Osteopathic Medical Board of California

Board Meeting Minutes

April 23, 2026

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Denise Pines, MBA, President
Hemesh Patel, D.O., Vice President
Gor Adamyan, Secretary
John M. Cummins, J.D.
Brett Lockman, D.O.
Matthew Swain, D.O.
Negeen Mirreghabie, Esq.
Faisal Qazi, D.O.

STAFF PRESENT:

Erika Calderon, Executive Director
Yuping Lin, DCA Legal Counsel
Terri Thorfinnson, Legislative/Regulatory Specialist
Machiko Chong, Licensing Program Manager
Cristy Livramento, Enforcement Program Manager
Beth Clark, Associate Governmental Program Analyst
Ralph Correa, Probation Monitor
Trisha St. Clair, DCA Moderator
Lucia Saldivar, DCA Deputy Director
Brad Lencioni, DCA Budget Manager
Kaila Van Lindt, DCA Budget Analyst;
John Gatschet, Deputy Attorney General
Thomas Heller, Administrative Law Judge
Gloria Castro, Senior Assistant Attorney General
Michael Brummel, Supervising Attorney General
Catherine Bachiller, DCA Manager Human Resources
Rebecca Smith, Deputy Attorney General
Olivia Castro, DCA Chief Human Resources

MEMBERS OF THE AUDIENCE:

Valerie Lile, OPSC , Vice President of Education
Holly Macriss, Executive Director, OPSC
Alice Avettian, WesternU Student
Tom Fox, Senior Director of Alumni Engagement WesternU
Michelle Monserratt-Ramos, Consumer Watchdog
Maria Ibarra-Navarrette, Consumer Watchdog
Nichole Bowles, Chief of Investigations, BRN
Tracy Dominguez, Consumer Watchdog

Board Meeting Minutes – April 23, 2026

Agenda Item 1 Call to Order/Roll Call/Establishment of a Quorum

Vice President Patel called the quarterly meeting to order at 8:13 a.m. at Western University of Health Sciences. The Board thanked Western University for hosting. The presiding officer reviewed Open Meeting Act procedures, including public-comment limits, Webex participation, and the requirement that remote board members remain visible and disclose whether another adult was present.

Ms. Mirreghabie confirmed that she was the only adult present at her remote location.

Machiko Chong called the roll and confirmed a quorum.

Agenda Item 2 Reading of the Board's Mission Statement

The Board mission statement was read by the Board's Executive Director Erika Calderon: "To protect the public by requiring competency, accountability, and integrity in the safe practice of medicine by osteopathic physicians."

Agenda Item 5 Public Comment for Items Not on the Agenda

The Board reviewed the limitations applicable to comments on matters not listed on the agenda, including restrictions on discussion of active enforcement or licensing matters.

No public comments were offered in the room or online.

Agenda Item 7 Review and Possible Approval of Board Meeting Minute

This item was addressed twice to ensure the motions were clear and would not create issues for the Board's regulatory record. Executive Director Erika Calderon explained that the November 13, 2025 minutes had been returned to the Board because the Office of Administrative Law requires the pertinent regulatory motion to be recorded exactly.

The Board reviewed the November minutes page by page and identified no additional amendments.

The Board also reviewed the January 22, 2026, minutes and directed that the title be corrected by removing "Teleconference" and using "Board Meeting Minutes."

November 13, 2025 Board Meeting Minutes

Motion – Gor Adamyan **Second** – Hemesh Patel, D.O.

- **Ayes** – Adamyan, Cummins, Lockman, Patel, Pines, Swain, Qazi
- **Nays** – None
- **Abstentions** – Negeen Mirreghabie

- **Absent** – None

Motion carried to approve the November 13, 2025 minutes as amended.

January 22, 2026 Board Meeting Minutes

Motion – Matthew Swain, D.O. **Second** – John M. Cummins, J.D.

