

Strategic Plan FY 2025-2029

TEXAS STATE BOARD
OF PLUMBING EXAMINERS

**TEXAS STATE BOARD of PLUMBING EXAMINERS
STRATEGIC PLAN**

For the Fiscal Years 2025 through 2029

<u>BOARD MEMBER</u>	<u>DATES OF TERM</u>	<u>HOMETOWN</u>
Frank S Denton Chair, Public Member Position	Appointment expires 09/05/2025	Conroe
James “Ron” Ainsworth Secretary, Master Plumber Position	Re-Appointment expires 09/05/2029	Midland
Darrin K Black Journeyman Plumber Position	Appointment expires 09/05/2027	Abilene
Milton Gutierrez Public Member Position	Re-Appointment expires 09/05/2027	Hutto
William “Bill” Klock Professional Engineer Position	Re-Appointment expires 09/05/2029	Austin
Thomas “Justin” MacDonald Commercial Builder Position	Appointment expires 09/05/2025	Kerrville
Thomas “Tommy” Rice Jr. Plumbing Contractor Position	Appointment expires 09/05/2027	Houston
Norma Yado Plumbing Inspector Position	Re-Appointment expires 09/05/2029	McAllen
David “Dave” Yelovich Residential Builder Position	Appointment expires 09/05/2025	Friendswood

Submitted June 1, 2024

Signed: 
Frank S Denton, Board Chair

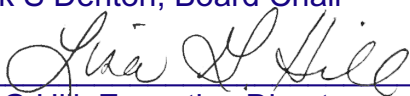
Signed: 
Lisa G Hill, Executive Director

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SCHEDULES

- A: Budget Structure – Goals, Objectives, and Performance Measures
- B: List of Performance Measure Definitions
- C: Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) Plan
- F: Workforce Plan, Organizational Chart and Survey of Employee Engagement
- H: Report on Customer Service
- I: Certification of Compliance with Cyber Security Training



AGENCY MISSION

The fundamental mission of the Texas State Board of Plumbing Examiners (TSBPE) is to help protect the health and safety of the citizens of the State of Texas by ensuring that our drinking water, air, and medical gases are free from contaminants so that we may live and work in the safe conditions that properly designed and installed plumbing systems are meant to provide. Our primary influence in fulfilling this mission is ensuring that individuals entrusted with a license issued by the Board and endowed with the inherent credibility it provides, are competent and exhibit the requisite fitness to perform plumbing work in this state. Another cornerstone in fulfilling the Board's mission is through community outreach and education, ensuring that the public is aware of the crucial role plumbing plays in guaranteeing sanitation and health, and the sometimes-unheralded role of the licensed plumbing professionals who safeguard the public's health. The Board steadfastly believes that an informed public will demand the reliability, accountability, and sound judgment of a licensed plumbing professional, ensuring that plumbing services are only provided by such proven professionals, and not left to unqualified and sometimes unscrupulous individuals who might undermine the Board's mission through unlicensed plumbing work.

Community outreach and education also serves the dual purpose of promoting the plumbing profession as a rewarding career option; an important task after years of relatively flat growth in the workforce while the population of Texas has been and is expected to continue to grow. The Board also takes seriously its statutory charge to investigate consumer complaints alleging threats to the public's health and safety and to take enforcement and disciplinary action against persons who have violated the Plumbing License Law; thus, preventing potentially dangerous unlicensed plumbing work and ensuring that licensed plumbers continue to exhibit fitness and uphold the high standards of licensure in the field. Through equitable and consistent regulation of the plumbing industry, and by examining, licensing, and registering plumbing professionals, the Board ensures that qualified individuals following clear standards protect the health and safety of the citizens of the State of Texas.



AGENCY PHILOSOPHY

The Texas State Board of Plumbing Examiners affects every citizen who utilizes plumbing in the State of Texas; relies on uncontaminated drinking water, air, and medical gases; and desires to live and work in the safe conditions that properly designed and installed plumbing systems are meant to provide.

The Texas State Board of Plumbing Examiners will fulfill the expectations of the citizens by acting in an ethical manner that is accountable, responsible, efficient, and open. The Board recognizes that protection of the health and safety of the citizens is foremost in its decision-making process. The Board performs its responsibilities with honesty, integrity, diligence and respectful courtesy. Adherence to these standards continually brings the Board ever closer to its goal of achieving excellence as an organization through the customer service it provides.

AGENCY PLANNING PROCESS

The members of the Texas State Board of Plumbing Examiners view strategic planning as a perpetual process and provide input and direction to staff as necessary throughout the year. TSBPE staff also provides valuable feedback in the strategic planning process. Several staff suggestions are incorporated in this published plan. In addition, the TSBPE has implemented the use of electronic surveys to target specific groups to determine how we can provide even better customer service. Strategic plans are also posted on the TSBPE website for the public's benefit and any comments received from the public are considered during the preparation of the subsequent Strategic Plan. Agency management staff participates extensively in the preparation of the plan, considering input provided from all sources including TSBPE staff, the public, and interested parties in the industry.

AGENCY STATUTORY BASIS

The Board's enabling statute is Chapter 1301 of the Texas Occupations Code. Specifically, Section 1301.251, formally charges the Board with administration of the Plumbing License Law.

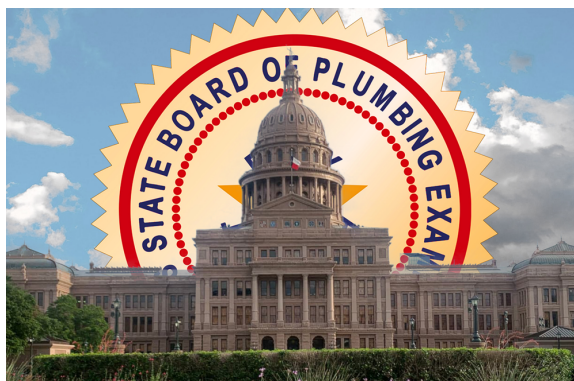
In 1897 the legislature passed the first state plumbing license law, requiring cities to adopt their own plumbing installation regulations and to establish local examining boards for



the purpose of examining and licensing Master Plumbers, Journeyman Plumbers, and Plumbing Inspectors.

Prior to that, a license was valid only within the city that issued it; reciprocity between cities was rare. As a result, applicable regulations and examination requirements varied widely from city to city.

In 1947, the Texas Legislature passed the Plumbing License Law of 1947, which created the Texas State Board of Plumbing Examiners to provide for uniform statewide examination and licensing of Master Plumbers, Journeyman Plumbers, and Plumbing Inspectors.



The 87th Legislative Session brought many needed changes to the Plumbing License Law and the agency's authority to implement those changes. HB 636 brought to the Board the ability to develop a curriculum for high school programs as well as trade school programs to create a steady consistent stream of educated and trained licensed and vetted plumbing professionals. This initiative will also create a high paying career for the youth in Texas while

serving the needs of Texans and the robust economy. The TSBPE has also collaborated with Texas State Technical College (TSTC) to utilize its facilities to provide additional practical testing centers around the state. In 2022, the Board opened its first new examination center located in Waco.

HB 636 also brought the ability for the Board to contract with a third-party testing company to allow for statewide testing locations to ensure prompt and efficient testing for faster entry into the workforce.

Licensed and registered plumbing professionals are now required to undergo a fingerprint background check thereby further ensuring that individuals engaged in the practice of plumbing are properly vetted to enter homes, schools, and businesses. As of the date of this report, TSBPE has processed **49,112** sets of fingerprints, which is approximately 67% of all plumber and registrant types. This puts TSBPE on target for the completion of all required initial license and registrant reviews by September 1, 2025.

The Board now also has the authority to issue a 30-day license in the event of an emergency for those qualified.



Additionally, the Board has expanded its offering of public information by displaying the actions taken against those that have violated the Plumbing License Law or Board Rules. Disciplinary action is located under each licensee and registrant's information at the agency's website at tsbpe.texas.gov

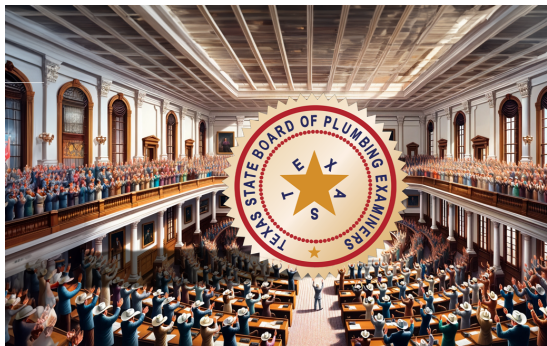
The alignment of licenses with specialized license endorsement renewal dates provided an internal efficiency allowing staff to do more with less effort and increase the number of licenses and registrations processed.

By opening the door for sharp changes in Plumber's professional continuing education, the Board has now developed a more open market with a wider variety of offerings to the plumbing trade. These changes bring more opportunities for licensees and registrants to select and customize their training and education needs.

HB 636 also provided the Board specific authority to reciprocate with other state licensing boards to assist with the demand for licensed plumbers in Texas. This will allow the expansion of the plumbing population during high economic times as well as in times of disaster and rebuilding efforts. The Board has entered into a reciprocal agreement for Journeyman licensees with Louisiana and Arkansas. In addition, the Board is actively working with several other states to do the same. The Texas State Board of Plumbing Examiners, whose mission is "to help protect the health and safety of the citizens of the State of Texas," will continue to play an essential role in these efforts by ensuring that plumbers who work to build and rebuild Texas are available and prepared for future disasters and will do so in a manner that will safeguard public health, safety and property.

88th Legislative Session

The Legislature gave the TSBPE nine (9) additional full-time employees (FTEs) to address much-needed staffing shortages. In addition, the agency received additional funding for the new examination centers, one vehicle replacement, staff merit increases, and upgrades to the VERSA licensing system.



The Texas State Board of Plumbing Examiners generates revenues sufficient to cover appropriate expenditures. TSBPE does not receive any funds from any other state or federal source. The Board also collects other revenues such as appropriated receipts, sales of Plumbing License Law and Board Rule publications, fees



for fulfilling open records requests and Conference and Seminar fees.

Beginning in FY 2023, a portion of examination fees has been collected by a third party for the newly implemented computer-based testing program. Initial and renewal of licenses, duplicate licenses, endorsements, registrations; and administrative penalties collected are directly deposited into the State's General Revenue Fund 0001 to be used as needed by the State of Texas for other State functions and expenses. The TSBPE has always collected more revenues than its total appropriated and unappropriated expenditures.

Online Enforcement Penalty Payments Coming Soon

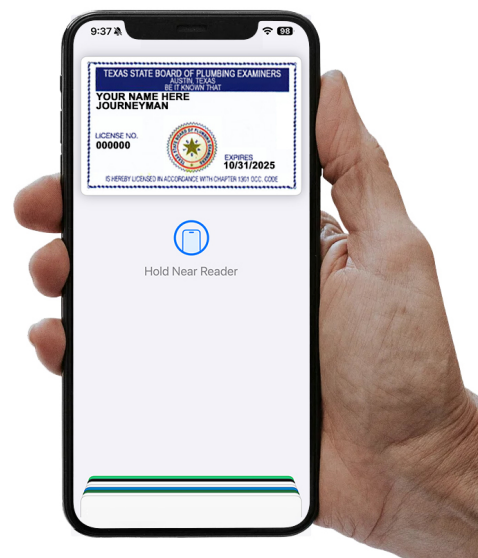
The TSBPE plans to introduce online payment capabilities for enforcement penalties. This advancement will significantly enhance our operational efficiency and service delivery to the plumbing community. By leveraging our secure Online Licensing System, the processing of enforcement penalties will become faster, more transparent, and user-friendly. For TSBPE, this move will streamline financial transactions, reduce administrative burdens, and ensure timely compliance. Licensees and registrants will benefit from the convenience of making payments anytime, anywhere, reducing delays and potential lapses in compliance due to payment processing times. This system will also provide immediate confirmation of transactions, ensuring that all parties have accurate and up-to-date records. Overall, the introduction of online payment for enforcement penalties aligns with our commitment to harnessing technological solutions to improve service delivery, enhance regulatory compliance, and support the professional growth and accountability of Texas plumbers.

Transition to Digital License Cards

As part of TSBPE's ongoing commitment to modernization and efficiency, we are considering a transition to digital license cards. This strategic initiative aligns with our mission to provide streamlined, accessible, and cost-effective services to both our licensees and the broader plumbing community.

Efficiency and Cost Savings

- **Reduction in Material Costs:** By eliminating the need for physical card production, TSBPE will significantly cut down on expenses related to card stock, printing and postage.



- **Administrative Efficiency:** Digital license cards will streamline the administrative processes associated with issuing and renewing licenses. The transition will reduce manual labor, minimize human error, and accelerate the overall process. This allows our staff to focus on other critical areas, enhancing overall productivity.

Accessibility and Convenience

- **Instant Access:** Digital license and registration cards will provide instant access to license and registration credentials, reducing the wait time for licensees and registrants. This is particularly beneficial for those needing immediate proof of licensure or registration for job opportunities or compliance checks.
- **Secure and Up-to-Date Information:** Digital cards can be updated in real-time, ensuring that the most current information is always available. This enhances the accuracy of licensee and registrant data and reduces the risk of outdated or incorrect information being used.

Financial Impact

- **Cost Reduction:** The cost savings from reducing physical card production, mailing, and postage will be substantial. These funds can be redirected towards improving other services and resources within the agency, such as enhanced online platforms or additional training programs.
- **Resource Allocation:** Savings in time and resources will enable the TSBPE to allocate more efforts towards enforcement, education, and community outreach initiatives.

The transition to digital license and registration cards is a forward-thinking initiative that promises to bring significant benefits to the TSBPE and the plumbing community at large. By leveraging modern technology, we can provide more efficient, cost-effective, and environmentally friendly services while maintaining the high standards of licensure and compliance Texas' plumbing industry demands. We are excited about this potential transition and look forward to engaging with our community to ensure its success.

PRIMARY AGENCY GOALS

GOAL A: Ensure public health through safe plumbing by licensing and regulation of plumbers - The Board seeks to protect the health and safety of Texas citizens by ensuring that each person has access to uncontaminated drinking water, air and medical gases through quality plumbing systems installed and maintained by competent plumbing professionals licensed by the Board, and



those training to become a licensed professional through registration with the Board. By designing and administering examinations and determining fitness for licensure, the Board ensures that all individuals involved in the installation, maintenance and inspection of plumbing systems in each city and of each public water system in the state are regulated by fair and responsive enforcement of clear standards, in order that the public may live and work in the safe environment that properly designed and installed plumbing systems are meant to provide. This task also entails oversight and administration of annual continuing education of licensees to ensure they are prepared for and able to respond to the continually evolving demands of, and technological changes in, the industry.

Goal B: Increase community outreach and public awareness - Through increased planned outreach to citizens in the form of presentations at community events, industry and trade association seminars and public service announcements, the Board seeks to further educate the public of the importance of securing a plumbing professional when the need arises and the potentially dangerous and costly consequences resulting from unqualified persons performing this work. Community outreach also serves the dual purpose of promoting the plumbing profession as a career; thereby recruiting bright and eager young minds to continue the profession and taking it to modern heights in a rapidly developing state with a sharply growing population.

Goal C: Increase enforcement of the Plumbing License Law – The Board, along with authorities for local jurisdictions, is charged with enforcement of the Plumbing License Law. The Board seeks to review and investigate complaints, including those of consumers, which allege a violation of the Plumbing License Law and/or Board Rules. This includes taking enforcement action against both unlicensed individuals engaging in plumbing and persons promoting these activities; and licensed individuals who may not be upholding the standards required of the Plumbing License Law and/or Board Rules. The Board seeks to increase enforcement against unlicensed individuals illegally practicing plumbing through increased use of undercover “sting” operations designed to detect and deter violations of the Plumbing License Law that might otherwise go unenforced in the era of anonymity arising from the modern digital marketplace. The Board also seeks to effectuate additional random “compliance checks” using its Investigators as contemplated by statute, on persons in the field on plumbing jobsites, thereby ensuring that said individuals are compliant with all licensing and registration requirements, and before a dangerous or costly



condition threatening the health and safety of the public occurs. The Board's enforcement activities also entail oversight of individuals approved by the Board to provide continuing education for licensees and registrants and ensuring compliance both from Providers and Instructors. In a state experiencing rapid development and sharp population growth, the Board seeks to step up its enforcement efforts to ensure compliance with the Plumbing License Law and thereby safeguarding the public's health and safety.

Goal D: Expand the license population and produce better-educated licensees and registrants by offering more avenues of education for those interested in entering the plumbing profession.

Goal E: Increase use of historically underutilized businesses (HUBs) - Establish and implement policies governing purchasing and public works contracting that will foster meaningful and substantive inclusion of HUBs. (Government Code, Chapter 2161)

AGENCY ACTION PLAN

The Texas State Board of Plumbing Examiners affects every citizen who utilizes plumbing in the State of Texas, as they rely on uncontaminated drinking water, air, medical gases, sanitary drain, and waste and vent systems (DWV) within homes, building and workplaces. Properly installed plumbing systems provide and enhance the safe conditions where Texans live and work.

Discreet Functions of the Board

Some of the Board's greatest assets are its exams and its two Examination Centers. The TSBPE is relatively rare among licensing agencies in that it develops, tests, and owns its own exams. The exams are part of its intellectual property and a testament to the expertise of its technical and education staff. TSBPE's examinations and Austin's Examination Center are recognized across the United States as setting a high standard in the plumbing industry. The Austin Examination Center is frequently toured by representatives from regulatory agencies from other states and even foreign countries who are considering implementing a similar practical examination approach.



Discreet Functions of the Board Include:

- Developing and test substantive written and practical exams for licensure and endorsements (Tradesman Plumber-Limited Licensees, Journeyman Plumbers, Master Plumbers, Plumbing Inspectors, and Specialty endorsements for Water Supply Protection Specialists, Medical Gas Piping Installers and Multipurpose Residential Fire Protection Sprinkler Specialists).
- Implementing computer-based testing material and coordinate use of TSBPE's examinations.
- Administering written and hands-on practical examinations for prospective licensees, and those licensees seeking specialized license endorsements (Tradesman Plumber-Limited Licensees, Journeyman Plumbers, Master Plumbers, Plumbing Inspectors, and Specialty endorsements for Water Supply Protection Specialists, Medical Gas Piping Installers and Multipurpose Residential Fire Protection Sprinkler Specialists).
- Creating and implementing substantive training requirements for Apprentices, Plumber's Apprentices, Drain Cleaners, Drain Cleaner-Restricted, and Residential Utilities Installers, and Journeymen.
- Creating standards for continuing education and continuing education providers.
- Approval of training and education materials provides professional standards.
- Approving continuing education material and courses for use by education providers.
- Approving Providers and Instructors of Continuing Professional Education classes and monitoring them for compliance.
- Issuing registrations for those working in the field and training to become a licensee and or registrant (Plumber's Apprentices, Drain Cleaners, Drain Cleaner-Restricted, and Residential Utilities Installers).
- Renewing the foregoing licenses, registrations and endorsements issued by and/or administered by TSBPE.
- Manufacturing and printing identification cards for all licensees and registrants for display in the field.
- Reviewing criminal histories of applicants for all license and registration types for fitness.
- Verifying license status for the public and local jurisdictions.



