

MEETING MINUTES
February 23, 2026
8:30 A.M. – 5:00 P.M.
PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT BOARD
2005 Evergreen Street
Hearing Room #1150
Sacramento, CA 95815

1. Call to Order by President

Dr. Kidd called the meeting to order at 8:33 a.m.

2. Roll Call

Staff called the roll. A quorum was present.

Board Members Present:

Vasco Deon Kidd, DHSc, PA-C, President
 Diego Inzunza, PA-C, Vice President
 Juan Armenta, Esq.
 Eric Bergersen, PA-C
 Philip DaVisio, DMSc, PA-C
 Bhavana Prakash, DMSc, PA-C
 Deborah Snow
 Veling Tsai, M.D.

Staff Present:

Jasmine Dhillon, Legislative and Regulatory Specialist
 Virginia Gerard, Probation Monitor
 Pearl Her, Administrative Analyst
 Jennifer Jimenez, Licensing Analyst
 Rozana Khan, Executive Officer
 Armando Melendez, Special Investigator
 Reza Pejuhesh, Attorney III
 Linda Serrano, Complaint Analyst
 Kristy Voong, Assistant Executive Officer (via video conference)

3. Consider Approval of November 17, 2025, Board Meeting Minutes

M/ Philip DaVisio S/ Diego Inzunza to:

Approve the November 17, 2025, meeting minutes.

Member	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Recusal
Juan Armenta	X				
Eric Bergersen	X				
Philip DaVisio	X				
Diego Inzunza	X				
Vasco Deon Kidd	X				
Bhavana Prakash	X				
Deborah Snow	X				

No public comment.

4. Public Comment on Items Not on the Agenda

(Note: The Board may not discuss or take action on any matter raised during this public comment section that is not included on this agenda, except to decide whether to place the matter on the agenda for a future meeting. [Government Code sections 11125 and 11125.7(a).])

No public comment.

5. President's Report

Dr. Kidd reported that on January 30, 2026, the U.S. Department of Education issued a notice of proposed rulemaking that would narrow the federal definition of a professional student for determining annual loan limits under the Direct Loan Program.

Historically, the professional student designation applied to programs requiring graduate level coursework, extensive clinical and practical training, and leading directly to licensure. The proposed rule replaces this function with a fixed list of 11 disciplines; programs not listed would be treated as a standard graduate program, such as physician assistant (PA) programs, nursing programs, and other professional healthcare programs.

This represents a significant policy shift with potential consequences for student funding, program enrollment, and workforce development. If finalized, PA students would be limited to \$20,500 per year in federal loans beginning July 2026, instead of the current \$50,000 annual limit.

Dr. Kidd stated that with the limited funding, students may acquire loans with higher interest rates, delay enrollment, or reconsider entering the profession.

Dr. Kidd reported that rural, economically disadvantaged, and underrepresented students would be highly affected at a time of persistent healthcare workforce shortages.

Dr. Kidd reported that a new bill, known as the Professional Degree Access Restoration Act, was introduced to address this issue, but it has not yet advanced. The proposed bill is currently in the public comment period, and national PA organizations are actively mobilizing advocacy efforts.

Public Comment:

Sonny Cline, President of California Academy of Physician Associates (CAPA) shared that CAPA is working diligently to advocate for this change. CAPA has provided resources to California PAs and students on submitting comments and petition letters.

6. Executive Officer's Report

Ms. Khan referred to members to Agenda Item 6 and reported the following.

The Board currently has two vacancies: one enforcement analyst position due to retirement and an office technician position due to a promotion. In January 2026, Angela Au accepted a promotional position with the Department of Motor Vehicles. Ms. Khan thanked Ms. Au for her time and dedication to the Board.

Additionally, the Board received notification from the Governor's Office that Board Member Ed Perez resigned effective January 22, 2026.

Ms. Khan reported the Board published the Winter edition of its biannual INSIDER newsletter.

Ms. Khan reported that due to the current State budget deficits, the Board has paused participation in outreach activities.

Dr. Kidd thanked Ed Perez for his service on the Board.

Mr. Inzunza thanked Ed Perez for his public service.

