Board of Licensed Professional Counselors and Therapists

Annual Performance Progress Report

Reporting Year 2024

KPM #	Approved Key Performance Measures (KPMs)
1	CUSTOMER SERVICE - Percent of customers rating their satisfaction with the agency's customer service as "good" or "excellent": overall, timeliness, accuracy, helpfulness, expertise, availability of information.
2	Board Best Practices - Percent of total best practices met by the Board.
3	Timely Investigations - Percent of complaints presented to the Board within 180 days of receipt of complaint.
4	Efficient Application Processing - Average number of calendar days from completed license application file to application approval.
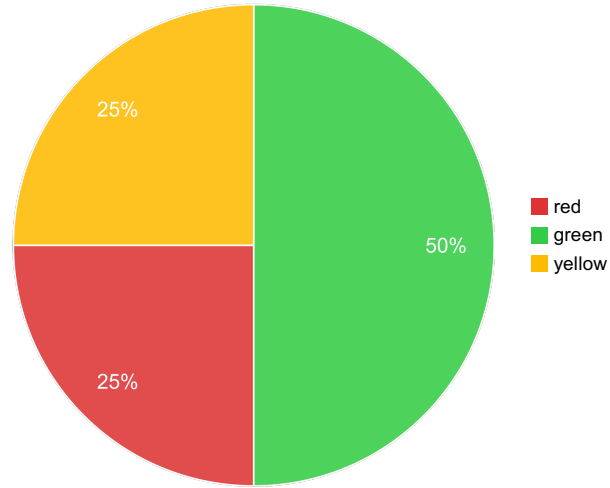
Performance Summary	Green	Yellow	Red
	= Target to -5%	= Target -5% to -15%	= Target > -15%
Summary Stats:	50%	25%	25%

KPM #1	CUSTOMER SERVICE - Percent of customers rating their satisfaction with the agency's customer service as "good" or "excellent": overall, timeliness, accuracy, helpfulness, expertise, availability of information.
	Data Collection Period: Jan 01 - Dec 31
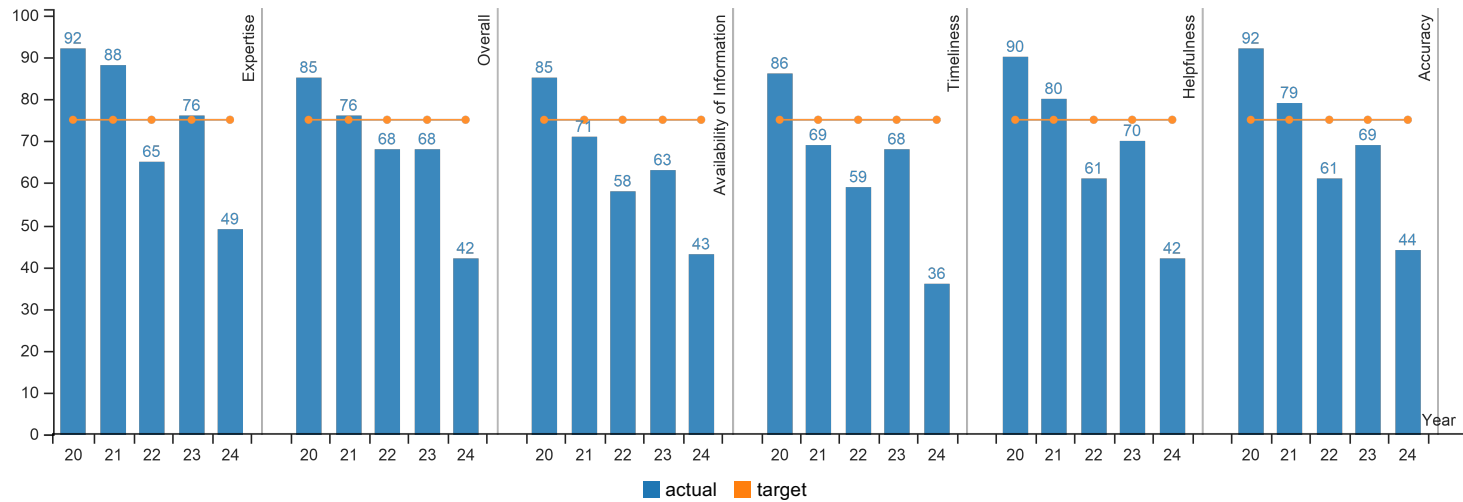
actual target

