

AUDITOR GENERAL'S COMMENTS ON THE BOARD'S RESPONSE

The Joint Legislative Audit Committee requires all agencies to respond to whether they agree with our findings and plan to implement the recommendations. We appreciate the Board's response, including its agreement with all findings and its plans to implement all recommendations. However, the Board has included certain statements in its response that necessitate the following clarification.

Issue

Board's response

In its response to Finding 1, the Board stated that “a significant factor impacting our performance has been the 75% increase of 3067 complaints in 2011 to 5378 in 2024, which has made the 180-day timeframe an unsustainable metric without a corresponding adjustment in resources.” Further, in its response to recommendation 14, the Board stated that “a request has been submitted to OSPB to request from the Legislature 28 additional FTEs and resources to investigate approximately 5,000 complaints submitted annually. The additional FTEs will allow the board to implement the goal of 180 days to complete investigations.”

Auditor General's comments

The Board's response indicates that it receives approximately 5,000 complaints annually, and it reported that it has requested additional FTEs to help it investigate complaints within 180 days. However, the approximately 5,000 complaints the Board cites require 2 different types of investigations with different investigation time frames.

Specifically, as discussed in Finding 1, the Board conducts 2 types of investigations:

► Complaint investigations

Investigations related to allegations the Board receives from the public about a licensee or certificate holder. We have determined that Arizona health regulatory boards should investigate and resolve complaints within 180 days of receiving them. As discussed in Finding 1, as of January 2025, the Board had a backlog of 2,177 open and unresolved complaints dating back to calendar year 2017, including more than 1,500 complaints that had already been open for more than 180 days.

► Licensing investigations

Investigations the Board opens pertaining to license and certificate applications, including investigating potential criminal activity committed by a licensee who has applied for license renewal. As discussed in Finding 1, the Board annually opened an average of 2,875 licensing investigations between calendar years 2020 and 2024. Despite Board rule providing 270 days for the Board to review and approve or deny licensing applications that require an investigation, the Board completed the majority of licensing investigations within 30 days during calendar years 2020 through 2024.