- Providing the public and local jurisdictions' building departments and inspectors with up-to-the-moment license and qualification information.
- Working cooperatively with other agencies for greatest administrative efficiencies and workforce development and outreach opportunities including, TVC, TWC, TEA, THECB, TSTC, University of Texas at Austin, TDLR.
- Working cooperatively to expand license reciprocity with other states' regulatory agencies to reduce unnecessary regulatory barriers to work and enhance license portability.
- Investigating complaints alleging violations of the Plumbing License Law and Board Rules, including those from consumers.
- Investigating and monitoring of plumbing jobsites for compliance with the Plumbing License Law and/or Board Rules to further ensure compliance and added consumer protection.
- Investigating alleged violations of the Plumbing License Law and/or Board rules through formal discovery including the issuance of subpoenas and conducting sworn depositions.
- Taking disciplinary action for violations of the Plumbing License Law and Board Rules, including, but not limited to: (i) revocation, suspension, denial and non-renewal of a license or registration; (ii) imposition of administrative penalties; (iii) issuance of cease-and-desist orders; (iv) seeking civil penalties; (v) seeking injunctive relief; and (vi) seeking criminal penalties.
- Retesting of licensees to re-assess fitness and competency in the field.
- Monitoring the material presented in Continuing Professional Education classes and other board required training classes.
- Assisting local authorities with enforcement of the Plumbing License Law and Board Rules
- Providing community outreach and public awareness through education and demonstrations at community events, industry and trade association seminars and through public services announcements with topics including (i) the importance of utilizing a licensed plumbing professional; (ii) the role of the Board in regulating licensees and enforcing the Plumbing License Law; (iii) dangerous trends or other items of public concern in the industry; (iv) avoidance of "cross contaminations" threatening safe potable water; and, (v) water conservation and the proper use of rain water collection systems.



- Providing transparent accessible Board and Committee meetings to the public and licensees.
- Responding to Public Information Act “open records” requests and provide an open and transparent agency environment.
- Serving the public by providing knowledge and professional industry resources through our website and at public meetings.
- Providing a veteran’s liaison to be responsive to and accommodate the needs of veterans and/or their spouses returning to civilian life and wishing to enter or rejoin the plumbing industry.
- Ensuring an equitable and efficient regulatory environment.
- Ensuring that, in a rapidly developing state with a sharply increasing population, adequate resources for the agency are properly planned and requested.
- Expanding recruitment and retention opportunities by establishing working relationships with community colleges, universities, technical education providers, and the Texas Veterans Commission to locate qualified applicants for open positions.
- Expanding recruitment and retention opportunities by establishing and implementing an internship program.
- Providing training and education opportunities for staff to increase production value in work product and encourage staff development and retention.

Examination and Licensure

Section 1301.202 of the Plumbing License Law states, in part, that it is one of the Board’s duties to employ Examiners to “. . . examine the fitness and qualifications of a person applying to the Board for a license . . .” The Board takes this charge very seriously.

This process begins with the review of applications, including applicants with criminal histories and individuals coming from another state or foreign country.

The Board’s examinations and Examination Centers are recognized across the United States as setting a high standard in the plumbing industry. Currently, separate examinations are given for Journeyman Plumber, Master Plumber, Tradesman Plumber-Limited, Medical Gas Piping Installation, Water Supply Protection Specialist, Multipurpose Residential Fire Protection Sprinkler Specialist and Plumbing Inspector.



Many of these examinations consist of thorough written and hands-on-practical sessions that ensure licensed plumbers and plumbing inspectors who work with public water supplies, sewage disposal, natural gases and medical gases have the qualifications, knowledge, skills, and competencies to do their jobs properly. The Board's Examination Centers allow the Board to conduct practical examinations.

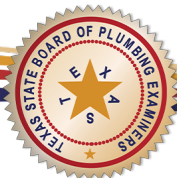
The life of any plumbing system, large or small, is directly related to the preparation and assembly of the materials that go into the making of a plumbing system. It is difficult to detect improper preparation of materials once the materials are assembled and installed in the plumbing system, until the system fails. The failure of a plumbing system can result in considerable expense to the consumer, fires, explosions, serious health problems and even death. For this reason, the practical portion of a plumbing examination is critical to ensure an applicant can demonstrate their ability to properly prepare and assemble plumbing materials used in plumbing systems. After an applicant assembles materials during the examination, the materials are disassembled, and the applicant is graded on how well the materials were prepared prior to assembly.

The Journeyman and Tradesman examinations are available in English and Spanish languages. The computer-based examinations are available for the Tradesman Plumber-Limited written, Journeyman written, Medical Gas Piping Installation, Master, and Water Supply Protection Specialist (WSPS) at more than 40 locations across Texas. Journeyman and Tradesman computer-based examinations will soon be available in Spanish also. The Plumbing Inspector and Multipurpose Residential Fire Protection Sprinkler Specialist examinations are planned for the final phase. The agency expects a dramatic increase in the number of examinations given during FY 2024.



Examination Statistics for Fiscal Year 2024 (as Compared with Fiscal Year 2023)

Examination Location & Type	Fiscal Year 2024			Fiscal Year 2023		
	9/1/2023 thru 04/30/2024 (8 months actual)			9/1/2022 thru 08/31/2023 (12 months actual)		
	#	#	%	#	#	%
	Examined	Passed	Passed	Examined	Passed	Passed
Austin:						
Journeyman	1,776	1,294	72.9%	2,780	2,033	73.1%
Master	261	155	59.4%	765	463	60.5%
Inspector	125	79	63.2%	174	129	74.1%
Tradesman	1,492	1,066	71.4%	1,746	1,303	74.6%
Medical Gas - Journeyman	133	95	71.4%	246	170	69.1%
Medical Gas - Master	55	43	78.2%	62	53	85.5%
Medical Gas - Inspector	24	19	79.2%	20	14	70.0%
Water Supply Protection Specialist - Journeyman	5	4	80.0%	7	6	85.7%
Water Supply Protection Specialist - Master	12	12	100.0%	13	13	100.0%
Water Supply Protection Specialist - Inspector	6	6	100.0%	5	5	100.0%
Residential Fire Protection Specialist - Journeyman	2	2	100.0%	2	2	100.0%
Residential Fire Protection Specialist - Master	7	7	100.0%	4	2	50.0%
Residential Fire Protection Specialist - Inspector	7	7	100.0%	6	5	83.3%
Subtotal Austin Examinations	3,905	2,789	71.4%	5,830	4,198	72.0%
Waco:						
Journeyman Written	51	41	80.4%	145	125	86.2%
Master Written	41	22	53.7%	126	78	61.9%
Tradesman Written	43	30	69.8%	158	135	85.4%
Medical Gas - Journeyman Written	21	14	66.7%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Medical Gas - Master Written	4	2	50.0%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Medical Gas - Inspector Written	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Water Supply Protection Specialist - Master Written	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Water Supply Protection Specialist - Journeyman Written	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Water Supply Protection Specialist - Inspector Written	na	n/a	n/a	na	n/a	n/a
Residential Fire Protection Specialist - Journeyman Written	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	1	100.0%
Residential Fire Protection Specialist - Master Written	n/a	n/a	n/a	4	4	100.0%
Subtotal Out-Of-Town Examinations	160	109	68.1%	434	343	79.0%
Total All Examinations	5,963	4,276	71.7%	9,616	6,952	72.3%



Examination Statistics for Fiscal Year 2024 (as Compared with Fiscal Year 2023 cont.)

Examination Location & Type	Fiscal Year 2024			Fiscal Year 2023		
	9/1/2023 thru 04/30/2024 (8 months actual)			9/1/2022 thru 08/31/2023 (12 months actual)		
	#	#	%	#	#	%
	Examined	Passed	Passed	Examined	Passed	Passed

Pearson Vue (CBT) Statewide:

Journeyman Written	1,072	758	70.7%
Tradesman Written	674	517	76.7%
Medical Gas - Journeyman Written	81	45	55.6%
Medical Gas - Master Written	28	21	75.0%
Medical Gas - Inspector Written	23	18	78.3%
Water Supply Protection Specialist - Master Written	10	10	100.0%
Water Supply Protection Specialist - Journeyman Written	5	4	80.0%
Water Supply Protection Specialist - Inspector Written	5	5	100.0%
Residential Fire Protection Specialist - Journeyman Written	n/a	n/a	n/a
Subtotal Pearson Vue (CBT) Statewide	1,898	1,378	72.6%

2,034	1,446	71.1%
1,080	813	75.3%
155	88	56.8%
38	26	68.4%
20	14	70.0%
13	13	100.0%
7	6	85.7%
5	5	100.0%
n/a	n/a	n/a
3,352	2,411	71.9%



Consumer Education and Public Awareness

The Board believes that to properly carry out its mission, it must endeavor to educate the industry and consumers of the requirements of the Plumbing License Law and the hazards of improperly installed plumbing. In this public awareness effort, TSBPE utilizes its website, gives presentations at community events, and also conducts awareness seminars for plumbing trade schools, high schools, universities, municipal inspection departments and associations, plumbing companies and plumbing trade associations. Board meetings are streamed live, thereby allowing the public and licensees to participate and offer input. Previously held Board meetings are also available on the TSBPE website.

Included in many of the seminars and outreach efforts is the Board's unique mobile cross-connection prevention demonstration unit that houses a display of see-through fixtures and piping which demonstrates, visually and in an approachable manner for the lay person, how easily our drinking water can be inadvertently contaminated by improperly installed plumbing systems.

In addition, TSBPE has developed a real-life scenario demonstration to show the hazards and destruction that an improperly installed water heater can present. This demonstration provides consumers with information they can use to prevent a disaster and informs them of the importance of a professional and safe installation.

These seminars also serve to provide information to individuals who are pondering career decisions and may be encouraged to consider the plumbing industry as a career path. They also serve to disrupt and prevent the practice of plumbing by unlicensed individuals by persuading the public to think not solely with their "pocketbook" when searching for an individual to provide plumbing services (which may lead them to hiring an unlicensed individual) and, specifically, to verify the licensure of persons they are considering hiring for plumbing work, and to feel comfortable and empowered to do so even with individuals believed to be licensed.

However, these education efforts are also important in the digital age, where property owners themselves, encouraged and emboldened by the widespread availability of reference materials, "self-help" forums, and tutorial videos on the internet, are performing plumbing work on their homestead, which by statute may constitute legal plumbing exempt from regulation and by the State, but is nonetheless potentially dangerous.

The educated consumer is able to make better decisions when choosing a plumber when the consumer knows what is expected of a plumber and understands the health and safety hazards associated with improperly installed plumbing. Additionally, when the



plumber knows the consumer possesses such knowledge, the plumber is more likely to deliver better service.

The Board asserts these education efforts are important, given the modern digital age and the ubiquity of the internet where, as discussed below in connection with enforcement, unlicensed individuals, with anonymity and practically free marketing efforts, can easily connect with unsuspecting consumers to perform illegal plumbing work.

Townhall Meeting Series

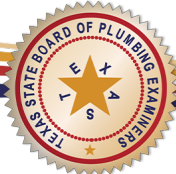
In our ongoing effort to increase compliance and protect the public while serving the licensees, we have implemented “Townhall Meetings for Plumbers.” The TSBPE Townhall Meeting Series has become one of our most successful initiatives, engaging both current and future plumbing professionals across Texas. Over the past two years, we have held 22 Townhall Meetings in 13 different cities. This extensive outreach effort reflects our commitment to fostering direct communication and addressing the needs of our stakeholders.



A standout moment in our Townhall series was the San Antonio Townhall held in Spring 2024, which saw an impressive attendance of more than 200 individuals. This high turnout underscores the value that our professionals place on these interactions. One of the key features that has contributed to the success of these events is our on-the-spot problem-solving sessions. These sessions provide immediate assistance for technical and license-related issues, offering practical solutions and real-time support to our

attendees. Every Townhall has an open forum Q and A session during which attendees are encouraged to ask TSBPE officials anything they’d like.

Townhall Meeting attendees appreciate the opportunity to voice their opinions and suggestions directly to TSBPE officials. The meetings keep our licensees informed of new requirements in statute and rules while providing an opportunity to obtain feedback from the licensees on developing initiatives. This direct feedback mechanism has enabled us to make informed decisions and implement changes that better serve our licensees and registrants. The diverse range of attendees, from Master Plumbers, Journeyman, Tradesman and Apprentices to the high school educators, and CPE Providers enrich the dialogue and provide a comprehensive understanding of the industry's landscape to those in or entering the profession.



Board members along with TSBPE staff attend the Townhall meetings, getting direct feedback from our licensees and registrants. Information received is also included in Board meetings for discussion or action, as well as in future strategic planning for the agency.

Feedback from the TSBPE Townhall Meeting Series has been overwhelmingly positive, with professionals from all sectors of the plumbing industry participating and expressing their appreciation for the initiative. The Townhall meetings have not only enhanced our ability to communicate regulatory updates and gather feedback but have also strengthened our relationship with the plumbing community. This initiative has set a new standard for engagement and has laid a strong foundation for future efforts to support and advance the plumbing profession in Texas. These Townhall meetings have become a permanent part of our outreach program.

Ask Kevin AI-Powered Chatbot

In response to the feedback received as part of our Customer Service Survey regarding availability and response times, the TSBPE implemented "Ask Kevin", an AI-powered chatbot developed using OpenAI's ChatGPT technology. This initiative was a strategic effort to enhance our customer service offering by providing immediate, accurate, and comprehensive responses to user queries at volume and 24/7. Ask Kevin has been integrated across all pages of both the mobile and desktop versions of the TSBPE website, ensuring that users have access to assistance no matter where they are on our site.



After 8 months in production, Ask Kevin has exceeded expectations on every level. Initially handling just 60 conversations per day, the chatbot now completes over 100 natural language conversations daily, a metric that demonstrates the growing reliance and trust the plumbing community has in this tool. The TSBPE reviews all conversations to continually improve the chatbot's accuracy and reliability. As a result, Ask Kevin's accuracy now stands at an astonishing 98%.

The introduction of Ask Kevin has not only improved user satisfaction but also significantly reduced the workload of our support staff. Inbound support email volume has decreased by 39%, allowing our team to focus on more complex issues and other strategic initiatives. Looking ahead, we plan to extend the availability of Ask Kevin to popular messaging platforms such as WhatsApp and Facebook Messenger. This expansion aims to provide even more accessible and convenient customer support



options, continuing our commitment to improving service delivery for the Texas plumbing community.

High School Accelerated Training Program (HATS)



The Texas State Board of Plumbing Examiners designed the High School Accelerated Training program to encourage high school students to pursue careers in plumbing. This program is a fantastic opportunity for young individuals to start building their careers in plumbing early, with the added benefit of gaining hands-on experience and a head start in accumulating the hours required for

licensing.

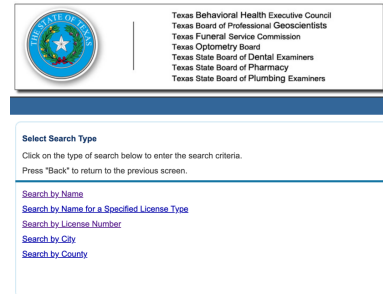
The program allows students who are enrolled in a qualified high school plumbing training program the option to be registered as Plumbers' Apprentices without paying initial application or renewal fees. This allows students that do not complete the full high school program to retain any verified on-the-job hours working under a Responsible Master Plumber. These hours may be counted toward advanced licensure should the student wish to remain in the plumbing industry.

The TSBPE's fee waiver provides a financial benefit to the student and gives the agency a registration we can use to support plumbing programs and instructors. Current participants, instructors, and school Career and Technical Education (CTE) staff are invited to local townhalls meetings. Additionally, TSBPE has offered and has provided substantive plumbing demonstrations to plumbing programs serving high school students as a learning opportunity for those programs. Lastly, the opportunity for TSBPE to connect with plumbers teaching CTE plumbing programs allows us to share information for continuing education benefits for those instructors, and support for instructors seeking to register students for licensing exams. TEA has shared our program information with their CTE staff. HATS has been a welcome opportunity for all participants in the field of plumbing education and students. This is an example of an innovative and accessible solution to support our mission to qualify competent plumbers and support workforce development.



License and Registration Search

The TSBPE's website also includes a feature that allows citizens to search license and registration status, scope of work permitted for each type of license and registration and to verify a Responsible Master Plumber's association with a particular plumbing company and whether a certificate of insurance is on file as required by statute. For these reasons, TSBPE's community outreach and public awareness efforts are important to both the plumbing industry and the consumer.



In addition, the TSBPE upgraded its ability to provide disciplinary history of its licensees online and available to consumers, including the ability to retrieve copies of the documents imposing the disciplinary action instantaneously. Consumers can easily review a licensee they are considering hiring and determine whether or not they have any past disciplinary actions that might impact their decision.

Enforcement of the Plumbing License Law



Rigorous and pro-active enforcement of the Plumbing License Law and Board Rules is critical to the health and safety of the citizens of Texas. Unlicensed plumbing contractors are of particular concern to the Board. Enforcement includes taking action against both unlicensed individuals engaging in plumbing, and licensed individuals who may not be upholding the standards required of the Plumbing License Law and

Board Rules. Due to the importance of the examination process, TSBPE strives to identify unlicensed activity.

In the modern digital age, where individuals enjoy digital anonymity and where digital advertising is largely cost-free and misrepresentations can proliferate, it is more difficult than ever to track down individuals engaging in or promoting unlicensed plumbing, and to collect the evidence required to provide due process to the alleged perpetrator and to overcome the Board's burden of proof to prosecute such violations.

As a result, the TSBPE, among other enforcement remedies, seeks to place a greater emphasis on the use of undercover "sting" operations to detect and deter violations



concerning unlicensed plumbing work, and to “intercept” these individuals before they are able to harm the public.

In addition, the TSBPE is developing better communication and awareness with city officials by providing an easy-to-follow form that can be filed electronically, with the Board to track verifiable violations of the Plumbing License Law witnessed by city officials, thereby stopping violators more quickly.

To strengthen our Enforcement capabilities and address the growing issue of unlicensed plumbing activity, the TSBPE plans to establish an Inside Investigations Team within the Enforcement Department. This initiative involves using one or two of the three total Investigator positions we’re requesting as “Online Investigators,” dedicated to monitoring and investigating unlicensed plumbing practices. These Investigators will focus primarily on utilizing the internet and social media platforms to follow up on complaints about unlicensed activity. By leveraging digital tools and techniques, the Online Investigators team will complement our existing Field Investigation team, providing a robust response to the challenges posed by unlicensed practitioners who operate online.

The Online Investigators team will ensure timely and thorough investigations into online complaints, enhancing our ability to detect and address unlicensed activities efficiently. By integrating this digital approach, we aim to improve our Enforcement reach, ensuring that all plumbing activities within Texas adhere to the regulations and standards set forth by the TSBPE.

TSBPE seeks voluntary compliance and informal resolution of complaints and violations whenever possible. TSBPE also utilizes informal conferences when appropriate to interact with violators and potentially, the person making the complaint, to work towards an informal resolution. When informal resolution or settlement is not possible, TSBPE pursues contested cases through the administrative hearings process at the State Office of Administrative Hearings (SOAH).

Additionally, TSBPE monitors Continuing Professional Education courses that are required for license renewal, on a random basis, to ensure all courses meet the minimum requirements of the Plumbing License Law and Board Rules.

The Board has found that most licensed plumbers desire to do the right thing, by complying with the laws and rules that regulate their industry. However, enforcement of the Plumbing License Law and Board Rules is still required even against licensees to correct violations by unwitting licensees, particularly when legal requirements have



changed, and to uphold the continuing fitness and integrity of license holders in the field, long after they were evaluated for fitness when initially receiving their license.

The regulation of plumbing system installations by qualified plumbers and inspection of those plumbing systems by qualified plumbing inspectors is critical to the health and safety of the citizens of Texas. Improperly installed plumbing systems can cause and have caused injury and death through explosions, fires, hospital medical gas contamination and noxious fumes. Improperly installed plumbing systems can transmit diseases that include typhoid fever, diarrhea, cholera, and amoebic and bacterial dysentery. Sickness or death can occur when noxious fumes such as carbon monoxide, methane gas and fuel gas that are not properly ventilated by a correctly designed and installed plumbing system. Improperly installed medical gas systems can deliver contaminated or cross-connected medical gases to hospital patients, causing sickness and even death.

The public looks to the Texas State Board of Plumbing Examiners to ensure the quality of plumbing work that it receives. The public also expects TSBPE to respond to complaints regarding the plumbing industry in a timely and responsible manner.

