

OREGON BOARD OF ACCOUNTANCY



April 4, 2023

Diversity & Inclusion /Affirmative Action Plan

Martin Pittioni
Executive Director
200 Hawthorne Ave SE, Suite D450
Salem, OR 97301-5289
Ph.: 503-378-2280

2023-2025

DESCRIPTION OF AGENCY

A. **Mission and Objectives**

The mission of the Oregon Board of Accountancy (Board) is to protect Oregon consumers by ensuring only qualified licensees practice public accountancy in accordance with established professional standards and promulgated rules. The Board is responsible for licensing and regulating Certified Public Accountants (CPAs) and Public Accountants (PAs) in Oregon.

The Board ensures that approximately 9,000 CPAs, PAs, municipal auditors and public accounting firms registered to practice in Oregon demonstrate and maintain professional competency to serve the needs of their clients and other users of their services. The Board is authorized by ORS chapter 673 to establish and enforce standards and regulations and license qualified applicants to practice public accountancy in Oregon.

B. **Name of Agency Director/Administrator**

Martin Pittioni
Executive Director
Board of Accountancy
200 Hawthorne Ave SE, Suite D450
Salem, OR 97301-5289
Ph.: 503-378-2280
E-mail: martin.pittioni@boa.oregon.gov

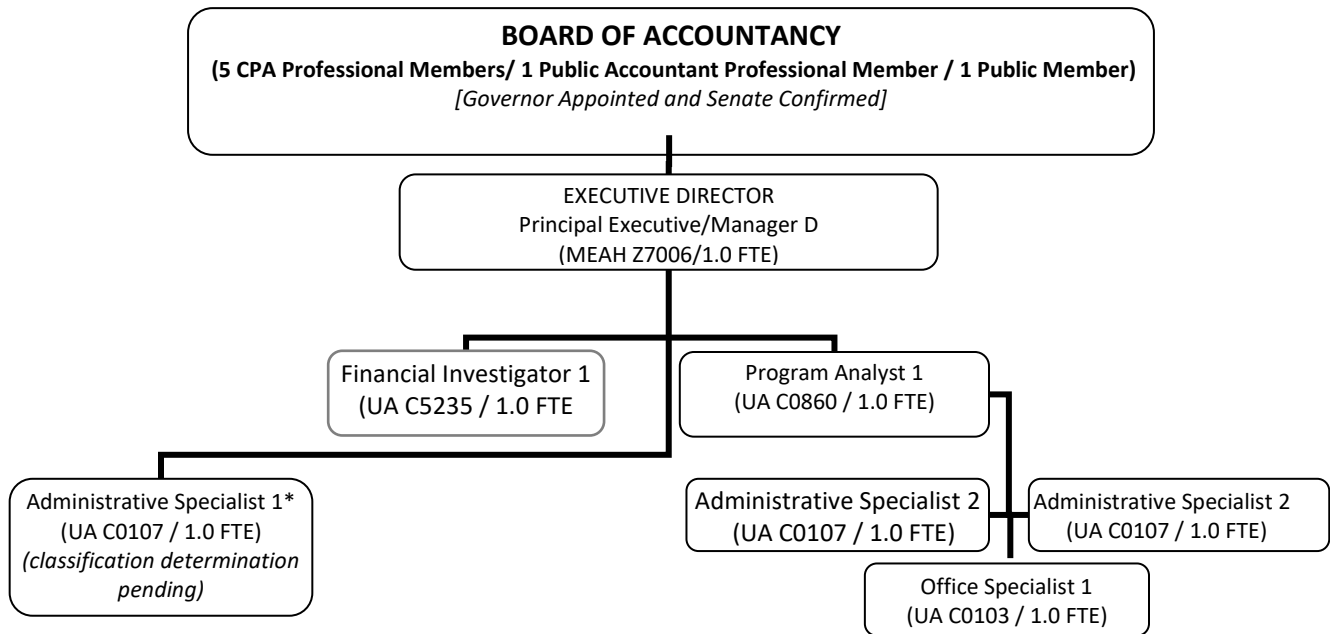
C. **Name of Governor's Policy Advisor**

Vince Porter
Economic Development and Workforce Policy Advisor
Office of the Governor
Ph.: 503.551.1651
E-mail: vince.porter@oregon.gov

D. **Name of DEI and Affirmative Action Representative**

Andrew Barlow
Licensing Coordinator
Board of Accountancy
200 Hawthorne Ave SE, Ste D450
Salem, OR 97301-5289
Ph.: 503-378-2270
E-mail: Andrew.barlow@boa.oregon.gov

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



AFFIRMATIVE ACTION POLICY

It is the policy of the State of Oregon that employment without discrimination is recognized as and declared to be a civil right. The State of Oregon is committed to achieving a workforce that represents the diversity of Oregon community and is a leader in providing its citizens fair and equal employment opportunity.

