

2024 LEGISLATIVE ADVISORY

The Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology and Hearing Aid Dispensers Board (Board) would like to notify you of legislative changes that may impact your practice and/or the profession. Unless otherwise specified, these changes are effective January 1, 2025.

AB 1900 (Weber) Consumer refunds: nondisclosure agreements.

Status: This bill was chaptered by Secretary of State on July 15, 2024 (Chapter 89, Statutes of 2024.)

Summary: This bill makes it unlawful act to prohibit a consumer from publishing or making statements about the business as a condition of receiving a refund or other consideration or thing of value contrary to public policy and void and unenforceable.

Impact on Licensees: Licensees cannot prohibit a consumer from making a review of a business or require the removal of a review of a business as a condition for receiving a refund from said business.

AB 1991 (Bonta) Licensee and registrant renewal: National Provider Identifier.

Status: This bill was chaptered by Secretary of State on September 22, 2024 (Chapter 369, Statutes of 2024.)

Summary: This bill would require healing arts boards to require a licensee or registrant who electronically renews their license or registration to provide to that board the licensee's or registrant's individual National Provider Identifier if they have one. The bill would provide that a violation of the bill's requirements is not a crime.

Impact on Licensees: Licensees who renew their license online will be required to provide their individual National Provider Identifier, if they have one, in the Department of Health Care Access and Information survey.

AB 2011 (Bauer-Kahan) Unlawful employment practices: small employer family leave mediation program: reproductive loss leave.

Status: This bill was chaptered by Secretary of State on July 18, 2024 (Chapter 147, Statutes of 2024.)

Summary: This bill expands the program to include resolution of alleged violations of prescribed provisions on reproductive leave loss and revise the statute of limitations to toll the statute of limitations applicable employee's claim relating to an alleged violation. The bill deems the mediation to be complete if the mediator determines that the employer does not have between 5 and 19 employees and deletes the repeal date for the pilot program, thereby extending operation of the program indefinitely.

Impact on Licensees: Licensees who employ between 5 and 19 employees or licensees who are employed by an employer who employs between 5 and 9 employees may contact the Civil Rights Department for mediation prior to filing a civil action that alleges a violation of Government Code section 12945.2 regarding family care and medical leave, Government Code section 12945.7 regarding bereavement leave upon the death of a family member, and Government Code section 12945.6 regarding reproductive loss leave following a reproductive loss event.

AB 2908 (Chen) Shareholders' meetings: remote communication.

Status: This bill was chaptered by Secretary of State on July 15, 2024 (Chapter 157, Statutes of 2024.)

Summary: This bill deletes the deadline of December 31, 2025, thereby authorizing indefinitely a corporation to conduct a meeting by means of electronic communication in the absence of consent of all shareholders if the meeting includes a live audiovisual feed for the duration of the meeting.

Impact on Licensees: Licensees operating as a corporation can, for indefinitely, hold their shareholder or member meetings remotely.

SB 1451 (Ashby) Professions and vocation

Status: This bill was chaptered by Secretary of State on September 22, 2024 (Chapter 481, Statutes of 2024.)

Summary: This bill would add the initials "D.O." to the list of prohibited terms under the Medical Practice Act and prohibit a person from using the words "doctor" or "physician," the letters or prefix "Dr.," the initials "M.D." or "D.O.," or any other terms or letters indicating or implying that the person is a physician and surgeon, physician, surgeon, or practitioner in a health care setting that would lead a reasonable patient to determine that the person is a licensed "M.D." or "D.O.". "D.O." The bill would also authorize certain persons to use the words "doctor" or "physician," the letters or prefix "Dr.," or the initials "M.D." or "D.O."

Impact on Licensees: Licensees may use the word "doctor" or the letters or prefix "Dr." if they have earned it and when advertising, the exact field in which the doctoral degree was earned must be specified in the advertisement.

SB 1526 (Committee on Business, Professions and Economic Development) Consumer affairs.

Status: This bill was chaptered by Secretary of State on September 22, 2024 (Chapter 497, Statutes of 2024.)

Summary: This bill would require graduation from a speech-language pathology assistant associate degree program, or equivalent course of study, approved by the board; and refer to a "hearing aid dispenser license" instead of a "hearing aid dispenser's license" as it relates to hearing aid dispensers and dispensing audiologists. This bill would make numerous technical and clarifying provisions related to programs within the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA).

Impact on Licensees: No impact on licensees. No requirements were changed as a result of this bill.