The TSBPE has developed a system to ensure that complaints are prioritized by the potential for harm to human life and property. Investigation priority numbers range from Priority 1 to Priority 3, with a lower number indicating a more serious violation deserving of investigation before investigations of matters with a higher number.

Positive feedback from the public is a key indicator of the satisfaction of TSBPE customers. Continued industry support and participation in public meetings related to the plumbing industry is another key indicator of customer satisfaction.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND PROCESSES

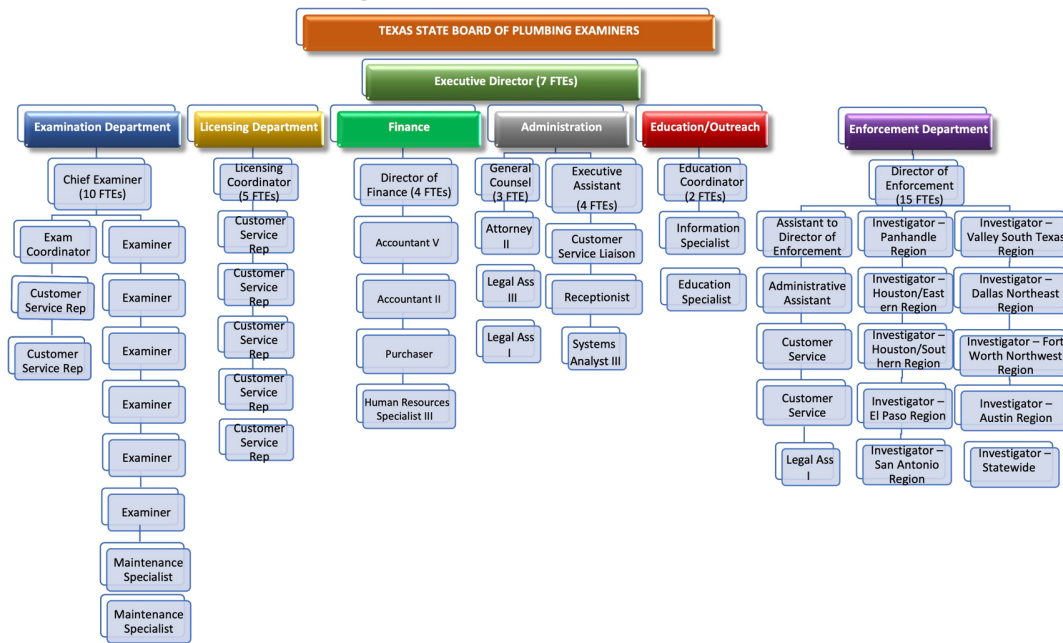
The Board is composed of nine members who serve staggered six-year terms. All Board members are appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Texas Senate:

- One member of the Board shall have had at least ten years' practical experience and be licensed as a Master Plumber.
- One member shall have had at least five years' practical experience and be licensed as a Journeyman Plumber.
- One member shall have had at least five years' practical experience and be licensed as a Plumbing Inspector.



- One member shall be a Responsible Master Plumber for at least five years with at least 10 years' experience as a licensed Master Plumber and/or Journeyman Plumber.
- One member shall be a licensed professional engineer practicing in the field of plumbing engineering.
- Two members shall be building contractors with five years' contracting experience (one of whom shall be principally engaged in home building and one of whom shall be principally engaged in commercial building).
- Two members must be representatives of the general public.
- The Governor also appoints the presiding officer of the Board.

The Board proposes and adopts rules and sets policy as necessary to carry out the enabling statute; and employs an Executive Director to carry out the policies and rules it adopts.



The Board's Executive Director directly supervises the following personnel: one General Counsel attorney, the Director of Financial Operations & Human Resources, the Director of Enforcement, the Director of Examination (Chief Examiner), the Executive Assistant to the Director and Board, the Information Specialist IV, a Human Resource Specialist III, and the Examination Coordinator.

The General Counsel attorney supervises one Staff Attorney, a Legal Assistant III, and a Legal Assistant I.



The Director of Enforcement supervises one Administrative Assistant, two Customer Service Representatives at the Board's Austin facility, and nine Investigators located throughout the state.

The Director of Examination (Chief Examiner) supervises six Examiners, the Examination Coordinator, and two Customer Service Representatives who administer and grade examinations, process new and returning exam applicant information, and maintain applicant qualification histories.

The Executive Assistant to the Director and Board supervises one Customer Service Representative who serves as the Agency's Receptionist and one Customer Service Representative who serves as the Customer Service Liaison to both the public and the plumbing industry by assisting with immediate issues such as veteran needs and insurance requirements. Additionally, the position oversees the work of the Systems Analyst III and a Legal Assistant I.

The Licensing Coordinator oversees five Customer Service Representatives who process Plumber's Apprentice applications, initial licenses, registrations, renewal processes, and the production of license pocket cards and wall certificates.

The Director of Financial Operations supervises one Accountant II, one Accountant IV, one Purchaser, and a Human Resources Specialist.

Management has adopted policies and procedures to place customer service first and to cross-train as a necessity to maintain a prompt level of service. One of the Customer Service Representatives, trained in all licensing application processes and having a high level of information technology experience, is designated as an Online Licensing Specialist. This position assists TSBPE's numerous on-line users with all aspects of the online licensing system. By designating this position, TSBPE continues to increase the use of online applications and has boosted this performance measure by 200% in the past five years.

The Examination and Licensing program provides examinations for Master Plumber, Journeyman Plumber, Tradesman Plumber-Limited Licensee, Plumbing Inspector, Medical Gas Endorsements, Multipurpose Residential Fire Protection Sprinkler Specialist Endorsements and Water Supply Protection Specialist Endorsements; and issues and renews licenses for successful applicants.

The Board also administers the registrations of Plumber's Apprentices, Residential Utilities Installers, Drain Cleaners and Drain Cleaner-Restricted Registrants.

The Master Plumber, Journeyman Plumber, Tradesman Plumber-Limited Licensee and Medical Gas Piping Installation endorsement examinations include a "hands on"



practical portion, as well as a written portion. The Plumbing Inspector examination is a written examination with a mock inspection of model plumbing systems. The Water Supply Protection Specialist examination is also a written examination.

Practical examinations are administered at the Board's Examination Centers located in Austin and Waco. With the addition of computer-based testing, TSBPE now offers examinations at more than 40 locations around the State as well as in some neighboring states and military bases. TSBPE also works with political subdivisions to offer specialty endorsement examinations in the more heavily populated areas as needed. This ensures that political subdivisions have the ability to provide the required plumbing inspections and can more quickly gain specialized endorsements for their qualified inspectors.

All licenses and registrations are renewed annually. Endorsements renew along with the individual's license, and individuals holding multiple licenses or endorsements may now renew them all on one date. This provides an easier method for both the licensee and staff resources. All licensees and registrants are required to obtain six hours of Continuing Professional Education prior to the renewal of the license or registration. All licenses, registrations and endorsements may be renewed online as well as all initial applications for registrations, licenses, endorsements, and examinations.

The Enforcement Program provides for enforcement of the Plumbing License Law and Board Rules, including:

- The intake and investigation of consumer complaints
- Performing compliance checks and monitoring of plumbing jobs
- Monitoring of Continuing Professional Education programs
- Cooperative enforcement with local municipalities and their Plumbing Inspectors
- Review of potential violations and certain applications for licensure and registrations of persons with past criminal convictions are reviewed by TSBPE staff during the review of fingerprints
- Revocation, suspension, denial and non-renewal of a license or registration
- Imposition of administrative penalties
- Issuance of cease-and-desist orders
- Seeking civil penalties
- Seeking injunction relief
- Seeking criminal penalties



The Indirect Administration function provides for supervision of all TSBPE staff. Indirect Administration performs all accounting, payroll, performance, purchasing, reporting, human resource, information resource, risk management and other administrative tasks required by the State to operate properly and efficiently.

TSBPE Investigators conduct investigations in the field across the State of Texas, investigating complaints, detecting other violations of the Plumbing License Law and Board Rules; and conducting compliance checks at jobsites. The Investigators, aided by technological solutions, can efficiently accomplish many administrative tasks while in the field. When not in the field, Investigators primarily office in their personal residence. The foregoing notwithstanding, Investigators are in TSBPE's Austin office with some regularity (particularly those located near the greater Austin area) and assist with a variety of duties both in Austin and within their regions. Investigators provide ongoing public outreach as well as career training presentations in addition to their investigative duties.



The following map reflects the areas in which the Investigators are located:



GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION OF THE AGENCY

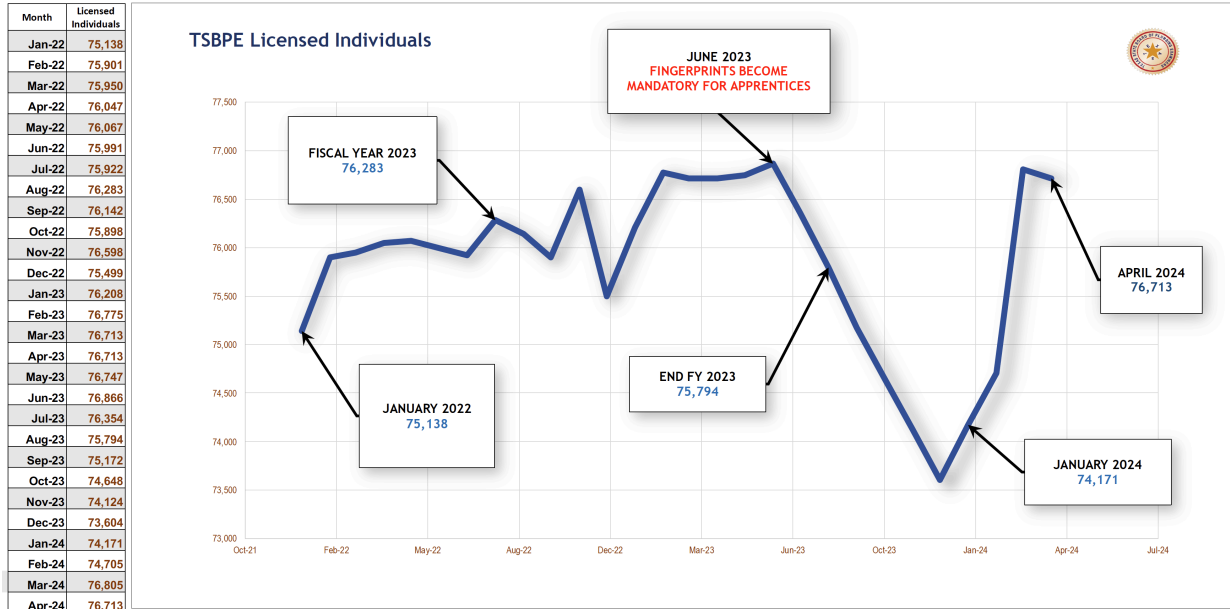
Since 1981, the Texas State Board of Plumbing Examiners administrative offices and main Examination Center have been located at 929 East 41st Street, Austin, Texas, 78751. The office is centrally located for both consumers and examinees. The building is leased under a contract negotiated and administered by the Texas Facilities Commission; the current lease expires in August 2025. The Texas Facilities Commission and the landlord are currently renegotiating a lease extension.



A second newly constructed Examination Center is located on the campus of the Texas State Technical College, 3801 Campus Drive, Waco, Texas 76705.

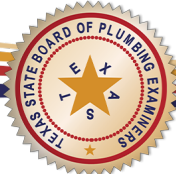
LOCATION OF SERVICE POPULATION

The Texas State Board of Plumbing Examiners serves the entire population of Texas in all regions of the State. The estimated population of Texas in 2024 is 30.946 million. The TSBPE's licensee and registrant population was 76,713 as of April 2024. The TSBPE has approximately 8,597 Master Plumbers who have records on file indicating they are serving as a Responsible Master Plumber and allowed by law to advertise and market plumbing services directly to the public, thereby serving as an analogue for the number of plumbing companies operating across the State of Texas. The total number of licenses, registrations and endorsements as of the date of this report is 102,038.



HUMAN RESOURCE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

The greatest strength of TSBPE's human resources is the number of employees who possess experience and expertise in the plumbing industry. Fifteen (15) of the Board's employees, including the Executive Director, Director of Enforcement, Director of Examination, and all Investigators and Examiners, are licensed plumbers. Another strength is the cross training between the Examination and Enforcement departments.



The Executive Director, Director of Enforcement and all investigators obtain certification by the Council on Licensure, Enforcement, and Regulation (CLEAR) as Investigators. As of the submission date of this Strategic Plan, fourteen (14) employees (FTEs or Full Time Equivalents), or 35.0%, have been with TSBPE for more than five (5) years. Additionally, 10 (ten) employees (FTEs), or 25.0%, have been with TSBPE for more than ten (10) years. TSBPE employees are trained in ethics, equal opportunity employment laws, safe driving, personal protection, cyber security, communication techniques, record management and protection of information.

During fiscal years 2020 through 2023, TSBPE experienced a substantial number of retirements and agency transfers. Budget limitations and employee cuts directly affect TSBPE's ability to retain qualified staff.

Employee Turnover and Recruitment of Qualified Employees

The TSBPE enjoys a favorable reputation as a place for employees to work, as reflected in our most recent Survey of Employee Engagement results. Employee performance is achieved by assuring that each employee is made aware of the important role they have in the function of the TSBPE. Each employee carries a sense of pride knowing that he or she plays a key role in the protection of the public's health, safety and welfare.

Despite its favorable reputation, TSBPE has had difficulties recruiting new staff and retaining employees over the last four fiscal years. During fiscal years 2022-2024 to date, TSBPE experienced a substantial number of retirements, departures, and agency transfers. The agency has repeatedly lost excellent employees to other state agencies or private industry due to the relatively lower compensation structure in comparison to better-funded state agencies and private industry. In short, salaries available to TSBPE are not competitive with private industry or, more impactfully, better-funded state agencies. TSBPE has struggled over the last two fiscal years to recruit new applicants to fill open positions despite its expanded efforts across multiple recruitment platforms and initiating an internship program to attract qualified applicants. Housing costs in the Austin metro area have increased dramatically over the last four years, coupled with a higher cost of living, making it difficult to retain and attract qualified staff. Staffing shortages are particularly impactful in competitive fields such as examination, financial services, information technology, and legal.



REDUNDANCIES AND IMPEDIMENTS

The TSBPE suggests that the following redundancies and impediments should be addressed within the planning process in the 89th Legislative Session. Addressing these issues will allow for greater administrative efficiency, expanded support and service to our regulated population, and workforce development in the plumbing industry.

1. Allow the TSBPE the ability to designate to the Executive Director the ability to approve and issue default orders in contested cases as provided by law;
2. Allow on the Board's request, that the attorney general shall represent the Board before the State Office of Administrative Hearings to enforce the chapter;
3. Clarify that board members may receive reimbursement for actual and necessary expenses incurred in performing the member's official duties;
4. Allow the expansion of our outreach program to support workforce development programs, including career development programs and veteran support, with other state agencies;
5. Enhance efforts to recruit and retain a qualified staff;
6. Allow TSBPE to update automated access to its VERSA licensing system maintained and administered by the Health Professional Council to protect confidential information of clients of family violence shelter centers, victims of trafficking shelter centers, and sexual assault programs and survivors of family violence, domestic violence, and sexual assault as required by HB 3120, 88th Legislature, Regular Session (2023).

Natural Disaster Response

With its main office in Austin, the Board was fortunate not to have suffered any significant losses in connection with winter storm URI. The events of URI however, brought into view the impediments the Board might face in the event of a natural disaster or other catastrophic event such as Uri.

In the aftermath of URI, the Board heeded Governor Abbott's declaration of disaster and by requesting the temporary suspension of certain provisions of the Plumbing License Law and associated rules deemed by the Board to be an impediment to disaster relief and recovery efforts.

Specifically, Sections 1301.404 (pertaining to annual mandatory continuing professional education), 1301.3576(2) (pertaining to required education coursework for Master Plumbers seeking Responsible Master Plumber status) and 1301.403(d) (pertaining to examination and re-application requirements for persons seeking to reinstate an expired



license after two years) of the Plumbing License Law were suspended in the affected areas.

The Board targeted these provisions after determining, and confirming with Investigators in the field, that there was a critical shortage of licensed plumbing professionals able to tackle the colossal task of rebuilding. Suspending these legal requirements prevented then current license holders from expiring who were unable to attend required continuing education classes in the affected areas, allowing Master Plumbers who had previously not wanted to operate their own plumbing company to quickly gain RMP status and have the legal authority to enter into legal plumbing contracts, without the necessity of taking the required coursework pertaining to basic business management, and allowed persons with a previous history of licensure to rejoin the workforce in a time of dire need, when desperate citizens were already in some cases turning to unlicensed individuals to provide plumbing work. Additionally, TSBPE was also able to issue licenses on a probationary basis to certain individuals, allowing them to complete the remainder of the normal license requirements later in the probationary period. While relaxing legal requirements in the affected area, TSBPE simultaneously stepped-up enforcement in the region by quickly dispatching additional Investigators to join Investigators who were already in position, including the Board's Director of Enforcement.

While the Board believes it is well-positioned to deal with impediments posed by a natural disaster or other catastrophic event such as a pandemic, the Board will continue to develop strategies and make recommendations to bolster our response measures and contingency plans in the event of a natural disaster or pandemic.

By allowing for this suspension, TSBPE is better able to assist those that may want to re-enter the plumbing workforce who have previous and verifiable experience with the need for an additional examination. In addition, those that may wish to become entrepreneurs will have a quicker and less expensive path to do so thereby providing additional jobs.

In addition, the Board will address through rule change within its continuing education required subjects, the need for plumbers to meet all governing recommendations while performing their essential duties during a pandemic.

During the pandemic the need for virtual classroom training to apply social distancing was a needed alternative for plumbers to meet both examination and continuing education requirements. Though quickly developed as an experimental form and substitute for onsite classroom, the Board has reviewed and amended its education rules to permanently allow for the virtual alternative.



During the COVID-19 disaster, TSBPE successfully conducted important State business via teleconferencing that allowed them to make decisions, preserve public participation and do it at a lower cost than traditional in-person meetings.

Now that the Open Meetings Act allows agencies to continue teleconferencing meetings, it will provide a routine option for State agencies if they choose. In addition, it will save money, travel time and expense as well as contribute to a safer environment by the reduction in vehicle use.

By doing so it will maintain government transparency while preserving important open-meeting protections, such as public participation and the ability to address a governmental body; provide written notice that gives the public a way to participate remotely and includes electronic copies of agenda packets that will be considered at the meeting; provide the public with access to a recording of any telephonic or videoconference meeting.

CAPITAL ASSETS AND STRENGTHS

The TSBPE's Examination Centers and the exams themselves represent a large portion of its most valuable assets. The TSBPE is relatively rare among licensing agencies in that it owns the various examinations it implements; it is wholly responsible for the development, internal testing and execution of every test. The exams are part of its intellectual property and a testament to the expertise of its technical and education staff. The TSBPE's examinations and Austin's Examination Center are recognized across the United States as setting a high standard in the plumbing industry. The Austin Examination Center is frequently toured by representatives from regulatory agencies from other states and foreign countries considering introducing a similar practical examination approach.

Separate examinations are administered for Journeyman Plumber, Master Plumber, Tradesman Plumber-Limited and Inspector licenses, as well as the Medical Gas Piping Installation, Water Supply Protection Specialist, Multipurpose Residential Fire Protection Sprinkler Specialist endorsements. All of these examinations, with the exception of the Water Supply Protection Specialist exam, consist of thorough written and hands-on-practical sessions that ensure licensed plumbers and plumbing inspectors who work with public water supplies, sewage disposal, natural gases and medical gases have the qualifications, knowledge, skills, and competencies to do their jobs properly.



The practical examination portion of the TSBPE Examination Center serves as a proving ground for applicants to demonstrate their knowledge and skills. It tests their ability to solve high-level plumbing issues and apply their knowledge in practical situations they might encounter in the field, ultimately determining their level of competency and fitness. For example, the practical examination requires Journeyman Plumber applicants to complete a “shop” component (measuring, cutting, preparation, assembly and fitting of pipe in various applications) and the design and rough-in of a sanitary waste and vent system using a scaled down two-story mock-up building.

