



## **TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF LICENSING AND REGULATION**

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November 16, 2016

Mr. Ken Levine, Director  
Sunset Advisory Commission  
P.O. Box 13066  
Austin, TX 78711-3066

Dear Mr. Levine,

This letter is to provide the Sunset Advisory Commission with feedback from the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR) regarding recommendations of the November 2016 Sunset staff report regarding the Texas State Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors, Texas State Board of Examiners of Marriage and Family Therapists, and Texas State Board of Social Worker Examiners, all of which are administratively attached to the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS). We appreciate the continuing confidence you and your staff have placed in us by recommending these three programs be transferred from DSHS to our agency. We have worked to identify reasons why the recommendations can be fully implemented by TDLR as well as key challenges regarding the recommendations. Attached is a background about our agency and its operations.

### **KEY POINTS SUPPORTING SUNSET STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS**

***Alignment with TDLR's Mission.*** Our expertise is in managing and developing a wide range of programs and making them work due to our functional alignment business model. Sunset Recommendation 1.1, proposing to transfer three DSHS programs to TDLR, fits our mission to honor the trust of all Texans, safeguard the public, and provide a fair and efficient licensing and regulatory environment at the lowest possible cost. In addition, the recommendation is consistent with our growing responsibility for managing a portfolio of health licensing programs previously administered by DSHS. Programs with a history of neglect or ongoing problems will find that TDLR is small enough to pay close attention to their needs, yet large enough to offer the experience, expertise, and services to make the programs more efficient and effective.

***TDLR's Agility and Flexibility.*** One of TDLR's greatest strengths is our size. We are a small agency, with big responsibilities that we take very seriously. While we currently serve nearly 714,000 licensees (and do so efficiently and capably) we do so with 430 employees statewide. We are not a large government bureaucracy; we are lean, nimble, and responsive to the changing needs of Texas lawmakers, our licensees, consumers, and the public. Our flexibility and functional alignment model has proven during the recent transfer of DSHS health licensing programs that we have the capacity to absorb certain types of licensing programs without disruption and offer

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*Helen Callier – Kingwood, Texas*

*Rick Figueroa – Brenham, Texas*

*Catherine Rodewald – Frisco, Texas*

*Ravi Shah – Carrollton, Texas*

*Deborah A. Yurco – Austin, Texas*

licensees the level of services they deserve by removing high fees, licensing delays, burdensome rules, and long enforcement timeframes.

***TDLR's Experience with Health and Other Program Transfers.*** TDLR has achieved excellent results from consolidating a range of license-based programs into TDLR's existing business model. In 2015, the Legislature initiated a two-phase transfer of 13 DSHS health licensing programs to TDLR through Senate Bill 202. TDLR now operates seven health licensing programs, having successfully completed the Phase I transfer of the programs from DSHS with no disruption to licensees or the public. By the end of 2019, TDLR and DSHS will complete the Phase II transfer of six additional health licensing programs. TDLR and DSHS continue to work closely and have developed the relationships and processes needed for any additional transfers. Programs transferring in Phase I and Phase II are listed below.

*Phase I* – Athletic Trainers, Dietitians, Dyslexia Therapists and Practitioners, Hearing Instrument Fitters and Dispensers, Midwives, Orthotists and Prosthetists, and Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists (32,420 combined licensees).

*Phase II* – Code Enforcement Officers, Laser Hair Removal, Massage Therapists, Mold Assessors and Remediators, Offender Education Providers, and Sanitarians (44,304 combined licensees).

In 2015, the Legislature transferred the regulation of Driver Education Schools, Driving Safety Course Providers, Driving Safety Schools and Instructors from the Texas Education Agency/Education Service Center Region 13 to TDLR. The bill also transferred the Parent Taught Driver Education program from the Texas Department of Public Safety to us. TDLR has completed the program transfers and our Driver Education and Safety program now provides services to 3,956 combined licensees.

The Legislature transferred the Towing Program to us in 2007 from the Texas Department of Transportation, where the program lacked oversight, had no inspection authority, and was unresponsive to licensee's needs. Today, the Towing, Vehicle Storage Facility, and Booting programs (39,838 combined licensees) are streamlined and well-run, earning TDLR trust and respect from the towing industry and the motoring public.

