

Board of Nursing Fiscal Year 2019-2023 Workforce Plan

I. AGENCY OVERVIEW

The Board of Nursing (BON) has one of the largest licensee database in the State of Texas. The Board regulates over 410,000 nurses and 209 schools of nursing. This is a unique challenge to investigate alleged violations of the Nurse Practice Act with the size of Texas and limited staff.

The Agency is mission driven and has a strict governance code which spells out the duties of the Board as appointed by the Governor, the Executive Director and the agency staff. All rules and policies are reviewed within the framework of protecting the public. The agency has streamlined, revised and eliminated policies that did not fit this mission. The agency has the appropriations approval to hire 124.7 positions. The agency has 48 FTEs in the Enforcement Division, 43.7 FTES in the Operations Division, 16 in the Nursing Division and 17 Administrative Employees including the Executive Director. The majority of staff is located in the Austin, Texas office and recently, staff have been hired outside Austin. The board has 13 members from throughout the State of Texas.

A. *Agency Mission*

The mission of the Texas Board of Nursing is to protect and promote the welfare of the people of Texas by ensuring that each person holding a license as a nurse in the State of Texas is competent to practice safely. The Board fulfills its mission through the regulation of the practice of nursing and the approval of schools of nursing. This mission, derived from **Chapters 301, 303 and 304 of the Occupations Code**, supersedes the interest of any individual, the nursing profession, or any special interest group.

B. *Agency Strategic Goals and Objectives*

Goal A	<u>Licensing & Accreditation</u> : To manage cost-effective, quality programs of accreditation, examination, licensure and regulation that ensure standards for nursing education and practice, and which effectively serve the market demand for qualified nurses.
Objective A.1	<u>Licensing & Examination</u> : To ensure timely and cost-effective application processing and licensure/credentialing systems for 100 percent of all qualified applicants for each fiscal year.
Objective A.2	<u>Accreditation</u> : to ensure that 100 percent of nursing programs are in compliance with the Board of Nursing’s rules.
Goal B	<u>Enforcement</u> : To ensure swift, fair and effective enforcement of the Nursing Practice Act (NPA) so that consumers are protected from unsafe, incompetent and unethical nursing practice by nurses.
Objective B.1	<u>Protect Public</u> : To guarantee that 100 percent of written complaints received annually regarding nursing practice or non-compliance with the Board of Nursing’s rules are investigated and resolved in accordance with the Nursing Practice Act (NPA) and Administrative Procedures Act (APTRA) or are appropriately referred to other regulatory agencies.

C. *Business Functions*

The Board of Nursing licenses Licensed Vocational Nurses, Registered Nurses, and Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs), approves schools of nursing, approves eligible students to take the national nursing exams, investigate alleged violations of the Nursing Practice Act and the Board's Rules and Regulations.

D. *Anticipated Changes to the Mission, Strategies and Goals over the next Five Years*

The Board has implemented strategies to go paperless by using available technology and anticipate migrating to the Optimal Regulatory Board System in fiscal year 2019. Plans are being made to implement additional strategies in the future.

E. *Additional Considerations*

Key Economic and Environmental Factors

The Board is experiencing a steady annual growth rate of 2% for currently licensed LVNs and 5% for currently licensed RNs and over 10% for APRNs. The number of new Texas licensees from examination and endorsement has added to this increase due to the dramatic growth of students. For the past two fiscal years, the BON has used all appropriated general revenue funds granted by the legislature. The BON has used appropriated receipts in the Licensing strategy allowing the agency to fund all programs adequately.

Challenges to Providing Competitive Salaries

As with all high performing organizations, the BON regards the agency staff as the agency's most valuable resource. The BON strives to recruit and retain the best employees in the State of Texas. The Board has addressed turnover by consistently allowing for pay for performance via the merit raise system and implementing the compensation philosophy of exceeding the average mid-range in the state classification pay groups. With the continued growth in the central Texas economy, the agency is experiencing increased competition for nursing staff. As shown in the Survey of Employee Engagement, the BON's alternative work schedule and educational leave policies continue to receive high ratings from staff. As with the entire state, employee pay remains the agency's lowest satisfaction category. The BON continues to look for extrinsic rewards for staff as agency salaries continue to slip behind the agency's counterparts in the private sector including working from home and flexible work schedules.

The BON continues to receive numerous phone, written and e-mail inquiries. Agency statistics show the following number of phone calls accessing our automated system:

Fiscal Year 2013 - 204,920 Calls
Fiscal Year 2014 - 199,594 Calls
Fiscal Year 2015 - 215,407 Calls
Fiscal Year 2016 – 286,414 Calls
Fiscal Year 2017 – 187,087 Calls

The phone call numbers above do not include the number of direct calls that go to a staff member nor does it include the number of e-mails that are increasing monthly. The BON has a customer service department and dedicated eight staff members to the task of answering calls.

II. CURRENT WORKFORCE PROFILE (SUPPLY ANALYSIS)

A. Agency Demographics

Gender:	Female	76.0%
	Male	24.0%
Race:	African-American	11.57%
	Hispanic	24.79%
	Other	1.65%
	Caucasian	61.98%

Percentage of Workforce Eligible to Retire in the Next Five Years: 17%

Job Categories	State Civilian Workforce					
	African American		Hispanic American		Females	
2017 Data	BON %	State %	BON %	State %	BON %	State %
Officials, Administration	25%	7.4%	0%	22.1%	50.00%	37.40%
Professionals	6.9%	10.4%	27.8%	19.3%	75%	55.3%
Technicians	0%	14.4%	0%	27.2%	0%	55.3%
Administrative Support	19%	14.8%	23.8%	34.8%	85.7%	72.1%

B. Employee Turnover

Turnover has been dropping over the past five years with the agency’s ability to pay competitive salaries to new staff and pay for performance to current staff. Due to resignations and retirements, the Board has lost valuable institutional knowledge. To compensate for this loss, detailed policies and procedures and a succession plan are being made.

