

**Board of Examiners for Speech-Language Pathology & Audiology (BSPA)
2025-27 Governor's Balanced Budget**

REFERENCE DOCUMENT

Contact: Erin K. Haag, Executive Director
Email: Erin.Haag@bspa.oregon.gov
www.oregon.bspa.gov

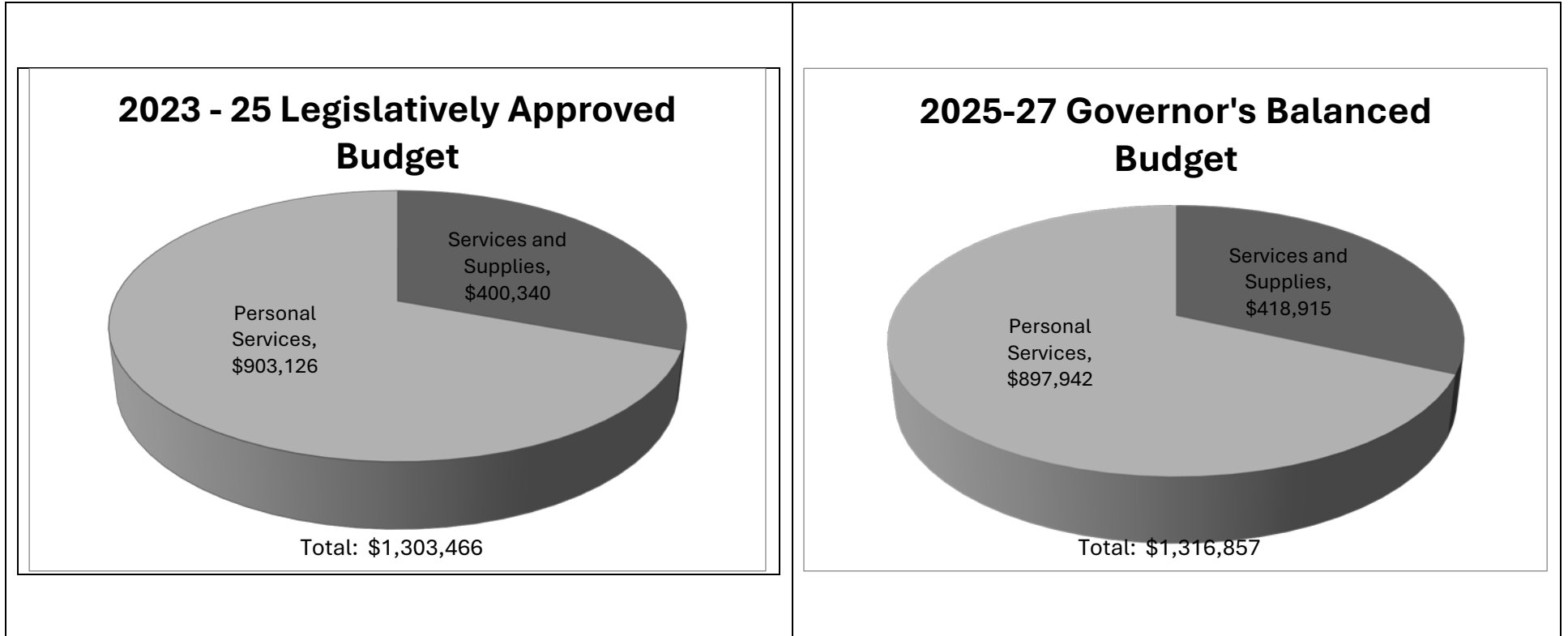
Agency Website LINK TO GBB HERE:

<https://www.oregon.gov/bspa/Documents/GBB%20Final.pdf>

- Agency Summary including budget details and description of major budget drivers
- 10% Reduction Form
- Long-Term Vacancy Form
- Ending Balance Form
- Organizational Chart

AGENCY SUMMARY

Agency Request Budget Summary Graphics



BSPA is one agency, one program, totally supported by Other Funds.

2025-27 Governor's Balanced Budget

AGENCY SUMMARY

Mission Statement and Statutory Authority

The Mission of the Board of Examiners for Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology (BSPA) is to protect the public by licensing and regulating the performance of speech-language pathologists (SLPs), audiologists, and speech-language pathology assistants (SLPAs).

The authority and responsibilities of the Board are contained in the Oregon Revised Statutes (ORS) 681.205 through 681.605; certain sections of ORS 676 “Health Professions Generally;” and Oregon Administrative Rules (OAR) 335-001-0000 through 335-095-0065.