All examinees must review various water heater setups and correctly identify potential code violations. Meanwhile, a qualified applicant seeking a Medical Gas Installation Endorsement must demonstrate proper assembly, purging, and brazing of both a horizontal and a vertical joint.

To accommodate these testing environments, the TSBPE’s Examination Centers are equipped with various tools, materials, fixtures, and fittings as well as workstations to conduct the exam. The mock-buildings are permanent fixtures and may be raised and lowered onto the workspace using a hoist and pulley system. The TSBPE’s Austin and Waco Exam Centers both also feature complete mock-ups of water heaters and brazing stations with fuel gas supply lines, burners, and industrial vent hoods. Safety in this environment is crucial, and the Exam Centers are also equipped with first aid stations, fire extinguishers, emergency eye washes, and other safety features to accommodate the examination environment. To ensure overall safety, both examination facilities are regularly inspected by the State Office of Risk Management (SORM) and the Austin and Waco Fire Departments. Few other states conduct a practical “hands-on” examination, let alone in the robust and rigorous fashion done by the TSBPE.

The TSBPE’s unique cross-connection prevention demonstration unit is another noteworthy asset of the agency. It houses a display of see-through fixtures and piping which demonstrates, viscerally and in an approachable manner for the lay person, how easily our drinking water can be inadvertently contaminated by improperly installed plumbing systems. TSBPE has two such cross-connection units. The larger unit is a permanent fixture located in the Austin Examination



Center and is shown to examinees and other interested persons visiting TSBPE’s offices. A second smaller mobile unit is housed in a trailer and is utilized at community outreach and public awareness events.

The Board also counts its community outreach and public awareness video presentations as capital assets. Specifically, TSBPE has so far developed three video presentations in its



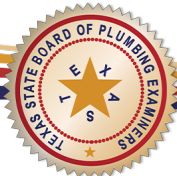
community outreach and public awareness efforts. These video presentations are shown on digital displays during presentations made by TSBPE at community events and industry seminars and are also posted on the TSBPE website for viewing by the public. The three videos cover the following topics: (i) an overview of the Board and its role in regulating the industry; (ii) an overview of the Board’s enforcement efforts of the Plumbing License Law and Board Rules and (iii) an

advisory presentation warning of the threats cross-connections and improperly installed plumbing can pose to safe potable water.

FISCAL ASPECTS OF THE AGENCY

The Texas State Board of Plumbing Examiners has consistently generated more than sufficient revenues to support its operations and does not receive any funds from any other state or federal source. All fees for examinations, initial and renewal of licenses, endorsements, registrations, and duplicate licenses; and administrative penalties collected are deposited directly into the State’s General Revenue Fund.

The Board is required to collect fees at least equal to TSBPE’s appropriations and other un-appropriated indirect costs. Typically, TSBPE collects annual revenues significantly more than its total annual appropriated and unappropriated expenditures. In addition, the TSBPE collects other revenues as appropriated receipts, such as sales of Plumbing License Law and Board Rule publications, fees from fulfilling open records requests, and Conference and Seminar fees.



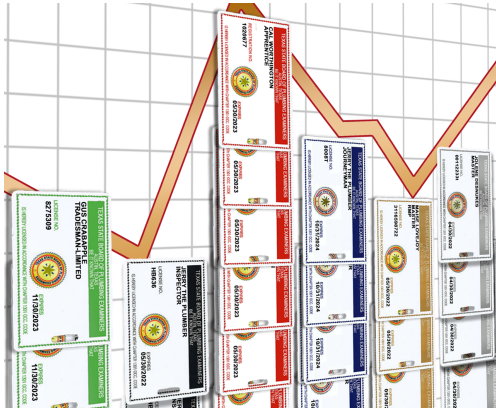
Budgetary Limitations

The Texas State Board of Plumbing Examiners' budget is limited by the General Appropriations Act, Article VIII, which limited the Texas State Board of Plumbing Examiners to a maximum of 51 full-time employees (FTEs) for fiscal years 2023 and 2024, which is an increase of 9.0 FTEs from fiscal years 2024 and 2025.

Degree Current Budget Meets Agency Needs

The Texas Economic and Population Forecast, prepared by the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts and the Texas State Data Center, has determined that much of the state's population growth is projected to occur in the large urban counties of Harris, Dallas, Tarrant, Bexar and Travis. This will increase the demand for licensed plumbers, plumbing inspectors, and plumber's apprentices. Industry growth will continue to increase the demands on the TSBPE, especially in the area of issuance and renewal of licenses and registrations, examinations, enforcement, complaint investigation and compliance checks.

As of the date of this report, TSBPE had 41 of its 51 positions filled. TSBPE continues to have difficulty recruiting and hiring qualified plumbers to fill its Investigator and Examiner positions. While plumbing is an essential service both in and out of pandemic or disaster, the demand across Texas for qualified individuals broadens the difficulty for the agency to pay salaries equivalent to those offered by plumbing companies, cities, and political subdivisions. The TSBPE is a very customer-oriented agency that requires significant customer interactions daily. Where possible, the agency allows staff the opportunity to work from home, whenever feasible.



TSBPE is in the process of hiring new employees (FTEs) to replace retirees and transferees to other Texas agencies. TSBPE currently has fifty-one (51) authorized positions to perform the Board's functions of issuing and renewing licenses, reviewing criminal backgrounds of applicants with criminal convictions, scheduling, administering, and grading examinations, assisting consumers with complaints, accounting, purchasing and human resources. As with most small agencies, many employees are assigned to multiple responsibilities, which cross strategies. TSBPE currently has 9 Investigator positions assigned to the enforcement strategy to investigate complaints, monitor jobsites, and identify violations located across the state.



TSBPE has one attorney on staff to investigate and prepare contested cases involving violations of the Plumbing License Law and/or Board Rules and denials of applications of individuals that have past criminal convictions. In addition, the Board and agency has one attorney designated as General Counsel.

EXPECTATIONS FOR FISCAL YEARS 2025 - 2029

As the population of Texas continues to grow, the demands on TSBPE’s various functions and processes will increase, including issuing and renewing licenses and registrations, reviewing criminal backgrounds of applicants with criminal convictions; imposing administrative penalties on violators; schedule, administer and grade several types of examinations; process consumer and industry complaints; provide public awareness demonstrations; monitor required educational courses; and perform accounting and human resource functions.

The Board considers that it has two basic groups of service populations:

- The general public and the citizens of the State of Texas, and
- The individuals regulated by the TSBPE.

These categories include complainants, respondents, licensees, registrants, examination applicants, political subdivisions, persons requesting public information, and persons attending public meetings of the Board.

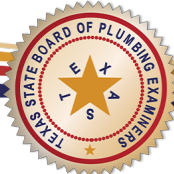
Education Level and Age Demographics

There is no minimum education requirement for licensees. However, a minimum age of 16 years is required for a Plumber’s Apprentice registration.

As of the end of May 2024, the current average age of TSBPE’s licensees and registrants are:



Overall Average Age: 43



FUTURE TRENDS

Demographic changes in TSBPE's citizen service population will not affect the need for the regulation of the plumbing industry and the need for the TSBPE to service its customers. Regardless of demographic changes, the public will continue to need uncontaminated drinking water, air, and medical gases. However, as the citizen service population grows, so too will the demands on agency personnel and the need for knowledgeable and licensed plumbers.

The Texas Economic and Population Forecast, prepared by the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts and the Texas State Data Center, predicts a 1.5% increase in the Texas resident population for fiscal year 2024, a 1.3% increase for fiscal year 2025, a 1.2% increase for each fiscal year through 2028, and a 1.1% increase for each fiscal year through 2031.

Because of national, state, local and family focus on our children's completion of at least basic education levels, it is expected that the education level of individuals who become licensed by TSBPE will probably increase over the next five years. Changes in the demographics of the agency's regulated service population will require TSBPE to provide additional services through increased availability of information technology.

The need for regulation of the plumbing industry will continue to exist in the future. Protection of the health and safety of the citizens who utilize plumbing in the State of Texas and rely on uncontaminated drinking water, air, and medical gases will be as important in the future as it is today. In fact, this will be even more important as the concern for adequate supplies of drinking water sources increases. For this reason, TSBPE, through its educational seminars and the industry, is continually working to encourage young adults to enter the plumbing industry, so the aging population of the licensees and registrants will be reinforced with a younger population of qualified licensed plumbers.

ECONOMIC VARIABLES

Customer demand on the TSBPE is very closely related to economic conditions, especially in the construction industry. Increases in new construction mean an increase in demand for licensees and registrants, as well as an increase in citizens who require the services of the industry and the agency. An increased number of licenses and registrations is



expected to be issued and renewed, as well as an increase in complaints that will be filed by Texas citizens. The number of licensees and registrants is also expected to increase.

As mentioned above, the Texas Economic and Population Forecast, prepared by the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts and the Texas State Data Center, predicts a 1.5% increase in the Texas resident population for fiscal year 2024, a 1.3% increase for fiscal year 2025, a 1.2% increase for each fiscal year through 2028, and a 1.1% increase for each fiscal year through 2031.

TSBPE continues to receive inquiries from individuals planning to relocate to Texas to work in the plumbing industry. TSBPE will respond to this expected increase and demand on agency personnel by continuing to monitor economic conditions and trends in the industry, striving to maintain a lower FTE turnover rate, increasing efficiency, further utilizing technology, and requesting additional FTEs as necessary.

IMPACT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL REQUIREMENTS

The Board's Investigators work with local municipal and other political subdivision authorities in cooperative enforcement of the Plumbing License Law and Board Rules.

Most often, the Board works closely with licensed Plumbing Inspectors in those jurisdictions. Licensed Plumbing Inspectors are employed by political subdivisions for the purpose of inspecting plumbing work to ensure compliance with local ordinances regulating plumbing. The Plumbing License Law authorizes Plumbing Inspectors to enforce the Plumbing License Law and Board Rules within the jurisdiction by which they are employed. Local government regulations have not impacted the TSBPE and none are anticipated.

EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY OF THE AGENCY

Since its creation in 1947, the Texas State Board of Plumbing Examiners has been continually challenged to meet the needs of the constantly evolving and modernizing industry that it serves. The most significant accomplishment of the Board is that it has been able to meet these changing needs while maintaining focus on its mission to protect the health and safety of the citizens of the State. The Board believes this is evident when considering the Board's regulation of the plumbing industry has helped to keep plumbing related accidents to a minimum.



Examples of the Board's significant accomplishments and evolution are:

- As materials and methods for the installation of plumbing have become more sophisticated, the Board has accepted and fulfilled its responsibility to continually review the examination process and qualifications of applicants ensuring that only qualified applicants receive and maintain a license. TSBPE continually evaluates and revises all examinations to ensure they meet current codes and standards. In addition, TSBPE continues to ensure that all examinations are code neutral.
- Changes in the Board's Enforcement program since 1993 have been significant. The implementation of the issuance of citations and placement of Investigators around the State had a remarkable effect on enforcement and compliance, not only with the Plumbing License Law and Board Rules, but with local ordinances regulating plumbing as well.
- The authority to impose administrative penalties granted to the Agency by the 78th Legislature has further increased compliance with the Plumbing License Law and Board Rules.
- The efforts of the Board's Enforcement Committee in reviewing the criminal histories of applicants and the effects of administrative actions taken against licensees and registrants who violate the Plumbing License Law and Board Rules are far reaching.
- The law-abiding plumbing community and consumers who have had their complaints thoroughly investigated and fairly resolved appreciate TSBPE's reputation for its enforcement practices.
- The implementation of the Continuing Professional Education (CPE) requirement for licensed Plumbers, Plumbing Inspectors and Plumbers Apprentice registrants is one of the more significant accomplishments of the Board. CPE has proven to be an extremely beneficial program to the licensees, as well as the consumers of the licensee's services. The increase in the licensee's awareness of current issues, changes in plumbing codes, and the laws and rules that regulate the plumbing industry, have been immeasurable. By allowing the use of virtual classroom courses, licensees now find it easier to obtain their required education. In addition, the renewal period of all endorsements now coincides with the license renewal date and the elimination of the additional endorsement fees has been combined with the license fee to streamline the renewal process.



- To further accommodate applicants, TSBPE has partnered with Pearson VUE, a leader in Computer-Based Testing, to provide computer-based examinations for all license types. Pearson VUE administers hundreds of tests per month at over 40 facilities across Texas, as well as locations in other states and on some military bases. This initiative accommodates plumbers both in Texas and out-of-state by offering exams close to their homes, drastically increasing the volume of tests conducted, eliminating wait times for applicants, and saving applicants thousands of dollars in travel time and lost work previously spent traveling to Austin.



- In FY 2024, the Texas State Board of Plumbing Examiners introduced a self-scheduling system for licensing exams, significantly reducing wait times and optimizing agency resource management. Candidates can now select their exam dates through our Online Licensing System, securing slots within days and enjoying increased flexibility and convenience. This system has also allowed administrative staff to focus on critical tasks, leading to cost savings and improved data accuracy. Looking ahead, the TSBPE will refine the self-scheduling system based on feedback, ensuring it remains user-friendly and efficient. Future integrations with other

**HOW SELF-SCHEDULE
-TO YOUR NEXT EXAM**

licensing processes will create a comprehensive, streamlined experience further supporting professional practice standards in the

plumbing industry.

- TSBPE, through an interagency agreement with Texas State Technical College (TSTC), has leveraged state resources. This agreement calls for TSBPE to work with TSTC staff to further develop their plumbing vocational education program to train and provide the requisite skills to take plumbing examinations and enter the workforce. This program is also available to any Texas trade school or institution of higher education to implement their own plumbing program. In turn, TSTC agreed to build on their campus two additional practical exam facilities operated and utilized by TSBPE exam staff. In addition, we are working with TSTC to develop a mobile testing unit that will be taken to remote areas of Texas to provide the practical exam and minimize travel for applicants. The Waco practical exam



center is now complete, and testing began in the summer of 2022. An additional testing center is planned at TSTC's Harlingen campus. The practical examination centers are utilized and operated by TSBPE staff. This joint initiative between two state agencies not only leverages state dollars but accomplishes joint goals of both organizations, getting more plumbers trained and on-the-job faster to meet the needs of Texas's booming economy.

- The implementation of the Multipurpose Residential Fire Protection Sprinkler Specialist, Water Supply Protection Specialist and Medical Gas Piping Installation Endorsement training and examinations for Master and Journeyman Plumbers is another example of changes in the plumbing industry that have addressed a vital health and safety need. Recent changes to the Board's existing rule for medical gas piping installation include the recognition of individuals who have passed a national standardized exam. With the acknowledgement of the national and state standards, individuals can more quickly become licensed.
- The Board has increased public and industry awareness significantly with the implementation and updating of the TSBPE website and public awareness seminars conducted by TSBPE around the state and the introduction of a Facebook page. TSBPE understands the importance of industry and public outreach to seek input regarding agency functions.
- The Board strives to go beyond meeting only the minimum requirements of the law to inform the industry and public of important matters of the agency. TSBPE continues to see an increase in the demand for public awareness and consumer education programs. In addition to presenting education seminars to individuals who are making career decisions, TSBPE also encourages individuals to consider the plumbing industry as a career path.

The fact that the Board has been able to achieve so many milestones, remain current with the progression of the plumbing industry and maintain focus on its mission while carrying out its daily activities with 41 employees that renew and issue licenses and registrations, examine, and monitor individuals within the plumbing industry is exemplary. The additional staff granted to the TSPBE in the 88th legislative session will further stream all functions of the agency. As of May 2024, TSBPE maintains more than **102,038** licenses, registrations, and endorsements.

PROCESS FOR DETERMINING EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY

Department managers review the performance measures of their respective departments on an ongoing basis. Department meetings are held as needed by the department



managers and respective staff to discuss performance issues. Performance measures are regularly discussed and evaluated during meetings with department managers and the Executive Director. The Executive Director reviews and analyzes the information provided and adjusts priorities and activities accordingly. Department performance reports and backup for each measure are compiled by each department manager and provided to the Director of Financial Operations and Executive Director for review.

Prior to each Board meeting, the statistical data provided regarding each Investigator's activities include the number of notices of non-compliance issued, compliance checks performed, complaints investigated, classes monitored, and seminars conducted. Information regarding Enforcement Committee activities includes the number of applicants for examination and license renewal whose criminal histories reviewed, the number of complaint cases reviewed, and the number of administrative penalties imposed.

The examination and licensing information statistics reviewed by the Board include the number of each type of examination given, pass/fail rates for each specific type of examination and the percentage of each type of exam passed; and number of licenses, registrations and endorsements issued and renewed.

A complete report of TSBPE's financial status is provided and discussed at each quarterly Board meeting. The Executive Director reports on all activities and significant matters of the agency. The Board formally reviews and analyzes the information provided and adjusts priorities and activities accordingly. The Board uses the information provided as a basis for policymaking. Department managers meet after each of the Board meetings to review and discuss priorities.

Providers of Continuing Professional Education distribute information on agency performance to licensees during the Continuing Professional Education courses. In turn, the industry utilizes the information when determining whether to support the Board's legislative budget requests, and in deciding what other legislation to support. This information is also used to make recommendations to the Board for rule and policy amendments.

In furthering its efforts to enhance the effectiveness, efficiency, and accountability of the TSBPE, the Board has implemented a plan to conduct random audits. These audits assist the Board in maintaining and updating its performance and procedures to ensure best practices in all areas.



TECHNOLOGY RESOURCE PLANNING

TSBPE continues to research technology solutions that will result in more efficient expenditure of limited resources and more effective delivery of services to Texas citizens and agency constituents. Below are the current and planned technology initiatives that support TSBPE objectives:

1. Consider agile procurement methodologies. To the greatest extent possible, the TSBPE relies on the Department of Information Resources (DIR) to approve vendors through a rigorous contracting process. As a result, all TSBPE's Information Technology purchases have been through contracts that have been pre-approved by DIR. In the event TSBPE seeks a contract outside DIR, we will work to implement any agile procurement methodologies in our procedures.
2. Leverage shared technology services. TSBPE has been a participant in the Health Professions Council's (HPC) Shared Regulatory Database program (VERSA) since its inception. In addition, the agency uses the leverage provided by DIR to purchase computers, related equipment, and software.
3. Explore and prioritize business process automation. TSBPE continually utilizes automated reporting to ensure and develop its workflow.
4. Utilize an application performance management solution. Currently, on behalf of the TSBPE, the HPC receives performance reports from the vendor regarding downtimes and many other processes.
5. Work with DIR and the vendor community to identify opportunities to improve agency infrastructure and applications to better serve the plumbing community and public.
6. Work with DIR to identify alternative funding sources for infrastructure and cybersecurity projects that benefit the plumbing industry and public.

Technology Initiative Assessment and Alignment

Initiative: Continue to Expand and Update the TSBPEs Digital Management Systems: The TSBPE is considering investing in a robust software platform that would unite our various digital back-end systems.

Agency Objective: Implementation of advanced back-end communication and digital management systems.

Anticipated Benefits: Adding a more robust and unified communications platform to the TSBPE's digital back-end will enable us to address communication and operational inefficiencies.

Capabilities or Barriers: Budgeting.



Guiding Principles: Supporting Versa Regulation addresses the following statewide guiding principles: Connect, Trust, and Innovate. The public-facing component of Versa Regulation allows citizens to access real-time information from the Agency database and to apply for registration, examination, or licensure in real-time. As of the end of May 2024, the percentage of licenses and registrations renewed online is approximately **92.11%** and the percentage of new licenses and registrations issued online is approximately **85.00%**. Future enhancements in the online user system should help increase these percentages even more.