No public comment.

7. Board Activity Reports

A. Licensing

Ms. Jimenez referred members to Agenda Item 7A and presented the following reports: Licensing Population by Type, Summary of Licensing Activity, Pending Application Workload, and Licensing Performance Measures.

Dr. Kidd asked for clarification on whether there are 29,000 PAs in California. Ms. Jimenez confirmed there are 29,477 PAs in California.

Mr. DaVisio commented that the report shows approximately 8,000 to 9,000 licenses are not active due to delinquent and cancelled statuses.

Ms. Voong clarified that although there is a total of 29,477 licenses, only 20,015 individuals are authorized to practice in California.

Mr. DaVisio asked whether the number of cancelled licenses will ever decrease, or if it continues to increase as licenses go into delinquent status and then cancel. Ms. Jimenez stated that the number of cancelled licenses will continue to increase, as individuals with this status must reapply as new applicants.

B. Complaints

Ms. Serrano referred members to Agenda Item 7B and presented the following reports: Complaint Statistics and Complaints Received by Type and Source.

Mr. Armenta asked whether the Board receives the same number of complaints every year. Ms. Serrano stated that the complaints have steadily increased each year.

Mr. Armenta asked whether complaints are classified based on severity. Ms. Serrano stated that complaints are classified by type and source and are prioritized based on the level of egregiousness, such as cases involving patient death.

Mr. Armenta asked whether the Board receives malpractice settlements. Ms. Serrano stated the Board is notified of all malpractice settlements over \$30,000.

Mr. Armenta asked whether the Board tracks civil lawsuits. Ms. Serrano stated that it does not.

C. Discipline

Ms. Serrano referred members to Agenda Item 7C and presented the following report: Discipline Statistics.

Dr. Tsai noted that the average age of pending cases has decreased significantly and asked if there is a contributing factor. Ms. Serrano stated that teamwork and staff focus on timeframes may be contributing factors.

D. Probation

Ms. Gerard referred members to Agenda Item 7D and presented the following report: Probation Activity.

E. Diversion

Ms. Gerard referred members to Agenda Item 7E and presented the following report: Diversion Program Activity.

No public comment.

8. Department of Consumer Affairs – Director’s Update (DCA Staff) – May Include Updates Pertaining to the Department’s Administrative Services, Human Resources, Enforcement, Information Technology, Communications and Outreach, as well as Legislative, Regulatory and Policy Matters

Judie Bucciarelli, Board and Bureau Relations thanked Ed Perez for his service and dedication to protect California consumers.

Ms. Bucciarelli reported that Chief Deputy Director Christine Lally has been named the Acting Director of DCA. She will lead DCA in this position until a director is formally appointed by the Governor’s Office.

Ms. Bucciarelli reported that last year, Governor Newsom issued an Executive Order allowing a one-year postponement of license renewal fees for those impacted by the Los Angeles Fires. DCA has begun sending notices to licensees who chose this postponement option, reminding them to pay their renewal fees.

Additionally, last year, Governor Newsom released his proposed 2025-26 State Budget, which included a proposal to split DCA’s oversight agency – the Business, Consumer Services, and Housing Agency – into two new state agencies: the

California Housing and Homelessness Agency and the Business and Consumer Services Agency. After public hearings and review by the Little Hoover Commission and the Legislature, the reorganization plan was enacted on July 5, 2025, and will become operative on July 1, 2026.

Additional updates included board business and travel, Form 700 filing requirements by April 1, and various upcoming trainings.

No public comment.

9. Budget Committee Update

Andrew Trute, DCA Budget Analyst, referred members to Agenda Item 9 and presented the expenditure projection report.

Mr. Trute reported an estimated \$1.5 million in personal services, and \$2.5 million in operating expenses and equipment, for a total of approximately \$4 million, resulting in a surplus of about \$2,000 or under 1%. Mr. Trute emphasized that the Budget Office will continue to monitor the expenditure.

For the revenue projections, the Board has an end-of-year projection of \$3.5 million against estimated revenue of \$3.4 million. Mr. Trute stated there are no concerns with revenues.