ORS 681.220 Policy. It is declared to be a policy of this state that it is necessary to provide regulatory authority over persons offering speech-language pathology and audiology services to the public in order to:

- (1) Safeguard the public health, safety and welfare;
- (2) Protect the public from being misled by incompetent, unscrupulous and unauthorized persons;
- (3) Protect the public from unprofessional conduct by qualified speech-language pathologists and audiologists; and
- (4) Help ensure the availability of the highest possible quality speech-language pathology and audiology services to people of this state who have communication disabilities.

ORS 681.420 Powers and duties; rules. The State Board of Examiners for Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology shall:

- (1) Administer, coordinate and enforce the provisions of this chapter;
- (2) Evaluate the qualifications of applicants for any license as issued under this chapter and supervise the examination of such applicants;
- (3) Investigate persons engaging in practices which violate the provisions of this chapter;
- (4) Conduct hearings and keep records and minutes as the board deems necessary to an orderly dispatch of business;
- (5) Adopt rules and regulations, including but not limited to governing ethical standards of practice under this chapter; and
- (6) Adopt a seal by which the board shall authenticate its proceedings. Copies of the proceedings, records and acts of the board, signed by the executive director or chairperson of the board and stamped with the seal, shall be prima facie evidence of the truth of such documents.

More than 4,000 licensed SLPs, Audiologists, and SLPAs provide services to Oregonians of all ages, from newborn babies to seniors, disabled and vulnerable people. Incompetent and/or unethical hearing and speech-language professionals can have a significant negative impact on the appropriate development or rehabilitation of patients in their care. BSPA’s mission is to protect the public as it relates to the practice of speech-language pathology and audiology. Board functions and actions address professional competence and conduct, remediation, and prevention.

AGENCY SUMMARY

Agency Strategic Plans

The Board's Vision:

- **Safer, Healthier Communities** – The Board's vision is that Oregonians are protected by overseeing the practices of speech-language pathology and audiology in all settings. Speech, language and communication disorders are the most prevalent health issues of young children, and these professionals help ensure children enter school ready to learn. Licensees help Oregonians with a wide range of hearing, speech, and language disorders. Board statutes and administrative rules are continuously reviewed to ensure they meet the legislative purpose of protecting the public.
- **Equity and Inclusion** – The Board envisions that its volunteers, staff members, human resource and operational policies and administrative rules affecting licensees embrace equity and inclusion.
- **Excellence in State Government and Board Operations**– Board operations follow all state policies including transparency. The Board ensures that it provides excellent customer service by processing licenses in a timely manner, protects the public by conducting investigations and closing cases in a timely manner, and ensures that Board members receive training and support for the important public role they play.

The Board's overall strategic goals for the 2025-27 Biennium are designed to advance the Mission and Vision as well as meet the Key Performance Measures (KPM) assigned by the Legislature. The strategic plan has been updated to include new goals (see attached).

Key Performance Measures:

The Board is proposing to delete one KPM and add two in its place, see below:

1. Customer Service - Percentage of customers rating their satisfaction with the agency's customer service as "good"; or "excellent": overall, timeliness, accuracy, helpfulness, expertise, availability of information. Goal 95%
2. Percentage of individual speech-language pathology assistants (SLPAs) and their supervising speech-language pathologists (SLPs) that passed the (SLPA) audit. Goal 90%
3. Percentage of School District and Education Service Districts that passed the speech-language pathology assistant (SLPA) audit. Goal 90%
4. Timely Resolution of Complaints - Percent of investigations presented to the Board within 180 days from the date of the complaint. Goal 90%
5. Best Practices - Percent of total best practices met by the Board. Goal 100%

AGENCY SUMMARY

Proposed deletion:

1 SLPA Supervision - Percentage of School District Compliance with SLPA supervision requirements outlined in OAR 335-095-0050.

KPM 1: Currently: Percentage of School District compliance with supervision requirements outlined in OAR 335

Goal: 60%. **Proposed new KPM: Percentage of school districts and educational service districts that pass on the speech-language pathology assistant audit. Goal: 90% of school districts/ESDs score 100% on the audit.**

(See attached strategic plan)

Criteria for 2025-27 Budget Development

In developing the 2025-27 budget, the Board considered the following criteria:

1. Does it improve accessibility and equity?
2. Is it required for basic licensing, investigation, and disciplinary functions?
3. Does it enhance customer service?
4. Does it improve public safety?
5. Does it provide adequate resources so that the Board achieves its strategic plan?
6. Does it support one or more of the Board goals?
7. Does it resolve current or potential problems, or otherwise improve agency operations?
8. Can it be implemented within existing statutes and rules? If not, consider statute/rule amendments.
9. Trends in licensing and revenue

State Owned Buildings and Infrastructure

The Board does not own any state buildings, but currently leases space from the Portland State Office Building at 800 NE Oregon, sharing a suite with 4 other statutorily independent licensing boards through mutual agreement. BSPA is part of the building “re-stack” and is the process of scanning all licensing files with the goal of reducing space to just one locked office for the executive director by 2028. Staff have successfully

AGENCY SUMMARY

worked remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic and do not need to work full time in the building because both before and after the pandemic, the Board had only 1-3 in person customers per year.