Report Year	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Expertise					
Actual	92%	88%	65%	76%	49%
Target	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%
Overall					
Actual	85%	76%	68%	68%	42%
Target	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%
Availability of Information					
Actual	85%	71%	58%	63%	43%
Target	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%
Timeliness					
Actual	86%	69%	59%	68%	36%
Target	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%
Helpfulness					
Actual	90%	80%	61%	70%	42%
Target	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%
Accuracy					
Actual	92%	79%	61%	69%	44%
Target	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%

How Are We Doing

Customer service ratings declined significantly from the prior year and fell below the target of 75% in all areas of customer service in 2024. **Overall Customer Satisfaction** decreased by 26 points, from 68% to 42%, which is 33 points below target. From 2023 to 2024, **Accuracy** decreased by 25 points, from 69% to 44%, which is 31 points below target. **Availability of Information** represented the smallest decrease, by 20 points, from 63% to 43%, sitting at 32 points below target. **Helpfulness** decreased by 28 points, from 70% to 42%, which is 33 points below target. **Expertise** decreased by 27 points, from 76% to 49%, which was previously the only area meeting target, but now 26 points below. **Timeliness** decreased the most significantly by 32 points, from 68% to 36%, and is the lowest ranked area of customer satisfaction for 2024.

Factors Affecting Results

The main factors affecting the 2024 survey results (which reflect customer satisfaction in the year 2023), which have been on a downward trend since the 2021 reporting year, are inadequate staff training, low morale, and turnover resulting from poor (former) management of the Board's Licensing Section. These results can no longer be attributed to the pandemic and must be carefully analyzed and attended to. Maintenance of consistent customer service is impossible when faced with repeated vacancies, coupled with a smaller pool of applicants for positions and significant time to recruit for and fill vacant positions. During vacancies, other staff members must step up to fill in the gaps, often working overtime. The front-line clerical/licensing positions are highly demanding in terms of difficulty and volume, and represent onboarding challenges due to the steep learning curve. These factors contribute to employee dissatisfaction, burnout, and staff members seeking higher paying and less intensive positions at other, typically larger agencies or in the private sector.

Board staff must keep pace with the continued growth in licensure applications, renewals, and compliance investigations. The BLPCT licensee base has grown by an average of 9.2% per year over the last decade, more than doubling in size from 2014 to 2023. The volume of licensure applications received, which represents the most significant workload burden for front-line staff, grew from 837 in 2019 to 1,621 in 2023, nearly doubling in just four years. By year end 2023, Board staff was managing 6,918 licensees and 1,844 registered associates, along with their questions and concerns over renewals, continuing education requirements, supervision reports, complaints, etc. Additionally, the Board has struggled with the responsiveness of its licensing system vendor, whose errors have caused significant disruption to operations and negative impact to the Board's reputation.

Generally, survey results reflect some stakeholders who have experienced an adverse enforcement action, do not agree with laws or rules that the Board is charged with enforcing, or are unsatisfied with the policy direction of the Board or State Government in general. These individuals will often respond "poor" to each satisfaction area, regardless of their experience with Board staff.

New agency leadership is prioritizing customer service in 2024 and beyond, taking active steps to engage, train, and retain the Board's crucial front-line staff. Initiatives include a request for additional staffing resources as part of the 2025-27 Agency Request Budget, along with a request for funding for an upgraded licensing system, and improvements to website content and format. HB 4010 (2024) at Section 10 removed the requirement for Board staff to review each applicant, licensee, and registrant professional disclosure statement (PDS) initially and every time there was a change. In 2023, staff reviewed nearly 10,000 PDS submissions, which represented the most significant bottleneck to application file completion. This important legislative change will continue to provide relief and allow staff to focus customer service efforts on other important areas. Board leadership and staff members will continue to work diligently to recover from prior setbacks and challenges, centering excellent customer service in everything we do.

