



# CONTRACTORS STATE LICENSE BOARD

## PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY REPORT

### Public Affairs Committee Meeting Summary Report

#### **A. Call to Order, Roll, Establishment of Quorum and Chair's Introduction**

Public Affairs Committee Chair Diana Love called the meeting of the Contractors State License Board (CSLB) Licensing Committee to order on May 15, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. via WebEx teleconference. A quorum was established.

##### Committee Members Present

Diana Love, Chair  
Alan Guy  
Jacob Lopez  
Josef Preciado  
James Ruane

Mary Teichert and Steve Panelli had approved absences.

##### CSLB Staff Present

David Fogt, Registrar  
Katherine White, Chief of Public Affairs  
Carol Gagnon, Chief of Licensing and Examinations  
Michael Jamnetski, Special Projects Manager  
David Gower, Public Affairs Supervisor  
Natalie Watmore, Information Officer  
Robin Williams, Executive Staff

##### DCA Staff Present

John Kinn, DCA Legal Counsel

#### **B. Public Comment Session for Items Not on the Agenda and Future Agenda Item Requests (Note: Individuals may appear before the committee members to discuss items not on the agenda; however, CSLB's committee can neither discuss nor take official action on these items at the time of the same meeting (Government Code sections 11125, 11125.7(a)).**

##### Committee Member Comment:

There was no public comment.

##### Public Comment:

There was no public comment.

**C. Update and Discussion Regarding 2025-27 Public Affairs Strategic Plan Objectives**

Chair Love began by explaining the purpose of the committee meeting to provide the Committee with updates on two Public Affairs strategic plan items.

**1. Improve the Clarity and Tone of Board Communications to Increase Public Understanding**

Public Affairs Chief Katherine White provided an update on this item. They explained that Public Affairs staff are regularly reviewing press releases, industry bulletins, and newsletters to determine where plain language edits need to be made. The tone has shifted in these documents to be more conversational and more understandable for stakeholders. Chief White also explained how staff have also reviewed public outreach presentations, such as those used for CSLB's Senior Scam Stopper seminars and licensing workshops, to see where language can be simplified for audiences. They explained that staff will continue to review all its publications to revise content and ensure key points are clear to stakeholders involved. Chief White said that if there are publications that the Committee believes need to be revised for the public, Public Affairs can prioritize those.

Committee Member Comment:

There was no public comment.

Public Comment:

There was no public comment.

**2. Update CSLB Website to Make it More Accessible and User Friendly**

Chair Love explained that CSLB has been working with the Department of Consumer Affairs on an eventual website update that will change the look of the website to be more uniform across boards and bureaus. This does not currently have a target date. The DCA website currently has a carousel on the front page that rotates to different featured items, including CSLB's Disaster Help Center.

Chair Love explained that CSLB's Public Affairs team has been working on website updates following the devastating wildfires in Los Angeles County. The Disaster Help Center was made more prominent on the homepage with a green button on the site's homepage. Chair Love noted that the Disaster Help Center page has been updated with updated information regarding debris removal in the fires and other resources in the recovery. This page includes a list of contractors with the authorized classifications and required hazardous material removal certification who have informed CSLB they are interested in providing debris removal bids to wildfire survivors. Chair Love added the Disaster Help Center page also includes important consumer protection tips on how to research a contractor and home improvement contract requirements that caution to not pay for work that has not been performed.



Chair Love explained that CSLB plans to survey the more than 50,000 general building contractors authorized to bid and contract for the rebuild that have a business address in the Los Angeles basin. General Building contractors expressing interest in providing wildfire bids will be added to the Disaster Help Center page.

Chair Love explained that Public Affairs staff are continuing to review the website to identify opportunities for additional updates.

Committee Member Comment:

There was no public comment.

Public Comment:

There was no public comment.

**D. Review and Discussion Regarding “Find My Licensed Contractor” Branding**

Chair Love explained that they had previously requested the “Find My Licensed Contractor” title on the CSLB website be renamed to “Find A Licensed Contractor.”

*Committee Member Jacob Lopez joined the meeting at 10:08 a.m.*

Chief White explained that the “Find My Licensed Contractor” feature was first launched in January 2018 to make it easier for consumers to find a licensed contractor for their home improvement projects. The feature also helped contractors search for subcontractors and awarding agencies look for bidders for public works contracts.