Major Information Technology Projects and Initiatives

The Board contracts with DAS for its servers. BSPA is part of a six-agency contract with Thentia for database services and completed the transition to this new database during 2020-21. The Board is also part of a 10-agency contract with Cascade Technology Alliance for desktop and daily I.T. services. As a small agency, BSPA looks for opportunities to partner with other small boards and commissions such as the Board of Pharmacy, Board of Physical Therapy, Board of Dentistry, Naturopathic Medicine Board, Veterinary Medicine Board, Mortuary and Cemetery Board, Occupational Therapy Board, Medical Imaging Board, and others to achieve additional operating efficiencies while meeting our independent statutory mission.

AGENCY SUMMARY

REVENUES

1. Revenue Forecast Narrative

Source: The Board of Examiners for Speech-Language Pathology & Audiology is supported solely by Other Funds. Licensing fees comprise 99% of revenue, with the remainder provided through delinquent fees, civil penalties, interest income, and sales of mailing lists.

Matching Funds: None

Agency Programs Funded with Revenue: This agency has one program: regulating speech pathology and audiology practice to protect Oregonians.

General Limits on Use of Funds: Funds are appropriated for administration and enforcement of ORS 681.205 through 681.991, and OAR 335-001-0000 through 335-070-0095.

Basis for 2025-27 Revenue, Expense, and Fund Balance Estimates:

REVENUE: The majority of Agency revenue comes from licensing fees and the number of licensees is affected by the supply and demand for SLPs, SLPAs, and audiologists who operate from Oregon or who provide services to Oregonians through telepractice from out of state.

Approximately 95% of the Board's revenue is derived from license renewals, which are tied to the license expiration date of January 30th of each even-numbered year. The 2023-25 Legislatively Approved Budget for total revenue is \$1,042,103. However, the Board has seen **an astronomical increase in the number of out of state licensees** to the extent that at the end of month 11 of 2023-25, total revenue is already at \$1,019, 419. We are projecting total revenue for the 2023-25 biennium to be at least \$1,500,000. Even with this massive increase in the number of licensees the Board continues to issue licenses in one business day from the time all required documents have been received. This Governor's Balanced Budget includes a fairly conservative total revenue of \$1,625,350.

The total licensee count over the last several biennia has consistently increased by 13-15% and due to heavy national and state demand for these professions, the trend is expected to continue.

AGENCY SUMMARY

EXPENSES: Expenses in this 2025-27 Governor’s Balanced Budget total: \$1,302,483. The Board does not require a fee increase and will continue with the same three full time staff positions.

FUND BALANCE: The actual beginning fund balance at the start of the 2023-25 biennium was \$462,706. Given the fact that revenue is projected to be at least 50% more than what was projected, and we have vacancy savings for the first time in 8 years, the actual ending balance is projected to be \$769,213, or 14 months of reserves. Generally the board needs about 9 months of reserves due to the fact that we receive the majority of funds every other year during license renewals. This strong fund balance should enable the board to keep licensing fees stable for 2025-27 and possibly 2027-29.

When projecting needed ending balance, it would be prudent to include an amount to cover extraordinary case costs, for which BSPA is self-insured. A reasonable estimate would be \$20,000 per year or \$40,000 per biennium. While this amount has not been included the ending balance projections in this budget request, it is important to recognize that this business risk is uncovered. As the volume and complexity of cases has increased, legal and investigative costs have grown. BSPA is totally supported by licensing fees paid by licensees, with no “reinsurance” provided by the General Fund or any third party policy. The Board must have sufficient reserves to cover actions it takes to protect the public. BSPA’s cash reserves must be used to pay investigative, legal, and hearing costs that exceed budget. The Board has statutory authority to charge licensees for the costs of disciplinary proceedings. Nevertheless, at times it may be inappropriate to charge the licensee for legal costs, such as when seeking to avoid hearing costs by entering into a Consent Order with the licensee.