- **Ayes** – Adamyan, Cummins, Lockman, Patel, Pines, Swain, Qazi
- **Nays** – None
- **Abstentions** – Negeen Mirreghabie
- **Absent** – None

Motion carried to approve the January 22, 2026 minutes with the meeting-title amendment.

No public comments were received on either motion.

Agenda Item 3 Petition for Early Termination of Probation: Jeff Douglas Lester, D.O.

Administrative Law Judge Thomas Heller presided over the hearing. The petitioner, Dr. Jeff Douglas Lester, represented himself, and Deputy Attorney General Rebecca Smith represented the state.

- The Deputy Attorney General summarized the underlying discipline arising from Dr. Lester's 2018 treatment of a patient with an intravenous amniotic-derived product represented as stem cells. The allegations included gross negligence, repeated negligent acts, incompetence, dishonest acts, false or misleading advertising, inadequate training, insufficient workup and referral, failure to respond appropriately to a suspected anaphylactic reaction, and the absence of a defibrillator. A stipulated decision effective May 5, 2023 revoked the license, stayed the revocation, and placed Dr. Lester on five years' probation through an estimated May 5, 2028 completion date. He petitioned for early termination on May 5, 2025.

- Dr. Lester testified that he believed he had been misled by product companies, representatives, and informal sources regarding safety and regulatory status. He described prior patient outcomes, his relationship with the deceased patient, and the emergency response on the day of the event. He acknowledged that he should not have treated a high-risk patient, that the ultimate treatment decision was his responsibility, and that epinephrine was not administered. He stated that he no longer performs intravenous or regenerative-medicine procedures and would not resume them without authoritative approval, formal training, and appropriate credentials.

- Dr. Lester described corrective measures, including monthly staff emergency drills, emergency buttons, a crash cart, written medical-emergency and naloxone protocols, updated CPR/ACLS-related preparation, continuing medical education, and routine probation monitoring. He stated that his staff now practice responding immediately to emergency alerts and bringing emergency supplies.

- The Deputy Attorney General questioned Dr. Lester regarding his corporate and fictitious-name registrations, adequacy of training, responsibility for website content, informed consent, the absence of stated risks, the relevance of his CME, and whether he accepted the factual findings in the disciplinary decision. Board members questioned his commitment to the standard of care; likelihood of returning to regenerative medicine; formal postgraduate and specialty training; image guidance and injection technique; methods for independently verifying regulatory and scientific claims; availability of infusion centers; emergency readiness; staffing; anaphylaxis treatment; and the practical effect of continued probation.

- Dr. Lester stated that probation had affected insurance participation and his reputation but acknowledged there was no operational downside to continued monitoring. Ms. Mirreghabie emphasized that the physician retains sole responsibility for the treatment plan regardless of patient or family requests.

- The ALJ ruled on exhibits, admitted certain items as hearsay, required protection or redaction of patient names, and confirmed withdrawal or duplication of other exhibits. In closing, Dr. Lester asserted rehabilitation and future compliance. The Deputy Attorney General opposed early termination, arguing that compliance alone did not establish rehabilitation, that the CME did not address the violations, and that Dr. Lester had not fully accepted the Board's findings or demonstrated sufficient insight. The matter was submitted for closed-session deliberation.

The Board's decision was not announced during the open session.

Closed Session
The Board entered closed session pursuant to applicable law to deliberate on the petition. After closed session, the Board reconvened in open session and a quorum was confirmed.

Agenda Item 6 Osteopathic Physician and Surgeon Student Question and Answer Forum

The Board welcomed first-year student Alice Avettian from Western University.

- A first-year Western University College of Osteopathic Medicine student, identified as Alice Avetian, attended the meeting to observe the Board's proceedings. Board members invited her to share her perspective on the challenges currently facing medical students. She identified the financial burden of medical education as a primary concern and estimated that total student debt, including interest, could approach $500,000. She also discussed limitations on access to food-assistance programs due to work-hour requirements and private-school eligibility restrictions.

- The student described use of artificial intelligence to summarize and explain lecture material and possible future use in SOAP-note preparation. She noted that AI provides faster access to difficult information but may reduce critical-thinking practice. Potential effects on radiology careers were discussed, though she did not believe AI could fully replace physicians.