KPM #2	Board Best Practices - Percent of total best practices met by the Board.
	Data Collection Period: Jan 01 - Dec 31

* Upward Trend = positive result
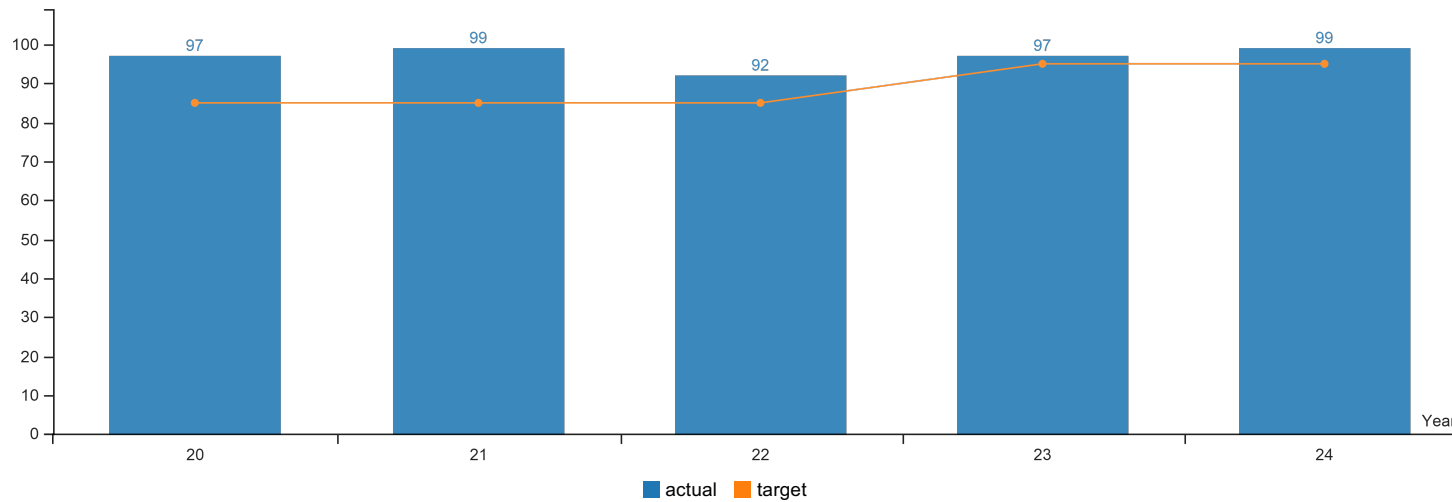
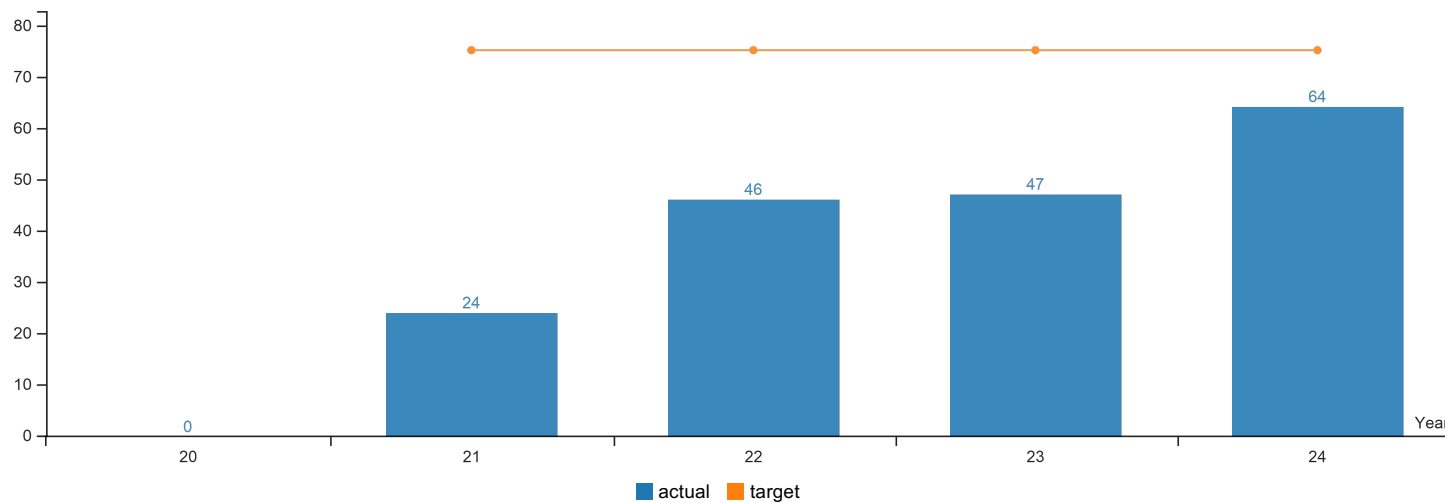| Report Year	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Metric Value					
Actual	97%	99%	92%	97%	99%
Target	85%	85%	85%	95%	95%