Proposed Changes in Revenue Sources or Fees

The Board has statutory authority in ORS 681.340 to impose fees for license fees and renewal thereof. The Board is not proposing to increase fees for the 2025-27 budget due to the factors described above.

History of BSPA Licensing Fees

The following tables summarize fee changes, their rationale, and amounts over the last 27 years.

Year	Action	Rationale
1995	Licensing fees increased	Support operations
2003	SLPA certificate fees established	New category of licensee: SLPA
2005	Licensing fees increased	Support operations
2008	Permissions fee established	New registration of SLPA supervisors licensed by TSPC; discontinued in 2009

AGENCY SUMMARY

2009	Licensing fees increased administratively	Support operations; generate 2007-09 ending balance needed to maintain agency operations through 2011-13
2011	Requested legislative approval of 2009 fee schedule; request denied and fees reverted to 2005 level	Request supported increased staffing to meet increased administrative/investigative caseload, as approved by December 2010 E-Board
2013	Fee increase approved	Fee increase was requested to support increased staff required to meet increased administrative/investigative caseload as approved by December 2010 E-Board, and to implement fingerprint-based criminal background checks as authorized by 2009 Legislature. However, this fee increase was lowered in the LAB based on legislative denial of requested 0.5 FTE investigator. Also, new fees were approved for temporary and limited license fee categories and for fingerprinting fees to be passed through to the Oregon State Police .
2021	Fee Increase Approved	The legislature approved fee increases during the 2021 session.

AGENCY SUMMARY

BSPA Current Licensing Fee Schedule			
Fee	Fee Amount 2021	Who Pays?	Biennial/One Time/ Annual
Application Fee	95	ALL	One Time
Biennial Active License/Renewal Fee	250	SLP/AUD	Biennial
Biennial Inactive License/Renewal Fee	75	SLP/AUD	Biennial
Conditional License/Renewal Fee	100	SLP/AUD	One Time/ Annual
Biennial Certificate/Renewal Fee	100	SLPA	Biennial
Biennial Inactive Certificate/Renewal Fee	50	SLPA	Biennial
Delinquent Fee	150	ALL	When Applicable
Permissions Fee	NA	SLP	Annual
Temporary License	100	SLP/AUD	When Applicable
Temporary Certificate	50	SLPA	When Applicable
Limited Term License	125	SLP/AUD	When Applicable
Limited Term Certificate	50	SLPA	When Applicable
OSP Background Check	50	ALL	One Time

AGENCY SUMMARY

Types of Licenses and Who Pays

- Licensing fees are paid on a biennial basis by active speech-language pathologists (SLPs), speech-language pathology assistants (SLPAs), and audiologists (AUDs). Individuals dually licensed in both SLP and AUD pay only a single fee.
- Delinquent fees are levied on licensees who are late in renewing, re-activating after a lapse, and for other reasons specified in our rules (including late or inadequate reporting of professional development).
- The application fee is a one-time, non-refundable fee for initial licenses of all types.
- The fingerprint background check fee is a one-time, non-refundable initial license fee for all types.
- The conditional license fee is for a special one-year license for newly graduated SLPs during their clinical fellowship year which is renewable for one year if needed while the individual completes their fellowship requirements.
- Miscellaneous fees are charged for sales of mailing lists to licensees or members of the public.

Temporary license fees were approved as part of the 2013-15 budget process. The Board adopted OAR 335-085-0010 to implement this license category, effective July 1, 2013. Temporary licenses are valid for up to 6 months, and its current uses are:

- To allow an applicant to be licensed while awaiting final transcripts to be issued in the event that all degree requirements have been met, but the university only confers degrees at certain dates in the year.
- To allow applicants who are licensed after May 1st of odd-numbered years to be issued a lower-cost limited term initial license, since they will need to renew it by December 31st. This makes the initial costs fairer for licensees applying within a short time before the renewal deadline.
- To allow military spouses to work in Oregon if they hold a license in another state, until the next renewal at which time they must obtain the regular Oregon license.
- Effective September 13, 2013, the Board created a new temporary Provisional SLPA license. This license allows an SLPA candidate to complete their clinical fieldwork outside of an academic practicum course without engaging in unlicensed practice.

2. Detail of Lottery Funds, Other Funds, and Federal Funds Revenue—See ORBITS BPR012 (same as 107BF07) on page C6. The Board has one source of funds: Other Funds.

