

Arizona Board of Athletic Training

CONCLUSION: The Arizona Board of Athletic Training (Board) regulates the practice of athletic training in the State by licensing athletic trainers, providing information about licensees to the public, and investigating and resolving complaints against licensees. We found that the Board can improve its licensing of athletic trainers, improve its provision of information to the public on its website, and develop and implement guidance for staff on the licensee information it can provide over the phone. Additionally, the Board should improve its compliance with open meeting law, develop additional complaint-handling procedures, and verify that athletic trainers receive appropriate direction from physicians.

Some licenses issued without verifying lawful presence



Board did not verify lawful presence for
9 of 30 applications we reviewed

We reviewed a random sample of athletic training license applications and found that the Board verified that applicants met most license requirements but did not consistently ensure that applicants met the statutory requirement to demonstrate lawful presence in the U.S. prior to approving or renewing their licenses.

Recommendation

The Board should develop and implement policies and procedures for ensuring that license applicants have met lawful presence requirements.

Continuing-education requirements not verified

The Board requires its licensees to complete continuing education annually prior to license renewal and has authority to verify completion, but it does not do so. During the audit, the Board began discussing revising its rules to establish a continuing-education audit process.

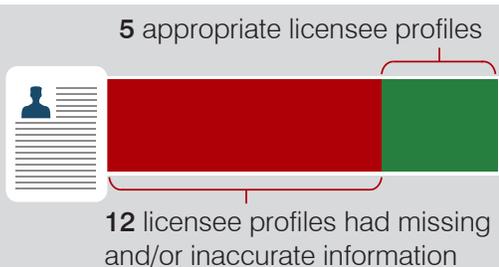
Recommendation

The Board should continue with its efforts to establish a continuing-education audit process.



Board did not verify compliance with continuing-education requirements for renewal applications

Incomplete and inaccurate information included on website



5 appropriate licensee profiles

12 licensee profiles had missing and/or inaccurate information

We reviewed website profiles for 17 athletic trainers and found that 12 of the profiles did not include complete and/or accurate information regarding disciplinary actions and/or license status. Further, the Board's website did not include the required statement regarding how to obtain public records related to any licensee. Finally, the Board does not post orders related to disciplinary actions, such as consent agreements, on its website, which is a practice other Arizona health regulatory boards follow that provides helpful information to the public.

Recommendation

The Board should ensure that it includes on its website complete and accurate information in its licensee profiles, the required statement regarding how to obtain public information, and board orders related to disciplinary actions.

Required information not initially provided to caller

We called the Board and requested complaint history about a licensee, but board staff did not disclose statutorily required information. Although staff later contacted us to provide the information, the Board lacks written guidance for staff when providing licensee information over the phone.

Recommendation

The Board should develop and implement policies and procedures to guide staff on what information to provide about licensees over the phone.



Board did not initially provide complaint and nondisciplinary information about licensee

Other board actions needed

As reported in the Sunset Factors section of the report, we found that the Board issued athletic trainer licenses we reviewed in a timely manner, resolved complaints we reviewed appropriately and in a timely manner, and provided opportunities for public input before adopting rules. However, we identified the following areas for improvement:

Board should improve compliance with open meeting law—We assessed the Board's compliance with the State's open meeting law for three board meetings and found that the Board generally complied with most requirements. However, for one of three board meetings, the Board did not provide a requested audio recording within the required time frame. In addition, the Board's meeting minutes did not contain the meeting location.

Recommendation

The Board should ensure that it makes meeting minutes or a recording available for public inspection within the required time frame and that its meeting minutes include the meeting location.

Board should develop additional written complaint-handling procedures—Although the Board adequately resolved complaints in a timely manner for the 17 complaints it received and opened between calendar years 2015 and 2017, the Board has limited written procedures regarding its complaint-handling practices.

Recommendation

The Board should develop and implement additional written complaint-handling procedures.

Board should verify that athletic trainers receive appropriate direction from physicians—Athletic trainers are statutorily required to practice under the direction of a licensed physician, and the Board's rules require licensees to have written protocols that a physician approves. However, the Board does not verify that licensees have these protocols.

Recommendation

The Board should implement a process to help ensure athletic trainers are practicing under a licensed physician's direction, such as requiring licensees to provide documentation of their physician-approved written protocols.