



## Idaho Division of Occupational & Professional Licenses

Brad Little – Governor

Russell Barron – Division Administrator



## Strategic Plan 2025-2028



## Administrator's Message



The Division of Occupational and Professional Licenses (DOPL) was created with Governor Little's Executive Order 2020-10 on June 3, 2020, and was recognized and implemented by the Legislature on July 1, 2021 as a new umbrella organization to provide services to 48 Boards and Commissions, 3 important Safety Programs, and 8 Advisory Committees. It is a privilege to serve as the Administrator for this Division.

All Boards, Commissions, and Programs provide important services to Idaho professionals, which have an impact on industries and business. These services contribute to a healthy economy and keep patients, consumers, and the public safe. Bringing these entities into one organization results in services being provided more efficiently and effectively. We will continue to align rules and policies where possible, as well as streamline operations by maximizing the use of technology and utilizing value-driven processes.

A reorganization of this magnitude is a journey, and this Strategic Plan helps guide us through the transition and beyond. We are creating a culture built on respect for the professionals performing this important work throughout Idaho and providing them exceptional customer service.

Sincerely,

RUSSELL S. BARRON, MBA CPM  
DIVISION ADMINISTRATOR



## Division History

In the 2020 Idaho Legislative Session, HB 318 was signed into law codifying the creation of a new Division of Occupational and Professional Licenses from the former Bureau of Occupational Licenses and providing the Governor authority to reorganize Programs and Boards within the Department of Self-Governing Agencies as needed to create an orderly arrangement in the administration of government.

Pursuant to title 67-2601(2)(h), Idaho Code, the Division of Occupational and Professional Licenses exists within the Department of Self-Governing Agencies. On June 3, 2020, Governor Little issued Executive Order 2020-10 reorganizing 11 agencies into one. The original 48 Boards and Commissions, 3 Safety Programs, and 8 Advisory Committees were organized within the following four Bureaus:

1. Building, Construction, and Real Estate;
2. Occupational Licenses;
3. Health Professions; and
4. Administration

Executive Order 2020-10 tasked the Division Administrator to establish a plan to coordinate the move of Boards assigned to DOPL to a central office location so that Idahoans may access a one-stop shop for state licenses. In addition, it tasked the Division Administrator to establish a plan to seek efficiencies from the combined organization including, but not limited to, the consolidation of information technology systems across Boards where practicable.

In the 2021 Idaho Legislative Session, the restructuring of 11 agencies encompassing 48 Boards and Commissions into DOPL was enshrined into Idaho Code with the signature of three regulatory framework bills:

- SB 1024 – Vesting the Division hiring authority in the Division Administrator
- SB 1026 – Changing the statute references of previous self-governing agencies to their new name, the Division of Occupational and Professional Licenses
- SB 1056 – Detailing the duties of the Division Administrator and transitioning all Boards and Commissions to the ‘Occupational Licenses Fund’

The Idaho Legislature has approved the following changes since DOPL’s inception:

- 2021 – Combining the Architects Board with the Landscape Architects
- 2022 – Creating a new Board called the Naturopathic Health Care Board
- 2024 – Merging the Board of Midwifery with the Board of Nursing; combining the Board of Dietitians, Athletic Training Board, Respiratory Therapy Board, and the Board of Naturopathic Medicine into one Allied Health Advisory Board, which serves under the Board of Medicine

As of July 1, 2024, there are 45 Boards and Commissions, 3 Safety Programs, and 9 Advisory Committees.



## Strategic Plan 2025-2028 Overview

### Mission, Vision, Core Values

- Mission – Consumer protection and public safety
- Vision – Right touch regulation
- Core Values – Quality customer service, Balanced and fair regulation, Integrity, and Respect

### Strategic Goal 1 – Lead through transparency and exceptional customer service

- Objective 1.1 – Use administrative and fiscal data to implement processes to optimize Division operational efficiencies and cost savings measures
- Objective 1.2 – Optimize licensure technology to streamline application processes for simple and fast licensing and permitting for Idaho professionals
- Objective 1.3 – Strengthen the financial situation of each Board, Commission, and Program by attaining and maintaining a healthy cash balance between 100% - 125% of annual expenses, while maintaining the lowest fees possible