As Versa Regulation is a shared software solution with the Health Professions Council (HPC) and other Article VIII regulatory agencies, the Board's data is stored in a Department of Information Resources (DIR) approved data center and supported by HPC, allowing for easier sharing and translating of data by other agencies, should that need arise. In addition, when HPC staff discovers an opportunity to optimize the database application for one of the now seven agencies, HPC staff is able to present the solution to other agencies sharing Versa Regulation, giving the opportunity for TSBPE to receive a benefit to the database application that may not have been discovered otherwise.

Anticipated Benefits: The implementation of Versa Regulation has resulted in quicker turn-around times and more efficient operations, which in turn, increases customer satisfaction. Versa Regulation serves as the primary application for handling secure database information and allows for continued identity management. Security rules for different users of the application in various departments are maintained by the system administrator, requiring each authorized individual to use one set of identification information for access to the agency database. In addition, the database application keeps a record of changes to data with timestamp and user information and requires secure access to the system's online component to ensure licensees' and registrants' information remains secure.

Capabilities or Barriers: Budgetary constraints may well play a role in needed customizations.

Initiative: Contract with Vintage IT Services through DIR contract to Manage Agency IT Services: TSBPE's contract with Vintage IT Services for managed services provides dependable maintenance of the agency's IT equipment, including its server, firewall, and office desktop computers, and monitoring of TSBPE's software and IT security, allowing TSBPE staff to focus more on other business needs.

Agency Objectives: Contracting with Vintage IT Services Supports all Agency Objectives.

Statewide Technology Priorities: Contracting with Vintage IT Services aligns with Statewide Technology Priorities P2 – Data Management, P4 – Infrastructure, P7 – Network, and P9 – Security and Privacy.



Guiding Principles: Contracting with Vintage IT Services addresses the statewide guiding principle of delivery by managing TSBPE’s secure network and shared drives and its common e-mail software application, enhancing information asset management.

Anticipated Benefits: TSBPE continues to see the benefits of contracting with Vintage IT Services. Allowing information to be shared on secure network drives has increased staff efficiency by allowing file documentation to be viewed electronically. The security of TSBPE data has improved by requiring secure sign on to TSBPE desktop computers and by the continual monitoring of users and individual access permissions.

Capabilities or Barriers: As TSBPE staff have become more familiar with accessing file information through the use of newer electronic programs, TSBPE will continue to evaluate electronic maintenance of files. Maintaining files in electronic format has provided easier access to file data and significantly reduced physical storage space requirements. Easier access also allows TSBPE to produce information requested by the public more quickly.

Initiative: Provide Board Meeting Documentation Electronically: TSBPE provides Board members and staff with electronic documentation for each Board and Committee meeting to eliminate the need for creating paper Board books. Each Board member and staff member attending a Board or Committee meeting is provided with a laptop computer for viewing documents for consideration and review during the meeting. Board documents are offered in a cloud-based program for prior meeting viewing.

Agency Objectives: Providing Board meeting documentation electronically supports all Agency objectives.

Statewide Technology Priorities: Providing Board and Committee meeting documentation electronically aligns with Statewide Technology Priority P6 - Mobility

Guiding Principles: Providing Board and Committee meeting documentation electronically addresses the statewide guiding principles of Deliver and Trust, by allowing meeting documents to be provided to Board members and staff outside of the office prior to the meeting via electronic mail, as well as maintaining Board meeting documentation in an electronic format for any requests from the public for that documentation.

Anticipated Benefits: TSBPE has seen an increase in efficiency in fulfilling public information requests for Board meeting documentation by storing the information electronically. TSBPE has also been able to accommodate off-site Board members and other agency staff by sending electronic Board meeting documentation to those off-site Board and staff members via electronic email for review prior to the meeting.

Capabilities or Barriers: As more information for review and consideration during Board and Committee meetings is submitted to TSBPE electronically, the process for providing meeting documentation to Board members and agency staff in an electronic format will become more streamlined.



Initiative: Mobile Broadband Internet Connection for Off-Site Staff: TSBPE has secured services for high-speed mobile broadband internet for TSBPE Investigators who work from remote offices.

Agency Objectives: Securing mobile broadband internet for off-site staff supports all of the agency objectives.

Statewide Technology Priorities: Contracting through DIR to obtain mobile broadband internet connections for agency off-site staff aligns with Statewide Technology Priorities P6 – Mobility and P7 – Network.

Guiding Principles: Contracting through DIR to obtain mobile broadband internet connections for TSBPE staff who office from remote locations across the state, by allowing Investigators to remotely access the agency database via laptop computers or cellular telephones. External staff can quickly verify licensing and application information while conducting compliance checks through safe secure connections.

Anticipated Benefits: Allowing TSBPE Investigators remote access to the agency database via laptop computers or cellular telephones will benefit TSBPE and increase its efficiency and accuracy by eliminating the need for the Investigator to contact the Enforcement Department staff by telephone in order to verify information while the Investigator is working off-site.

Capabilities or Barriers: There is some limited availability of mobile broadband internet services from DIR approved vendors in certain remote areas where an Investigator’s office has been a barrier to obtaining a high quality mobile broadband internet connection.

Initiative: Contract with DIR for Security Event and Threat Analysis Network Security Platform Services: The Board contracts with DIR to participate in their Security Event and Threat Analysis (SETA) network security platform in order to increase security of TSBPE data and its critical infrastructure, to alert the agency of and prevent any cyber security threats, and to identify any potential IT vulnerabilities and weaknesses.

Agency Objectives: Contracting with DIR for SETA services supports all of the agency objectives.

Statewide Technology Priorities: Contracting with DIR for SETA services aligns with Statewide Technology Priorities P2 – Data Management, P4 – Infrastructure, and P9 – Security and Privacy.

Guiding Principles: Contracting with DIR for SETA services will address the statewide guiding principles of deliver by ensuring the TSBPE workforce can safely continue to access agency email remotely when needed, increasing productivity and efficiency, and ensuring safety of the TSBPE’s network and data.

Anticipated Benefits: TSBPE anticipates increased security and efficiency in contracting with DIR for SETA services by ensuring agency network and data are secure from cyber-attacks. This will decrease the risk of agency downtime to recover data or repair damaged equipment due to attempted cyber-attacks.



Capabilities or Barriers: TSBPE has easily maintained its efforts with DIR’s SETA services platform due to contractual support from Vintage IT Services, as well as the Health Professions Council (HPC) staff.

HOW TSBPE COMPARES TO OTHER STATES

While researching other states, TSBPE staff has determined that eight states do not require a license for Journeyman and Master Plumbers. However, many require an additional license or certification for fuel gas piping.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TSBPE Signs Reciprocal License Agreement with Louisiana
Louisiana Journeymen with Gasfitter Licenses in Good Standing are Now Eligible to Obtain the Equivalent License in Texas, No Exam Required

AUSTIN, Texas – The Texas State Board of Plumbing Examiners (TSBPE) has completed an agreement with The State Plumbing Board of Louisiana (SPBLA) that allows Journeymen Plumbers from both states to register for a reciprocal license without an additional examination requirement. The new reciprocal license policy will increase the availability of skilled, licensed plumbers on both sides of the 130-mile border that divides the two Gulf Coast neighbors.

Reciprocal licensing, a long-requested licensure option in the plumbing community, has proven difficult for agencies to implement due to state-to-state variations in license requirements. “The plumbing skillset and licensing requirements in Louisiana are substantially equivalent to ours here in Texas,” said TSBPE Board Chair Frank S. Denton, “this agreement makes good sense for both states.”

Extreme weather events like Hurricane Ida and the deep freeze that hit Texas in early 2021 highlight the unique way in which both states will benefit from a streamlined out-of-state license registration and approval process.

This arrangement is as much a message of support to working plumbers as it is a net positive for plumbing companies in either state who will now have more options when hiring a licensed plumber. Ultimately, the consumer stands to benefit most from the landmark deal; both agencies expect it to significantly increase the availability of trained plumbing professionals across the Gulf Coast and beyond.

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Relevant Links

Texas State Board of Plumbing Examiners (TSBPE) tsbpe.texas.gov

State Plumbing Board of Louisiana spblla.com

Of those eight states that do not regulate plumbers on the state level, plumbers are licensed and regulated by the individual cities or counties where the work is performed.

Sharp population growth has fueled the need for additional plumbers, and the Board continually seeks to act within its current statutory authority to reduce barriers to plumbers relocating to Texas from out-of-state.

Of those states that license Journeyman plumbers, some conduct a “hands on” practical examination for the Journeyman license. Some states that do not currently offer a “hands on” practical examination have indicated they realize the need for it and are progressing towards the use of a practical examination. Most states base their examinations on a single

plumbing code adopted by that state.

Most states require that a Plumbing Contractor carry liability insurance. A few states require Continuing Professional Education to renew a license. Most states do not truly practice reciprocity. Many states accept a license from another state to satisfy experience requirements but require the individual to undergo their state examination. However, many states recognize the Texas license as a license greater than or equal to theirs.



Most of the states researched generally have enforcement programs similar to Texas. Some states utilize state agency-employed Investigators, while others rely on local Plumbing Inspectors to provide enforcement.

Throughout the years, TSBPE staff have had opportunities to network with individuals representing other states and countries on issues relating to the development of enforcement and examination strategies. The Texas State Board of Plumbing Examiners is recognized by some states as setting standards that plumbing regulatory boards in other states desire to emulate.

Texas was one of the first states in the nation to administer such a comprehensive practical examination for licensing plumbers and to implement a medical gas piping installation endorsement for licenses. Effective September 1, 2009, Texas became one of the first states to authorize plumbers who meet training and examination requirements to install multipurpose residential fire protection sprinkler systems in one- and two-family dwellings. In the past, representatives from plumbing regulatory boards of other states and one country requested a tour of the Board's facilities and to review TSBPE's programs in an effort to pattern their programs after Texas. TSBPE sets an example to the industry across the nation and in the world.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

Customer service is an area that always provides an opportunity for improvement. During fiscal year 2024, TSBPE conducted its bi-annual customer service survey. The agency relies heavily on the information obtained from this survey to gauge how we are serving the population. In addition, TSBPE plans to implement a continuous survey process for its customers through a web service.

TSBPE has expanded the use of electronic surveys to Apprentices to determine ways to better assist those that entering the trade and those nearing experience levels for examination. Using the survey targeted at the Apprentice level plumber, staff determined a need for more guidance in the steps to licensure. TSBPE is developing an easy step guide for the Apprentice Plumber that will be available on our website and utilized in our career outreach program. In addition, through comments received from Apprentice plumbers, TSBPE has determined that certain training program requirements need to have earlier code learning requirements incorporated. The Apprentice Plumber survey also offered a look at the number expected to be ready for examination in the coming year.



TSBPE has also developed its “Compact with Texans” and appointed a Customer Service Representative in compliance with Sec. 2114.006 of the Government Code. Upon completion of all examinations, applicants are requested to anonymously complete a questionnaire regarding their opinion of the examination and the service they received during the examination. Based on comments received from the plumbing industry and the public, TSBPE now provides improved availability of electronic data related to licensee and registrant applications, renewals and inquiries.



The TSBPE Customer Service Liaison provides a direct link to assist Veterans and service member spouses wishing to return to the plumbing industry or enter as a new career path. TSBPE currently has 944 veterans and service members in its license and registration population. Continuing education, trade association meetings and telephone conversations received by TSBPE staff are brought to the attention of department managers and/or the Executive Director. Comments made to Investigators are also a great source of feedback.

TSBPE evaluates all comments received and often makes changes to agency policies based on customer comments or recommendations. The ability to be heard and the responsiveness of the agency are key factors in the widespread support the Board enjoys from the industry.

The Board has made a commitment to pursue the highest level of customer satisfaction in the delivery of each service we provide. By promoting accountability, teamwork, honesty, integrity, and ethical behavior within TSBPE, we have developed a positive atmosphere that is conducive to successful interaction with the people we serve. Through careful research and review, we continually work to identify our complete customer base and to provide services needed. In addition, we continue to strive for excellence in all areas and to improve our performance whenever possible.

TSBPE’s resolution time for complaints is a measure that is continuously monitored. The TSBPE strives to maintain or exceed performance expectations for complaint resolution time. However, the loss of even one Investigator due to a budget reduction will slow complaint resolution time. TSBPE strives to efficiently assist those that file complaints, whether or not budget reductions are implemented.



SCHEDULE A

Texas State Board of Plumbing Examiners

Budget Structure

Goal A: Ensure Public Health through Safe Plumbing by Licensing and Registering Plumbers

Goal Description: To protect the health and safety of Texas citizens by ensuring that each person has access to uncontaminated drinking water, air and medical gases through quality plumbing systems installed and maintained by competent Master Plumbers, Journeyman Plumbers, Tradesman Plumber-Limited Licensees, Plumber's Apprentices, Residential Utility Installers, Drain Cleaners, Drain Cleaner-Restricted Registrants and that the systems are inspected by competent Plumbing Inspectors; to ensure that all involved in the installation, maintenance and inspection of plumbing systems in each city and public water system in the State are regulated by fair and responsive enforcement of clear standards, in order that the public may live and work in the safe environment that properly installed plumbing systems are designed to provide.

Objective: Evaluate and License Applicants, Enforce the Act and Board Rules

Objective Description: To maintain procedures to evaluate applicants for competency so that all examination results are issued within two working days and all licenses are issued within two working days, to monitor job sites in order to deter all unlicensed plumbers, and to resolve 60 percent of complaints within six months of the receipt of the complaint.

Outcome Measures:

- Percentage of Complaints Resolved Resulting in Disciplinary Action (KEY)
- Recidivism Rate for Those Receiving Disciplinary Action
- Percentage of Licensees and Registrants with No Recent Violations (KEY)
- Percentage of Documented Complaints Resolved Within Six Months
- Percentage of Licensees and Registrants Who Renew Online (KEY)
- Percentage of New (Initial) Licenses, Registrations and Endorsements Issued Online (KEY)

Strategy A.1.1.: Examine and License Plumbers: Administer Competency Examinations & Issue and Renew Licenses and Registrations

Description: Administer competency examinations and issue and renew licenses for Master Plumbers, Journeyman Plumbers, Tradesman Plumber-Limited Licensees, Plumbing Inspectors, Medical Gas endorsements, and Water Supply Protection endorsements; issue and renew registrations for Plumber's Apprentices, Residential Utility Installers, Drain Cleaners and Drain Cleaner-Restricted Registrants.

Output Measures:

- Number of New Licenses, Registrations & Endorsements Issued to Individuals (KEY)
- Number of Licenses, Registrations and Endorsements Renewed (KEY)
- Number of Individuals Examined

Efficiency Measures:

- Percentage of New Individual Licenses and Registrations Issued Within 10 Days
- Percentage of Individual License and Registration Renewals Issued Within 7 Days
- Average Time to Issue Examination Results (in Working Days)

Explanatory Measures:

- Examination Pass Rate
- Total Number of Individuals Licensed and Registered (Unduplicated)

Strategy A.1.2.: Texas.Gov (Subscription Fees)

Description: Provide for the processing of occupational licenses, registrations, or permit fees through Texas.Gov. Estimated and nontransferable.

Strategy A.1.3.: Inspections and Enforcement: Inspect and Perform Compliance Checks, Investigate and Resolve Complaints

Description: Inspect and monitor job sites; approve continuing professional education (CPE) seminars; conduct training sessions; respond to inquiries; investigate and resolve complaints; issue reprimands and revoke or suspend licenses and registrations; issue administrative penalties; monitor providers of instruction in medical gas piping programs, water supply protection specialist

programs, and continuing professional education (CPE) programs; inspect plumbing for compliance with state plumbing codes; and maintain contacts with municipal authorities that comply with the Act through local ordinances.

Output Measures:

- Total Number of Compliance Checks Performed (KEY)
- Number of Individuals Contacted During Compliance Checks for Licenses and Registrations
- Number of Continuing Professional Education (CPE) Courses Monitored
- Number of Investigations Conducted (KEY)
- Number of Complaints Resolved (KEY)
- Number of Reprimands Issued and Licenses or Registrations Revoked, Suspended or Denied
- Number of Hearings Held by the State Office of Administrative Hearings

Efficiency Measures:

- Average Time for Complaint Resolution

Explanatory Measures:

- Percentage of Unlicensed Plumbers and Unregistered Individuals Monitored During Compliance Checks
- Percentage of Compliance Checks Found with Violations (KEY)
- Number of Individuals Attending Continuing Professional Education (CPE) Courses
- Number of Complaints Received
- Percentage of Complaints Received Against Licensees and Registrants
- Number of Jurisdictional Complaints Received
- Percentage of Disciplinary Actions Taken Against Unlicensed and Unregistered Individuals

Strategy A.1.4.: Consumer Education and Public Awareness

Description: Conduct community outreach to promote public awareness of plumber licensing and regulation in Texas, as well as the critical role properly designed and installed plumbing systems play in safeguarding public health and sanitation. Educate the public by increasing awareness of hazards associated with unlicensed plumbing work and encourage consumers to hire licensed plumbers when procuring plumbing services. Increase industry recruitment while reducing industry staffing shortages by promoting the plumbing trade as a professionally and financially rewarding career option with a path of steady career progression available to individual plumbing professionals. Conduct awareness campaigns through community events and trade schools, middle schools, high

schools, community and technical colleges, universities, municipal building and inspection departments, plumbing firms, and trade associations. Advance community outreach and public awareness through social media engagement, while leveraging internet and information technology channels including artificial intelligence.

Output Measures:

- Number of Continuing Education and Public Awareness Seminars Conducted

Explanatory Measures:

- Number of Individuals Attending Educational and Public Awareness Seminars Conducted

Goal B: Indirect Administration

Strategy B.1.1.: Indirect Administration - Examination & Licensing

Description: Provides support to the Examination and Licensing sections of the Agency that administer strategies in Goal A. Also provides administrative functions, including acting as liaison with other state and local entities and the media; human resources, finance and payroll, budgeting, purchasing and HUB, State property accounting; workforce planning and information technology services within the agency. Manages the day-to-day operations of the Agency.

Strategy B.1.2.: Indirect Administration – Inspections & Enforcement

Description: Provides support to the Inspection and Enforcement sections of the Agency that administer strategies in Goal A. Also provides administrative functions, including acting as liaison with other state and local entities and the media; human resources, finance and payroll, budgeting, purchasing and HUB, State property accounting; workforce planning and information technology services within the agency. Manages the day-to-day operations of the Agency.

Agency Budget and Method of Finance

The appropriations for the current biennium as provided in the General Appropriations Act are set forth as follows:

A. Goal: ENSURE PUBLIC HEALTH THROUGH SAFE PLUMBING	<u>FY 2024</u>	<u>FY 2025</u>
A.1.1. Strategy: Examine and License Plumbers	\$ 1,669,375	\$ 1,655,832
A.1.2. Strategy: Texas.Gov	155,000	155,000
A.1.3. Strategy: Inspections and Enforcement	1,347,298	1,300,887
A.1.4. Strategy: Consumer Education and Public Awareness	149,644	150,286
B. Goal: INDIRECT ADMINISTRATION		
B.1.1. Strategy: Indirect Admin – Examination & Licensing	253,666	244,307
B.1.2. Strategy: Indirect Admin - Inspections & Enforcement	<u>192,278</u>	<u>193,888</u>
C. Goal: SALARY ADJUSTMENTS (Statewide)		
C.1.1. Strategy: Salary Adjustments (Statewide)	134,147	257,758
Grand Totals	<u>\$ 3,901,408</u>	<u>\$ 3,957,958</u>

The Methods of Financing for the above appropriations are the General Revenue Fund, Regular Appropriations in the amount of \$3,875,808 and Article IX, Appropriated Receipts in the amount of \$25,600 for Fiscal Year 2024; and Regular Appropriations in the amount of \$3,932,358 and Article IX, Appropriated Receipts in the amount of \$25,600 for Fiscal Year 2025.