AGENCY SUMMARY

Agency Programs

The Agency is comprised of one program that regulates the practice of speech-language pathology and audiology and licenses and investigates speech-language pathologists, speech-language pathology assistants, and audiologists in the state of Oregon. The Board's functions are entirely supported by Other Funds; specifically by licensing fees and related administrative charges (such as delinquent fees, civil penalties, and sales of licensee mailing lists).

The Board regulates the professional practice of speech-language pathology and audiology through reviewing credentials for licensure, ongoing monitoring of licensees through compliance audits, and investigating complaints regarding professional competence and conduct. BSPA issues licenses to qualified applicants on an ongoing basis and renews licenses biennially. All regular licenses must be renewed by December 31st of odd numbered years to be considered timely. This creates a very uneven revenue cycle, with 90% of BSPA's revenue historically realized in November/December/January of each new biennium.

BSPA references national standards developed by the American Speech-language Hearing Association (ASHA) and the American Academy of Audiology (AAA) regarding scope of practice, required education and training, and professional and ethical standards. BSPA also solicits input from the Oregon Academy of Audiology (OAA) and Oregon Speech-language Hearing Association (OSHA) regarding issues important to licensees.

The Board regulates the professional practice of speech-language pathology and audiology through ongoing monitoring of licensees, including investigations regarding professional competence and conduct. The Board receives complaints and reviews them to determine whether the complaints fall within the Board's authority, and, if so, obtains information to establish whether a violation of statutes or rules has occurred. Investigative reports prepared by staff and clinical experts are reviewed, and Board members themselves may also interview licensees during an investigation. The Board functions as a "committee of the whole" to determine if a violation has occurred and take appropriate disciplinary action. The Assistant Attorney General (AAG) assigned to the Board is consulted for legal advice on disciplinary and related administrative matters.

Volume

Workload is tracked by two measures—licensee counts and disciplinary/compliance caseload. The total number of licensees as of July, 2018, was 2,771 while the total as of July, 2020 is 3,058. That represents a 10.3% increase. The total number of licensees in July of 2022 was 3,510, an increase over the two year period of 14%. It is most relevant to compare to two years ago at the same point in time, because of the biennial renewal cycle. This trend of the number of licensees increasing by at least 10% each biennium has held true over the last 15 years, and is expected to continue here

AGENCY SUMMARY

in Oregon. A striking trend since 2021 is that more than 55% of all new licensees do not live in Oregon and work with Oregon's citizens via telepractice. There are no barriers to practicing across state lines due to Oregon's telepractice rules as long as providers are licensed if they are either living in Oregon or working with patients in Oregon. As of January, 2025, the Board has more than 4,000 licensees.

Disciplinary and compliance cases have also increased over time. During 2004 through 2008, the Board investigated approximately 20 cases per year. 2009 saw a big jump to 41 cases, and in 2011 the board logged 100 case investigations. The Board opened 86 case investigations in 2017, 56 in 2018, 74 in 2019, 63 in 2020, 44 in 2021, and 64 in 2022, 56 in 2023 and 46 in 2024. Investigators at state licensing boards generally handle 40 open cases at any given time.

Staffing & Budget Highlights

The Board is currently staffed by three positions including a full time Executive Director, full time Administrative Assistant (Administrative Specialist 2) and as of May, 2019, a full time Investigator 2. That position became vacant in March 2024 as she took a promotion with the Board of Nursing. We filled the position and the new investigator started on January 27, 2025, so the board had a substantial vacancy savings but will not have vacancies in 2025-27.

No General Funds are used to fund the Board program or functions. Licensing fees provide 99% of Board revenue; the remainder comes from civil penalties or delinquent fees for violations of Board statutes and rules, interest income and sales of mailing lists. These are all Other Funds.

Environmental Factors

- Growth and aging of the state population is increasing the demand for speech, language, communication and audiology services. According to the *U.S. Occupational Outlook*, the number of audiologists is expected to grow 10% during 2006-2016, and the number of SLPs is projected to increase 11%.
- More than 55% of all new licensees in 2021 are not living in Oregon. This is a striking trend most likely due to COVID-19 but also Universal Licensure, since more SLPs who are not also licensed in education will tend to want licensure in Oregon where only the Board license is required to work in schools and all settings.
- Pacific University has added graduate programs in audiology and SLP, and PSU has increased its SLP graduate program capacity. These changes increased the number of Oregon graduates qualified for licensing beginning in 2013.