The Barbering and Cosmetology programs came to us in 2005 from independent commissions that were poorly managed and financially challenged. Using our functional alignment model, we have improved services, streamlined the licensing process, lowered fees, and strengthened enforcement for these programs, while keeping pace with the rapid growth of the licensee population (306,138 combined licensees).

***TDLR's Partnership with Health and Industry Professionals.*** TDLR's success in consolidating programs is a direct result of the communication and cooperation between subject matter experts and our program professionals to create a robust compliance program, regardless of the profession or industry. We listen to the people we regulate, and we count on them to share best practices so we can have a better-informed regulatory structure. We have a proven track record of involving subject matter experts and professionals in the beginning of any new process or transfer so that

lines of communication are established early and relationships can grow over time. Specifically, for programs transferred from DSHS during Phase I, we have worked closely with stakeholders, including health professional associations and advisory boards, to solicit input and develop health-related standard of care rules.

***TDLR Has Recruited Talented Employees.*** Another key to TDLR’s success in overhauling programs transferred to us is recruiting and retaining talented employees from those programs so they can continue working with the program using their valuable knowledge and established industry relationships. With recent health licensing program transfers, TDLR has hired a number of former DSHS employees who have worked closely in the development and implementation of key inspection and compliance elements for the programs. We’ve developed our approach of bringing over program experts and trained professionals based on our long experience transferring other programs including Driver Education and Safety, Cosmetology, Barber, Property Tax Professional, and Towing programs.

***TDLR Has An Experienced Education and Examination Division.*** The Education and Examination Division is responsible for developing continuing education and pre-license education requirements for a wide variety of TDLR programs. Our Education and Examination staff ensures that schools and continuing education providers comply with our laws and rules by evaluating and approving schools, providers and courses, and by providing technical support and assistance to applicants. The Division uses educational reporting software to simplify how licensees and providers report completed pre-license and licensing continuing education courses. Given concerns raised about the level of continuing education oversight for social workers, marriage and family therapists, and licensed professional counselors, we feel that our existing education and examination model makes TDLR an ideal fit.

***TDLR Uses Independent Advisory Boards.*** TDLR’s Commission appointed advisory board structure allows for independence in judgment and review of license applications and consumer complaints by our agency while providing robust protection from industry conflict of interest or favoritism. At the same time, our advisory board members work closely with TDLR leadership and staff to establish examination, education, ethics, and practice standards and to provide our staff with industry perspective. TDLR has created an advisory board process which is completely inclusive; we listen closely to the advice and opinions of our board members. TDLR’s advisory board model is consistent with Sunset’s preferred licensing model for “advisory committees.” While we understand some may have concerns about moving away from an independent board governance structure, it has been our experience that the Advisory Board model has been successful in promoting effectiveness, transparency, and independence.

***TDLR Can Manage the Transfer.*** TDLR has worked closely with the Sunset Commission and DSHS on the transfer of 13 health licensing programs, and will continue to do so if the Legislature directs transfer of the licensing programs for social workers, marriage and family therapists, and licensed professional counselors. Based on our experience, a controlled-growth, phased-in approach works best, and allows us to pay careful attention to each program as it comes over and give each of them the attention they deserve and will require. Our goal is to integrate programs into TDLR’s successful business model, which provides licensees efficient and streamlined

services they deserve at the lowest cost possible. The combined population of programs allows for greater economy of scale using our shared-services model and presents a favorable revenue-to-cost ratio.

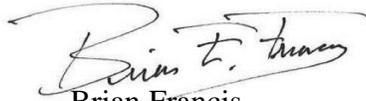
### **KEY CHALLENGES FACING TDLR WITH RECOMMENDATION 1.1**

*What TDLR Will Need To Succeed.* To implement these changes TDLR will need:

- Support, involvement, and cooperation from the affected professionals and associations to develop, plan, and implement the ongoing programs' operation.
- The talent and experience of key DSHS employees currently supporting and serving these professions joining TDLR's team.
- Coordination with the Texas Legislature, the Governor's office, and the Legislative Budget Board to ensure necessary resources and staffing, including timely appropriations for services such as accounting, purchasing, human resources, network and information services, advisory board support, general counsel, and customer service.
- Ongoing communication and collaboration with our colleagues at DSHS, the Health and Human Services Commission, the Department of Information Resources, the Office of the Comptroller, the Texas Facilities Commission, and the Office of Attorney General.
- Continued support from the Texas Legislature to streamline and standardize affected program statutes so they better fit TDLR's regulatory business model.