SCHEDULE B

Texas State Board of Plumbing Examiners

List of Measure Definitions

Goal A: Ensure Public Health through Safe Plumbing by Licensing and Registering Plumbers

Description: To protect the health and safety of Texas citizens by ensuring that each person has access to uncontaminated drinking water, air and medical gases through quality plumbing systems installed and maintained by competent Master Plumbers, Journeyman Plumbers, Tradesman Plumber-Limited Licensees, Plumber's Apprentices, Residential Utility Installers, Drain Cleaners, Drain Cleaner-restricted Registrants and that the systems are inspected by competent Plumbing Inspectors; to ensure that all individuals involved in the installation, maintenance and inspection of plumbing systems in each city and public water system in the state are regulated by fair and responsive enforcement of clear standards, in order that the public may live and work in the safe environment that properly installed plumbing systems are designed to provide.

OUTCOME MEASURES:

Percentage of Complaints Resolved Resulting in Disciplinary Action (KEY)

Definition: Percent of complaints that were resolved during the reporting period that resulted in disciplinary action.

Purpose: The measure is intended to show the extent to which the Board exercises its disciplinary authority in proportion to the number of complaints received. It is important that both the public and licensees/registrants have an expectation that the Board will work to ensure fair and effective enforcement of the law and this measure seeks to indicate Board responsiveness to this expectation.

Data Source: The VERSA computer application/Regulatory Database system is used to track complaints received by the Board. At the end of each reporting period the Director of Enforcement generates reports of complaint data and calculates the measure. The Director of Financial Operations verifies the calculations and the reports are maintained by the Director of Financial Operations as part of the backup for the specific performance measure. Disciplinary actions include agreed orders, reprimands, warnings, suspensions, administrative penalties issued, citations issued, probations, revocations, denials and restitutions.

Methodology: The total number of complaints resolved during the reporting period that resulted in disciplinary action is divided by the total number of complaints received during the reporting period

resulting in a percentage. Disciplinary action includes agreed orders, reprimands, warnings, administrative penalties issued, citations issued, suspensions, probations, revocations, denials and restitutions on which the Board has acted.

Data Limitations: Complaints filed where the agency is unable to obtain sufficient evidence or no violation occurred, may affect this measure and is not within the control of the agency. Additionally, some cases are resolved by voluntary compliance on the part of the respondent, and therefore no disciplinary action is required.

Calculation Method: Non-Cumulative

New Measure: No

Target Attainment: Low: The desire is that fewer individuals will choose to violate the Plumbing License Law and Board Rules, resulting in a lower than target measure. However, a higher than target measure indicates the Board is dispensing fair and appropriate disciplinary actions for violations.

Percentage Measure: Yes

Recidivism Rate for Those Receiving Disciplinary Action (NON-KEY)

Definition: The number of repeat offenders at the end of the reporting period as a percentage of all offenders during the most recent three-year period.

Purpose: The measure is intended to show how effectively the agency enforces its regulatory requirements and prohibitions. It is important that the agency enforce its act and rules strictly enough to ensure consumers are protected from unsafe, incompetent and unethical practices by the registered or licensed professional.

Data Source: The Director of Enforcement generates a report from the VERSA computer application/Regulatory Database system for the number of repeat offenders and the number of individuals receiving disciplinary action. The reports are verified and maintained by the Director of Financial Operations as part of the backup for the specific performance measure.

Methodology: The number of individuals against whom two or more disciplinary actions were taken by the Board within the current and preceding two fiscal years (numerator) is divided by the total number of individuals receiving disciplinary actions within the current and preceding two fiscal years (denominator) resulting in a percentage.

Data Limitations: The Board dispenses fair and appropriate disciplinary action for violations of the Plumbing License Law and Board Rules. However, the Board has no control over how many individuals choose to violate the Plumbing License Law and Board Rules.

Calculation Method: Non-cumulative

New Measure: No

Target Attainment: Lower than Target

Percentage Measure: Yes

Percentage of Licensees and Registrants with No Recent Violations (KEY)

Definition: The percent of the total number of licensed and registered individuals at the end of the reporting period who have not incurred a violation within the current and preceding two years (three years total).

Purpose: Licensing and registering individuals helps ensure that practitioners meet legal standards for professional education and practice, which is a primary agency goal. This measure is important because it indicates how effectively the agency's activities deter violations of professional standards established by statute and rule.

Data Source: The Director of Enforcement generates a report for the number of individuals receiving disciplinary action during the reporting period. The Licensing Supervisor generates a report of the number of individuals currently licensed and registered by the agency. The Director of Enforcement calculates the measure and the reports are verified and maintained by the Director of Financial Operations as part of the backup for the specific performance measure.

Methodology: The total number of individuals currently licensed and registered by the agency that have not incurred a violation within the current and preceding two years, divided by the total number of individuals currently licensed and registered by the agency, results in a percentage. The numerator for this measure is calculated by subtracting the total number of licensees and registrants with violations during the three-year period from the total number of licensees and registrants at the end of the reporting period. The denominator is the total number of licensees and registrants at the end of the reporting period.

Data Limitations: The Board dispenses fair and appropriate disciplinary action for violations of the Plumbing License Law and Board Rules. However, the Board has no control over how many individuals choose to violate the Plumbing License Law and Board Rules.

Calculation Method: Non-cumulative

New Measure: No

Target Attainment: Higher than Target

Percentage Measure: Yes

Percentage of Documented Complaints Resolved Within Six Months (NON-KEY)

Definition: The percent of complaints resolved during the reporting period that was resolved within a six-month period from the time they were initially received by the agency.

Purpose: The measure is intended to show the percentage of complaints that are resolved within a reasonable time. It is important to ensure the swift enforcement of the Plumbing License Law and Board Rules, which is an agency goal.

Data Source: The Director of Enforcement generates a report of the complaints closed within the reporting period and the length of time between when the complaint was received by the agency and when it was resolved and calculates the percentage. The report is verified and maintained by the Director of Financial Operations as part of the backup for the specific performance measure.

Methodology: The number of complaints resolved within a period of six months or less from the date of receipt is divided by the total number of complaints resolved during the reporting period resulting in a percentage.

Data Limitations: Unanticipated increase in volume of complaints received or an unexpected lengthy absence (such as a catastrophic illness) of the Director of Enforcement or Complaint Department Assistants.

Calculation Method: Non-cumulative

New Measure: No

Target Attainment: Higher than Target

Percentage Measure: Yes

Percentage of Licensees and Registrants Who Renew Online (KEY)

Definition: The percent of the total number of licenses, registrations and endorsements renewed online during the reporting period.

Purpose: To track the use of online renewal technology by the licensee and registrant population.

Data Source: The Licensing Supervisor generates a report using the VERSA computer application/Regulatory Database system to determine the number of licensees and registrants who have renewed (by all methods) during the reporting period and the number of licensees and registrants who have renewed online during the reporting period. The Licensing Supervisor calculates the measure. The report is verified and maintained by the Director of Financial Operations as part of the backup for the specific performance measure.

Methodology: The total number of individual licenses, registrations, and endorsements renewed online is divided by the total number of individual licenses, registrations, and endorsements renewed (by all methods) during the reporting period resulting in a percentage.

Data Limitations: Licensee and registrant's access to the internet and opinions regarding security of internet processes could affect the number who will utilize this service.

Calculation Method: Non-cumulative

New Measure: No

Target Attainment: Higher than Target

Percentage Measure: Yes

Percentage of New (Initial) Licenses, Registrations and Endorsements Issued Online (KEY)

Definition: The percent of all new licenses, registrations, and endorsements issued online to individuals during the reporting period.

Purpose: To track the use of online license issuance technology by the licensee and registrant population.

Data Source: The Licensing Supervisor generates a report using the VERSA computer application/Regulatory Database system to determine the number of licensees and registrants who applied for a license or registration (by all methods) during the reporting period and the number of licensees and registrants who applied for a license or registration online during the reporting period. The Licensing Supervisor calculates the measure. The report is verified and maintained by the Director of Financial Operations as part of the backup for the specific performance measure.

Methodology: The total number of new licenses, registrations, and endorsements issued to individuals online is divided by the total number of new licenses, registrations, and endorsements issued to individuals (by all methods) during the reporting period resulting in a percentage.

Data Limitations: Licensee and registrant's access to the internet and opinions regarding security of internet processes could affect the number who will utilize this service. Additionally, supporting documentation required for initial applications may affect the number who will utilize this service.

Calculation Method: Non-cumulative

New Measure: No

Target Attainment: Higher than Target

Percentage Measure: Yes

Strategy A.1.1 - EXAMINE AND LICENSE PLUMBERS

OUTPUT MEASURES:

Number of New Licenses, Registrations & Endorsements Issued to Individuals (KEY)

Definition: The number of new licenses, registrations and endorsements issued to individuals during the reporting period.

Purpose: A successful licensing structure must ensure that legal standards for professional education and practice are met prior to issuance of a license, registration or endorsement. This measure is a primary workload indicator which is intended to show the number of individuals who have successfully met all licensure or registration criteria established by statute and rule as verified by the agency during the reporting period.

Data Source: The Licensing Supervisor generates a report at the end of each reporting period that lists the number of new licenses, registrations and endorsements issued for that period. The list is verified and maintained by the Director of Financial Operations as part of the backup for the specific performance measure.

Methodology: This measure counts the total number of new licenses, registrations and endorsements issued to individuals during the reporting period, regardless of when the application was originally received. Only new licenses, registrations and endorsements issued during the reporting period are counted.

Data Limitations: The number of new licenses, registrations and endorsements issued is directly related to the number of individuals who apply for and meet all requirements and/or successfully pass an examination and make payment for the initial license, registration or endorsement. This number is also directly related to the economy and demand for licensed/registered/endorsed individuals and plumbing inspectors.

Calculation Method: Cumulative

New Measure: No

Target Attainment: Higher than Target

Percentage Measure: No

Number of Licenses, Registrations and Endorsements Renewed (KEY)

Definition: The number of licenses, registrations and endorsements issued to individuals who previously held a license, registration, or endorsement and renewed during the current reporting period.

Purpose: License, registration and endorsement renewal is intended to ensure that persons who want to continue to practice in their respective profession satisfy current legal standards established by statute and rule for professional education and practice. This measure is intended to show the number of licenses, registrations, and endorsements that were renewed during the reporting period to individuals who previously and/or currently held a valid license, registration, or endorsement.

Data Source: The Licensing Supervisor generates a report at the end of each reporting period that lists the number of licenses, registrations and endorsements renewed during the reporting period. The list is verified and maintained by the Director of Financial Operations as part of the backup for the specific performance measure.

Methodology: The measure is calculated by querying the VERSA computer application/Regulatory Database system to produce the total number of licenses, registrations and endorsements renewed to individuals during the reporting period.

Data Limitations: This measure is directly related to the economy and demand for licensees and registrants. The Board has no control over individuals who choose to change professions and not renew their license, registration or endorsement.

Calculation Method: Cumulative

New Measure: No

Target Attainment: Higher than Target

Percentage Measure: No

Number of Individuals Examined (NON-KEY)

Definition: The number of individuals to whom an examination was administered in whole or in part during the reporting period.

Purpose: The measure shows the number of individuals examined which is a primary step in licensing the individual and represents a major cost element for the agency. Examination supplies, grading costs, and notification costs are directly related to this measure.

Data Source: At the end of each reporting period the Chief Examiner generates a report in the VERSA computer application/Regulatory Database system that lists the types and locations of examinations given and the number of individuals examined, passed, and failed for each type of examination. The

list is verified and maintained by the Director of Financial Operations as part of the backup for the specific performance measure.

Methodology: This measure counts the total number of examinations given for each type of license and endorsement. For an examination administered in one session, even if comprised of periods or breaks or on more than one day, the individuals attending the session are counted only once. An individual who attends two sessions for two examinations or parts of examinations should be counted twice.

Data Limitations: The number of individuals examined is directly related to the number of individuals who apply for an examination. This number is also directly related to the economy and demand for licensed plumbers and plumbing inspectors.

Calculation Method: Cumulative

New Measure: No

Target Attainment: Higher than Target

Percentage Measure: No

EFFICIENCY MEASURES:

Percentage of New Individual Licenses and Registrations Issued Within 10 Days (NON-KEY)

Definition: The percentage of initial individual license, registration and endorsement applications processed during the reporting period within ten working days, measured from the time in days elapsed from approval of the initial completed application until the date the license or registration card is mailed.

Purpose: This measures the ability of the agency to process new applications in a timely manner and its responsiveness to its licensees and registrants.

Data Source: A manual report is kept for each reporting period by the Licensing Coordinator of the number of working days elapsed since the date of approval and the date the license or registration card is produced and mailed. The report and any exceptions to the ten-day issuance are forwarded to the Licensing Supervisor who verifies the information and reports the measure to the Director of Financial Operations. The report is verified and maintained by the Director of Financial Operations as part of the backup for the specific performance measure.

Methodology: The number of new license and registration cards that were mailed within ten working days from application approval is divided by the total number of new licenses and registrations issued within the reporting period to determine the percentage of new license and registration cards issued within ten working days.

Data Limitations: Unanticipated computer or card printer downtime or unexpected lengthy absence (catastrophic illness) of the Licensing Technician, Licensing Coordinator or Licensing Supervisor.

Calculation Method: Non-Cumulative

New Measure: No

Target Attainment: Higher than target

Percentage Measure: Yes

Percentage of Individual License and Registration Renewals Issued Within 7 Days (NON-KEY)

Definition: The percentage of individual license and registration renewal applications that were processed during the reporting period within seven working days, measured from the time elapsed from approval of the renewal application until the date the renewal license or registration card is mailed.

Purpose: This measures the ability of the Agency to process renewal applications in a timely manner and its responsiveness to its primary constituent group.

Data Source: A report is kept by the Licensing Coordinator for each reporting period of the number of working days elapsed since the date of approval and date the renewed license or registration card is produced and mailed. The report and any exceptions to the seven working day processing are forwarded to the Licensing Supervisor who verifies the information. The report and calculations are then verified and maintained by the Director of Financial Operations as part of the backup for the specific performance measure.

Methodology: The number of license and registration renewals that were mailed within seven working days from approval of the renewal is divided by the total number of license and registration renewals issued during the reporting period to determine the percentage of renewal license and registration cards issued within seven working days.

Data Limitations: Unanticipated computer or card printer downtime or unexpected lengthy absence (catastrophic illness) of the Licensing Technician, Licensing Coordinator or Licensing Supervisor.

Calculation Method: Non-Cumulative

New Measure: No

Target Attainment: Higher than Target

Percentage Measure: Yes

Average Time to Issue Examination Results (in Working Days) (NON-KEY)

Definition: The average time, in working days, from examination administration to the issuance of the examination score by the Board to the examinee.

Purpose: The measure is intended to provide applicants timely notification of examination results. It is important that examination applicants receive timely notification of examination results in order that they may either proceed with an initial license or make application for re-examination.

Data Source: The VERSA Regulatory Database system is used to track when examination results are recorded and subsequently mailed to the applicant. The Chief Examiner prepares this report. The Director of Financial Operations verifies and maintains backup documentation for this measure.

Methodology: The number of working days from when the applicant takes the examination and when the examination results are mailed to the applicant.

Data Limitations: Unanticipated increase in volume of examination applications received or an unexpected lengthy absence (such as catastrophic illness) of an Examiner or the Examination Department Assistant.

Calculation Method: Non-Cumulative

New Measure: No

Target Attainment: Lower than Target

Percentage Measure: No

EXPLANATORY MEASURES:

Examination Pass Rate (NON-KEY)

Definition: The percentage of individuals to whom a whole examination or segments of a multi-part examination were administered during the reporting period who received a passing score.

Purpose: The measure shows the rate at which those examined passed. This is an important step in the licensing process and a low pass rate may represent unnecessarily restrictive licensure requirements or inadequate preparation by licensure applicants.

Data Source: At the end of each reporting period the Chief Examiner generates a report in the VERSA computer application/Regulatory Database system that lists the types of examinations given and the number of individuals examined, passed, and failed for each type of examination. The list is

verified and maintained by the Director of Financial Operations as part of the backup for the specific performance measure.

Methodology: The total number of individuals who passed the examination is divided by the total number of individuals examined resulting in a percentage. If two examinations were given within the same reporting period, the total number of individuals passing the exam during the reporting period is divided by the total number of persons taking the exam during the reporting period. Persons taking the exam multiple times are counted each time they take an examination.

Data Limitations: Inadequate preparation by licensure applicants.

Calculation Method: Non-Cumulative

New Measure: No

Target Attainment: Higher than Target

Percentage Measure: Yes

Total Number of Individuals Licensed and Registered (unduplicated) (NON-KEY)

Definition: Total unduplicated number of individuals licensed, registered and endorsed on the last day of the reporting period.

Purpose: The measure shows the total number of individual licenses and registrations currently issued which indicates the size of the agency's primary constituency.

Data Source: The Licensing Supervisor generates a report at the end of each reporting period in the VERSA computer application/Regulatory Database system that lists the unduplicated number of individuals licensed, registered and endorsed on the last working day of the reporting period. The list is verified and maintained by the Director of Financial Operations as part of the backup for the specific performance measure.

Methodology: The total unduplicated number of individuals licensed, registered and endorsed according to the VERSA computer application/Regulatory Database system at the end of the reporting period. An individual who holds more than one license, registration or endorsement is counted only once and only those with current status are counted.

Data Limitations: This measure is directly affected by the economy and demand for licensees and registrants in the plumbing industry.

Calculation Method: Non-Cumulative

New Measure: No

Target Attainment: Higher than Target

Percentage Measure: No

Strategy A.1.3 - INSPECTIONS AND ENFORCEMENT

OUTPUT MEASURES:

Total Number of Compliance Checks Performed (KEY)

Definition: The total number of compliance checks performed by staff within the jurisdiction of the Plumbing License Law to determine whether plumbing work that was previously performed, is currently being performed, or will be performed: was, is, or will be in compliance with the Plumbing License Law and Board Rules.

Purpose: This measure is compared with the number of complaints investigated to determine the workload and output of Investigators.

Data Source: Each Board representative maintains data on the number of compliance checks performed in an automated format and submits the data to the Director of Enforcement. The Director of Enforcement compiles and verifies the data and forwards the report to the Director of Financial Operations. The report is maintained by the Director of Financial Operations as part of the backup for the specific performance measure.

Methodology: The total number of compliance checks performed is provided in the generated report.

Data Limitations: Complaints requiring extensive investigation by Investigators may decrease the amount of time available and therefore decrease the number of compliance checks performed.

Calculation Method: Cumulative

New Measure: No

Target Attainment: Higher than Target

Percentage Measure: No

Number of Individuals Contacted During Compliance Checks for Licenses and Registrations (NON-KEY)

Definition: The total number of individuals verbally contacted by staff during compliance checks to determine whether individuals are licensed or registered and working in compliance with the Plumbing License Law and Board Rules.

Purpose: The measure is reflective of the number of individuals engaged in performing and inspecting plumbing work during the reporting period and is used to determine the work output of Investigators.

Data Source: Each Investigator maintains data on the number of individuals contacted during compliance checks in an automated format and submits the data to the Director of Enforcement. The Director of Enforcement generates a report, verifies the data and forwards the report to the Director of Financial Operations. The report is verified and maintained by the Director of Financial Operations as part of the backup for the specific performance measure.

Methodology: The total number of individuals contacted by staff during compliance checks is provided in the generated report.

Data Limitations: Whenever the number of complaints requiring investigation by Investigators substantially increases, the amount of time available for compliance checks is reduced.

Calculation Method: Cumulative

New Measure: No

Target Attainment: Higher than Target

Percentage Measure: No

Number of Continuing Professional Education (CPE) Monitored (NON-KEY)

Definition: The total number of continuing professional education (CPE) courses monitored for compliance by Board personnel.

Purpose: This measure is used to document the number of continuing professional education (CPE) courses monitored for compliance with Board rules by Board personnel. The Board uses this number to determine and ensure that CPE courses are conducted in a fair and equitable manner across the State and ensures that each education provider complies and offers the required number of hours and materials to attendees.