Chief White explained that the feature continues to be regularly used by stakeholders. In 2024, the Find My Licensed Contractor page was viewed nearly 2 million times and is among the top 10 pages viewed on the website. Chief White noted that, as a result, it is linked on different locations on the website, including the Disaster Help Center and Public Data Portal, along with press releases about sting operations. They said if the Committee chooses to move forward with changing it, staff will need to update the various locations on the website with this new branding.

Chair Love explained that they were in favor of making this change because people seeing the “Find My Licensed Contractor” link may be confused and think they were finding a contractor they had already hired. They asked Chief White about where on the website it would need to be changed besides the homepage where there is a button for “Find My Licensed Contractor.”

Chief White noted it would not be as simple as just updating this button as there is an entire page called “Find My Licensed Contractor” and it would have to be updated on the backend to ensure the updated name is reflected across the website.

Registrar Fogt then asked how often it is used.



Chief White responded that information on how many people have used it was not available but that the page was viewed 2 million times in 2024.

Registrar Fogt asked the Committee whether it would be more clear for the public if it was called “Find A Licensed Contractor.”

Committee Member Comment:

Chair Love noted they were in favor of the change.

Committee Member Alan Guy said it is two different searches that are up for discussion. They noted they use “Find My Licensed Contractor” when looking at subcontractors. Member Guy noted that the feature can be cumbersome when sorting through C-22 Asbestos Abatement contractors, for example. Member Guy noted the feature would be useful if it could be narrowed down by license type and zip code.

Chair Love clarified that the “Find My Licensed Contractor” page has features for license type and zip code and noted it is used for both.

Member Guy asked whether “Find My Licensed Contractor” was different than the License Check feature on the website.

Both Chair Love and Chief White confirmed that they are different features.

Member Guy said they now know which feature to use when searching for a subcontractor.

Chair Love asked if a vote by the Committee was needed on this item.

Legal Counsel John Kinn explained that this is an advisory committee and said this item could be voted on during the next board meeting.

Member Guy then asked how to find this feature on the website.

Chief White noted if you go to the homepage, you can scroll down and see a link for “Find My Licensed Contractor.”

Member Lopez noted it is also available under Online Services.

Registrar Fogt noted on the Disaster Help Center page, CSLB has a search tool to find contractors through the Public Data Portal with the proper classifications. They noted it has been an effective feature.

Chair Love reiterated the point that “Find A Licensed Contractor” makes it more clear and noted they will bring it to the full Board.

**Public Comment:**

There was no public comment.

**E. Review and Discussion Regarding Career Opportunities for Justice-Involved Individuals**

Chair Love explained that this agenda item was one they previously asked to be an item for a future meeting and addresses career opportunities for justice-involved individuals. Chair Love explained that, per DCA Legal, justice-involved individuals refers to people who have had interactions with the criminal justice system as a defendant and that this item looks at how CSLB can assist these individuals seeking employment once their sentence has been completed.

Chair Love explained how the licensure process works for applicants with criminal convictions. They said all applicants must be fingerprinted ahead of being licensed, which then leads to a criminal background check. Each license applicant is evaluated on a case-by-case basis to determine license eligibility. A criminal conviction or formal license discipline does not automatically preclude an applicant from CSLB licensure.

Chair Love asked Licensing Chief Carol Gagnon to describe this process further.

Chief Gagnon explained how all applicants must be fingerprinted as part of the licensure process. Those fingerprints are then sent to the FBI and Department of Justice for a background check. Chief Gagnon explained how any arrests or convictions are sent to CSLB's criminal background staff for review before a license can be issued. They stated that if an applicant has a felony conviction for a crime that is substantially related to the duties of a licensee, the applicant may be deemed to be rehabilitated if seven years have passed, depending on the crime. She explained that for misdemeanor convictions, an applicant may be deemed to be rehabilitated in three years' time. Chief Gagnon explained that staff also look at the extent to which the applicant has complied with the terms of parole, probation, and restitution. Staff also look at the applicant's work history after release from incarceration.