How Are We Doing

In the past five years, the Board has exceeded the target in Board best practices. The most recent result for the 2024 reporting period was 99%, which represents a two-point increase from the prior period. In previous years the Board was further above target; in 2024 it is only 4 points above target, since the Legislative Fiscal Office increased the target from 85% to 95% beginning in 2023.

Factors Affecting Results

Agency leadership continues to look for opportunities for improved performance and increased transparency, regardless of the Board members' reports of success. Board staff sends materials with the survey to help clarify survey questions and explain how they directly relate to agency operations; however, members report on their perceptions of best practices which could reflect aspirational rather than actual performance levels. The survey will fall below 100% if just one of the eight Board members opines that any one of the 15 best practice measures are not being met.

KPM #3	Timely Investigations - Percent of complaints presented to the Board within 180 days of receipt of complaint.
	Data Collection Period: Jan 01 - Dec 31

* Upward Trend = positive result

Report Year	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Timely Investigations					
Actual		24%	46%	47%	64%
Target		75%	75%	75%	75%

How Are We Doing

For the 2024 reporting year, 64% of complaints were presented to the Board within 180 days of receipt, which falls below the target of 75% by 11 points, but represents a significant 17-point improvement over the 47% result in 2022, and far exceeds the 24% result in 2021. Note that this is a new KPM approved in 2021, so there is no 2020 data.

Factors Affecting Results

The Agency has set an ambitious goal to present most complaint investigations to the Board within 180 days of receipt; however, there are many factors affecting our ability to expediently resolve a complaint. These include the varying complexity of cases, increasing volume of complaints received, arranging witness interviews, travel time, coordinating respondent, attorney, and witness schedules for interviews, and waiting for necessary records to be submitted (including issuing and enforcing subpoenas. Sometimes the Board receives emergency high-priority cases involving serious public protection concerns that take staff resources away from other cases.

The goal is to present a thorough and complete investigation report to the Board the first time, which often is not possible to achieve within the required 180 days. The Board meets bimonthly, so timing is a major factor as well. The Board continues to receive pressure from respondents, their attorneys, and the local professional association to allow respondents more and more time to respond to allegations and produce records, which reduces investigators' ability to achieve timeliness goals. In the current reporting period (reflecting investigations opened in 2023), significant growth in the licensee base and compliance caseload continued to contribute to challenges in maintaining timeliness, which negatively affected customer service as described under KPM #1. The volume of new investigations increased by 38.6% from 2020 to 2021, by 10.0% from 2021 to 2022, and another 7.5% from 2022 to 2023, significantly adding to the Compliance Section workload and making it a challenge to keep up. Though still significant, the lesser growth in 2023 compared to recent years allowed some room for catch-up.

