

December 30, 2025

Tomiquia Moss, Secretary
California Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency
500 Capitol Mall, Suite 1850
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Secretary Tomiquia Moss,

In accordance with the State Leadership Accountability Act (Leadership Accountability), the Acupuncture Board submits this report on the review of our internal control and monitoring systems for the biennial period ending December 31, 2025.

Should you have any questions please contact Benjamin Bodea, Executive Officer, at (916) 599-0218, Ben.Bodea@dca.ca.gov.

GOVERNANCE

Mission and Strategic Plan

Mission

To protect the people of California by upholding acupuncture and herbal medicine practice standards through the oversight and enforcement of the Acupuncture Licensure Act.

Goal 1: Licensing and Education

Establishes and maintains requirements to protect consumers through education, examination, licensing, professional competencies, and reasonable access to the profession.

1.1 Create a continuing education (CE) policy to accept additional entities' healing arts courses to offer licensees access to more integrative medical education and promote consumer protection.

1.2 Collaborate with acupuncture schools and the accreditor to designate fewer degree titles to improve clarity among consumers and allied health professionals.

1.3 Pursue statutory authority to establish an educational and training program application and renewal fee to maintain adequate funding.

1.4 Develop and implement a continuing education audit component to the Board's online Connect system to facilitate compliance with the ongoing continuing education requirements.

Goal 2: Enforcement

Protects the health and safety of consumers through the enforcement of the laws and regulations governing the practice of acupuncture and herbal medicine.

2.1 Develop and implement the enforcement component of Connect to promote efficiency in enforcement operations.

2.2 Complete digitization of hard copy enforcement documents to enhance efficiency in operations.

2.3 Create a tracking system to identify and monitor complaints related to the new Acupuncture Assistant role and report that information to the Board.

Goal 3: Legislation and Regulation

Advocates for statutes and adopts regulations, policies, and procedures that strengthen and support its mandate, mission, and vision.

3.1 Update the continuing education regulations to align with current statute.

3.2 Seek legislative clarity and authority over Asian massage and manual therapy to alleviate consumer confusion.

3.3 Explore the Board's capability of addressing the prescription of medicalgrade herbs to provide clarity and accountability to consumers and physicians.

3.4 Explore the feasibility of requiring that foreign-trained and tutorial applicants that take the licensing exam in a language other than English meet a minimum English proficiency to promote effective communication between practitioners and patients.

3.5 Simplify the definitions around cupping and related practices to ensure clarity for consumers and licensees.

3.6 Seek statutory authority to allow domestically trained applicants to complete missing education requirements at Board approved educational and training programs.

Goal 4: Outreach and Communication

Educes consumers, licensees, and other stakeholders about the practice and regulation of acupuncture and herbal medicine.

4.1 Provide stakeholder meetings to offer licensees and the public opportunities to inquire about Board activities and to gather input about issues of interest arising in the industry.

4.2 Collaborate with DCA's Office of Public Affairs to create and utilize social media accounts to engage diverse stakeholders.

4.3 Collaborate with other U.S. state regulatory boards to build relationships and engage in discussion about a national standard and license portability.

Goal 5: Administration and Customer Service

Continues to build and maintain an excellent organization through the development of staff, responsible management, strong leadership, and effective Board governance.

5.1 Conduct an internal fee study to monitor financial resources and re-assess fees such that, if needed, the Board can show cause for changes in the 2028 Sunset Report.

5.2 Partner with DCA to update the Board website to improve access and responsiveness.

5.3 Expand and diversify the pool of subject matter experts available to the Board.

5.4 Update staff process manuals to reflect the new Connect system.

5.5 Explore ways to implement a Customer Relations Management service that allows the Board to create tickets to track and close issues.

Control Environment

Management establishes an effective control environment by adhering to applicable laws, and regulations, establishing clear expectations for staff, and meeting or exceeding performance measures established for enforcement and licensing activities.

Information and Communication

The Board uses various communication methods with internal and external stakeholders, including e-mail blasts to listServ and Interested Parties mailing lists, social media (Twitter).

MONITORING

The information included here discusses the entity-wide, continuous process to ensure internal control systems are working as intended. The role of the executive monitoring sponsor includes facilitating and verifying that the Acupuncture Board monitoring practices are implemented and functioning. The responsibilities as the executive monitoring sponsor(s) have been given to: Benjamin Bodea, Executive Officer.

