

SCHEDULE F – WORKFORCE PLAN

OVERVIEW

History: The Texas Optometry Board is charged with regulating the practice of optometry in the State of Texas.

The agency was created in 1921 by the 37th Legislature under the name Texas State Board of Examiners in Optometry. The 61st Legislature in 1969 changed the agency's name to Texas Optometry Board. The enabling legislation for the Board is found in Chapter 351 of the Texas Occupations Code.

Mission: “The mission of the agency is to promote, preserve, and protect the health, safety and economic welfare of the people of Texas through the regulation of the practice of optometry. The Board accomplishes this mission through two primary functions – licensing and enforcement.”

Goals & Objectives:

Goal: Licensure and Enforcement:

Objective: To manage a quality program of examination and licensure to ensure the initial and continuing competency of optometrists, and to enforce the optometry statutes to ensure that the public is protected from incompetent services, fraud and misrepresentation.

Strategies:

- Operate an efficient & comprehensive licensure & enforcement system
- Provide a peer assistance program for licensed individuals

Business Functions: The agency has two core functions – licensing and enforcement. As part of the licensing function, the agency processes initial licenses and renews licenses which includes continuing education monitoring. As part of the enforcement function, the agency investigates complaints and inspects optometrists to ensure compliance with the Texas Optometry Act.

Finally, the agency must comply with statutory policies and mandates regarding accounting and human resources and routinely respond to requests from ERS, CPA, State Auditor, DIR, etc. For a small agency, hiring staff to handle these types of functions is burdensome and expensive so other staff step in to cover these responsibilities.

Anticipated Changes: The agency does not anticipate changes to its mission or strategic goals for the next five years, but does anticipate changes to its rules, policies, procedures, and workforce as a consequence of evolving external changes including updated technology and social changes.

Factors Expected to Result in Changes to the Agency: Key economic, environmental, and other factors that may result in changes at the agency within the next five years:

- Staff turnover if compensation packages do not remain competitive with other regulatory agencies or do not keep pace with cost-of-living increases;
- Additional requirements and reporting mandated by the Legislature or other state officials;

- Efforts by the Board and agency leadership to reassess agency operations, rulemaking, communication, etc., in order to improve the delivery of services:
- Information technology advances; and
- Customer demand for more timely services and greater access to agency functions.

SUPPLY ANALYSIS

Workforce Profile: The Board has authorization for a total of seven full-time employees, with one exempt employee who serves as the agency head. Of the positions, 1.5 are vacant.

Diversity: The workforce diversity for the agency is:

Gender	
Male	3
Female	3
Race/Ethnicity	
Hispanic	1
White	3
Black	2
Age	
0-30	0
31-50	2
51+	4
Agency Tenure	
Less than 2 years	1
2 years or more but less than 5 years	1
5 years or more but less than 15 years	3
15 years or more but less than 20 years	1
20 years or more	0

Other: Other relevant workforce data points:

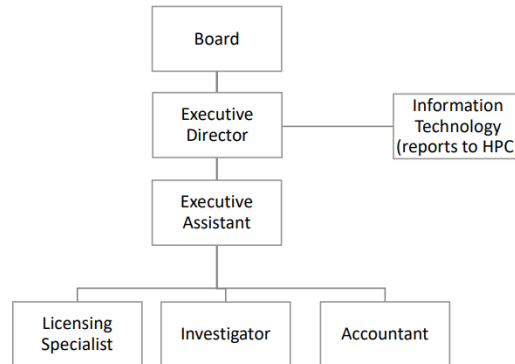
- Return to Work Employees: 2 of 5.5
- Veterans – 1 of 5.5
- FY23 Turnover Rate: 19% (1 involuntary separation)

Workforce Skills Critical to the Board’s Mission and Goals: All agency staff must be proficient in the use of computers and other standard office equipment, as well as typical software programs used in office environments. All staff must have excellent customer service skills because all staff interact with stakeholders and members of the public.

Workforce Allocation:

Organizational Structure

As of November 2023



DEMAND ANALYSIS

Future Workforce Analysis: The Board anticipates changes to its future workforce due to the following factors:

- The trend of the Legislature and other state entities to place new mandates on the agency
- The need for more optometrists due to the projected increase of the state's population
- Increasing use of automated or online technologies to enhance or improve agency efficiencies and public access
- Turnover of staff caused by non-competitive compensation packages
- The trend among the workforce to work fully remote

Future Workforce Skills Needed: To continue to meet the Board's workload, the agency must cross-train its employees, establish automated procedures to streamline processes, improve internal and external communications, and increase the use of technology throughout the agency.

GAP ANALYSIS

The agency's current workforce is qualified and competent to undertake the two primary tasks of the agency -- licensing and enforcement. The agency currently has systems in place to easily train new or existing staff on these tasks. However, the agency does face a time-gap between the notice of a vacancy and the filling of the vacant position. A period of at least a month and a-half is required to replace an employee where the agency has only a two week notice of a vacancy creation, and no matter how qualified the new employee is, additional training is always required.

As a small agency, the current workforce struggles with statutorily mandated requirements related to the financial side of the agency – purchasing, payroll, reporting, etc. Systems at other reporting agencies are not designed to easily allow for training or access.

Gap Strategy: Retention of Staff

Telecommuting: The Board provides the options of a hybrid telecommuting schedule for all positions. However, at small state agencies a fully remote schedule is inherently limited because the office must be open each weekday.

Staff Training: The agency hopes to assist staff with improving their skills by sending them to various training opportunities.

Gap Strategy: Succession Planning

Staff Procedure Manuals: Positions at the agency should develop training manuals which include materials pertinent to each position including policies and procedures, as well as form letters, checklists, etc. These manuals should be updated as procedures change.

Cross Training: When possible, staff are provided cross training for other positions in the agency. This is difficult to achieve because of the nature of each position and the small size of the agency.

Gap Strategy: Online Services

Enhanced Use of Board Website: The Board's website should be a powerful tool to increase efficiency and customer service. Agency staff continue to work toward making its website a comprehensive source of information easily accessible by the public at any time.

Gap Strategy: Reporting Requirements

Annual Checklists: The agency is currently in the process of updating its lists of reports required throughout the fiscal year by various entities to ensure it does not miss required deadlines.

Training: The agency is encouraging staff to make use of the Comptroller's training resources to ensure the agency complies with payroll, purchasing, and contracting requirements.