AGENCY SUMMARY

- A shortage of qualified SLPs has existed in all geographical areas of the state; particularly in rural areas. This appears to be subsiding with increased in-migration, the slow economic recovery, and the increased capacity of the Oregon training programs and a dramatic increase in the provision of services via telepractice. There remains a problem in recruitment and retention of SLPs in some areas.
- Increased awareness of the law requiring speech-language pathology assistant (SLPA) certification and use of SLPAs due to the shortage of SLPs has contributed to the use of SLPAs. The Board responded in September 2013 by creating a Provisional SLPA license to allow individuals *not* enrolled in a university program to legally complete clinical fieldwork required for SLPA certification.
- SLPAs are required to be supervised by a SLP licensed by the Board, or by an SLP certified by TSPC who has agreed to follow the supervision rules adopted by the Board. This maintains supervision standards and provides the Board with jurisdiction over all aspects of SLPA practice.
- Improved awareness of the Board's role in consumer protection has resulted in increased administrative and legal costs associated with investigations and disciplinary actions. From 1989-2006, the Board received only 2-3 outside complaints per year. The Board now engages in more compliance investigations and communicates regularly with other jurisdictions regarding complaints filed elsewhere. Recent statistics demonstrate a striking increase in caseload.
- COVID-19 impacted agency operations in a number of ways including the need to clarify telepractice, conduct temporary rulemaking, and coordinate guidance statements with Oregon Department of Education, the Oregon Health Authority, the Governor's office and others.
- In ORS 694 and OAR 333-025, the State of Oregon requires hearing aid dealers to be licensed through the Oregon Health Licensing Agency. Legislative changes in 2009 recognized hearing aid dispensing as part of the scope of practice of audiologists. Board-licensed audiologists are no longer required to be licensed by OHLA; regulation of this function is now under the aegis of this Board. However, there remain issues of mutual interest and cooperation between BSPA and OHLA regarding these related license types.
- Continued pressure from the national professional organizations to join a national licensure compact, however the legislative counsel has stated it is not consistent with the Oregon Constitution.

Agency Initiatives & Accomplishments

AGENCY SUMMARY

- Collaboration with Oregon Department of Education Medicaid program to ensure that licenses who bill Medicaid for services provided by SLPs, audiologists, and SLPAs are according to Board rules. Participated in training sessions for this pilot program.
- Conversion to a new database and conducted successful online renewal. New applicants now able to apply online and the board is working to eliminate all paper by accepting electronic college transcripts. As of 2020, the Board is no longer accepting checks with all payment received online, increasing efficiency and reducing risk.
- Transition to an “almost” paper-free agency, work to continue in 2025-27 and reduce office space.
- Nimble reaction to COVID-19 pandemic with Q&A, rules reviews, collaboration with ODE and others.
- With COVID-19, Board staff of three began working remotely as of March 10, 2020, and Board meetings have been held via Zoom and conference call.
- The Board held or participated in three Zoom meetings to update and advise licensees on matters related to COVID-19 during Spring and Summer, 2020.
- Staff spoke at additional public meetings including presentations for master’s students at Portland State University and Pacific University.
- Increased the board’s racial diversity. Completed biennial Affirmative Action diversity and inclusion plan.
- Created and posted Guide to Utilization of SLPAs to address the new rules that went into effect January 1, 2020.
- With the addition of a full time Investigator, all new cases are brought to the Board within 180 days or sooner. (New 2020& 2021 Cases)

State-owned buildings and infrastructure – (n/a)

Major IT Projects/Initiatives— N/A

Summary of 2021-23 Budget—See ORBITS report.

Program Prioritization for 2021-23—Form 107BF23 not applicable. Agency has only one program.

Reduction Options—ORS 291.216 Reduction Option Form (Form 107BF17).

Organization Chart 2024 (current) and also proposed – no new staff positions.

AGENCY SUMMARY

PROGRAM UNITS

1. Program Unit Organization Charts--The agency has only one program; see previous information regarding agency operations.

2.i. Enabling Legislation/Program Authorization

Statutory authority for this regulation is provided in ORS Chapter 681 and ORS Chapter 676 (for Health Professions Generally), and implemented through OAR Chapter 335.

2.j. Funding Streams

BSPA's functions are entirely supported by Other Funds. Licensing fees provide 99% of agency revenue; the remainder is from delinquent/late fees, civil penalties, interest income, and sales of licensee mailing lists.

3. Program Unit Narrative—The agency has only one program; see Section 1

4. Packages

The Board is requesting the essential packages

a. Package Narrative

Essential Packages

010 Non-PICS Personal Services/ Vacancy Factor—This package reflects an increase in Public Employees' Retirement System pension obligation bond payment calculated by the state, and an adjustment to the mass transit tax. Vacancy savings is not anticipated, DAS rent increased.