### Strategic Goal 2 – Public protection through consistent enforcement

- Objective 2.1 – Deliver timely resolution of complaints and investigations
- Objective 2.2 – Provide effective enforcement through accountability mechanisms
- Objective 2.3 – Uphold effective pathways for alternative dispute resolution
- Objective 2.4 – Organize legal services to provide consistent advice and timely enforcement

### Strategic Goal 3 – Make recognizable and measurable reform through permissionless innovation

- Objective 3.1 – Prevent the accumulation of costly, ineffective, and outdated regulations through applying zero-based regulation to all the Division rule chapters
- Objective 3.2 – Limit regulatory capture
- Objective 3.3 – Collaborate on statute reform with the Idaho Legislative Occupational and Professional Licensure Review Committee (OPLR)



## Mission

### Consumer protection and public safety.

- We are dedicated to protecting consumers and ensuring public safety through appropriate licensing processes and preserving the integrity of the marketplace by promoting a fair and competitive business environment in Idaho.

## Outcome-Based Vision

### Right touch regulation

- At DOPL, we believe in fostering an Idaho in which consumers and service providers partner, forging common successes. With a sharp focus on streamlining and modernizing processes and enhancing end-to-end customer experiences, we strive to advance an environment and regulatory framework where both businesses and consumers are treated fairly, and the economy thrives. Though the Division's makeup of occupational licensing professions is diverse, our shared commitment is unwavering.

## Core Values

### Quality Customer Service

- We strive to ensure that our customers can clearly see our commitment to delivering accurate, helpful, and timely resources, and troubleshoot complex problems.

### Balanced & Fair Regulation

- We are committed to fairness, evidence-based regulation, and procedural justice. We pride ourselves on our consistent, accurate, and equal treatment of all customers, stakeholders, and employees.

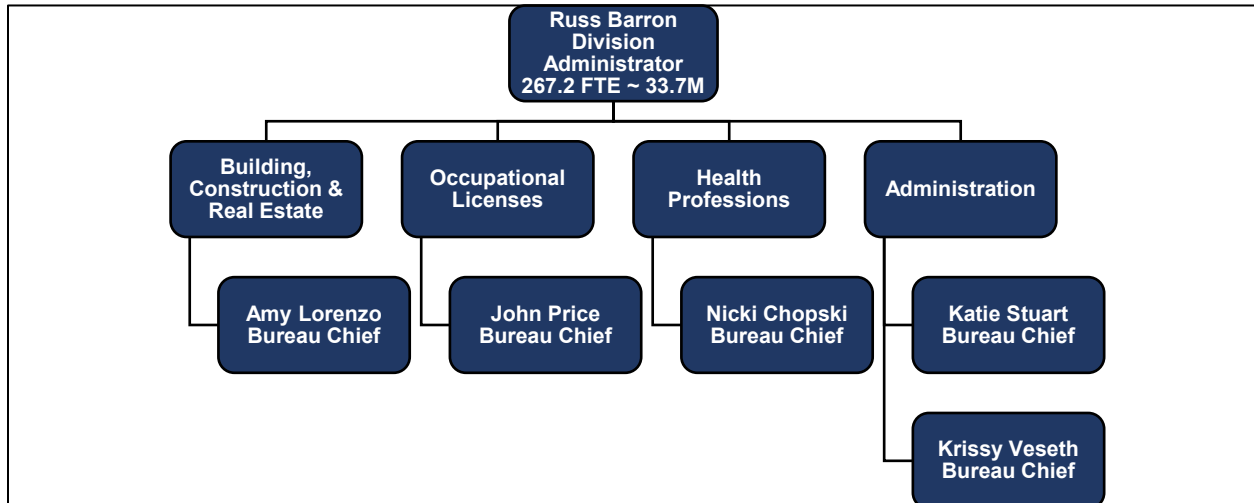
### Integrity

- We seek to demonstrate honesty, fairness, openness and clear boundaries in all our interactions, behaviors and practices within the organization and with our guests, stakeholders and the wider community.