Data Source: Each Investigator submits data on the number of continuing professional education (CPE) courses monitored for compliance in an automated format to the Director of Enforcement. The Director of Enforcement generates the report, verifies the data and forwards the report to the Director of Financial Operations. The report is verified and maintained by the Director of Financial Operations as part of the backup for the specific performance measure.

Methodology: The total number of continuing professional education (CPE) courses monitored is provided in the generated report.

Data Limitations: The workload of the agency in other areas may take priority and not allow for as many continuing professional education (CPE) courses to be monitored as desired.

Calculation Method: Cumulative

New Measure: No

Target Attainment: Higher than Target

Percentage Measure: No

Number of Investigations Conducted (KEY)

Definition: The total number of investigations conducted by Enforcement staff.

Purpose: This measure is a workload and work output measure to document the number of complaints requiring investigations. It is important to note that all complaints received are investigated by staff. Complaints may be investigated and resolved without an investigation conducted in the field.

Data Source: The Director of Enforcement generates a report from the VERSA computer application/Regulatory Database system of the number of investigations completed during the reporting period. The Director of Enforcement verifies the data, prepares the report and forwards it to the Director of Financial Operations. The report is verified and maintained by the Director of Financial Operations as part of the backup for the specific performance measure.

Methodology: The total number of investigations conducted is provided in the generated report.

Data Limitations: The number of investigations conducted is directly related to the number of complaints received. If the number of complaints received significantly decreases, the number of investigations conducted would also decrease.

Calculation Method: Cumulative

New Measure: No

Target Attainment: Higher than Target

Percentage Measure: No

Number of Complaints Resolved (KEY)

Definition: The total number of complaints resolved during the reporting period.

Purpose: The measure shows the workload associated with resolving complaints.

Data Source: The Director of Enforcement generates a report from the VERSA computer application/Regulatory Database system for the number of complaints resolved within the reporting

period. The Director of Enforcement verifies the data and prepares the report, then forwards it to the Director of Financial Operations. The report is verified and maintained by the Director of Financial Operations as part of the backup for the specific performance measure.

Methodology: The total number of complaints during the reporting period which the Enforcement Committee has reviewed and determined that a violation has occurred and appropriate sanctions have been recommended or the Enforcement Committee has determined the complaint is without merit. All complaints require investigation, some more extensive than others.

Data Limitations: Complexity of the complaints may decrease the number of complaints resolved during the reporting period. When the agency utilizes staff from the Enforcement department to assist with increased workloads in the examination, licensing and registration processes, the number of complaints resolved may decrease because of the reallocation of Enforcement staff.

Calculation Method: Cumulative

New Measure: No

Target Attainment: Higher than Target

Percentage Measure: No

Number of Reprimands Issued and Licenses or Registrations Revoked, Suspended or Denied (NON-KEY)

Definition: The total number of individuals who were issued reprimands, citations, or administrative penalties, or had their license or registration revoked, suspended or denied.

Purpose: This measure indicates how effectively and fairly the agency enforces the Plumbing License Law and Board Rules.

Data Source: The Director of Enforcement generates a report from the VERSA computer application/Regulatory Database system that includes the number of complaints that had final action resulting in a reprimand, citation or administrative penalty, or where a license or registration was revoked, suspended, or denied. The Director of Enforcement generates the report and verifies the data. The report is verified and maintained by the Director of Financial Operations as part of the backup for the specific performance measure.

Methodology: The total number of complaints resulting in disciplinary action is provided in the generated report.

Data Limitations: The agency dispenses fair and appropriate disciplinary action for violations of the Plumbing License Law and Board Rules. However, the agency has no control over how many individuals choose to violate the Plumbing License Law and Board Rules.

Calculation Method: Cumulative

New Measure: No

Target Attainment: The desire is that fewer individuals will choose to violate the Plumbing License Law or Board Rules, resulting in a lower than target measure. However, a higher than target measure indicates that the Agency is dispensing fair and appropriate disciplinary actions for violations.

Percentage Measure: No

Number of Hearings Held by the State Office of Administrative Hearings (NON-KEY)

Definition: The total number of hearings held by the State Office of Administrative Hearings (SOAH) to resolve alleged violations of the Plumbing License Law.

Purpose: The purpose of the measure is to determine the number of complaints that are unable to be resolved with administrative penalties issued or through Agreed Final Orders and how many are required to be forwarded to the SOAH. This is important for strategic planning purposes.

Data Source: The Director of Enforcement gathers the data which includes data from a report issued by the State Office of Administrative Hearings (SOAH) that includes the number of complaints heard at the SOAH during the reporting period. The Director of Enforcement verifies the report and forwards it to the Director of Financial Operations. The report is verified and maintained by the Director of Financial Operations as part of the backup for the specific performance measure.

Methodology: The total number of hearings before the State Office of Administrative Hearings (SOAH) is provided in the generated report.

Data Limitations: The Board has no control over the number of respondents who refuse to agree to the terms of an Agreed Final Order or Board decision and subsequently choose to request a hearing before the State Office of Administrative Hearings (SOAH).

Calculation Method: Cumulative

New Measure: No

Target Attainment: Lower than Target

Percentage Measure: No

EFFICIENCY MEASURES:

Average Time for Complaint Resolution (NON-KEY)

Definition: The average length of time (in months) to resolve a complaint, for all complaints resolved during the reporting period.

Purpose: The measure shows the agency's efficiency in resolving complaints.

Data Source: The Director of Enforcement generates a report from the VERSA computer application/Regulatory Database system that calculates the average time from the date the complaint is received to the date the complaint is resolved for all complaints resolved during the reporting period. The report is verified and forwarded to the Director of Financial Operations who maintains the report as part of the backup for the specific performance measure.

Methodology: The VERSA computer application/Regulatory Database system calculates the average time from the date the complaint is received to the date the complaint is resolved for all complaints resolved during the reporting period. All complaints require some degree of investigation.

Data Limitations: Complexity of the complaint may increase the average time for complaint resolution.

Calculation Method: Non-cumulative

New Measure: No

Target Attainment: Lower than Target

Percentage Measure: No

EXPLANATORY MEASURES:

Percentage of Unlicensed Plumbers and Unregistered Individuals Monitored During Compliance Checks (NON-KEY)

Definition: The percentage of individuals who were unlicensed plumbers and/or unregistered individuals divided by the total number of contacts made by Enforcement staff during compliance checks.

Purpose: The measure is useful in determining the level of compliance with the Plumbing License Law and the effectiveness of compliance checks. The total number of licensed plumbers and

unregistered individuals monitored during compliance checks is compared to the total number of individuals checked to estimate industry trends that may be used in strategic planning.

Data Source: Each Investigator gathers and submits data on the number of violations found during compliance checks. The data is maintained in the VERSA computer application/Regulatory Database system. The Director of Enforcement verifies and compiles the data, generates the report, and calculates the percentage. The Director of Enforcement forwards the report to the Director of Financial Operations. The report is verified and maintained by the Director of Financial Operations as part of the backup for the specific performance measure.

Methodology: The total number of individuals who were unlicensed plumbers and/or unregistered individuals, divided by the total number of contacts made by Enforcement staff with licensed and unlicensed plumbers and registered and unregistered individuals during compliance checks.

Data Limitations: This measure is directly affected by the economy and demand for licensed plumbers and registered apprentices working in the plumbing industry.

Calculation Method: Non-cumulative

New Measure: No

Target Attainment: Lower than Target

Percentage Measure: Yes

Percentage of Compliance Checks Found with Violations (KEY)

Definition: The percentage of compliance checks found with violations, divided by the total number of compliance checks performed.

Purpose: The measure is useful in determining the level of compliance with the Plumbing License Law and the effectiveness of compliance checks. This measure is used to estimate industry trends that may be used in strategic planning.

Data Source: Each Investigator gathers and submits the number of violations found during compliance checks. The data is maintained in the VERSA computer application/Regulatory Database system. The Director of Enforcement verifies and compiles the data, generates the report, and calculates the percentage. The Director of Enforcement forwards the report to the Director of Financial Operations. The report is verified and maintained by the Director of Financial Operations as part of the backup for the specific performance measure.

Methodology: The total number of compliance checks with violations is divided by the total number of compliance checks performed.

Data Limitations: This measure is directly affected by the economy and demand for plumbers and apprentices working in the plumbing industry.

Calculation Method: Non-cumulative

New Measure: No

Target Attainment: Lower than Target

Percentage Measure: Yes

Number of Individuals Attending Education Seminars and Training Sessions (NON-KEY)

Definition: The total number of individuals contacted while monitoring continuing professional education (CPE) courses during the reporting period.

Purpose: This measure is used to determine the number of student classroom contacts made by Board personnel during the monitoring of required continuing professional education (CPE) courses.

Data Source: Each Board representative gathers and submits data on the number of attendees contacted while monitoring continuing education courses (CPE). The data is maintained in the VERSA computer application/Regulatory Database system. The Director of Enforcement generates the report, verifies the data and forwards the report to the Director of Financial Operations. The report is verified and maintained by the Director of Financial Operations as part of the backup for the specific performance measure.

Methodology: The total number of individuals contacted who attended continuing professional education (CPE) courses monitored is provided in the generated report.

Data Limitations: The workload of the agency in other areas may take priority and not allow for the desired number of courses to be monitored.

Calculation Method: Non-cumulative

New Measure: No

Target Attainment: Higher than Target

Percentage Measure: No

Number of Complaints Received (NON-KEY)

Definition: The number of complaints received during the reporting period.

Purpose: The intent of this measure is to determine the effectiveness of the Board's enforcement, public awareness and continuing professional education programs.

Data Source: The Director of Enforcement generates and verifies a report from the VERSA computer application/Regulatory Database system for the number of complaints received during the reporting period. The report is verified and maintained by the Director of Financial Operations as part of the backup for the specific performance measure.

Methodology: The total number of complaints received is provided in the generated VERSA report.

Data Limitations: The Board has no control over factors that influence the number of complaints filed.

Calculation Method: Non-cumulative

New Measure: No

Target Attainment: Lower than target

Percentage Measure: No

Percentage of Complaints Received Against Licensees and Registrants (NON-KEY)

Definition: The percentage of complaints received against licensees and registrants is divided by the total number of complaints received.

Purpose: The intent of this measure is to determine the effectiveness of the Board's enforcement, public awareness and continuing professional education programs.

Data Source: The Director of Enforcement generates a report from the VERSA computer application/Regulatory Database system for the number of complaints received during the reporting period. The report indicates the number of complaints against licensees and registrants vs. non-licensees and non-registered individuals. The report is verified and maintained by the Director of Financial Operations as part of the backup for the specific performance measure.

Methodology: The number of complaints against licensees and registrants is divided by the total number of complaints received during the reporting period resulting in a percentage.

Data Limitations: The Board has no control over factors that influence the number of complaints filed.

Calculation Method: Non-cumulative

New Measure: No

Target Attainment: Lower than Target

Percentage Measure: Yes

Number of Jurisdictional Complaints Received (NON-KEY)

Definition: The total number of complaints received during the reporting period that are within the Board's jurisdiction of statutory responsibility.

Purpose: The measure shows the number of jurisdictional complaints, which helps determine agency workload.

Data Source: The Director of Enforcement generates a report from the VERSA computer application/Regulatory Database system for the number of complaints received during the reporting period that were not within the agency's jurisdiction. The report is verified and maintained by the Director of Financial Operations as part of the backup for the specific performance measure.

Methodology: The number of non-jurisdictional complaints received is subtracted from the total number of complaints to determine the number of jurisdictional complaints received.

Data Limitations: The Board has no control over factors that influence the number of complaints filed.

Calculation Method: Non-cumulative

New Measure: No

Target Attainment: Lower than Target

Percentage Measure: No

Percentage of Disciplinary Actions Taken Against Unlicensed and Unregistered Individuals (NON-KEY)

Definition: The percentage of disciplinary actions taken against unlicensed and unregistered individuals during the reporting period.

Purpose: This measure indicates how effectively and fairly the Board enforces the Plumbing License Law and Board Rules.

Data Source: The Director of Enforcement generates a report from the VERSA computer application/Regulatory Database system for the number of disciplinary actions taken during the reporting period. The report shows the number of disciplinary actions taken against both licensees/registrants and non-licensees/non-registered individuals. The report is verified and maintained by the Director of Financial Operations as part of the backup for the specific performance measure.

Methodology: The number of disciplinary actions taken against unlicensed and unregistered individuals is divided by the total number of disciplinary actions taken during the reporting period resulting in a percentage.

Data Limitations: The Board dispenses fair and appropriate disciplinary action for violations of the Plumbing License Law and Board Rules. However, the Board has no control over how many individuals, licensees/registrants and non-licensees/non-registered individuals choose to violate the Plumbing License Law and Board Rules.

Calculation Method: Non-Cumulative

New Measure: No

Target Attainment: The desire is that fewer individuals will choose to violate the Plumbing License Law or Board Rules, resulting in a lower than target measure. However, a higher than target measure indicates that the Agency is dispensing fair and appropriate disciplinary actions for violations.

Percentage Measure: Yes

Strategy A.1.4 - CONSUMER EDUCATION AND PUBLIC AWARENESS

OUTPUT MEASURES:

Number of Continuing Education and Public Awareness Seminars Conducted (NON-KEY)

Definition: The total number of community outreach events, including seminars and industry workshops attended and conducted by Board personnel. These outreach events educate individuals who are securing or providing plumbing services, while encouraging industry participation by advancing and educating those considering the plumbing industry as a career.

Purpose: Provide dedicated and coordinated efforts through community outreach and achieve awareness by the public of the licensing and regulation of plumbers in Texas, and the critical role a properly designed and installed plumbing system plays in safeguarding public health and sanitation. Encourage industry recruitment and help to alleviate industry staffing shortages by promoting the plumbing trade as a prosperous career option and promoting the incentivized career paths for individuals seeking formal education and training. Attend events held at trade schools, middle schools, high schools, community and technical colleges, municipal building and inspection departments, plumbing companies and trade associations.

Data Source: Board personnel submits data on the number of seminars conducted collects the data and submits it to the Education Specialist Supervisor. The Education Specialist Supervisor verifies the data and forwards the report to the Director of Financial Operations. The report is verified and maintained by the Director of Financial Operations as part of the backup for the specific performance measure.

Methodology: The total number of seminars conducted is collected in a formatted report.

Data Limitations: The workload of the Agency in other areas may take priority and not allow for the desired number of seminars to be conducted. The Agency typically receives more requests for seminars than it can provide.

Calculation Method: Cumulative

New Measure: No

Target Attainment: Higher than target

Percentage Measure: No

EXPLANATORY MEASURES:

Number of Individuals Attending Educational and Public Awareness Seminars Conducted (NON-KEY)

Definition: The total number of attendees at community outreach events, including seminars and industry workshops attended and conducted by Board personnel. These outreach events provide and educate individuals who are securing or providing plumbing services, while also encouraging industry participation by advancing and educating those considering the plumbing industry as a career.

Purpose: Provide dedicated and coordinated efforts through community outreach and achieve awareness by the public of the licensing and regulation of plumbers in Texas, and the critical role a properly designed and installed plumbing system plays in safeguarding public health and sanitation. Encourage industry recruitment and alleviate industry staffing shortages by promoting the plumbing trade as a prosperous career option and promoting the incentivized career paths for individuals seeking formal education and training. Attend events held at trade schools, middle schools, high schools, community and technical colleges, municipal building and inspection departments, plumbing companies, and trade associations.

Data Source: Board personnel submits data on the number of individuals attending seminars and submits it to the Education Specialist Supervisor. The Education Specialist Supervisor verifies the data and forwards the report to the Director of Financial Operations. The report is verified and

maintained by the Director of Financial Operations as part of the backup for the specific performance measure.

Methodology: The total number of individuals attending seminars is collected in a formatted report.

Data Limitations: The workload of the agency in other areas may take priority and not allow for the desired number of seminars to be conducted, limiting the number of attendees. The Agency typically receives more requests for seminars than it can provide.

Calculation Method: Non-Cumulative

New Measure: No

Target Attainment: Higher than target

Percentage Measure: No

SCHEDULE C

Texas State Board of Plumbing Examiners Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) Plan

Policy: The Texas State Board of Plumbing Examiners (TSBPE) will establish and implement policies to make good faith efforts to utilize Historically Underutilized Business (HUBs) through the use of a strong procurement plan, in all phases of procurement activities. TSBPE's procurement plan requires a regular search of the Centralized Master Bidders List (CMBL) when planning to buy goods and services. TSBPE will purchase from a HUB vendor to the fullest extent possible.

Goal: TSBPE will make a good faith effort to meet or exceed the utilization of Historically Underutilized Business (HUBs) through the total value of contracts and purchases awarded by the Agency in each of the applicable procurement categories:

FY 2024-25 HUB Goals:

26.0% for Other Services Contracts Category

21.1% for Commodities Contracts Category

Outcome Measure: Percentage of total dollar value of purchasing contracts and subcontracts awarded directly or indirectly to HUBs

Output Measures:

- Number of HUB Contracts and Sub-Contracts Awarded
- Number of HUB Contractors and Sub-Contractors Responding to Bid Proposals
- Dollar Value of HUB Contracts and Sub-Contracts

Plan To Increase Use: TSBPE is committed to the goal of awarding contracts and purchases whenever possible to HUB vendors. Our goal is to ensure that all procurement practices promote the goal of equal access for minority and woman-owned businesses in the State of Texas.

The Agency uses the Centralized Master Bidders List (CMBL) as provided by the Statewide Procurement Division (SPD), which maintains the most updated list of HUB vendors, to identify certified HUB vendors. TSBPE always follows the procurement methods as outlined by the State of Texas Procurement manual, and purchases are made through TxSmartBuy whenever possible.

TSBPE is dedicated to supporting the intent of the HUB program. HUB purchases during fiscal years 2022, 2023 and 2024 indicate both success and commitment to continued compliance with the HUB

program. For the fiscal years 2025 through 2029, TSBPE’s planning will use the same positive strategy. In addition, TSBPE will enhance training to TSBPE staff regarding the importance of the HUB program, the latest HUB-related information, TSBPE HUB statistics and methods of improvement. TSBPE's HUB Coordinator will also work in partnership with other state agency HUB coordinators to recognize and implement best practices for improving our HUB contracting results. As part of the agency’s HUB outreach, staff began attending HUB fairs and conferences across the state in FY 2022, subject to budget constraints.

TSBPE is a small agency of 51 FTEs and therefore has few contracts but will encourage contractors to use HUBs as partners and subcontractors whenever possible. TSBPE will provide potential contractors with reference lists of certified HUBs who may be able to participate in TSBPE contracts. TSBPE will encourage woman and minority-owned business utilization to potential respondents.

TSBPE's percentages consistently exceed the statewide average in the categories where purchases have occurred, with the exception of a few small one-time non-HUB purchases in the Special Trades category.

- **SPECIAL TRADES:** For purchases during Fiscal Year 2022, TSBPE had two one-time non-HUB purchases for \$1,376, and for Fiscal Year 2023 a one-time non-HUB purchase for \$825.

Other than the small Special Trades Purchases mentioned above, TSBPE only had purchases in two categories, Other Services and Commodity Purchasing for both Fiscal Years 2022 and 2023.

- **OTHER SERVICES:** For Fiscal Year 2022, TSBPE had total expenditures of \$190,526, of which \$68,255, or **35.82%**, were with HUB vendors. For Fiscal Year 2023, TSBPE had total expenditures of \$192,325, of which \$89,389, or **46.48%**, were with HUB vendors. The State of Texas statewide goal for both years was 26.00%.
- **COMMODITY PURCHASING:** For Fiscal Year 2022, TSBPE had total expenditures of \$107,937, of which \$25,372, or **23.51%**, were with HUB vendors. For Fiscal Year 2023, TSBPE had total expenditures of \$176,992, of which \$48,642, or **27.48%**, were with HUB vendors. The State of Texas statewide goal for both years was 21.10%.

TSBPE's HUB Coordinator is also the Agency's Chief Financial Officer and Director of Financial Operations. In this capacity, the CFO advises and assists TSBPE's staff in complying with the requirements of the HUB program, and serves in accordance with Texas Government Code, Chapter 2161 and Texas Administrative Code, Title 37, Part 1, Chapter 1, Subchapter U, Rule §1.261.