031 Standard Inflation and State Government Service Charges—This package increases most Service and Supplies costs by amounts allowed by the state.

b. Essential and Policy Package Fiscal Impact Summary

ORBITS BPR013 follows on page D16.

AGENCY SUMMARY

c. Policy Packages Involving IT Projects

Not applicable.

5. Detail of Lottery Funds, Other Funds, and Federal Funds Revenue

See ORBITS BPR012 on page C6.

AGENCY SUMMARY

Special Reports

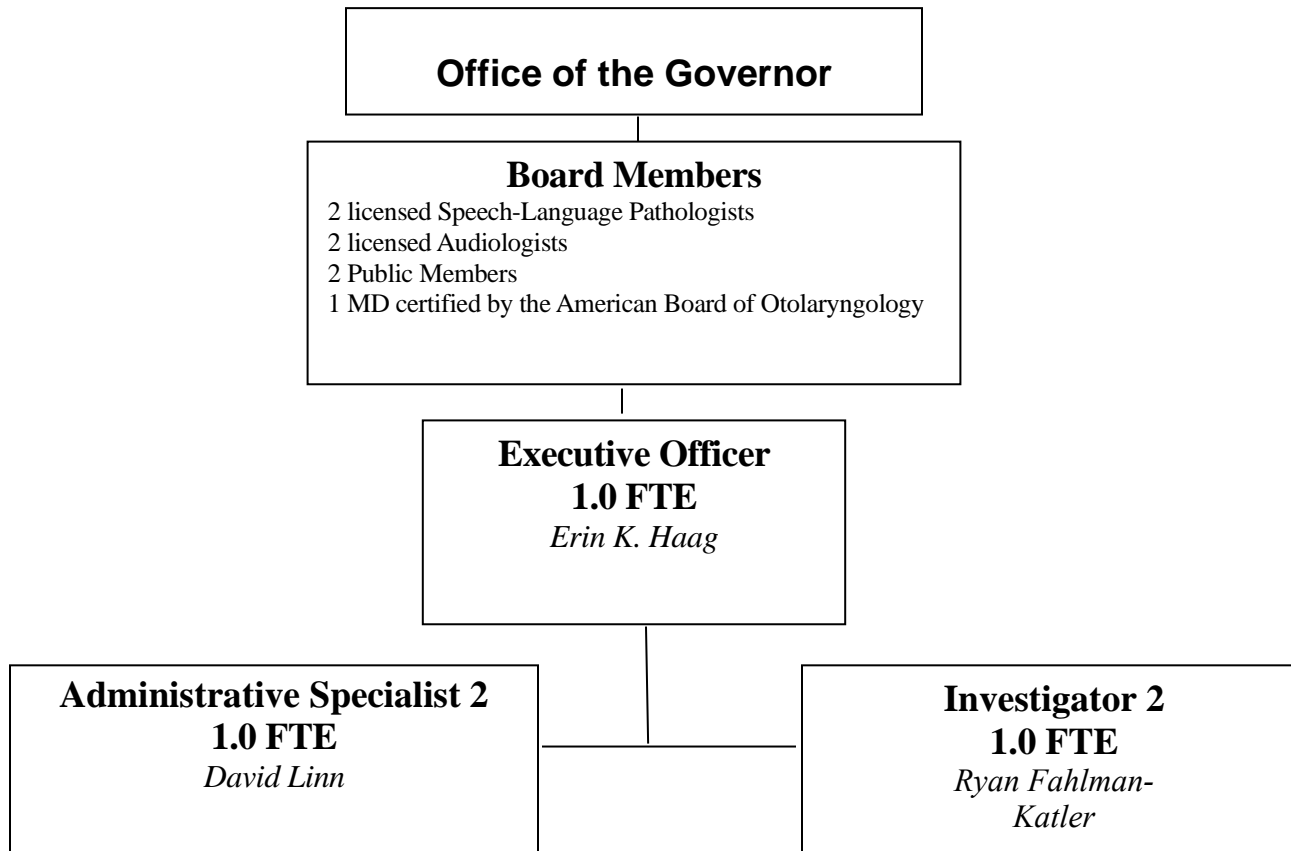
Strategic Plan, May 2024
Affirmative Action Report – attached

BUDGET NARRATIVE

Agency Summary: Organization Chart, 2023-25 Current

Oregon Board of Examiners for Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology

ORGANIZATION CHART

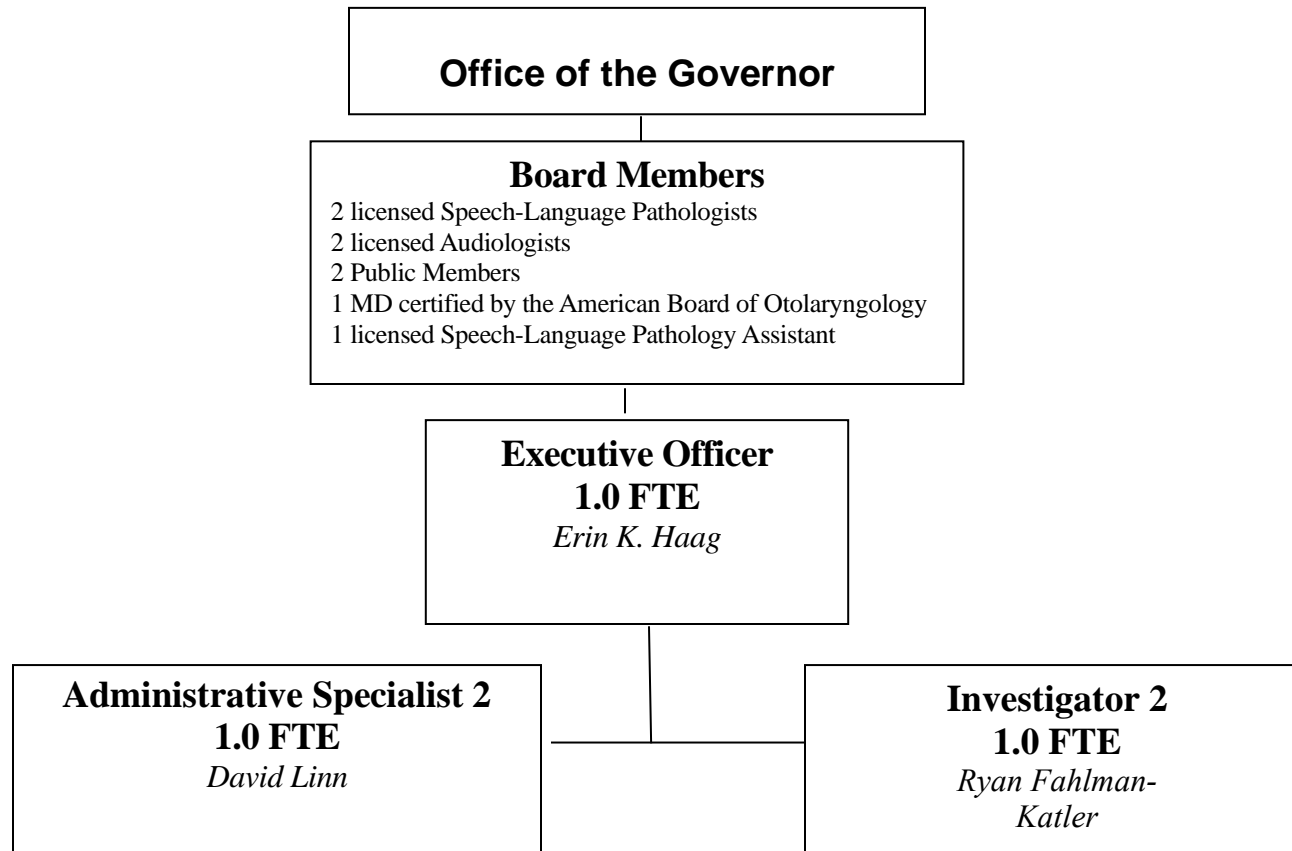


BUDGET NARRATIVE

Agency Summary: Organization Chart, 2023-25 Proposed

Oregon Board of Examiners for Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology

ORGANIZATION CHART



Agency Name (Acronym)
2025-27 Biennium

Detail of Reductions to 2025-27 Current Service Level Budget

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Priority (ranked most to least preferred)	Agency	SCR or Activity Initials	Program Unit/Activity Description	GF	LF	OF	NL-OF	FF	NL-FF	TOTAL FUNDS	Pos.	FTE	Used in Gov. Budget Yes / No	Impact of Reduction on Services and Outcomes	
Dept	Prgm/ Div														
	BSPA	42803	Licensing and regulation of speech-language pathology & audiology							\$ 130,284	3	3.00		10% cut to total personal services expense (by cutting back each position by 10%) would mean that all Board functions would be slowed down and a backlog would build up.	
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TOTAL				-	-	-	-	-	-	\$ 130,284	3	3.00			

Target (10%)
Difference \$ 130,284