My staff and I look forward to meeting with you and the Commission in person on December 8-9, 2016 during the Sunset Advisory Commission hearing on the review of the Texas State Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors, Texas State Board of Examiners of Marriage and Family Therapists, and Texas State Board of Social Worker Examiners. Please let me know if and when you need anything from us.

Sincerely,



Brian Francis  
Executive Director

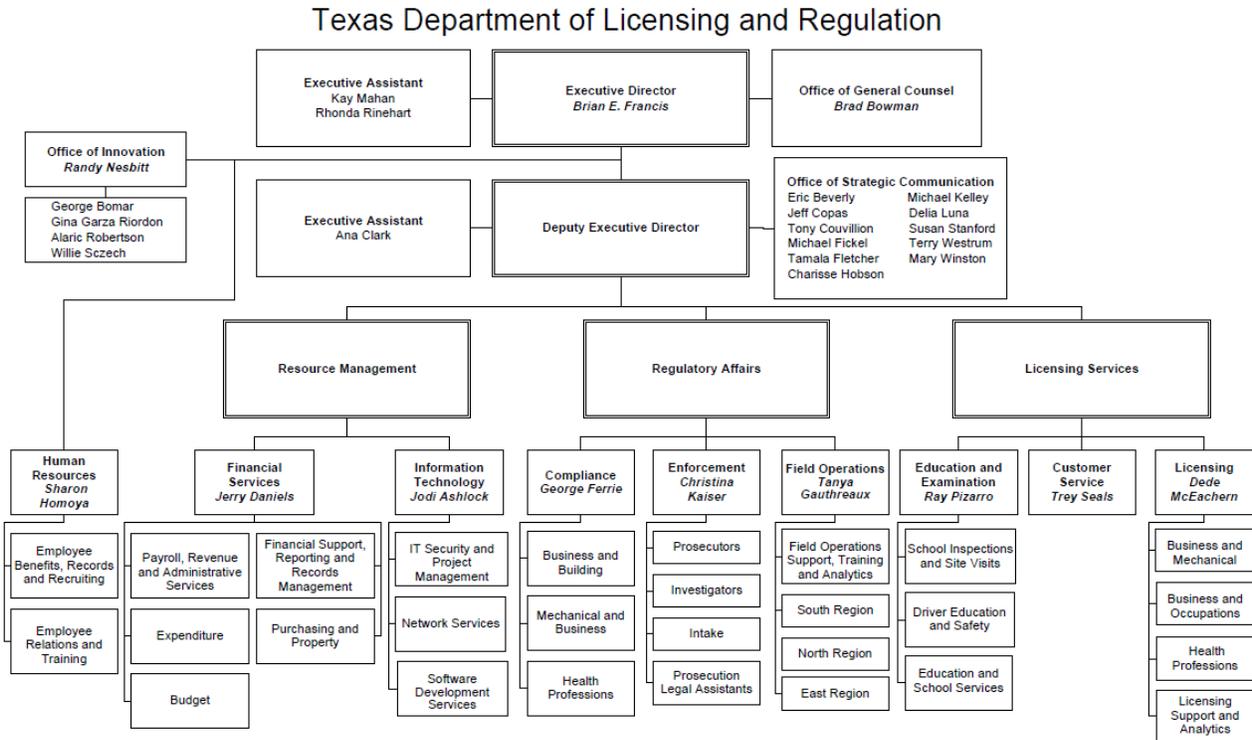
Attachment (TDLR: At a Glance)



# TDLR: AT A GLANCE

## WHO WE ARE

The Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR) is responsible for licensing and regulating a broad range of occupations, businesses, facilities, and equipment in Texas. Our purpose is to protect the health and safety of Texans and ensure they are served by qualified professionals. With a functionally-aligned business model that is guided by respect-based leadership, TDLR is an exceptional agency that strives for excellence recognized by both the private and public sector.



