

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PLAN



Occupational Therapy Licensing Board

Nancy Schuberg, Executive Director
800 NE Oregon St., Suite 407
Portland, OR 97232
971-673-0198

Diversity & Inclusion/Affirmative Action Plan July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2025

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all People are created equal,
that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights,
that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness."*

-- U.S. Declaration of Independence



Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

Occupational Therapy Licensing Board
800 NE Oregon, Suite 407
Portland, OR 97232-2162
Phone: 971-673-0198
FAX: 971-673-0226
www.oregon.gov/otlb

September 14, 2022

Juliet Valdez, Statewide Affirmative Action Manager
Office of Cultural Change
Dept. of Administrative Services
155 Cottage Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: 2023-2025 Occupational Therapy Licensing Board Diversion & Inclusion/Affirmative Action Plan

The Executive Director and members of the Occupational Therapy Licensing Board (Board) recognize and appreciate the benefit of Diversity & Inclusion/Affirmative Action. The Board pledges its commitment to promote best practices in support of equal employment opportunity and to achieve the full and fair contribution of underserved communities, women, people with disabilities, older persons, and all protected classes found to be under utilized in the workforce.

Although the Board is small, with just two staff members and five board members, the Board realizes that affirmative action and diversity and inclusion go beyond the employment realm. The Board consciously considers these elements of affirmative action when recruiting new Board members, and in dealings with vendors, contract workers and in service to the public.

To meet the objectives of the Board's Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity initiative, the Board has prepared an Affirmative Action Policy and a Summary Statement that will serve to eliminate and prevent discrimination of all protected classes.

As Agency Director and Affirmative Action Representative, I pledge uphold and support compliance with the Board's Diversity & Inclusion/Affirmative Action Plan and Policy, to ensure equality and avoid discrimination, and to promote a workforce that is representative of the population as a whole.

Thank you for your continued direction and support.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Schuberg
Executive Director

Occupational Therapy Licensing Board

2023-2025 Affirmative Action Plan

Agency Overview: The Oregon Occupational Therapy Licensing Board, created in 1977, regulates occupational therapy practice to assure that only qualified persons provide occupational therapy services. The Board sets the standards of practice, examines applicants for licensure, and issues licenses to qualified applicants. The Board investigates complaints and takes appropriate disciplinary action when violations are found to have occurred. The Board staff includes a full time Director and half time Administrative Assistant.

Mission Statement: To protect the public by supervising Occupational Therapy (OT) practice and to assure safe and ethical delivery of Occupational Therapy services.

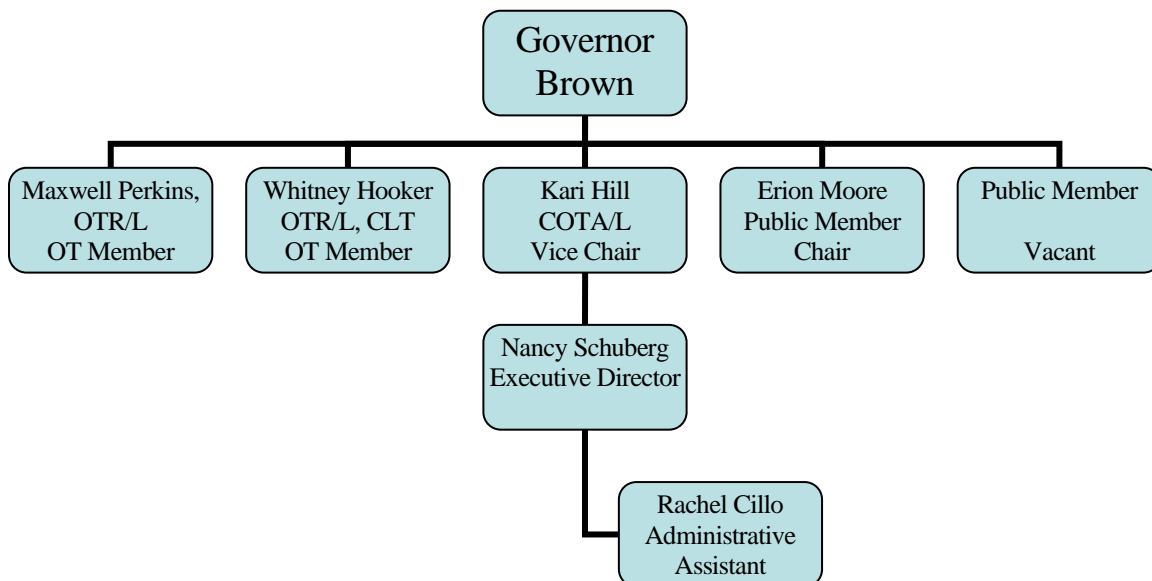
Agency Director / Affirmative Action Representative:

Nancy Schuberg, Executive Director
Oregon Occupational Therapy Licensing Board
800 NE Oregon St. Suite 407
Portland, OR 97232
Phone: 971-673-0198
Email: nancy.schuberg@otlb.oregon.gov

Governor’s Policy Advisor:

Jackie Yerby, Policy Advisor for Behavioral Health and Health Licensing

Organizational Chart:



Occupational Therapy Licensing Board

2023-2025 Affirmative Action Plan

Affirmative Action Statement

The Occupational Therapy Licensing Board will not tolerate discrimination or harassment on the basis of age, color, marital status, mental or physical disability, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or any reason prohibited by state or federal statute. Nor shall the Board do business with any vendor/provider for the state of Oregon who discriminates or harasses in the above-described manner. All personnel, licensing actions and disciplinary actions of the Board shall be administered according to this policy.

All staff of the Board shall adhere to the Affirmative Action Policy and Plan. It is the duty of employees of the Board to create a job environment atmosphere that is conducive to non-discrimination policies and free of any form of discrimination or harassment. The application of this policy is the individual responsibility of all administrative staff, and each shall be evaluated on his/her performance in achieving this affirmative action policy as well as in other job performance criteria. The Affirmative Action Plan is posted on the Board's website and a hard copy is available at the Board office. Posters detailing state and federal employment laws are on display in the Board office common area.

All employees are advised of the procedure for lodging a discrimination/ harassment complaint, and all employees with concerns of any kind related to affirmative action shall be encouraged to bring them to the attention of the Executive Director or the Board Chair.

It is further the policy of the Board to establish and maintain this program of affirmative action to provide for a method of eliminating any effects of past or present discrimination, intended or unintended, which may be indicated by analysis of present employment patterns, practices, or policies.

Diversity and Inclusion Statement

The Occupational Therapy Licensing Board is committed to equitable treatment and elimination of discrimination in all its forms. The Board recognizes the rights of all individuals to mutual respect, acceptance of others without biases based on differences of any kind.

The Board values its staff and Board members. Recognizing the uniqueness of everyone and the contribution that each can make, respecting those of different cultures and creating an inclusive work environment where awareness of, and respect for, those of different backgrounds is promoted.

The Board Director spent three and a half years living abroad in China and Thailand and continues to celebrate diversity in her work and personal life through friendships, reading, cultural events, films and contact with people of diverse backgrounds. She pledges to act immediately if made aware of any employee or Board member engaging in any type of harassment.

Board staff and Board members of the Occupational Therapy Licensing Board will be treated with respect and dignity.

Occupational Therapy Licensing Board

2023-2025 Affirmative Action Plan

Progress on 2021-2023 Affirmative Action Goals

The Board recognizes the value of individual and cultural differences. Being a small Board with just 1.5 FTE and no personnel activity did not lend itself the opportunity to do much in the way of diversity staffing considerations during the 2021-23 plan period.

The OT licensing Board is comprised of five members who are ethnically and demographically diverse. There are two white women, one white male, and one African American male who is disabled. The range in age is from 37 to 61. In the 21-23 biennium, the Board replaced one of the OT female members who reached term limitations. Under the guidance of the Governor's office of Executive Appointments, the Board recruited the newest member from outside the Portland Metro area to increase the geographic diversity of the Board. The new member is a white woman, who works in rural settings. The board is currently in the process of recruiting a new public member to replace its former member, an African American male who resigned due to illness.