The Agency is requesting additional compliance staffing resources as part of the 2025-27 Agency Request Budget, and this is expected to help the investigative team keep up with the ever-increasing caseload. Agency leadership has been working diligently to hire and train new staff members and improve complaint-processing speeds, but without compromising the integrity of the investigation process. The Agency expects to show continued improvement in the 2025 report with a sufficiently staffed and trained compliance section that is dedicated to clearing out the backlog and staying ahead of the curve.

KPM #4	Efficient Application Processing - Average number of calendar days from completed license application file to application approval.
	Data Collection Period: Jan 01 - Dec 31

* Upward Trend = negative result
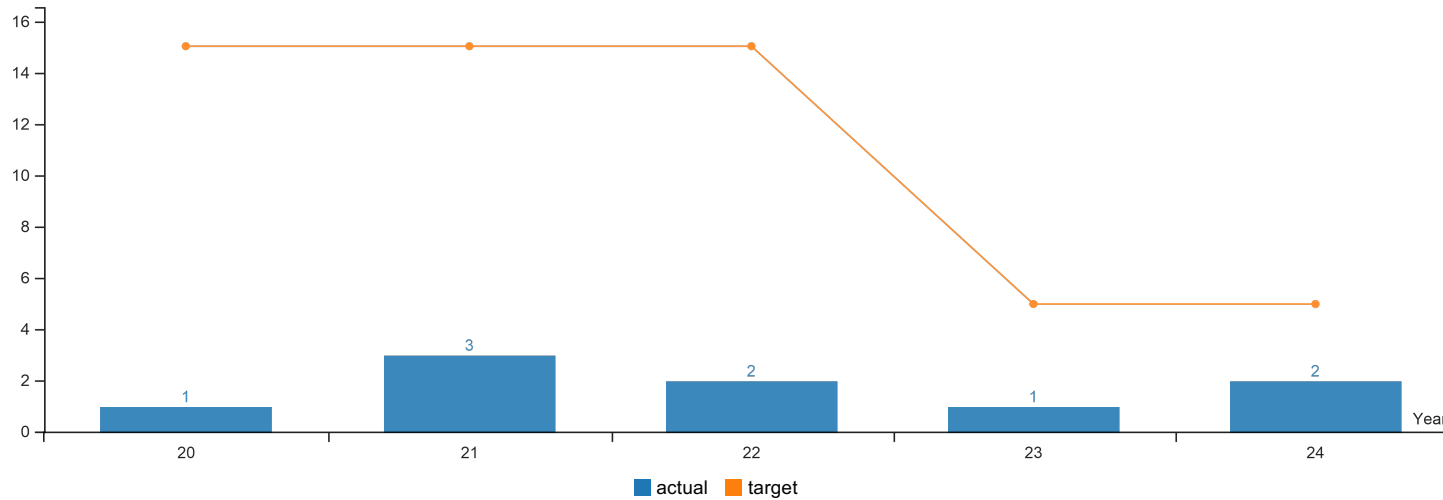
Report Year	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Efficient Application Processing					
Actual	1	3	2	1	2
Target	15	15	15	5	5

How Are We Doing

The Board has surpassed its goal to take an average of no more than five calendar days to approve a completed licensure application. The 2024 report, which reflects applications processed during the 2023 calendar year, shows an average of two days. This is a one-day increase over the average of one day in the 2023 report.

Factors Affecting Results

Efficient application processing has been highly prioritized by the Board, as it is a crucial step in ensuring licensed behavioral health providers can quickly provide necessary services to Oregonians. Agency leadership has continued to implement streamlined processes and best practice sharing between the two regulated boards that has enabled more efficient application processing. Despite these good results, the Agency is still continuously looking for ways to improve, including staff retention, cross-training to help cover for absences and vacancies, improvements in the licensing system and website, and continuous feedback. While speed of service is important, so too is the quality of customer service we provide along the way, which as descripted in KPM #1 will be a major focus area for improvement in the coming years.