Accordingly, the Oregon Board of Accountancy shall:

1. Maintain a policy of equal treatment and equality of opportunity in employment for all applicants and employees in its employment decisions.
2. Apply all terms, conditions, benefits, and privileges of employment with the agency to all applicants and employees regardless of race, color, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, national origin, political affiliation, FMLA/OFLA leave status, military leave status, disability, or any other reason prohibited by the law or policy of the state or federal government.
3. Engage in efforts improve the workforce pipeline and diversity of the profession, including through collaboration with agency partners.

AGENCY AFFIRMATIVE ACTION POLICY STATEMENT

The Board of Accountancy is committed to achieving a work force that represents the diversity of Oregon’s population and to providing fair and equal employment opportunities. The Board is committed to an affirmative action program that provides equal opportunities for all persons

regardless of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, marital status, age or disability. The Board provides an environment for each employee, applicant for employment, and every licensee or applicant for licensure, that is free from sexual harassment, as well as harassment and intimidation on account of an individual's race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, age, and marital status or disability. The Board's employment practices are consistent with the State's Affirmative Action Plan Guidelines and with state and federal laws, which preclude discrimination.

The Executive Director will communicate the plan to every employee on email and at an all staff meeting. The Director will further work through the agency's DEI / Affirmative Action Representative to review hiring and promotion patterns and job descriptions with our HR Business Partner in the Department of Administrative Services Chief Human Resources Office (DAS CHRO) with a goal of identifying and removing any barriers to equal employment opportunities. This partnership will also ensure that the agency's Affirmative Action Policy Statement and Affirmative Action Plan are posted on the agency's website and is effectively communicated to the Board's employees.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION STATEMENT

The Board of Accountancy is committed to establishing, monitoring, and maintaining a work environment where all employees are given opportunities to develop, treated with respect and integrity and feel part of the Board's goals and mission. This is accomplished by promoting a diverse staff where everyone feels supported and valued. The Board is an equal-opportunity employer that is committed to a pro-active role in recruitment and selection process. The Board recognizes that given the small size of its staff, the greatest DEI impact it can have is by identifying and resourcing community engagement with its partners to help achieve the profession's goals for accountancy workforce development and in the process. Therefore, the Board's DEI and Affirmative Action Plan will from this point forward emphasize the Board's community engagement efforts to improve the accountancy workforce pipeline and diversity, while still addressing the Board's own work force.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT EFFORTS

The Oregon Board of Accountancy will develop a community engagement plan during the first year of the reporting period, in primary partnership with the Oregon Society for CPA's (OSCPA). Based on preliminary conversations with OSCP, both the Board and OSCP view community engagement to improve the accountancy workforce pipeline and its diversity as an issue where Board engagement would be welcome and close coordination with OSCP would be very helpful. In addition, the Board also intends to coordinate plan development with the National Association of State Boards of Accountancy (NASBA), including NASBA's Center for the Public Trust (CBT). CBT's mission is to develop, empower and promote ethical leaders. CBT's work already includes outreach to students nationally, operating CBT student chapters around the country, deep involvement in workforce issues and promoting diversity of the profession.

Finally, NASBA has convened a special committee to address workforce pipeline issues which is tasked with developing recommendation for state boards of accountancy to implement. This will serve as another valuable input into the community engagement plan.

HUMAN RESOURCE SERVICES

The Oregon Board of Accountancy's Human Resource Services are provided by the Department of Administrative Services, Chief Human Resource Office (CHRO). The Board of Accountancy works closely with CHRO on all recruitments, promotions, and personnel issues that arise.

TRAINING, EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Board of Accountancy recognizes that its employees are its greatest resource. Investing in employee development and enhancing employee knowledge, skills and abilities is one of the agency's highest priorities.

Continued professional development and training opportunities ensures that employees are provided with the skills needed to excel in their work, and therefore be retained in the agency. The Oregon Board of Accountancy uses a variety of approaches to establish a climate that supports continuous learning and development through the following:

- Establish clear paths for acquiring the skills, knowledge and experience that employees need for their continuing learning and career development.
- Establish developmental opportunities for employees, such as detail assignments and leadership training to give everyone interested in a chance to participate in assignments that prepare them for high-level positions.
- Use a variety of ways to provide training and developmental experience for employees such as:
 - Webinars and other interactive online training
 - Internal and external training courses
 - Establish individual needs and training requests and make those a standard part of the conversation during the quarterly check-ins with employees.

