

**California Board of
Barbering and Cosmetology**

**Board Meeting
Minutes of February 23, 2026**

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Tonya Fairley, President
Kellie Funk, Vice President
Anthony Bertram
Michelle Edgar
Megan Ellis
Dr. Yolanda Jimenez
Tamika Miller
Danielle Munoz
Calimay Pham
Steve Weeks

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT

Carrie Harris, Deputy Executive Officer
Allison Lee, Board Project Manager
Sabina Knight, Legal Counsel
Monica Burris, Executive Analyst

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

Sinar Lomeli

1. Call to Order/ Roll Call/ Establishment of Quorum

President Tonya Fairley convened the meeting at approximately 10:00 am. A roll call confirmed the presences of a quorum.

2. Board President's Welcome (Tonya Fairley)

President Fairley acknowledged that February 23, 2026, marked Vice President Kellie Funk's last Board meeting. She thanked Ms. Funk for her service as Vice President over the past year and for her four years of board service as a practicing aesthetician. Ms. Funk delivered prepared remarks reflecting on her tenure, urging licensees to engage with the Board, expressing gratitude to President Fairley for the nomination as Vice President, and commending Board staff. Ms. Funk also noted the removal of the practical examination and called for thoughtful efforts to align esthetician's preparedness with consumer expectations. President Fairley also acknowledged the completion of Colette Kavanaugh's Board term.

3. Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) Update and Discussion of Same, Which May Include Updates on DCA's Administrative Services, Human Resources, Enforcement, Information Technology, Communications and Outreach, and Legislative, Regulatory, or Policy Matters.

Shelly Jones, Assistant Deputy Director of Board and Bureau Relations, presented the DCA update on behalf of the Department. The following topics were covered:

Leadership Update: Chief Deputy Director Christine Lally has been named Acting Director of DCA following the retirement of Director Kimberly Kirchmeyer. Director Lally

has served in multiple leadership roles within DCA since 2013 and will serve until a director is formally appointed by the governor.

License Renewal Fee Relief for LA Fire Survivors: Governor Newsom's executive order allowing a one-year postponement of license renewal fees for Los Angeles fire survivors (fees due January through June 2025) remains in effect. DCA began sending reminder notices in January 2026. Licensees in the BreEZe system can renew online; others must mail payments.

Governor's Reorganization Plan: Enacted July 5, 2025. The Business Consumer Services and Housing Agency will be split into two agencies. The new Business and Consumer Services Agency becomes operative July 1, 2026, with DCA among eight departments within it. DCA is participating in transition workgroups and will keep board leadership apprised.

Travel Reminders: Members should evaluate ride-sharing versus rental cars; carpooling is encouraged. Receipts should be retained for new travel costs such as luggage charges.

Form 700 / Statement of Economic Interest: Members must file within 30 days of assuming or leaving appointment and annually by April 1. The 2026 annual filing covers January 1 through December 31, 2025. The deadline is April 1, 2026; DCA requested e-filing completion by March 20, 2026. Filing must be completed through the FPPC online portal; paper copies are not accepted.

Training Updates: An Unconscious Bias Training module has been developed for board members and will be added to LMS accounts and incorporated into the onboarding process for new members. The Annual President's Training is scheduled for February 24, 2026, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. (virtual, for board presidents and vice presidents). Board Member Orientation dates for 2026: April 1, June 24, and October 21 (must be completed within one year of appointment or reappointment).

Steve Weeks asked about DCA's total staffing. Ms. Jones indicated DCA has several thousand employees; President Fairley noted approximately 3,500.

Public Comment: No public comments were received for this agenda item.

4. Annual Election of Officers

Motion: Steve Weeks nominated Tonya Fairley for Board President. Dr. Yolanda Jimenez seconded. Tonya Fairley accepted the nomination.

Public Comment: There were no public comments received.

Roll Call Vote: Motion to approve the Tonya Fairley as Board President carried: 10 yes, 0 no, and 0 abstain, per the following roll call vote:

- Board Members voted "Yes": Tonya Fairley, Kellie Funk, Anthony Bertram, Michelle Edgar, Megan Ellis, Dr. Yolanda Jimenez, Tamika Miller, Danielle Munoz, Calimay Pham, Steve Weeks

Motion: Dr. Yolanda Jimenez nominated Danielle Munoz for Vice President. Steve Weeks seconded; President Fairley also seconded. Danielle Munoz accepted the nomination.

