

## GAC SURVEY PRELIMINARY RESULTS

Recently the Governmental Affairs Committee surveyed SDPA members investigating members understanding of the board of psychology, as well experiences navigating the licensing/administrative wing, and the enforcement/disciplinary wing of the California Board of Psychology (BoP). Results of the survey will be disseminated in two parts. Below you will find the qualitative results comprising part 1 of the results report. Qualitative results (part 2) will be forthcoming over the next few months.

Readers should be aware the results were obtained from a self-selecting population sample who chose to participate in a survey regarding the BoP. Self-selecting samples inherently have a high propensity to create biased results as those who choose to participate are more likely to have had more extreme experiences motivating participation. Results should be taken with precaution.

The survey garnered a total of 83 participants with 89.41% being 'licensed psychologists,' and 'students,' 'doctoral level pre-licensed,' and 'psychologists no longer licensed' each accounting for 3.53% of respondents respectively. The survey was only sent to SDPA membership; however, it is possible non-SDPA members also might have answered as no question was asked specifically about SDPA membership.

The survey explored SDPA members' understanding of the mission the BoP serves. 81.58% of participants correctly identified the primary role of the BoP as "Protecting the public and assuring minimal qualifications and standards for psychologists granted licensure". Of the 14 respondents with misperceptions, 12 of them were 'licensed psychologists;' while 'psychologists no longer licensed' accounted for 1 incorrect response, and 'students' the remaining two responses.

The majority of participants (72.5%) have had 1 or more contacts with the board of psychology above and beyond the normal initial licensure and renewal processes (1-2 separate issues = 45% of participants; 3-4 separate issues = 18.75%; 4 or more separate issues = 8.75). Only 27.5% of participants have only communicated with the board about initial licensure or renewal.

Communications with the BoP were indicated to be most successful when conducted via email (51 indications); communications by phone being second most successful (32 indications); written correspondence third (12 indications). Communications by fax, public hearing, and in-person were equally reported as least successful (2 indications each). Post-hoc interpretation of this question's answer profile along with qualitative data from participants indicates this question asking about "success" of communication vehicles might be conflated with "most used" communication vehicles. If this were the case, forms of communication such as public hearing and in-person could be very successful ways of communicating with the BoP, however not frequently utilized accounting for their low rating.

The survey assessed participant **satisfaction** on the following questions:

	Question	Very Low	Low	Moderate	High	Very High
1	How responsive has the California Board of Psychology (BoP) been to your communications with them?	15.28%	15.28%	43.06%	18.06%	8.33%
2	How would you rate the level of satisfaction you have had with your contacts with the BoP?	21.62%	25.68%	25.68%	20.27%	6.76%
3	How would you rate your level of satisfaction with the licensure (Initial, Psych Associate, SPE, ext.) aspects of your contacts with the BoP?	17.57%	17.57%	39.19%	20.27%	5.41%
4	How would you rate the timeliness of the licensure process by the BoP?	30.14%	16.44%	32.88%	16.44%	4.11%
5	How would you rate your perception of the level of fairness in enforcement/discipline actions taken by the BoP?	16.18%	17.65%	41.18%	17.65%	7.35%
6	How would you rate the timeliness of enforcement/discipline actions taken by the BoP?	14.29%	19.05%	46.03%	14.29%	6.35%
7	How do you rate the quality of how the BoP handles enforcement/disciplinary issues? (appropriate disciplinary action, due diligence, fairness to all parties, etc.)	16.92%	15.38%	43.08%	16.92%	7.69%
8	How familiar are you with the processes the BoP takes in determining the response to complaints?	16.00%	37.33%	20.00%	18.67%	8.00%

Participant responses to each item fell on a positively skewed normal curve, with the greatest dissatisfaction being reported regarding **timeliness of the licensure process** ( $M = 2.48$ ,  $SD = 1.19$ ). Participants reported the greatest satisfaction with the BoP's **responsiveness to communications** ( $M = 2.89$ ,  $SD = 1.12$ ). Participant's satisfaction was most discrepant when it came to satisfaction regarding **contacts with the BoP** ( $SD$

= 1.21), whereas participant reporting was least varied regarding satisfaction with **timeliness of enforcement/discipline actions** taken by the BoP (SD = 1.06).

When assessing SDPA member's familiarity with the processes the BoP takes in determining the response to complaints, participant responses were again positively skewed with the majority reporting **low familiarity**.

