



Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor

Occupational Therapy Licensing Board

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July 31, 2024

RE: OTLB Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Cover Memo

The Occupational Therapy Licensing Board is governed by state statutes and rules (ORS 675.210-675.340 and OAR Chapter 339). The board's core mission is to protect the public and ensure the safe and ethical delivery of occupational therapy services across the state.

How the Board Achieves Its Mission:

- **Licensing & Education:** We issue licenses to qualified applicants, ensuring they are properly educated, practice strictly within their scope, and maintain ongoing training throughout their careers.
- **Accountability:** We thoroughly investigate complaints and take disciplinary action when appropriate.
- **Standards:** We actively develop policy and standards of practice to maintain high-quality care.

Note: These programs do not burden members of the public, nor do they negatively impact racial equity.

Transparency and Public Engagement

We are committed to an open, collaborative process. The board sends notices of all rule changes impacting budgets or licensees to all interested parties, licensees, professional associations, and the legislature. Any comments on rulemaking are shared directly with the board before a permanent rule is adopted, ensuring all voices and perspectives are heard.

Additionally, the board hosts quarterly public meetings where all official decisions are made, and we welcome public comments during these sessions.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Regards,

Nancy Schuberg, Executive Director

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Occupational Therapy Licensing Board (OTLB) Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Plan June 1, 2024 – May 31, 2028

I. Overview of Agency Mission

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

II. OTLB Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Statement

The Occupational Therapy Licensing Board (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, and acceptance of others without biases based on differences of any kind.

The board values its staff, board members, licensees, and the public it serves. 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 pledges to foster an inclusive environment where everyone is valued, respected and feels empowered to contribute their unique perspectives and abilities. We are committed to creating a culture of belonging where individuals feel safe, supported, and included.

III. DEI Plan

The OTLB has established these goals for promoting a culture that values diversity, supports equity and fosters inclusion.

Assessment: Solicit feedback from licensees, community partners, board members and staff on DEI initiatives so we can integrate feedback into our daily operations and build a more inclusive culture.

- Survey sent to all licensees and community partners for ideas on how to boost diversity in OT. Feedback shared with the state OT association and OT educational program directors in Oregon.

- Develop an annual confidential online survey for board members to evaluate the success of the board in achieving its DEI initiatives, ensuring the OTLB members feel safe, respected and supported.
- Regular check-ins with board staff (Licensing Specialist) to include discussion about inclusion, and making sure they are getting enough support.

Education: Continual learning and growth by staying up to date about best practices and emerging trends in DEI. Get comfortable re-thinking much of what was thought to be true.

- Continued completion of DEI training courses for board staff.
- Share opportunities for education with Board members.

Outreach: Promote cultural competency education among licensees.

- Promote cultural competency among licensees by providing links to courses to fulfill their cultural competency CE requirement.
- Continue to advertise the NBCOT JEDI self-reflection modules with licensees through the OTLB newsletter.
- Monitor federal legislation for grants for individuals currently underrepresented in the OT profession.
- Continue to post workforce data for occupational therapists in Oregon.

Follow up: Annual follow up on DEI initiatives.

- Convey the harassment policy with the board members and who do go to if they feel like they have been harassed or discriminated against.

“Doing nothing is the same as accepting the status quo.”