Public Comment: There were no public comments received.

Roll Call Vote: Motion to approve the Danielle Munoz as Board Vice President carried: 10 yes, 0 no, and 0 abstain, per the following roll call vote:

- Board Members voted “Yes”: Tonya Fairley, Kellie Funk, Anthony Bertram, Michelle Edgar, Megan Ellis, Dr. Yolanda Jimenez, Tamika Miller, Danielle Munoz, Calimay Pham, Steve Weeks

5. Discussion and Possible Approval of the 2026 Board Member Guidelines and Procedures Manual

Staff presented updates to the 2026 Board Member Guidelines and Procedures Manual, including: reorganization of standing committees listed in alphabetical order; updated defensive driver training link; and updated travel reimbursement mileage rate from 67 cents to 72.5 cents per mile.

Motion: Calimay Pham moved to approve the 2026 Board Member Guidelines and Procedures Manual. Tonya Fairley seconded.

Public Comment: No public comments were received in person or online.

Roll Call Vote: Motion to approve the 2026 Board Member Guidelines and Procedures manual carried: 10 yes, 0 no, and 0 abstain, per the following roll call:

- Board Members voted “Yes”: Tonya Fairley, Kellie Funk, Anthony Bertram, Michelle Edgar, Megan Ellis, Dr. Yolanda Jimenez, Tamika Miller, Danielle Munoz, Calimay Pham, Steve Weeks

6. Discussion and Possible Approval of the November 17, 2025, Board Meeting Minutes

Motion: Tonya Fairley moved to approve the November 17, 2025, Board Meeting Minutes. Danielle Munoz seconded.

Public Comment: No public comments were received in person or online.

Roll Call Vote: Motion to approve the November 17, 2025, Board Meeting Minutes carried: 10 yes, 0 no, and 0 abstain, per the following roll call:

- Board Members voted “Yes”: Tonya Fairley, Kellie Funk, Anthony Bertram, Michelle Edgar, Megan Ellis, Dr. Yolanda Jimenez, Tamika Miller, Danielle Munoz, Calimay Pham, Steve Weeks

7. Executive Management Reports and Discussion of Same (Kristy Underwood)

a. Administration and Operations

The Administration and Operations unit vacancy (Supervisor I) has been filled by Emily Whaley, who is returning to the Board. One vacancy remains: Analyst III / SSM I Specialist (Regulation Specialist). Note: CalHR implemented a generalist classification consolidation project in January 2026, resulting in dual naming of positions (current and prior classification names) throughout the report until staff adjusts to the new designations. Staff training included a Leadership Empowerment Work Group held in early December, bringing all managers together for team building.

Budget: The Board is currently operating in a surplus; months in reserve stand at 19.9.

Steve Weeks inquired about the Board's financial reporting structure and relationship with DCA. Carrie Harris confirmed that DCA handles the majority of financial operations, and the Board maintains a dedicated budget staff member. Budget projections are provided by the governor's office; the Board receives monthly updated spreadsheets of expenses, expenditures, and revenue from DCA.

b. Licensing, Examinations, and Disciplinary Review Appeals

The Licensing unit currently has six vacancies: Staff Services Manager I, Associate Government Program Analyst, Staff Services Analyst, Limited Term Program Technician, and two Seasonal Clerks.

Examination pass rates (Q1 vs. Q2, FY 2025–26): Barber pass rate increased by 1%; Cosmetologist pass rate decreased by 2%. The Board receives approximately 114 emails per day; response time is 1–2 business days, which remains consistent.

Applications: 13,511 applications received in Q2 FY 2025–26, a 13% decrease from Q1 (attributed to the holiday period); establishment applications remain consistent with prior years. Licenses issued in Q2: 1,837 (a 17% decrease from Q1). Current licensee population: 664,120.

Overall exam pass rates: Barbers 58%; Cosmetologists 62%; Estheticians 77%; Manicurists 77%;

Electrologists 67%; Hairstylists 50%.

Apprentice program overall pass rate: 40% (Barbers 43% versus 62% for school candidates; Cosmetologists 36% versus 66% for school candidates). Out-of-country overall pass rate: 43%.