- Monitoring activities are performed, documented, and measured against a baseline
- Management evaluates results and ensures appropriate corrective actions are

implemented and documented

RISK ASSESSMENT PROCESS

The following personnel were involved in the Acupuncture Board risk assessment process: executive management, front line management, and staff.

The following methods were used to identify risks: brainstorming meetings, ongoing monitoring activities, audit/review results, other/prior risk assessments, external stakeholders, questionnaires, consideration of potential fraud, and performance metrics.

The following criteria were used to rank risks: likelihood of occurrence, potential impact to mission/goals/objectives, timing of potential event, potential impact of remediation efforts, and tolerance level for the type of risk.

RISKS AND CONTROLS

Risk: Connect Platform - Enforcement Module Development

Enforcement will slow down due to development of an enforcement module in the business modernization project since the analysts will be used for system testing throughout development and the Board will be working with the DCA's Office of Information Services and the module software developers/vendors; creating multiple points of internal and external risk.

Control: Control 1

Management will monitor enforcement performance measures to ensure the Board meets the minimum recommended timelines.

Management will continue to monitor module development with external partners to ensure timely completion and make resources available as needed. Management will monitor enforcement performance measures to ensure the Board meets the minimum recommended timelines.

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Control: Limited Term Enforcement Analyst

Should performance measures drop to or below minimum recommended timelines, a limited term analyst position should be sought after to allow for continued enforcement operations.

Risk: Excessive or Near-Limit Leave Balances

The Executive Officer and two managers have leave in excess of or near the maximum allotted for managerial employees. These hours are challenging to reduce due to the operational need in the last few years which has continued to prevent the use of leave. Should any manager transfer or retire, the leave balances in excess of 640 hours would be the financial responsibility of the Board.

Control: Grant Leave

In accordance with the California Code of Regulations, title 2, sections 599.738, 599.742.1, and 599.752, excluded employees in excess of the 640* hours maximum accrual limits will submit for approval, a plan to use vacation/annual leave utilizing DCA's Leave Reduction Plan (HR-96).

Control: Leave Buy Back

Should Leave Balances continue to be challenging to reduce, managers will be offered/encouraged to consider the leave buy back program that the Department offers depending on its budget health and if the program is available.

Risk: Funding - Increased workload, decreased licensing

Special Fund Revenue has been decreasing due to:

- 1) a decreasing licensing population,
- 2) increase in the number of applicants and trainees for the Tutorial program, (which the licensees underwrite), and,
- 3) lack of authority to collect fees for reviewing acupuncture curriculum applications and updates from training programs

Control: Automate processes

Seek a separate IT development contract to automate more of the Tutorial and Training Program application and review processes on the new Connect platform

Control: Seek Regulatory Fee Increases

Seek Fee increases of the Tutorial Program via the Regulatory rulemaking process.

Control: Seek Statutory Authority for New Curriculum Fee

Seek Statutory Authority to collect a Curriculum review fee.

Risk: Key Person Dependency

The Board's staff of 13 authorized positions leads to key person dependency for the Board's essential business functions. As a result, losing any staff member unexpectedly, or for a prolonged time, leads to delays in the Board performing its business activities and often prolongs the completion of projects and regulatory packages due to the sudden and necessary redirection of staff.

Control: Cross-Training of Staff with Management Oversight

The Board has implemented cross-training for the Board's primary business functions to prevent delays in issuing and renewing licenses and reviewing complaints if the Board unexpectedly loses staff members.

Control: Update and Maintain Procedure Manuals

With the development of the new IT licensing platform, Connect, the Board's management team are working to include the new functionality in new training manuals.

This will help reduce training times as staff are redirected to address pressing projects or regular business.

CONCLUSION

The Acupuncture Board strives to reduce the risks inherent in our work and accepts the responsibility to continuously improve by addressing newly recognized risks and revising risk mitigation strategies as appropriate. I certify our internal control and monitoring systems are adequate to identify and address current and potential risks facing the organization.

Benjamin Bodea, Executive Officer

CC: California Legislature [Senate, Assembly]
California State Auditor
California State Library
California State Controller
Director of California Department of Finance
Secretary of California Government Operations Agency