### Respect

- We appreciate and acknowledge the role and contributions of others. We conduct ourselves in a way that shows regard and thoughtfulness to others.

## Organizational Structure



## Key External Factors

Shifting economic, political, social and professional climates that are beyond the Division's control may impact the accomplishment of long-range goals and objectives.

- State legislation that alters or significantly impacts the functions of the Boards and Commissions
- Federal law changes that create marketplace confusion or spur the need for corresponding state action
- Advancements in support staff education and training, creating new synergies for all occupational licensing professionals
- Consumer acceptance and demand of new services and business models
- Private accreditation, credentialing, and education services development, availability, and cost
- Industry, company, and facility policies, liability insurance, and other risk mitigation factors that play a role in regulation of an industry
- Civil and criminal law actions regarding regulated individuals and industries
- Professional ethics and self-restraint in practice and services provided
- Economic conditions within the state are dynamic and constantly evolving, and this can lead to unpredictability in the growth of licensees and registrants
- Technology evolution being faster than regulatory agencies can realistically keep up with regarding rulemaking
- Supply and demand of workforce, including workforce shortages
- Impact of COVID-19 and cost inflation on Division operations
- Interest, engagement, and external influences of stakeholders



## Goals, Objectives, and Performance Measures

### Goal 1: Lead through transparency and exceptional customer service

#### Key External Factors – The Success of Goal 1 Depends Upon

- Licensing system vendor’s capabilities
- Ability and willingness of customers to accept new and improved technology and processes to serve them
- State economic conditions impacting inspection volume

#### Objective 1.1 – Use administrative and fiscal data to implement processes to optimize Division operational efficiencies and cost savings measures

Executive Order 2020-10 tasked the Division administrator to establish a plan to seek efficiencies from the combined organization of all Boards in areas where consistency and uniformity will create quality and expedient services for Idahoans.

#### Performance Measures

**1.1.1** By December 2024, complete implementation of consistent processes across the Division in licensing, investigations, and Board support

**1.1.2** By July 2025, use automated, cadenced, and itemized fiscal reports to implement cost saving measures pertinent to each Board, Commission, and Program

**Benchmarks** – We will track our progress by establishing year-over-year tracking of targeted items, such as an employee engagement survey, that seek to align supervision and processes between the central office and regional offices. We will track customer satisfaction through the number of operational complaints received and through formal and informal feedback from customers. We will evaluate new process implementations through Board and Program financial reports to achieve the overall goal of Board solvency.

#### Objective 1.2 – Optimize licensure technology to streamline application processes for simple and fast licensing and permitting for Idaho professionals

As new professionals enter our state economy, getting qualified professionals licensed quickly and easily means Idaho is a better place for businesses and consumers. DOPL is actively pursuing process changes to accelerate licensing, and we seek continual improvement of those processes to support economic development and a balanced regulatory framework. In addition, simplifying licensure endorsement allows military



families to experience a smoother transition and higher earning potential when they move to Idaho.

### **Performance Measures**

- 1.2.1** By July 2025, implement universal licensure and align endorsement applications and licensing processes for veterans, active military and their spouses across all Division Boards and Commissions
- 1.2.2** By October 2024, create a standardization plan for all Board applications and identify statutes and rules that would need changes to implement the standardization
- 1.2.3** By December 2024, outsource all qualifying examinations across all remaining Boards with a standardized exam to national testing providers, or similar third-party administrators
- 1.2.4** By December 2024, implement a performance dashboard to manage the total application processing time
- 1.2.5** By July 2028, transition all licensees and registrants to a 2-year or more license period
- 1.2.6** By December 2024, implementation of paperless processes for all Division licensing and registration functions
- 1.2.7** By December 2024, complete the full implementation of a new licensing system

**Benchmarks** – We will measure our Division’s progress by year-over-year tracking of targeted items that seek to align application and licensure processes, including standardizing all application forms and providing such forms online, standardizing all renewal processes and providing such processes online, and outsourcing all examinations. We will measure the year-over-year total application processing time. We will establish a baseline percentage of processes that are paperless and track the year-over-year progress for the life of the strategic plan.