Mr. Trute reported that the fund condition report provides a four-year view of the Board's fund. For the prior year 2024-25, the Board had an adjusted beginning balance of \$4 million, collected approximately \$3.3 million in revenue, and incurred expenditures of \$3.6 million, resulting in a fund balance of about \$3.5 million or 10.2 months in reserve.

For the current fiscal year 2025-26, the Board has a beginning balance of \$3.5 million and projects approximately \$3.5 million in revenue and \$4.2 million in total expenditures. The current fund balance is about \$2.9 million, or 8.1 months in reserve.

Mr. Trute stated that the 2026-27 and 2027-28 budget year projections are based on the Governor's Budget, except for income from surplus, which is formula driven. He noted that the fund condition is a snapshot in time and reflects only the data available at the time of its preparation.

Mr. Trute reported that months in reserve are projected to decline in the out years, as revenues remain relatively constant while expenditures increase annually by approximately 3%.

Dr. Kidd expressed his appreciation for the presentation and commented that the Board's budget is healthy, with strong months in reserve.

Dr. Kidd thanked Ms. Khan and staff for maintaining the Board fiscally responsible.

No public comment.

10. Report on Medical Board of California Activities

Dr. Tsai provided an update from the Medical Board of California (MBC), which met on December 4-5, 2025. He reported that the meeting included highlights such as updates to the BreEZe online complaint form and license renewals.

Dr. Tsai reported that MBC received 9,707 complaints last year, of which 2,600 were submitted inappropriately and redirected to other agencies. Approximately 6,000 complaints were filed online, and of those, 1,100 were referred for investigation.

Dr. Tsai reported that Assembly Bill (AB) 3119 was enacted in 2024. The bill requires MBC, the Osteopathic Medical Board of California, the Board of Registered Nursing and the Physician Assistant Board to consider including in their continuing education requirements, a course on infection-associated chronic conditions, including, but not limited to, long COVID.

No public comment.

11. Presentation by Sondra M. DePalma, Vice President, Reimbursements and Professional Practice, American Academy of Physician Associates — Overview of the Physician Assistant (PA) profession nationally, PA training modernization trends, medical malpractice payment reports, and a status update on California's application to the Rural Health Transformation Program

Dr. Kidd introduced Dr. DePalma and thanked her for taking the time to present to the Board. Dr. Kidd shared that the Board is not an advocacy board, but rather a public protection agency, and that all information presented would be viewed through a public protection lens.

Dr. DePalma stated she was asked to speak about the safety of PA provided care but also wished to provide a high-level overview of PAs, including their training, education, certification and licensure. Some key points included:

- There are 190,000 PAs providing care across all specialties, with 500 million patient interactions annually in the United States.
- PA education and certification are highly regulated, ensuring rigorous training similar to that of physicians.
- Recent studies show that PA-provided care yields health outcomes equivalent to physician care, with no significant differences in quality.
- Modernization of PA practice laws can improve access to care without compromising patient safety or quality.
- Many states are moving toward less restrictive practice environments, enhancing workforce efficiency and healthcare access.

Dr. DePalma reported that California's current practice environment is considered moderate based on AAPA rankings because the state has three of the four key foundational elements. She stated that if California removed the ratio requirement

between PAs and physicians with whom they collaborate or used the term “collaboration” to describe the working relationship, the state would move to an advanced ranking. Dr. DePalma further stated that California could achieve an optimal ranking by removing the legal tether between a PA and physician.

Mr. Armenta commented that the reports appeared to present policy arguments and asked why the Board, rather than the Legislature, was being addressed. Dr. DePalma stated that she was asked to provide an update on the PA practice environment and how it factors into the Rural Health Transformation (RHT) Program.

Mr. Armenta asked who invited Dr. DePalma to present. Dr. Kidd stated that he invited Dr. DePalma to present.

Dr. DePalma reported that all 50 states received funding under the RHT. Half of the funding was distributed equally among all states, while the remaining half was distributed based on factors such as ruralness, capacity factors, and workforce practice environment.

Ms. Prakash thanked Dr. DePalma for the comprehensive overview of the PA practice and information about the RHT Program.