Renewal survey results: 46% of establishments reported that independent contractors work in their establishments. Of full-time California workers, 38% reported as employees and 42% as independent contractors. President Fairley noted potential confusion in the survey data, observing that California booth renters are classified as independent contractors, which may cause salon owners to undercount booth renters in survey responses. Staff agreed to clarify the survey question language.

DRC (Disciplinary Review Committee): No vacancies. 117 pending appeals in the south; 47 pending in the north. Burbank DRC hearing scheduled for April 20–21. A DRC session is also scheduled for the following morning in Sacramento. President Fairley encouraged all board members to observe a DRC session as an educational opportunity.

c. Enforcement, Inspections, and Cite and Fine

Enforcement vacancies: Staff Services Manager, Associate Government Program Analyst/Staff Services Analyst, one Special Investigator, one Inspector I/II.

Complaints: 1,728 received in Q2 FY 2025–26, a 7% decrease from the prior quarter. 102 cases pending at the Attorney General's Office. 85 active probation cases; 115 total probationers.

Disciplinary outcomes (last quarter): 7 licenses revoked; 5 placed on probation; 1 license denied.

Schools: 273 approved schools; 44 school cases opened last quarter; 43 open school complaint cases currently pending.

Inspections: 487 inspections conducted in December 2025 by 16 inspectors. Citation processing time: 1 day (credited to full implementation of the mobile inspection platform). Q2 FY 2025–26 totals: 1,203 citations issued; 1,517 total inspections for the quarter.

Citation collections: 1,573 payment notices sent last quarter; backlog reduced to approximately 200 older cases. Payment plans: 158 active plans (increase from prior quarter); 17 plans cancelled last quarter due to non-compliance. Eligible licensees with fines over \$500 may apply for a 12-month payment plan.

Steve Weeks noted that disciplinary outcomes represent a fraction of one-hundredth of a percent of the licensee population, reflecting positively on the overall compliance of California licensees. Ms. Harris concurred, noting that the majority of those referred for formal discipline had received multiple prior citations for the same violation. She noted a slight uptick in consumer harm cases.

d. Outreach Update

Staff attended the Premier Anaheim Trade Show, February 1–2, 2026 (President Fairley attended). Social media following: Instagram 14,200 followers; X (formerly Twitter) 897 followers; Facebook 23,000 followers; Spanish-language Facebook 53 followers; Vietnamese-language Facebook 272 followers. Ms. Harris expressed hope for growth in the Spanish and Vietnamese language page audiences commensurate with the Board's licensee population.

e. Strategic Plan Update

Strategic Plan: Pre-apprentice training course launched July 1, 2025. Spanish version is in final development with the vendor. BarberCosmo Update newsletter: 11th issue expected February 2026. The current strategic plan extends through 2027; planning for a new strategic plan cycle will begin in coordination with DCA.

Public Comment: No public comments were received in person or online.

8. Update on the 2026 Sunset Review Process

Ms. Harris reported that the Sunset Review hearing before the legislature is scheduled for Tuesday, March 10, 2026. A mock hearing with DCA is planned for the following week. Following the hearing, the legislature may submit questions; Board-approved responses must be submitted within 30 days. Ms. Harris noted that an early April Board meeting may be necessary to approve those responses. President Fairley confirmed she will attend the mock hearing.

Public Comment: No public comments were received in person or online.

9. Discussion and Possible Action on a Review of the Spanish Examination Pass Rates

Carrie Harris presented a report on Spanish examination pass rates. Following discussion at the November 2025 Board meeting, members had requested a DIF (Differential Item Functioning) review and an analysis of questions that Spanish-speaking test takers answer at lower rates than English-speaking counterparts. Data presented:

- 2025 pass rates (English vs. Spanish): California school barbers — 64% vs. 41%. English/Spanish apprentice barbers — 47% vs. 23%. Out-of-country barbers — 25% vs. 15%. Cosmetology school candidates — 69% vs. 30%. Cosmetology apprentices — 46% vs. 27%. Out-of-country cosmetology — 45% vs. 16%.
- Of 306 individuals who attended an approved California school and took the exam in Spanish: 130 candidates attended a school approved to teach in Spanish but still failed (nearly 50%); 62 attended a school not approved to teach in Spanish.
- For barbering, 189 individuals attended an approved school and took the exam in Spanish: 42 attended a Spanish-approved school but failed; 65 attended a school not approved to teach in Spanish.
- 55% of barber candidates who took the Spanish exam did not attend a school approved to teach in Spanish. It is unknown whether these schools teach in Spanish without approval, or whether education is delivered in English with candidates electing to test in Spanish.
- The Board has no data on whether apprentices receiving education at Spanish-approved programs are choosing to take the exam in Spanish.