- Board members discussed the perception that medical boards exist mainly to discipline physicians and emphasized the Board's public-protection and rehabilitation roles. Staff asked how best to reach students. The student advised that newsletters and Facebook may have limited reach and recommended participation in mandatory professionalism or conference-week programming. She offered to help coordinate through her student organization. The Board noted Open Meeting Act constraints on the number of members who may participate outside a noticed meeting and suggested coordination of a future meeting or presentation.

Public comment: Michele Monserratt-Ramos of Consumer Watchdog noted that some medical students use TikTok and Instagram to share their medical-school experiences and build public support.

Agenda Item 8 President's Report

President Pines welcomed newly appointed physician member Faisal Qazi, D.O., appointed March 20, 2026, and summarized his neurology, teaching, and institutional leadership background. Dr. Qazi expressed enthusiasm for supporting patient safety, patient care, and the Board's role.

President Pines reported that the January Hill Day was timely because legislation subsequently introduced would define who may use the D.O. designation and protect the profession's identity. The Board intends to continue an annual Hill Day in January 2027. She also reported on a Federation of State Medical Boards work session on trauma-informed care, emphasizing the need for specialized investigator training in domestic-violence and sexual-harassment complaints. OMBC leadership and DCA planned to pursue such training.

President Pines announced the upcoming FSMB annual meeting in Baltimore and stated that she would report relevant developments at a future meeting.

Public comment: Michele Monserratt-Ramos welcomed the new members, described her advocacy arising from the death of her fiancé, and urged rigorous complaint review, accountability, transparency, and prioritization of public protection. President Pines thanked her for longstanding advocacy.

Agenda Item 9 Board Member Communications with Interested Parties

No board member disclosures were reported.

No public comments were received.

Agenda Item 10 Intergovernmental Relations Reports and Administrative Services Update

- **Department of Consumer Affairs Update**

  Lucia Saldivar, Deputy Director of Board and Bureau Relations, reported that the Governor's reorganization will divide the Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency into the California Housing and Homelessness Agency and the Business and Consumer Services Agency. DCA will be one of eight departments under the latter beginning July 1, 2026. DCA continued transition planning through agency work groups.

  Members and staff were reminded to book travel early, compare rental cars with ride-share services, and retain receipts for new costs such as baggage fees. Board Member Orientation Training must be completed within one year of appointment or reappointment; upcoming sessions were scheduled for June 24 and October 21, 2026. Ms. Saldivar thanked President Pines for serving as a panelist at DCA's February board-president training.

No public comments were received.

- **B. Budget Update**

  Kaila Van Lindt, Budget Analyst, joined by Budget Manager Brad Lencioni, presented expenditure, revenue, and fund-condition projections based on actual data through fiscal month eight. The Board's existing $4.33 million budget was projected to incur approximately $4.980 million in expenditures, exceeding the appropriation by about $647,000. With anticipated Attorney General and Health Quality Investigation Unit augmentations, the budget would increase to approximately $5.022 million, producing an estimated $42,000 reversion, or 0.84 percent.

  For FY 2024-25, the Board collected approximately $4.119 million: $1.096 million in initial-license fees, $2.737 million in renewal fees, and $286,000 from citations, fines, delinquent fees, and other revenue. For FY 2025-26, projected revenue was $3.750 million and projected expenditures were $5.056 million, including statewide pro rata charges, with an estimated $689,000 augmentation. The projected year-end reserve was $3.637 million, or approximately 8.8 months. The Budget Office will continue monthly monitoring.

Executive Director Erika Calderon thanked the budget team for extensive work addressing the declining reserve.

No public comments were received.

Agenda Item 11 Presentation on the Corporate Practice of Medicine

Deputy Attorney General John Gatschet presented on California's corporate-practice-of-medicine doctrine. A temporary technology problem caused the Board to defer and later resume the presentation.