Investing in training opportunities for all employees reflects the value and support the Board places on our employees.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PLAN PREVIOUS OBJECTIVES:

The Board of Accountancy is currently undergoing a complete re-build of its staff and operations, with all positions except one investigator position vacating between January and August 2022. The agency is rebuilding its staff and was successful in working with the Governor's Office to fill one vacancy on its Board in September 2022.

In this context, the new Executive Director that joined the agency in May 2022 did not have an opportunity for any continuity or hand-off regarding the agency's plan and is therefore also re-imagining and re-building this aspect of the Board's work, with a new emphasis on community engagement.

Prior plan objectives were exclusively focused on staff and board composition and accomplishing diversity objectives in that arena. The agency intends to change its approach going forward, starting with this 2023-25 plan, by adding a significant emphasis on community engagement to the plan with a goal of contributing to workforce expansion and diversity in the accountancy profession.

With respect to Board and staff current state, including very recent hiring of two diverse staff and a Board appointment completed by September 2022, the following reflects the current composition of the Board and its staff:

Current State as of 10/12/2022 – Staff/Board member

Board Members	Race	Staff	Race
Board Members	Race	Staff	Race
7 members		6 staff	
5 males – 57%	White – 86% Hispanic – 14 %	3 males – 50%	1 Asian-American 17%
2 females – 29%		3 females – 50%	1 Black – 17%
		2 vacancies	4 White – 67%

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PLAN 2023-25 OBJECTIVES

The Board’s primary goal for 2023-25 will be to expand its plan objectives to contribute more directly to the professions’ efforts to increase the size and diversity of the accountancy profession pipeline, focusing on community engagement plan development in year 1, and implementation in year 2.

More specifically, the Board is committed to developing a community engagement plan in close consultation with our partners at OSCPA and NASBA by June 30, 2024. Plan development will include goal setting for 2024-25 and the following 2025-27 biennium. For accountability and transparency reasons, the Board intends to publish an updated version of this plan in September 2024, reflecting outcomes of the planning process and status of goal development and implementation efforts.

The Journal of Accountancy’s reporting on the April 2022 release of AICPA’s 2021 Trends Report sets forth the following key background data highlighting at the national level the accountancy profession pipeline challenge and current state of efforts to improve diversity:

Difficulties maintaining the supply of potential CPAs in the pipeline mirror challenges experienced throughout the educational sector since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Overall, educational enrollment is down as some young people have reevaluated their aspirations and their ability to pay for college amid the pandemic.

Total undergraduate enrollment declined 6.6% from the fall of 2019 through the fall of 2021, representing a deficit of 1,025,569 students, according to the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center.

Accounting postsecondary programs also have seen a decline, although its start began before the pandemic. The combined number of bachelor's and master's degree graduates in accounting has dropped steadily since reaching a high of 79,854 in 2015–2016. Between 2018–2019 and 2019–2020, that number fell 4% to 72,923.

On the other hand, the number of new CPA Exam participants is expected to rise in the upcoming years after an increase from 30,385 in 2020 to 32,186 in 2021. Historical trends have shown that overall candidate volumes tend to increase prior to the launch of a new exam format. With the CPA Evolution-aligned exam debuting in January 2024, more exam-takers are expected in 2022 and 2023.

The profession's efforts to encourage diversity, equity, and inclusion delivered progress with a rise of almost 5 percentage points (a change from 30.1% in 2018 to 34.7% in 2020) in the portion of new accounting graduate hires at CPA firms who are ethnically diverse. This occurred despite an ethnic diversity trend in bachelor's degrees that has been almost completely flat dating back to 2013–2014.

Meanwhile, the portion of ethnically diverse partners in accounting/finance functions at CPA firms doubled over a two-year period from 9% to 18%. These included gains with partners identifying as Asian/Pacific Islander (from 4% to 10%), Hispanic/Latino (from 2% to 5%), and Black/African American (from 1% to 2%).

It is against this background that the Board intends to develop its community outreach plan in a way that balances its commitment to contributing to workforce diversity and expansion and balance that with its limited resources and ongoing resourcing of its other public protection functions. The Board views shortages in the CPA workforce also as a public protection concern, and thus desires to leverage its efforts by building on and contributing to local and national efforts to address the profession's work force challenges.

Signature

Martin Pittioni, Executive Director

Date

If you have any questions regarding the agency's Affirmative Action Plan please contact the Affirmative Action Representative listed below.

Andrew Barlow
DEI and Affirmative Action Representative
OREGON BOARD OF ACCOUNTANCY
200 Hawthorne Ave SE, Suite D450
Salem, OR 97301-5289
Ph.: 503-378-2270
e-mail: martin.pittioni@boa.oregon.gov