Other than turnover, the Board Director continues to create a welcoming environment by fostering an acceptance of people's differences and treating everyone with respect and professionalism whether they are staff or customer.

The Board Director shares information from DEI/AA meetings with staff and the Board. The Board will continue to display the agency commitment to the Affirmative Action Plan by posting the link on their website homepage and displaying a copy in the Board office and make copies available when considering new vendor/contract relationships.

The Board Director forwards notices and emails about cultural activities, webinars and other information that supports diversity and tolerance to licensees, Board members and staff. During the 2021-22 time period, Board staff (Nancy Schuberg and Rachel Cillo) attended a Pride Month Event entitled "Intersectionality: Our next steps together". The Board Director completed Diversity & Equity Conversation/Training, completed course entitled, "Preventing Discrimination and Harassment", and "Creating a Transgender Inclusive Workplace". Board staff (Nancy Schuberg and Rachel Cillo) both completed the NBCOT J.E.D.I. (Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion) Self-reflection tool, an award-winning open access tool consisting of modules that foster opportunities for self-reflection and personal growth related to the JEDI principles.

The Director continues to work with the Oregon Health Authority to collect workforce data during every renewal period. In 2020, the Board established rules in accordance with HB 2011 (2019) requiring all licensees to complete continuing education on cultural competence during every renewal period.

The Director recently received a performance evaluation from the Board Chair and was evaluated positively on her effectiveness in achieving the Boards Affirmative Action objectives.

On a national level, the national OT association worked with members of Congress to introduce the Allied Health Workforce Diversity Act. The *Allied Health Workforce Diversity Act* (S. 1679/H.R. 3320) was first introduced in 2019. The goal of this legislation is to increase the number of individuals currently underrepresented in the professions of occupational therapy, physical

therapy, respiratory therapy, speech-language pathology, and audiology, by creating a grant program administered by the Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA).

Since its initial introduction, the *Allied Health Workforce Diversity Act* (AHWD) has received a lot of Congressional attention. In its first year, at the end of 2019, it passed the full House of Representatives as part of a larger health care workforce package. Unfortunately, that bill was never voted on by the Senate, and the process had to begin again in the new Congress. This Congress has seen even more progress.

On March 15, 2022, the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee overwhelmingly approved a broad piece of legislation that included a new grant program to increase the diversity of the allied health workforce. This broad bill, the *Prepare for and Respond to Existing Viruses, Emerging New Threats (PREVENT) Pandemics Act* (S. 3799) was designed to improve our response to pandemics. The grant program included in the *PREVENT Pandemics Act* is based on the grant program created in the *Allied Health Workforce Diversity Act*. The new program created by the legislation would provide funding to higher education programs to implement strategies that have been shown to increase the recruitment, enrollment, retention, and graduation of students from underrepresented and disadvantaged backgrounds.

2023-2025 Affirmative Action Goals

Being a small Board with just 1.5 FTE and no personnel activity does not allow the opportunity to do much in the way of diversifying staff. However, in the current plan period the Board will replace a public member who resigned due to illness and the Board will look for opportunities to further diversify its profile.

In recruiting the new OT board member, The OTLB will work to increase diversity of the Board membership through efforts to encourage women, disabled persons and underserved communities to seek positions on the board. This will be accomplished through notices on the Board website, e-newsletter and through efforts to coordinate with the Governor's office of Executive Appointments to select diverse candidates. Applicants will be informed that the Board values and is committed to workforce diversity and will be provided with the Boards current Affirmative Action plan.

The Boards strategy for retaining its board members and staff includes encouraging a welcoming environment, keeping doors open for questions and answers and treating employees with respect and dignity. Board members and staff will continue to be provided with opportunities to attend affirmative action and diversity-related training courses. The Board handles all its own HR matters. It does not receive services from another agency.

The Board will continue to work with the Oregon Health Authority to collect workforce data collection for licensees and to inform licensees of free and low-cost opportunities for cultural competency continuing education.

The Director will act immediately if made aware of any Board employee or board member engaging in any type of harassment.

The Director will continue to be evaluated on compliance with the agency's AA objectives on the annual performance evaluation.