Agency Turnover Percentages: 2014-2017

- Fiscal Year 2014 - 16.4%
- Fiscal Year 2015 - 10.9%
- Fiscal Year 2016 – 20.7%
- Fiscal Year 2017 – 10.4%

C. Workforce Skills Critical to the Mission and Goals of the Agency

Nurses - The agency requires a minimum of Associate Degree prepared nurses for Enforcement and Master’s Degree prepared nurses for consulting. Both need critical thinking skills to apply their expertise in areas outside their particular training and education. All nurses need to be proficient in use of computer software programs since they will be processing their cases from receiving the complaint to filing formal charges, drafting orders, and writing reports on school survey visits.

All staff will have to be minimally proficient in various technologies as the BON will be moving to paperless functions within the next five years. This means the ability to manipulate programs for word processing, documenting, imaging, web-based services, and records retention.

All staff will need to advance their communication skills since the Board's focus is and will continue to be providing excellent customer service to the public. Each staff member is required in some way to interact with internal and external customers which necessitates the ability to appreciate diversity and how it affects business processes.

D. *Projected Employee Attrition Rate over the Next Five Years*

Fiscal Year 2018 - 17%
Fiscal Year 2019 - 17%
Fiscal Year 2020 - 18%
Fiscal Year 2021 - 18%
Fiscal Year 2022 - 16%

The agency anticipates ongoing difficulty in filling Nurse Investigator and Nurse Consultant positions at least until fiscal year 2020 due to the acute competition for nursing faculty and staff at schools and hospitals. If unable to secure sufficient operating funds, the agency will look for new ways to apply the merit raise system which is the most effective tool in the recruitment and retention of staff. The BON has begun to feel the effect of baby boomers beginning to retire since fiscal year 2015. Beginning in fiscal year 2017, there will be 18 staff members eligible for retirement.

III. FUTURE WORKFORCE PROFILE (DEMAND ANALYSIS)

A. *Expected Workforce Changes Driven by Factors such as changing Mission, Technology, Work, Workloads and/or Work Processes*

As the agency moves towards a paperless environment, it is anticipated that additional and ongoing training in the area of computer software and imaging processes will be needed.

B. *Future Workforce Skills Needed*

To facilitate the ongoing business processes, the agency must be able to become better knowledge agents. This will require staff to be able to use critical thinking skills, become change agents, anticipate the future, use technology wisely and manage time.

Board staff must be able to enforce the NPA by conducting timely investigations of alleged violations of the law and rules since this directly effects the protection of the public. Staff must also be able to collect fees, process license applications and license nurses as quickly as possible for the public to have adequate access to healthcare.

IV. GAP ANALYSIS

The Board does not anticipate a shortage of the pool of administrative staff over the next five years due to the available workforce in the Central Texas area. However, it is anticipated that a shortage of RNs to fill Enforcement and Nursing Consultant duties due to the public and private demand for the limited number of RNs in the workforce.

Currently, there are 29 positions requiring registered nurses. The agency anticipates the need for additional RNs by the end of the next five year cycle. They will be needed in the Practice Department to testify of alleged violations of the law and rules and three will be used in a consultant capacity to interpret complex practice issues and serve as an expert witness on cases.

The BON believes staff have the fundamental skills to complete tasks but need additional training to enhance their skills to perform more efficiently and effectively. Since there is movement towards more technology based business processes, there will no longer be a need for microfilming skills.

V. STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

In order for the agency to recruit and retain some of the most critical skills such as nursing knowledge, the agency will have to leave unfilled positions open longer to have the funds to hire and retain nurses at the mid-range of the pay scale. To bring the Nurse Investigators along faster in the enforcement area, they will be paired with mentors within the agency. Use of the Council on Licensure, Enforcement and Regulation (CLEAR) organization will facilitate investigator training. Leaders will be identified within the organization to provide internal and external training opportunities to enhance skills and help the agency in succession planning.

Goal 1	Recruit and Retain a competent workforce.
Rationale:	To establish a consistent, productive business atmosphere, the BON needs a well-trained and stable workforce to protect the public. This includes the ongoing internal training of current staff to fill open positions and possibly consolidate some work processes to enhance staff compensation with current or available funds.
Action Steps:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Request additional operating funds in the next legislative session to enhance employee compensation especially in the recruitment and retention of nurses. 2. Develop and revise agency policy and procedures to be consistent and detailed. 3. Develop mandatory training components for recognized agency sub-par skill sets. 4. Establish a mentorship program with current staff and those from other small state agencies to demonstrate best practices in needed skill sets. 5. Complete a succession plan which incorporates time lines and minimal skill sets. 6. Conduct a risk assessment to the agency due to potential knowledge loss of key staff. 7. Establish and implement a career ladder for all staff.
Goal 2	Establish an agency culture of change enhancements to business processes.
Rationale:	Resources will always be limited. At best, funding will remain constant but staff will be required to do more. This necessitates doing business more efficiently and effectively. To do this, staff will need to accept change as a way of life and not be afraid to try new ideas. It doesn't always have to be done the way it's always been done before.
Action Steps:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop an ongoing mandatory training module on change enhancements. 2. Add the skill of change enhancements and change management to the minimal core of essential job functions. 3. Reorganize agency structure around processes. 4. Develop a pay system that rewards constructive change management.