



# MEMORANDUM

<b>DATE</b>	March 4, 2024
<b>TO</b>	Physician Assistant Board (Board)
<b>FROM</b>	Rozana Khan, Executive Officer
<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>Agenda Item 6. Executive Officer’s Report</b>

**A. Personnel**

Effective January 30, 2024, Armando Melendez has been promoted to Special Investigator (SI). As mentioned in the November meeting, the non-sworn SI position was established at limited term for 24 months to collect workload data and cost savings. The Board has identified several case types that can be investigated and referred for prosecution without the use of a Division of Investigation (DOI), Health Quality Investigation Unit (HQIU) sworn investigator. Redirecting such cases to non-sworn personnel will streamline processes and reduce costs. Many tasks associated with investigations can be performed by non-sworn investigators such as detecting and verifying violations, interviewing witnesses, gathering information, analyzing testimony, serving legal papers, or serving as an expert witness amongst other non-sworn duties. The Board will continue to utilize HQIU for criminal investigations that can only be handled by a sworn peace officer.

Mr. Melendez brings over 22 years of comprehensive experience with a strong understanding of the Physician Assistant Board (PAB) and the Medical Board of California (MBC) functions. With a background as a complaint analyst for the PAB over the past three years and 19 years of service at the MBC, Mr. Melendez has excelled in various roles, including the Central Complaint Unit, Licensing Unit, Business Services Office, and Outreach Program.

His expertise spans the review, analysis, and interpretation of laws, policies, and regulations, including the Physician Assistant Practice Act, Medical Practice Act, California Code of Regulations and the Health and Safety Code. Over the past eight years, Mr. Melendez has managed a diverse caseload, handling cases related to quality of care, office practice, subsequent arrests, impairment, and unlicensed practice. In addition to initiating and reviewing cases, he is proficient in conducting interviews, corresponding with licensees and facilities, and managing the Medical Consultant Program at both PAB and MBC.

Additionally, Mr. Melendez works part time as an Athletic Inspector with the California Athletic Commission and has received extensive training in evidence collection, substance abuse identification, and enforcing relevant regulations. Please join me in congratulating Mr. Melendez on his promotion.

On February 13, 2024, Administrative Analyst Ariel Gompers accepted a promotional position with the Office of Administrative Hearings. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to Ms. Gompers for her dedication, hard work, and contributions to PAB, and wish her great success in her new role.

Karen Halbo, regulatory counsel, has accepted a great opportunity with the California Department

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of Industrial Relations and is no longer with the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA). While we miss Ms. Halbo, we are excited for her new opportunity and wish her all the best in her endeavors.

I am pleased to announce that Kristy Schieldge is stepping in as our regulatory counsel. Ms. Schieldge, who has previously served as the Board's legal counsel, brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise to this role. She was instrumental in working with members, staff, and the Legislature on Senate Bill 697. Ms. Schieldge has been with DCA for over 20 years and is an Attorney IV. We look forward to Ms. Schieldge's continued contributions to the success of the Board.

**B. Outreach**

Due to the current state budget deficits in fiscal years 2023-24 and 2024-25, the Board will temporarily suspend all outreach activities until further notice. This includes non-essential travel plans both in-state and out-of-state, such as participation in seminars, conferences, and training. Only travel necessary to conduct official state business will be permitted during this period.

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