### **Objective 1.3 – Strengthen the finances of each Board, Commission, and Program by attaining and maintaining a healthy cash balance between 100% - 125% of annual expenses, while maintaining the lowest fees possible**

DOPL operates on revenue generated from licensing and permitting fees paid by its customers. For various reasons, some Boards and Commissions have a healthy cash balance, while the cash balance of some is significant, and still others do not have a





sufficient cash fund balance. Each Board, Commission, and Program must be solvent, yet not possess an excessive cash balance. We will work with them to reach and maintain the desired amount of cash on hand through various approaches.

### **Performance Measures**

**1.3.1** By November 2024, the Administration Bureau will complete a Board level professional fee analysis, five-year cash balance projections, threshold for fee changes, and guidance document to use as a framework to manage professional licensing fees and cash balances

**1.3.2** By July 2025, implement fee increases, fee reductions, fee holidays, and other strategies to attain cash balances between 30% and 125% by July 2030

**Benchmarks** – We will measure the Division’s progress by establishing a baseline fee analysis and track year-over-year fee data to work towards balancing lower fees and an appropriate dedicated fund balance that keeps the Division whole, and promotes appropriate, healthy cash balances for each Board, Commission, and Program.

## **Goal 2: Public protection through consistent enforcement**

### **Key External Factors – The Success of Goal 2 Depends Upon**

- Peer recovery network vendor capabilities
- Availability and cost of contracting legal services

### **Objective 2.1 – Deliver timely resolution of complaints and investigations**

Every Board and Commission within DOPL receives complaints from consumers, guiding our ability to identify and carry out enforcement against individuals or businesses that are out of compliance with Idaho laws and rules. We pursue timeliness and consistency in our enforcement approach to complaint research and resolution for investigations.

### **Performance Measures**

**2.1.1** By December 2024, define “final decision” on an investigation and ensure responses are sent to respondent within 15 days of that decision

**2.1.2** By December 2024, implement consistent investigative processes across all Bureaus for complaint tracking, intake, processing, response, investigation, closure, or administrative action



**2.1.3** By December 2026, 90% of Board and Commission investigations are closed within 120 days

**Benchmarks** – We will measure our progress for all Boards and Commissions by measuring the number of days that each investigation takes to be resolved, measuring the time it takes for staff to send acknowledgment of receipt on each complaint, measuring the timeliness of prosecuting attorneys, and measuring the number of days for staff to respond to respondents after the final decision on a complaint. We will develop a baseline analysis of disciplinary processes across the Division to use as the framework to drive consistency and efficiency.

## **Objective 2.2 – Provide effective enforcement through accountability mechanisms**

As part of DOPL’s charge to protect consumers, many Boards and Commissions are responsible for ensuring that regulated entities are compliant with Idaho laws and rules. We protect the public from predatory practices and protect at-risk communities through disciplinary enforcement measures.

### **Performance Measures**

**2.2.1** By December 2028, 80% of healthcare prescribers will meet the statutory requirement of checking the prescription drug monitoring program before prescribing opioids or benzodiazepines 100% of the time

**2.2.2** By July 2025, inspections are current for Industrial Safety and Elevator Safety Programs

**2.2.3** By December 2024, 100% of plan review applicants will be notified within 5 business days of plan review results

**2.2.4** By December 2024, the Building, Construction, and Real Estate inspector teams will implement a process to monitor expired permits and enforce compliance for final inspections or extension of permits

**2.2.5** By July 2025, assess and begin implementation of tiered inspector positions for cross-trained inspectors who conduct inspections across multiple disciplines for various Boards or Programs

**Benchmarks** – We will measure our Division progress by tracking the annual percentage of inspections completed, measuring the number of days that it takes staff to notify licensees of each plan review result, and measuring the percentage of development and implementation of a process for monitoring and enforcing the trades permit processes. We will work towards 100% compliance in prescriber utilization of the



prescription drug monitoring program over the lifetime of the strategic plan, and revamp the processes related to obtaining and tracking of wholesaler reported data.