DIF Review: PSI (examination vendor) performed a Differential Item Functioning study evaluating whether test items functioned comparably for English versus Spanish test takers. A small number of items were flagged for linguistic and content review; the number was described as very few. The flagged items do not represent a definitive root cause.

Board Discussion: Members and President Fairley discussed the multifactorial nature of the pass rate disparity, including: dialects and linguistic diversity within the Spanish-speaking population; interrupted formal education; learning style

mismatches; school enrollment and admissions practices; and the Board's limited jurisdictional authority over school quality (which falls under BPPE). Dr. Jimenez asked whether any of the 44 open school cases involved schools approved to teach in Spanish; staff agreed to investigate. Steve Weeks expressed concern at the lack of a definitive root cause after years of review and called for more direct engagement with schools.

President Fairley and Ms. Harris noted that the Board lacks authority over student admissions and enrollment standards and therefore cannot compel data from schools on these matters.

Recommendations: (1) Staff will hold a virtual town hall meeting with PSI and all school and apprentice program sponsors on April 13, 2026, to discuss the Spanish exam and provide guidance on improving pass scores. PSI can provide a subject-area breakdown identifying where Spanish test takers underperform relative to English test takers. (2) The Board's Sunset Review request for additional oversight over schools, if granted, would allow the Board to examine the quality of education delivered, including at Spanish-instruction programs.

Public Comment: Fred Jones, Professional Beauty Federation of California, testified that some Spanish-instruction schools recommend their students test in English due to distrust of the Spanish exam translation quality. He referenced the historical use of aggregate scoring (practical plus written) which previously compensated for lower written exam performance, and the statutory language recognizing the hands-on nature of the industry. He called on the Board to demand direct engagement with PSI psychometricians.

Monica Burris clarified that PSI conducted a separate town hall for schools on February 9, 2026, covering upcoming exam changes; the April 13 town hall is a distinct event focused on school administrators and apprentice programs. No additional public comments were received.

10. Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Rulemaking Proposals:

- a. **Update Regarding Rulemaking to Amend Title 16, California Code of Regulations (CCR) section 911 (License by Endorsement (Reciprocity), Application and Out of State License Certifications)**
- b. **Update Regarding Rulemaking to Amend Title 16, CCR sections 913, 913.1, 914.1, 914.2, 915, 917, 918, 918.1, 919, 919.1, 920, 921, 921.1, 921.2, 922, 924, 924.1, 925, 926, 927 (Apprenticeship)**
- c. **Update Regarding Rulemaking to Amend Title 16, CCR section 931 (Interpreters for Licensing Exams)**
- d. **Update Regarding Rulemaking to Amend Title 16, CCR sections 940, 941, 950.10, 950.12, 962, 962.1, 962.2 (Schools and Externs)**
- e. **Update Regarding Rulemaking to Amend Title 16, CCR section 972 (Disciplinary Guidelines)**
- f. **Update Regarding Rulemaking to Adopt Title 16, CCR section 974.4 (SB 384: Remedial Education Program)**
- g. **Update Regarding Rulemaking to Amend Title 16, CCR section 977 et seq. (Health and Safety)**

Carrie Harris presented the following regulation updates:

- CCR Section 931 (Interpreter Regulation): Became effective January 1, 2026. Exam candidates may now use an interpreter once per year (previously, once every two years).
- Disciplinary Guidelines (CCR Section 972): Final regulation proposal is being drafted by staff.
- CCR Section 991 (Reciprocity): Regulation proposal is being prepared by staff.
- Pending further development: Apprenticeship regulations; Schools and Externs; Remedial Education Program; Health and Safety.

Public Comment: No public comments were received in person or online.

11. Public Comment on Items Not on the Agenda

Public Comment: No public comments were received in person or online.

12. Suggestions for Future Agenda Items

No suggestions were offered by board members or the public.

Public Comment: No public comments were received.

13. Adjournment

There being no further business to discuss, Steve Weeks requested the Board adjourn in honor of Executive Officer Kristy Underwood's ill family member, extending well-wishes on behalf of the full Board. The meeting was adjourned.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at approximately 11:10 a.m.