Dr. Kidd thanked Dr. DePalma for her presentation and for providing the Board a panoramic view of developments affecting the PA profession across the country. Dr. Kidd also stated that the Board is permitted to hear testimony to educate members on a wide variety of issues related to the profession.

Mr. Armenta stated that policy matters should not be the Board’s focus and reiterated his prior position that the Board’s primary focus must be on public protection. He commented that the presentation appeared to support policy changes that should instead be addressed by the Legislature.

Public comment:

Mr. Cline expressed his appreciation for the Board’s attention and support. He added that when individuals are held solely responsible for their decision making, they make better decisions because they are accountable for them.

12. Update, Discussion, and Possible Action to Consider Changes to Previously Proposed Text and Reauthorization of a Regular Rulemaking to Amend 16 CCR Sections 1399.514, 1399.615 and 1399.619 – License Renewal and Continuing Medical Education Required

Ms. Dhillon stated that this agenda item is deferred as staff is working on possible updates to the online BreEZe application with DCA’s Office of Information Services.

No public comment.

13. Regulations – Update on Pending Regulatory Packages

1. 16 CCR 1399.514, 1399.615 – SB 697: License Renewal and Continuing Medical Education Required

The Legislature has included amendments to BPC section 3523 in AB 1501 and the bill has been chaptered, with an effective date of January 1, 2026. Staff is working with Regulations Counsel on the proposed text for Board approval at the next Board meeting.

2. 16 CCR 1399.506, 1399.507, 1399.511, 1399.530, 1399.535, 1399.536, 1399.538, 1399.539, 1399.546 and 1399.556 – SB 697: Application, Exam Scores, Addresses, and Records

This package is on the Board's website for public comments, however, there was an error in posting and mailing, the Board is consulting with the Office of Administrative Law (OAL) to determine how long the public comment period will be extended.

3. 16 CCR 1399.515 – AB 2461: Retired Status Updates and Returned Fingerprint Requirement

The Board reviewed and adopted proposed revised regulatory language to continue the rulemaking process at the November 17, 2025, meeting. Staff is working on finalizing the initial documents with Regulations Counsel and will be filing the Notice with OAL in the coming months.

4. 16 CCR 1399.523 – SB 1441: Implement Uniform Standards Related to Substance Abusing Licensees and Update of Disciplinary Guidelines

Staff is working on the proposed language for Board approval this calendar year.

5. 16 CCR 1399.501, 1399.503, 1399.514, 1399.515, 1399.520, 1399.536, 1399.546, 1399.547, 1399.550, 1399.612 and 1399.616 - Section 100 Technical Clean-Up and Statutory Fee Changes

This regulatory package was filed with the Secretary of State on January 8, 2026, and became effective upon filing.

No public comment.

14. Report by the Physician Assistant Training, Accreditation and Workforce Development Committee

Dr. Kidd referred members to Agenda Item 14 and presented the Physician Assistant Training, Accreditation and Workforce Development Committee Report.

Dr. Kidd reported that there are currently 321 nationally accredited PA training programs in the United States, with 20 located in California. He noted that none of the California programs are on probation, six programs hold provisional accreditation, and four programs are in development. Geographically, 15 programs are located in Southern California, four in the Bay Area, and one in the Central Valley.

Dr. Kidd also reported that the annual enrollment capacity across California's 20 PA programs is approaching 1,100 students, with an average of 53 students per program.

No public comment.

15. Report by the Legislative and Regulatory Affairs Committee

Ms. Dhillon stated that February 20, 2026, was the last day to introduce bills in the Legislature, and several bills were submitted last week. Because meeting materials must be posted on the Board's website at least 10 days before the meeting, she will need additional time to analyze those bills and will present them for discussion at the next Board meeting.

No public comment.

16. Agenda Items for Next Meeting

No public comment.

17. CLOSED SESSION

Pursuant to Government Code section 11126(c)(3), the Board will Convene to Deliberate on Disciplinary Actions and Decisions to be Reached in Administrative Procedure Act Proceedings

18. Adjournment

With no further business, the opening meeting was adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

Minutes do not reflect the order in which agenda items were presented at the Board meeting.