SCHEDULE F

Texas State Board of Plumbing Examiners

Workforce Plan

General Information: The Texas State Board of Plumbing Examiners (TSBPE) believes that an employee's performance at work has a direct influence on TSBPE's overall performance and can influence the agency's budget. As the State of Texas population continues to increase (estimated to be 30.946 million in 2024), demand for State services has also increased. Currently TSBPE maintains more than **101,108** licenses, registrations, and endorsements within **18** license and registration types.

Budget restrictions, employee caps, hiring freezes and a possible shortage of trained State workers in future years could lead to an inadequate workforce, causing agencies to take longer to meet public service demands. As agencies struggle to fill positions, current employees are required to take on additional responsibilities. When agencies are not adequately staffed, existing State employees may have to work harder and longer hours that can lead to fatigue, increased error rates, loss of productivity, and low morale.

Workforce Skills Critical to the Mission and Goals of TSBPE: Fifteen (15) of the agency's employees, including the Executive Director, Director of Enforcement, Chief Examiner, and all Investigators and Examiners are licensed plumbers. The licensing requirement is critical, in addition to computer and public speaking and communication skills, for these positions. Other administrative skills, common to other agencies, such as State accounting, purchasing, information technology skills, and administrative technical skills, are critical to the support of the agency's mission, goals, and strategies.

FUTURE TSBPE WORKFORCE PROFILE (DEMAND ANALYSIS)

Expected Workforce Changes Driven by Factors Such as Changing Mission, Technology, Work, Workloads, and/or Work Processes: The Board anticipates changes in how it meets the mission for licensing exams with the opening of a new Examination Center in Waco, and a planned exam center in Harlingen along with a mobile unit for the practical exams. In addition, Computer Based Testing is now available in over 40 locations around the State. Due to the continued growth in the Texas economy and the plumbing industry, TSBPE expects its workload will continue to increase and will need additional FTEs to carry out its mission and duties.

Future Workforce Skills Needed: Future workforce skills critical to the mission and goals of the TSBPE are expected to remain about the same. However, to develop new skills related to future needs, additional training is made available as funding allows.

Anticipated Increase in the Number of Employees Needed: Because the population of the state is expected to increase and the economy continues to expand, and based on the current mission of the TSBPE, additional personnel as described in the Board's planned request will be needed.

Critical Functions That Must Be Performed to Achieve the Strategic Plan: Performance of all TSBPE functions, including issuing and renewing licenses, reviewing criminal backgrounds of applicants with criminal convictions, scheduling, administering, and grading a variety of examinations, processing consumer complaints, as well as accounting and human resource functions, is critical to achieving the TSBPE's strategic plan goals.

Anticipated Surplus or Shortage of Skills: The TSBPE is concerned that its ability to attract future employees that possess the needed skills may be impaired by the disparity of salaries between State employees and private industry employees.

STRATEGY FOR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Changes in Organizational Structure: Under the current mission, TSBPE anticipates an increased need for licensed plumbing staff to administer licensing examinations, increase enforcement activities, and provide ongoing training to licensed plumbers statewide.

Retention Programs: TSBPE supports its employees by rewarding merit increases to employees who perform above satisfactory levels, subject to budgetary constraints. Additionally, the agency continually strives to maintain a work environment that allows for flexibility, without compromising productivity or customer service.

Recruitment Plans: To the fullest extent possible, TSBPE will strive to recruit the number of qualified individuals required to carry out the agency's mission, including qualified veterans and persons of minority, disability, and female gender. TSBPE will utilize a wide range of recruitment sources, including but not limited to statewide minority, disability and female organizations, educational institutions, and the Texas Workforce Commission.

Organizational Training, Employee and Career Development: TSBPE provides organizational training, including equal employment opportunity, sexual harassment, and procedural training. TSBPE utilizes cross-training between departments, to enhance the knowledge and skill levels of all employees. TSBPE provides for the cost or reimbursement of training for its employees, when the training is in the best interest of the agency. TSBPE provides training and certification of its

employees in the areas of investigation, purchaser certification, information resource training, financial operations and supplemental plumbing training and certification.

Leadership Development: Cross-training is essential in leadership development for a small agency. Department managers share their experience and knowledge with staff. TSBPE provides leadership training for its department managers, subject to budgetary constraints. The agency also encourages team building.

Succession Planning: All of the factors indicated for organizational training: employee, leadership and career development are essential in planning for succession. The ability to properly compensate the most well-trained individuals is of the utmost importance when developing those employees that show an interest in succession. Additionally, TSBPE also looks for qualified individuals and resources outside of the agency.

Workforce Demographics: Beginning with fiscal year 2024, TSBPE received authority for nine (9) new full-time equivalent (FTE) positions necessary to support a boom in statewide construction, administer fingerprint and background check requirements for licensing of certified plumbers, and additional positions for enforcement, to support an ever-increasing regulated population, expanded examination offerings, and activities to enforce the plumbing statutes and rules.

Employee Turnover and Recruitment of Qualified Employees: The TSBPE enjoys a favorable reputation as a place for employees to work, as reflected in our most recent Survey of Employee Engagement results. However, TSBPE faces the continuing challenge of offering competitive compensation to recruit and retain qualified employees in our investigator, accounting, and procurement positions. Although employee turnover for the TSBPE compares favorably with many State agencies, TSBPE faces the same challenge with an aging workforce as do many other organizations. It is taking longer periods of time to identify, recruit, and hire qualified candidates for some of our positions due to our relatively lower compensation structure in comparison to the private sector.

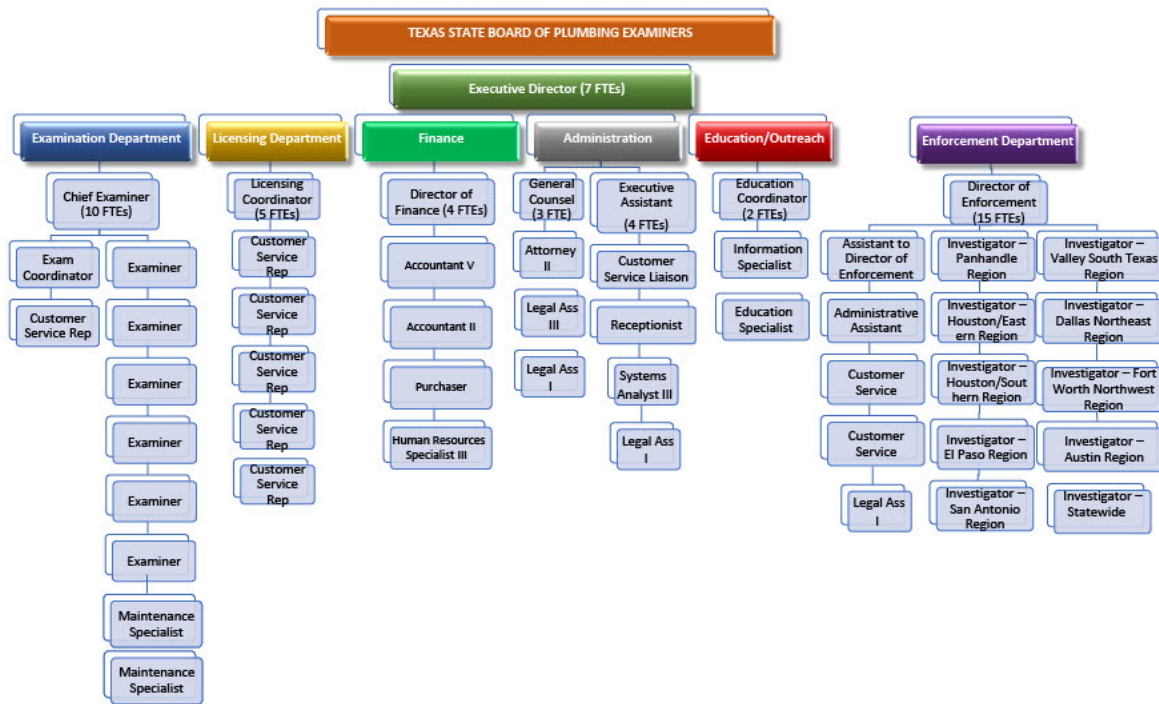
A retirement analysis of TSBPE reveals that eleven (11) employees are eligible to retire within the next two years, or 26.8%. Additionally, fourteen (14) employees are eligible to retire within the next five years, or 34.1%. Workforce planning allows agencies to address issues that drive workforce changes such as the aging workforce and growing retirement eligibility. To prepare, TSBPE's workforce plan includes cross-training of employees to minimize the effects of vacancies created by retirement or attrition. In addition, when filling open positions that require plumbing knowledge, the agency seeks individuals with skills that are valuable now and in the future.

Demographics Information to include Age, Gender, Race and Tenure: Although TSBPE is considered a small state agency (51 FTEs, 41 positions filled as of the date of this report), retaining a mission-critical skilled workforce is imperative to obtain optimum performance. **78.0%** of TSBPE's current workforce report to the Austin location, while **22.0%** work from their home offices and are located throughout the State. Veterans comprise **7.3%** of the TSBPE workforce.

As of May 31, 2024, TSBPE's current workforce of 41 FTEs has the following demographics:

- **Age:** Average agency age = **51.2 years**. Average age in the Examination & Licensing Strategy = **46.9**; Average age in the Inspections & Enforcement Strategy = **53.0**; Average age in the Consumer Education & Public Awareness Strategy = **53.5**; Average age in the Indirect Administration Strategy = **54.9**. Agency ages range from **24 to 72**.
- **Tenure – TSBPE Only Service:** Average for Entire Agency = **4.9 years**; Average for Examination & Licensing Strategy = **4.6 years**; Average for Inspections & Enforcement Strategy = **5.9 years**; Average for Consumer Education & Public Awareness Strategy = **4.2 years**; Average for Indirect Administration Strategy = **6.4 years**.
- **Tenure – Total State of Texas Service:** Average for Entire Agency = **7.7 years**; Average for Examination & Licensing Strategy = **6.1 years**; Average for Inspections & Enforcement Strategy = **7.1 years**; Average for Consumer Education & Public Awareness Strategy = **4.2 years**; Average for Indirect Administration Strategy = **10.3 years**.

Percentage of Workforce Eligible to Retire Within the Next Five Years: **11 employees**, or **26.8%**, could retire within the next two years. It is estimated that **7** of those eligible employees will retire within the next two years.



SURVEY OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT (SEE) RESULTS

The Texas State Board of Plumbing Examiners (TSBPE) participated in the 2023 Survey of Employee Engagement (SEE) administered by the Institute for Organizational Excellence at the University of Texas at Austin. The survey was conducted during January and February 2024. Of the 41 employees who were invited to participate in the survey, 24 employees responded, or 58.5%. Generally, rates higher than fifty percent (50%) suggest soundness of an Agency's health, according to the Institute. High rates signify those employees have an investment in the organization and are willing to contribute towards making improvements within the workplace. With this level of engagement, employees have high expectations from leadership to act upon the survey results.

The overall score is a broad indicator for comparison purposes with other entities. Scores above 350 are desirable; when scores dip below 300, there should be cause for concern. The TSBPE overall score for this survey was **410**, up from an overall score of 371 in 2022.

It appears the overall attitudes of most employees are generally good. TSBPE continues to maintain an experienced workforce with **20%** of employees having tenure of 3 - 10 years. 60% are new hires and have anywhere from 0 to 2 years of experience.

Twelve items crossing several survey constructs were selected to assess the level of engagement among individual employees. For TSBPE, **38%** were Highly Engaged and **29%** were Engaged. Moderately Engaged and Disengaged combine for 33%.

Highly Engaged employees are willing to go above and beyond in their employment. Engaged employees are more present in the workplace and show an effort to help. Moderately Engaged employees are physically present but put minimal effort towards accomplishing the job. Disengaged employees are basically not very disinterested in performing their jobs.

Overall, TSBPE employees believe the work atmosphere to be a safe one where workers are ethical and treat each other with respect. Scoring also indicated that employees understand their roles and consider the organization's reputation to be positive.

The main weakness, as identified in this and in previous surveys, is the employee attitude regarding pay. The consensus of employees is that their pay is not comparable to positions in other organizations or in relation to their job duties. Merit increases have been very limited, not only in Investigator and Examiner positions, but in office staff as well. This lower score suggests that pay is a central concern or reason for discontent.

Employee development, which was a weakness in prior surveys, continues to show marked improvement. Most employees used the available resources to obtain training and increase their skills and value.

Information Systems has been a challenge at the agency due to aging building information technology infrastructure and rapid system changes and deployments.

TSBPE administration has examined the findings of the survey and discussed them with employees for more specific input and prioritized areas for improvement. The administration has also utilized the results of the survey to recognize those areas identified as substantial and relative strengths.

TEXAS STATE BOARD OF PLUMBING EXAMINERS

Report on Customer Service
Submitted May 31, 2024



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Texas State Board of Plumbing Examiners (TSBPE) is committed to providing exemplary service to a diverse clientele, including licensed plumbers, apprentices, inspectors, and the general public. This annual report details findings from our 2024 Customer Service survey, and our plans for continuous improvement in our services in response to those findings.

INVENTORY OF EXTERNAL CUSTOMERS SERVED AND DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES RENDERED

The Texas State Board of Plumbing Examiners (TSBPE) serves a diverse range of external customers, including licensees, registrants, and the general public, all of whom utilize multiple strategies for service engagement. The primary strategies include:

- **Examine and License Plumbers:** This core service area includes processing applications for exams, issuing and renewing licenses, and maintaining registration records. It serves a primary audience of plumbing professionals at various career stages, from apprentices to master plumbers.
- **Inspections and Enforcement:** This area focuses on maintaining industry standards through rigorous compliance checks, handling complaints, and enforcing regulations. The service is crucial for ensuring that licensed professionals adhere to state laws and safety standards.
- **Consumer Education and Public Awareness:** Amidst ongoing public health considerations, TSBPE has leveraged digital platforms to inform and educate the public and potential plumbing professionals about career opportunities and industry standards.
- **Indirect Administration:** This strategy encompasses those interacting with the TSBPE for records requests or software applications.

INFORMATION-GATHERING METHODS UTILIZED IN OBTAINING INPUT FROM CUSTOMERS

To assess and enhance our service delivery, TSBPE employs various methods to gather feedback:

- **Direct Surveys:** Conducted across different service interactions, including licensing exams and renewal processes. These surveys help capture direct feedback from users about their experiences and satisfaction levels.



- **Online Feedback Mechanisms:** Implemented on our website and online platforms to continuously gather unsolicited customer feedback.

INFORMATION-GATHERING METHODS UTILIZED IN OBTAINING INPUT FROM CUSTOMERS

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- **Direct Surveys:** Conducted across different service interactions, including licensing exams and renewal processes. These surveys help capture direct feedback from users about their experiences and satisfaction levels.
- **Online Feedback Mechanisms:** Implemented on our website and online platforms to continuously gather unsolicited customer feedback.

SURVEY RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Survey Distribution and Response

Distribution:

- **Examination:** 180
- **License/Renewals:** 180
- **Administration:** 48,977
- **TOTAL DISTRIBUTED:** 49,337

Response:

- 844 completed surveys were received

Overall response rate: 1.7%



Customer Satisfaction Breakdown:

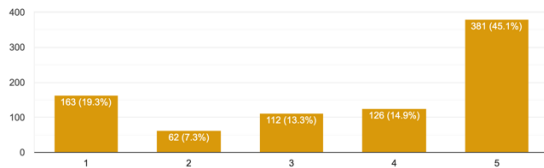
- Respondents showed strong agreement in the effectiveness and clarity of communications.
- Inquiry response time and inquiry resolution time both are clear areas for potential improvement, reflecting a need for enhanced responsiveness and transparency.

LEVELS OF CUSTOMER-DETERMINED SERVICE QUALITY

Responses demonstrated a high level of satisfaction across several dimensions, including:

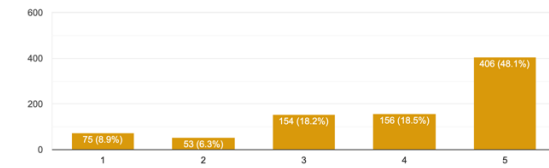
Overall Satisfaction

Overall, I am satisfied with the services I received and my experience with TSBPE.
844 responses



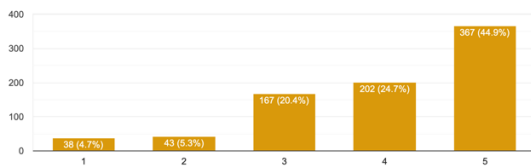
Staff Assistance

The staff members are courteous, knowledgeable, and demonstrated willingness to assist.
844 responses



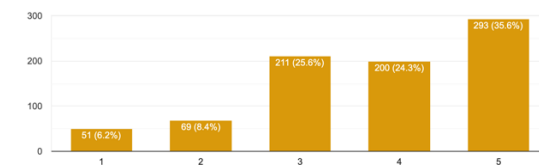
Website Accuracy

The information on the new TSBPE website is accurate.
817 responses



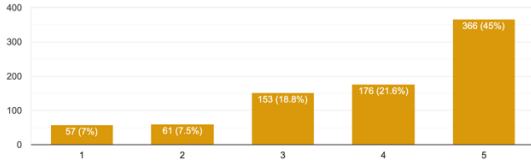
Website Organization

The recently redesigned TSBPE website is easy to use and well organized.
824 responses



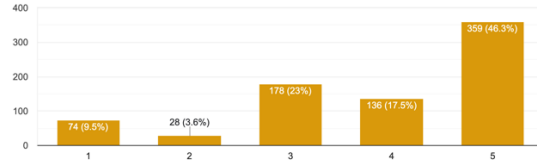
Website Contact Info Accessibility

I was able to find contact information on the new TSBPE website.
813 responses



Accuracy of Printed Info

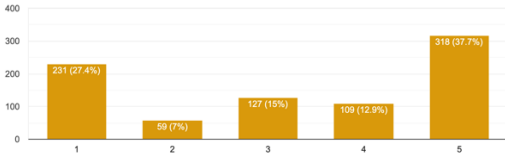
The printed information was clear, understandable, and accurate.
775 responses



The survey highlighted also uncovered two key areas for improvement, both relating to response time:

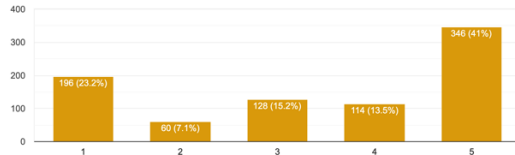
Inquiry Response Time

My telephone call or email inquiry was answered in a reasonable amount of time.
844 responses



Inquiry Resolution Time

The issue I raised with my inquiry was solved in a reasonable amount of time.
844 responses



PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS

Outcome Measures:

- Overall Satisfaction with Services Received:
- Identified Ways to Improve Service Delivery:

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The TSBPE acknowledges the insights gained from the customer service survey and is committed to addressing areas for improvement and maintaining high standards of service delivery to ensure the satisfaction of all stakeholders involved.



APPENDIX 10. CERTIFICATION OF COMPLIANCE WITH CYBERSECURITY TRAINING



CERTIFICATE

Agency Name

Texas State Board of Plumbing Examiners

Pursuant to the Texas Government Code, Section 2056.002(b)(12), this is to certify that the agency has complied with the cybersecurity training required pursuant to the Texas Government Code, Sections 2054.5191 and 2054.5192.

Chief Executive Officer or Presiding Judge

Handwritten signature of Lisa G. Hill in blue ink.

Signature

Lisa G. Hill

Printed Name

Executive Director

Title

6/1/24

Date

Board or Commission Chair

Handwritten signature of Frank S. Denton in blue ink.

Signature

Frank S. Denton

Printed Name

Board Chair

Title

6/1/24

Date



**TEXAS STATE BOARD
OF PLUMBING EXAMINERS**

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