Chief Gagnon explained that there are no convictions that automatically preclude an applicant for licensure; however, they explained that certain convictions over the seven-year time range may be grounds for denial if the applicant was convicted for a serious felony such as those involving violent sex crimes or a firearms conviction. Chair Gagnon explained that if an applicant is required to be registered as a sex offender or if the applicant was convicted for a financial crime currently defined as a felony, these may be grounds for denial. Chief Gagnon explained how applicants who are denied licensure can appeal that decision.

Chair Love noted that if individuals want to get construction industry experience, they may be able to work within the California Prison Authority's Career Technical Program, which partners individuals with trade unions, nonprofits, and construction companies to



get pre-apprenticeship skills and experience and that this can help with placement into apprenticeships once they have been released. Chair Love explained how CSLB can work with the California Prison Authority to provide additional resources to assist, including a flyer or brochure.

Committee Chair Love explained that Board Chair Michael Mark made CSLB aware of a comprehensive pre-apprenticeship curriculum developed and approved by the Building Trades National Apprenticeship and Training Committee.

Chair Love asked Member Lopez to comment on the MC3 Readiness Apprenticeship Program.

Member Lopez explained their involvement in an MC3 Readiness Apprenticeship Program that provides an opportunity for local people to speed up getting into a union. They stated six representatives are assigned to recruit and expand this program. They said that the program helps contractors meet their needs.

Chair Love asked if there were other ideas on how the Committee can assist these individuals on their path to licensure.

Committee Member Comment:

Committee Member Josef Preciado said that there are a number of non-profit organizations, including some in the Sacramento area, that are doing some of this work, specifically to support individuals who are justice impacted to identify and find programs like the one Member Lopez discussed. Member Preciado said they would share the names of these organizations with CSLB.

Chair Love asked if there are any exceptions to the rules regarding the amount of time that needs to pass for an individual convicted of a crime to get licensed.

Chief Gagnon explained that applicants will be denied licensure if less than three years has passed after a misdemeanor conviction and less than seven years has passed following a felony conviction. Chief Gagnon explained that some of these people hoping to gain experience will work for a licensed contractor while they are waiting for that time to expire.

Registrar Fogt said they wanted to clarify that certain types of misdemeanors do not prevent an applicant from getting licensed. They explained how the types of crimes that prevent licensure are listed on CSLB's website and required rehabilitation. Registrar Fogt noted that these individuals can get the experience to eventually apply for licensure.

Chair Love asked if individuals wanting to eventually get licensed would work as a journeyman while waiting for that time to expire.



Registrar Fogt explained that if someone is convicted of a felony, CSLB has the authority to deny licensure up to seven years. They explained that after seven years, except for under certain circumstances, they cannot be denied due to that prior conviction. Registrar Fogt explained that if an individual seeking licensure is convicted of a financial crime that CSLB wants the victim of that crime to be made financially whole. They noted that CSLB also monitors whether an applicant is currently out on probation or parole. Registrar Fogt noted that some individuals are also getting their criminal convictions expunged and taken off the record, which can change the timeline.

Special Projects Manager Michael Jamnetski said there are certainly exceptions but CSLB must consider during the decision-making process whether an applicant for licensure has been rehabilitated during the application process and whether the conviction is related to construction.

Registrar Fogt said whether an applicant convicted of a crime has paid restitution to the crime victim is considered when CSLB is determining whether an applicant has been rehabilitated and also whether that person is on probation or parole. Registrar Fogt said they want the board to look at ways CSLB can provide outreach to the criminal justice system to encourage people getting released from incarceration to consider pursuing a career in construction.

Chair Love requested that this item be placed on the agenda of the next board meeting for further discussion.

Public Comment:

Public Affairs Supervisor David Gower read a question from a member of the public named Scott asking for more information about the rehabilitation process.

Registrar Fogt repeated that applicants on probation or parole are usually denied licensure until their status changes. They explained that applicants can appeal that decision by going before an administrative law judge. Registrar Fogt explained that an administrative law judge can determine whether an applicant has been rehabilitated and eligible to get licensed.

Manager Jamnetski told the commenter that there is a [link in the committee meeting slideshow](#) that lists the criteria CSLB uses when determining whether an application has been rehabilitated.

**F. Adjournment**

*The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 a.m.*