### **Objective 2.3 – Uphold effective pathways for alternative dispute resolution**

Alternative dispute resolution is usually less formal, less expensive, and less time-consuming than a formal hearing, and includes mediation and conciliation. DOPL looks to utilize alternative dispute resolution where appropriate to decrease the time to resolve a case, reduce legal expenditures and achieve more expedient resolutions.

#### **Performance Measures**

**2.3.1** By October 2024, develop an analysis and guidance document for Boards and Commissions that outlines legal disciplinary processes, determines where existing processes are at variance with laws and rules, and proposes process improvements that will increase consistency and reduce cost in the use of legal services to support disciplinary enforcement processes

**2.3.2** By October 2024, the Division will provide training to every Board and Commission regarding enforcement options, including confidential options for discipline, to provide optimal pathways for enforcement and dispute resolution

**2.3.3** By July 2025, implement annual audits of disciplinary cases for consistency of penalties across the Division to ensure fair and equitable corrective action. Using the data from the audit, the Division will adopt a standardized matrix of discipline for common violations (e.g., continuing education violations, practicing on an expired license) to guide Boards and Commissions when imposing disciplinary measures

**2.3.4** By January 2025, investigator teams for each Bureau will perform a substance use disorder data analysis for complaints, informal discipline, and final disciplinary action to determine what Boards and Commissions should be prioritized as a focus for professional recovery network programs

**Benchmarks** – We will measure our Division progress by tracking the percentage of discipline cases resolved through informal pathways and measuring the number of new professions implementing a professional recovery program.



## **Objective 2.4 – Organize legal services to provide consistent advice and timely enforcement**

DOPL Boards and Commissions receive support from attorneys. Currently, general counsel is provided by in-house attorneys, and prosecution counsel is provided by outside contract attorneys. The Division seeks to improve legal processes that lead to timely outcomes.

### **Performance Measures**

**2.4.1** By December 2024, evaluate in-house support staff, such as paralegals or a legal assistant, and implement changes to support efficient Division legal processes

**2.4.2** By July 2025, the Administration Bureau will create consistency and effectiveness in prosecution contract terms and alignment of services provided to the Division

**2.4.3** By July 2025, evaluate and implement enhancements to the debt collection process

**Benchmarks** – We will measure our progress for all Boards and Commissions by measuring the timeliness and consistency of work performed by all legal counsel. We will also measure progress by the increase in percentage of debt collection year over year.

## **Goal 3: Make recognizable and measurable reform through permissionless innovation**

### **Key External Factors – The Success of Goal 3 Depends Upon**

- Keeping the focus on public safety
- Strategic planning meetings to align the Boards and Commissions around direction and framework before getting into the rulemaking or agency legislation details
- Utilizing a zero-based regulation model for rulemaking and agency legislation
- Placing the burden of proof on those advocating to keep unnecessary regulations
- Not judging policy by personal interests
- Not treating every issue as brand new and learning from the experiences of other professions or jurisdictions
- Coordinating efforts with legislative committees for all statute and rule changes



### **Objective 3.1 – Prevent the accumulation of costly, ineffective, and outdated regulations through applying zero-based regulation to all the Division rule chapters**

Though our primary responsibility is to protect the public, we also have a duty to treat the industries we regulate fairly and in a way that doesn't create unnecessary administrative burdens or "red-tape." Permissionless innovation refers to the notion that experimentation with new technologies and business models should generally be permitted by default. Unless a compelling case can be made that a new invention or business model will bring serious harm to individuals, innovation should be allowed to continue unabated and problems, if they develop at all, can be addressed later. We strive to set clear expectations and collaborate with regulated entities so that regulatory processes don't cause unnecessary delays or barriers in their ability to do business.

The 2019 Red Tape Reduction Act (Executive Order 2019-02) required state agencies to review their administrative rules to identify costly, ineffective, duplicative, or outdated regulations. In January 2020, Governor Little repealed Executive Order 2019-02 and issued Executive Order No. 2020-01, Zero-Based Regulation, requiring agencies to justify every regulation they promulgate. Moving forward, every rule chapter in effect will be reviewed by DOPL, according to a staggered, 5-year schedule. About 20% of rule chapters will be reviewed annually. The first group of Boards and Commissions began their Zero-Based Regulation review in fiscal year 2022.

