations that are consistent with current practice, established psychometric standards, and existing statutes and regulations.
6. Continue to evaluate and refine Education Division processes to improve efficiency, eliminate redundancy, and maximize utilization of available human and physical resources.
7. Continue to optimize and expand the use of information technology for data collection and analysis relative to the education and practice of LVNs and PTs.
8. Educate program directors relative to Board expectations and responsibilities specified in the statutes and regulations when they are approved, when the need is identified by the NEC, and during Director Forums.

9. Conduct annual stakeholder surveys to identify trends and issues that significantly impact the education, practice, supply, and employability of LVNs and PTs.

D. ADMINISTRATION

The Board's consumer protection priority is apparent in all Board programs, goals and accomplishments and by vigilant oversight of its programs with respect to the consumer protection priority; actions reflect leadership, vision, budgetary prudence, and partnerships with DCA, governmental agencies and stakeholders. This is an ongoing goal.

Objectives:

1. Assure that the consumer protection priority of the Board is present in all programs by assessing Board programs and activities before legislative proposals are due to DCA.
2. As resources and travel restrictions permit, promote general consumer education/patient rights awareness and consumer protection through regular Board meetings, our website, brochures, and stakeholder contact opportunities, such as graduations, professional conferences and meetings.
3. Evaluate the Strategic Plan annually and assess progress of objectives to attain goals and revise as necessary.
4. Identify, develop, and implement the best practices for staff achievement of goals.
5. Evaluate and follow-up on the Board's performance of its regulatory functions through the use of targeted surveys, and feedback from professional, health care, and consumer organizations.
6. Continue to follow-up with the DCA Office of Human Resources (OHR) to assure our need for filling vacancies, including the difficult to fill Nursing Education Consultant positions.
7. Network with our stakeholders, DCA and other agencies to discern the future for VN and PT education and practice and the direction of health care.
8. Maintain communication with relevant legislative committees and staff to alert them about Board issues, solutions, provide input for proposed legislation and to remain abreast with legislation impacting the Board.

9. Fill vacancies quickly by immediately initiating the process with the DCA OHR when vacancies arise, utilizing resources to identify potential staff and working closely with our Personnel Specialist.
10. Engage DCA's SOLID in the development of the 2016 Strategic Plan.

E. EXAMINATIONS AND LICENSING

The Board's application, licensure, and renewal processes are user friendly and timely. The VN and PT licensure examinations are psychometrically sound and consistent with current VN and PT education and practice. Examination administration is consistent with vendor contract timelines and sufficient testing centers. This is an ongoing goal.

Examination Objectives:

1. Provide input to the National Council of State Boards of Nursing, Inc. (NCSBN) regarding California's VN statutory requirements and to assure scope of practice compliance in our contract for examination development and implementation by semi-annually reviewing past examinations and future test plans as permitted by NCSBN and Pearson View.
2. Assure that a new occupational analysis and test plan are completed every three to five years for NCLEX-VN and every five to seven years for the PT Licensure Examination.
3. Assess as necessary, or at least every three years, the NCLEX-PN examination testing centers by asking our programs for documentation, if they are experiencing any problems, in the accomodation of our 11,000 and increasing examinees.
4. Educate and inform our approved program directors of the Board's examination application requirements and procedures through director forums, our website, and Board meetings.

Licensing Objectives:

1. Review application procedures and staff resources to maintain the Board's goal of the four to eight week timeline for completion.
2. Utilize creative workforce solutions to mitigate unexpected backlogs.
3. Keep staff trained in BreEZe functions for licensing processes.
4. Assure that successful candidates meet all requirments for licensure.

5. Licensing staff assures the accuracy of the number of Board eligible examinees that tested compared to the numbers the vendor reports.

F. AUTOMATION

The Board “goes live” with BreEZe in December 2015 and continues, as resources permit, to provide staff with technology, equipment and training that will enhance their capabilities in BreEZe and to maintain the system’s requirements. This is an ongoing goal.

Objectives:

1. “Go Live” with BreEZe implementation as designed with no major problems in the timeliness of licensing and enforcement processes.
2. Set up planning meetings to efficiently communicate specific issues to the DCA’s BreEZe team and vendor toward the elimination or ‘work through’ of problems with the system or unwanted media attention.
3. Select required staff who thoroughly understand the Board’s business processes and can translate that knowledge into the required design of the system as mandated by the vendor and DCA to insure a quality product.
4. Collaborate with DCA to provide quality training of staff as measured by their understanding of BreEZe functions and ability to implement the system.
5. Support DCA’s effort to provide staff with the tools to facilitate their understanding of the dynamics of the radical change required to initiate the Board’s online business processes and the disruption that change will have while implementing the new system.

Internal Assessment Summary

An internal assessment is one element in the building of a comprehensive Strategic Plan. An internal assessment highlights an organization's operational strengths, identifies opportunities for operational improvement, and serves as an indicator of how well positioned an organization is to carry out the strategic goals it sets. The Board periodically conducts an analysis of the Board's internal operations.

Board leadership is committed to strengthening its internal operations, and believes in the ability of Board staff to share responsibility for operational improvement including office morale and team spirit. To the extent that it is financially feasible, Board leadership will continue to invest in staff's growth and development which ensures our ability to meet the Board's strategic goals.

With this shared commitment to serve our consumers and work collaboratively in 2015, Board leadership and staff are well positioned to carry out the mission and strategic goals set forth in this plan.

External Assessment Summary

The Board routinely distributes Customer Service Surveys at its public counter and at Board Meetings. The respondents are asked to rate the Board's services regarding specific performance categories. The rating scale ranged from very satisfied, satisfied, marginally satisfied, dissatisfied and very dissatisfied.

In fiscal year 2013/14, survey results indicated that 90% were either very satisfied or satisfied with the Board's performance. A total of 259 surveys were received that year (see attached). This was reported in our 2014 Sunset Review Report.