Administrative issues SDPA members have experienced with the BoP were assessed. The most cited administrative issue was that of **long wait times for paperwork and/or problems with licensing approval process** (35 indications, 42.2%), with **lack of response to phone and email communications** (26 indications, 31.3%) being second most cited. **Customer service complaints** as well as **difficulties with the Breeze website** were equally experienced (16 indications each; 19.3%). Members also experienced difficulties regarding **complicated or difficult complaint process** (9 indications, 10.8%). 25.3% of participants reported **no administrative issues** with the BoP (21 indications). Twelve participants (11.8%) did not answer the question.

SDPA members reported enforcement/disciplinary issues personally experienced by the BoP. The most cited enforcement/disciplinary issues were **violations of the ethics code** (8 indications, 9.6%). Second most experienced enforcement/disciplinary issue being **administrative negligence** (6 indications, 7.2%), while **violations of the law** was third most cited (5 indications, 5.0%). The majority of SDPA members reported no experience of enforcement/disciplinary issues (58 indications, 69.9%). Eleven participants (12.9%) did not respond to the question.

Issues/behaviors participants thought the BoP should be more proactive about investigating/disciplining was assessed. Participants reported **clinical negligence** being the category they were most concerned about the BoP being more proactive about investigating (17 indications, 20.5%); followed by **violations of the ethics code** (15 indications, 18.1%), **violations of the law** (14 indications, 16.9%), and finally **administrative negligence** was the least concerning action (8 indications, 9.6%). 35 participants (42.2%) indicated there were no actions they wanted the BoP to be more proactive in disciplining.

Issues/behaviors participants thought the BoP should be less active about investigating/disciplining was assessed. Participants reported **administrative negligence** being the category they thought the BoP should be less proactive about investigating (25 indications, 30.1%); followed by **clinical negligence** (8 indications, 9.6%), **violations of the ethics code** (6 indications, 7.2%), and finally violations of the law was the category participants least wanted the BoP to take less action regarding (4 indications, 4.8%). 38 participants (45.8%) indicated there were no actions they wanted the BoP to be less proactive in disciplining.

SDPA members reported which aspects of the BoP's enforcement process they wanted to have more education regarding. The area of enforcement participants most wanted

greater education regarding was **investigation of complaints** (41 indications, 49.4%), followed by the **disciplinary action decision making process** (37 indications, 44.6%). Participants showed similar interest for knowledge about the following topics: **Timeframes for complaint process** (27 indications, 32.5%); **State of practice ability during complaint/investigation process** (23 indications, 27.7%); **Types of disciplinary action** (22 indications, 26.5%). Twenty-seven participants (32.5% indicated no desire for additional knowledge regarding the aforementioned topics.

Participants shared the level of additional liability coverage they retain specifically for defense against BoP complaints. Thirty-three participants (39.8%) indicated that they did not opt in for the additional coverage. Of the people who did opt in for the additional coverage, the most held coverage was at the **\$50,000 board, \$10,000 governmental** (19 indications, 22.9%). Both the **\$75,000 board, \$12,500 governmental** and the **\$100,000 board, \$10,000 governmental** were equally held by eight participants each (9.6%). Seven participants (8.4%) held the lowest level of coverage at **\$25,000 board, \$7,500 governmental**. Eight participants (9.6%) did not respond to the question.

#### Take aways:

- 18.54% of SDPA members do not understand the role and purpose the BoP serves and were unable to identify its correct role being 1) Protecting the public, 2) Assuring minimal qualifications and standards for psychologists granted licensure.
- 72% of SDPA members have had contacts with the BoP outside of standard licensing procedures. A 72% statistic highlights how relevant knowledge about the BoP's functioning, purpose, and how to navigate their various systems are as the likelihood of BoP contact over one's career is more likely than not.
- Communicating with the BoP was most successful when communications were conducted by email.
- Most participants indicated moderate satisfaction across all BoP domain interactions with the most dissatisfaction with licensure wait times, and the greatest satisfaction with responsiveness to communications.
- The most experienced disciplinary inquiry the BoP investigated members for were violations of the ethics code.
- Members wanted the board to be more diligent in investigating clinical negligence, and less pursuant of administrative negligence
- Most members reported low knowledge of the BoP's enforcement procedures and indicated wanted greater education regarding the BoP's investigation procedure.
- 39% of participants do not hold additional malpractice coverage which covers them from board investigation. Most people who did opt for the board protection add on purchased coverages at the \$50,000 (BoP); 10,000 (government) level.

Based upon these results (part 1) and the forth coming qualitative results (part 2), the Governmental Affairs committee will be developing a list of recommendations that will be disseminated out the SDPA membership.