#### **Performance Measures**

**3.1.1** By July 2025, ensure all Boards, Commissions, and Programs have completed zero-based rulemaking

**Benchmarks** – We will measure our progress by the number of Boards, Commissions, and Programs that have completed zero-based rulemaking. We will also track the number of page reductions in administrative rule chapters year over year.

### **Objective 3.2 – Limit regulatory capture**

Because regulatory Boards and Commissions are of necessity intimately involved in the affairs of a particular industry, the Board members and staff are exposed to strong interest group pressures. Regulatory capture can occur when special interests co-opt regulatory agencies or Board members to further their own ends or prevent the inconvenience of competition. We seek to always distinguish between the protection of the profession versus the protection of the consumer in all Division legislation and rulemaking efforts. We recognize regulatory capture in occupational licensing can lead



to increased consumer prices, limiting competition, or undermining innovation that could better serve the public.

### **Performance Measures**

**3.2.1** By July 2025, the Administration Bureau will review Idaho Code and administrative rules for all Boards and Commissions and develop a Division wide report to be delivered to the Governor, making specific evidence-based recommendations to reduce regulatory capture among Idaho occupational licensing Boards and Commissions

**3.2.2** By July 2025, through zero-based regulation, each Board and Commission will work towards an evidence-based approach to harmonizing professional scope of practice with the education, training, and practice experience of the professionals they regulate – transitioning to a standard of care model for scope of practice, supervision, and delegation

**3.2.3** By July 2025, through zero-based regulation, each Board and Commission will work towards removing occupational licensing barriers to entry, endorsement, reciprocity, renewal, and reinstatement of the professionals they regulate

**3.2.4** By July 2025, through zero-based regulation, each Board and Commission will work towards being technology agnostic in education, practice, and supervision

**Benchmarks** – We will measure our progress for all Boards and Commissions by year-over-year of tracking targeted items that seek to align Board processes and prevent regulatory capture. For example, we will determine and track which professions regulate via standard of care versus bright line regulation. We will measure which professions regulate by Board approved processes versus through a marketplace solution for the same process seen in another similar profession. We will track which Boards place limitations on the use and function of technology for education, practice, and supervision.

### **Objective 3.3 – Collaborate on statute reform with the Idaho Legislative Occupational and Professional Licensure Review Committee (OPLR)**

Through SB 1351 (2020) and SB1084 (2021), the Idaho Legislature has created the Occupational and Professional Licensure Review Committee and the framework for both sunrise and sunset reviews for occupational licensing. The new framework for reform allows the Division to partner with the legislature to create a cadenced process that sets specific dates that a Board, Commission, or function of Division will terminate



unless the legislature passes new legislation to continue. So, the “sun sets” on that part of the Division if it is not reauthorized. In fact, the term "sunset legislation" was originally coined in Colorado in the 1970s as a response to problems with regulatory Boards, regulatory efficiencies, and government transparency. The sunset review process will generally question the need for regulation to protect the public. If regulation is determined to be needed, the sunset review will look for the least restrictive level of regulation consistent with the public interest and protection. We recognize the value of statute reform and a review process to determine whether restrictions that were once justified on consumer protection grounds, accomplished those goals, or are still needed today. As an agency comprised of regulatory Boards and Commissions, we must be held accountable for our successes and failures, and implementation of a sunrise and sunset review process will act as a beneficial feedback loop that produces better results and performance.

### **Performance Measures**

**3.3.1** Beginning July 2023, annually participate in the legislative sunset review process for each Division Board and Commission practice act on a ten-year rotating basis

**3.3.2** Beginning July 2023, annually participate with the legislature on any new sunrise application requesting that a new lawful profession or occupational group that is not licensed become licensed

**3.3.3** Beginning July 2023, annually participate with the legislature to establish and implement a sunset date on each Division Board and Commission practice act on a ten-year rotating basis

**Benchmarks** – We will measure our progress by the number of Boards and Commissions that complete the statute review process with the legislative Occupational and Professional Licensing Review Committee each year.