The presentation addressed the general prohibition on unlicensed entities controlling the practice of medicine; the distinction between permissible administrative support and impermissible control over clinical judgment; ownership and organizational-structure requirements; management-service arrangements; fee splitting; the role of professional medical corporations; and enforcement considerations. Board members asked questions regarding practical indicators of control, ownership and contracting structures, and the relationship between business operations and independent physician judgment.

No Board action was taken.

Agenda Item 12 Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Erika Calderon provided updates on Board personnel, operations, technology initiatives, and outreach activities.

- **Personnel:** The Board had 15.9 authorized positions. Receptionist Sanjay accepted a promotion with CalPERS, effective May 7, 2026. Recruitment to fill the vacancy would begin following his departure.

- **Technology and Operations:** The Board launched a consumer enforcement video and a secure document upload portal on its website to improve public access and streamline document submissions. Staff also continued work on delinquent-license outreach, the September 2026 Board newsletter, social media communications, committee meetings, coordination with the Attorney General's Office and HQIU investigators, and Department of Consumer Affairs initiatives related to diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility, and artificial intelligence.

- **Outreach:** Ms. Calderon reported on her attendance at the OPSC 65th Annual Convention.

Board members discussed the accessibility and public use of the document upload portal, consumer outreach efforts, and delinquent-license communications.

Public comment was received.

No Board action was taken.

Agenda Item 13 Licensing Program Update

Licensing Program Manager Machiko Chong presented the Licensing Program Update, including licensing statistics through the third quarter of Fiscal Year 2025–2026 and current licensing activities.

- **Licensing Statistics:** The Board reported 17,407 licensed osteopathic physicians and surgeons, 1,629 postgraduate training licenses, and 1,489 fictitious name permits.

- **Program Operations:** Ms. Chong reviewed application processing, renewals, audits, and ongoing efforts to improve workflow, communications, and regulatory compliance. She also noted minor corrections to attachment references in the written report.

- **Delinquent License Project:** Staff identified 1,946 delinquent licenses, with an initial review indicating that 1,058 licensees had relocated out of state. The Board discussed outreach efforts to delinquent licensees, the absence of a retired-license status, and the fact that licensing fees have remained unchanged for approximately 25 years.

- Board members asked questions regarding application processing timelines, license-status data, and strategies for addressing delinquent licenses.

No public comment was received, and no Board action was taken.

Agenda Item 14 Enforcement and Probation Program Updates

Enforcement Program Manager Cristy Livramento presented the Enforcement Program Update, including complaint, investigation, accusation, and case-aging statistics, as well as additional data requested by the Board at prior meetings.

- **Enforcement Activities:** Ms. Livramento highlighted the Board's new consumer complaint video and explained that educational letters are issued for minor recordkeeping or administrative deficiencies rather than cases involving negligent patient care. She also reported that patient-impact statements are included when patient-care cases are referred for formal investigation, although the Board is not statutorily required to solicit them. Since implementation, the Board had received two patient-impact statements.

- **Public Comment:** Representatives from Consumer Watchdog requested expanded reporting on complaint statistics, including death-related complaints, formal investigations, complainant interviews, educational letters, patient-impact statements, and case outcomes. Commenters also shared personal experiences with the complaint process and encouraged the Board to strengthen transparency and engagement with complainants and their families. Staff responded by clarifying the purpose of educational letters and the Board's patient-impact-statement process.

- **Probation Program:** On behalf of Probation Monitor Ralph Correa, staff reported that 30 licensees were on active probation. Of those, 27 were actively monitored while practicing in California, and 4 were tolling probation while practicing out of state and therefore not receiving probation credit. Staff also reported that four physicians with public letters of reprimand remained under monitoring, two cease-practice orders had been issued for non-compliance, and one petition for revocation had been submitted to the Attorney General's Office.

Board members discussed enforcement reporting and program operations.

No Board action was taken.

Agenda Item 15 Presentation by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education

Dr. Graham McMahon, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME), presented an overview of ACCME's accreditation system and introduced the CME Passport platform, a digital system that receives verified continuing medical education (CME) completion data directly from accredited providers.

Dr. McMahon explained that ACCME offered the CME Passport system to OMBC at no cost. The platform is designed to streamline CME verification by reducing reliance on physician-uploaded certificates, supporting identity matching, minimizing manual audits, and assisting the Board in verifying the continuing education requirements for California osteopathic physician license renewal.

Board members discussed the system's compatibility with existing renewal requirements, integration of AOA- and AMA-accredited CME, data completeness, privacy protections, identity matching, specialty-specific education, and how physicians could supplement records not captured by the system. Public commenters emphasized the importance of preserving appropriate recognition of osteopathic-specific continuing medical education.

The Board expressed interest in further staff evaluation of the proposal and continued coordination with ACCME.

Public comment: Holly Macriss, Executive Director for the Osteopathic Physicians & Surgeons of California (OPSC), sought clarification about the costs related to CME providers and state associations. She acknowledged previous feedback that specialty hours are hard to obtain, but that OPSC is incorporating more of these hours into their CME events and requested the Board's continued collaboration with ACOFP-CA and OPSC to address CME needs. Valerie Lile, Vice President of Education for the American Osteopathic Association (AOA), explained that the AOA provides a transcript service for its osteopathic physician and surgeon members similar to what the ACCME provides, covering both licensure certifications and state requirements.

No Board action was taken.

Agenda Item 16 Rulemaking Update

Legislative and Regulatory Specialist Terri Thorfinnson provided an update on the Board's rulemaking activities.

- **Priority Fee Rulemaking:** The priority fee rulemaking package advanced to Agency review, the final step before submission to the Office of Administrative Law (OAL) for notice and public comment.

- **Other Rulemaking Projects:** The disciplinary guidelines remained in the drafting stage, while the licensing update package continued in development.

Executive Director Erika Calderon explained that the original rulemaking package had included application-related changes but was narrowed to focus on fees and revenue. She also acknowledged the contributions of regulatory counsel and the Department of Consumer Affairs Budget Office. Staff indicated that work would next focus on the disciplinary guidelines in coordination with the Enforcement Committee before presenting proposed regulatory language to the full Board.

No public comment was received, and no Board action was taken.

Agenda Item 17 Discussion and Possible Action on Legislation

Legislative and Regulatory Specialist Terri Thorfinnson presented updates on pending legislation and noted that several staff recommendations had changed following recent amendments. **AB 1587** was moved to the Board's watch list after substantial amendments, **SB 849** was returned to active consideration following proposed amendments by the Medical Board of California, and **AB 2398** was held until the end of the discussion due to recent amendments.

The Board considered the following measures:

- **AB 1703 – Osteopathic Title and Scope Protection:**
  The Executive Committee had previously adopted a **support** position. Board members recommended a technical amendment to include **Osteopathic Manipulative Medicine (OMM)**, in addition to osteopathic manipulative treatment, to better reflect the profession's philosophy and scope of practice. Staff was directed to communicate the recommendation to the bill sponsor. No additional Board action was required.

- **SB 1002 – Out-of-State Telemedicine Exemption:**
  The Board **opposed** expansion of an exemption allowing out-of-state physicians to treat California patients without California licensure, citing jurisdiction, complaint investigation, subpoena authority, record access, and consumer-remedy concerns.

  Motion – Hemesh Patel, D.O. **Second** – Faisal Qazi, D.O.
    - **Ayes** – Adamyan, Cummins, Lockman, Mirreghabie, Patel, Pines, Swain, Qazi
    - **Nays** – None
    - **Abstentions** – None
    - **Absent** – None

  Motion carried to oppose SB 1002.

- **AB 2575 – Artificial Intelligence in Health Care:**
  The Board **supported** the bill, recognizing its disclosure requirements and safeguards governing the use of artificial intelligence in health care. Members also discussed federal preemption and the importance of ensuring patients are not misled.

  Motion – Matthew Swain, D.O. **Second** – Hemesh Patel, D.O.

    - **Ayes** – Adamyan, Cummins, Lockman, Mirreghabie, Patel, Pines, Swain, Qazi
    - **Nays** – None
    - **Abstentions** – None
    - **Absent** – None

  Motion carried to support AB 2575.

- **SB 903 – Artificial Intelligence in Health Care:**
  The Board **supported** the bill as an additional safeguard promoting transparency

when artificial intelligence is used in health care communications and services.

Motion – Matthew Swain, D.O. **Second** – Hemesh Patel, D.O.

- **Ayes** – Adamyan, Cummins, Lockman, Mirreghabie, Patel, Pines, Swain, Qazi
- **Nays** – None
- **Abstentions** – None
- **Absent** – None

Motion carried to support SB 903.

- **AB 2164 – Reproductive Health Protections/Extradition:**
  The Board **supported** the bill, which would strengthen protections related to lawful reproductive health services provided in California.

  Motion – Hemesh Patel, D.O. **Second** – John M. Cummins, J.D.
  - **Ayes** – Adamyan, Cummins, Mirreghabie, Patel, Pines, Swain, Qazi
  - **Nays** – None
  - **Abstentions** – None
  - **Absent** – Brett Lockman, D.O. (not marked on vote sheet)

  Motion carried to support AB 2164.

- **Menopause Trailer Bill:**
  The Board **supported** the revised budget trailer bill concerning menopause care. Staff noted that it updated previously supported legislation and strengthened the continuing education provisions.

  Motion – Negeen Mirreghabie, Esq. **Second** – Hemesh Patel, D.O.
  - **Ayes** – Adamyan, Cummins, Lockman, Mirreghabie, Patel, Pines, Swain, Qazi
  - **Nays** – None
  - **Abstentions** – None
  - **Absent** – None

  Motion carried to support the Menopause Trailer Bill.

- **AB 2256 – Radiologist Assistants:**
  The Board **opposed** the bill due to concerns about creating a new practice structure without an independent regulatory board or comparable consumer-protection framework.

  Motion – Matthew Swain, D.O. **Second** – Hemesh Patel, D.O.
  - **Ayes** – Adamyan, Cummins, Lockman, Mirreghabie, Patel, Pines, Swain, Qazi
  - **Nays** – None
  - **Abstentions** – None
  - **Absent** – None

  Motion carried to oppose AB 2256.

- **SB 849 – Sexual Misconduct:**
  The Board voted to **support the bill if amended** to incorporate the Medical Board of California's proposed language, which members believed would strengthen enforcement while avoiding unintended retroactive effects.

  Motion – Matthew Swain, D.O. **Second** – Hemesh Patel, D.O.
  - **Ayes** – Adamyan, Cummins, Lockman, Mirreghabie, Patel, Pines, Swain, Qazi
  - **Nays** – None
  - **Abstentions** – None
  - **Absent** – None

  Motion carried to support SB 849 if amended with the Medical Board of California's proposed language.

- **AB 2398 – Alternative Residency Pathway:**
  Staff explained that recent amendments changed the bill from establishing an alternative licensure pathway to creating a study group in which OMBC would participate. The Board determined that the amended proposal did not require a formal position and deferred further consideration pending future recommendations.

  No Board action was taken.

  During the discussion, a Board member also raised **AB 45** regarding Labor Commissioner enforcement and hospital licensing. Members discussed potential impacts on physician protections and enforcement authority. Staff agreed to follow up with the member, and **no position was taken**.

Agenda Item 18 Future Agenda Items

The Board discussed potential future agenda items, including presentations on the **physician-patient relationship**, a **demonstration of the Board's document upload portal**, and a presentation by the **American Osteopathic Association (AOA)**.

No public comments were received.

No additional future agenda items were formally adopted, and no public comment was received.

Agenda Item 19 Annual Performance Evaluation

The Board recessed into closed session for the Executive Director's performance evaluation.

Agenda Item 20 Adjournment

The Board adjourned its meeting at approximately **6:00pm**.