Chapter 51 of the Texas Occupations Code establishes TDLR and its responsibilities. The Texas Commission of Licensing and Regulation (Commission) is TDLR’s governing board and policy-making body. It has seven public members appointed to staggered six-year terms by the Governor with the consent of the Texas Senate. By law, Commission members cannot engage in any of the businesses or trades regulated by Texas state government.

The Commission guides TDLR’s common-sense approach to fair, efficient regulation and low-cost licensing. Before any rules are adopted, the Commission carefully considers any potential impact on businesses, customers, and licensees. The Commission strives to honor the trust of all Texans and ensure that the regulatory process is not heavy-handed or arbitrary. To support this endeavor, Commissioners receive training from TDLR’s Office of the General Counsel on the state’s open government laws. The Commission conducts its business in a setting open to the public, and all Commission meetings are streamed live on the internet, then archived and available to view anytime.



# TDLR: AT A GLANCE

## WHAT WE BELIEVE

*Core Values:* TDLR core values reflect what is truly important to us as an organization.

- Accountability
- Customer Service
- Innovation
- Integrity
- Open and Free Communication
- Respect
- Teamwork

They are the foundation of our agency culture and are the driving force behind our daily work. It is through these core values that TDLR is able to achieve the agency vision and mission each and every day.

*Mission:* To honor the trust of all Texans, safeguard the public, and provide a fair and efficient licensing and regulatory environment at the lowest possible cost.

*Vision:* To be the leader in public service by creating innovative, low-cost licensing and regulatory “next” practices, and cultivating highly engaged employees who provide exceptional customer service.

## WHO WE REGULATE

We believe in carefully balancing the interest of protecting public health and safety. TDLR’s culture of innovation allows us to successfully manage growth and increasing responsibilities while maintaining a motivated and lean workforce. Below is a snapshots of the programs and license types at TDLR.

TDLR licenses individuals and businesses for **32 programs**.

<b><u>Business &amp; Occupations (12)</u></b>	<b><u>Health Professions (7)</u></b>	<b><u>Building &amp; Mechanical (6)</u></b>
Combative Sports Driver Education and Safety For-Profit Legal Services Licensed Breeders Polygraph Examiners Professional Employer Organizations Service Contract Providers Temporary Common Worker Employers Towing Companies Used Automotive Parts Recyclers Vehicle Protection Product Warrantors Vehicle Storage Facilities	Athletic Trainers Dietitians Dyslexia Therapists & Practitioners Hearing Instrument Fitters & Dispensers Midwives Orthotists & Prosthetists Speech-Language Pathologists & Audiologists	Air Conditioning and Refrigeration Architectural Barriers Boiler Safety Electrical Safety Elevators, Escalators & Related Equipment Industrialized Housing and Buildings
	<b><u>Professionals (5)</u></b>	<b><u>Natural Resources (2)</u></b>
	Auctioneers Barbering Cosmetology Property Tax Consultants Property Tax Professionals	Water Well Drillers & Pump Installers Weather Modification



## TDLR: AT A GLANCE

### Licensee Population

<b>Program</b>	<b>Total License Population</b>
<b>Health Professions</b>	
Speech-Language Pathologists & Audiologists	20,426
Dietitians	5,511
Athletic Trainers	3,580
Dyslexia Therapists & Practitioners	946
Orthotists & Prosthetists	891
Hearing Instrument Fitters & Dispensers	808
Midwives	258
<b>TOTAL: 32,420</b>	
<b>Professionals</b>	
Cosmetology	282,679
Barbering	23,459
Property Tax Professionals	3,482
Auctioneers	2,453
Property Tax Consultants	1,697
<b>TOTAL: 313,770</b>	
<b>Building &amp; Mechanical</b>	
Electrical Safety	139,430
Boiler Safety	54,290
Air Conditioning and Refrigeration	42,688
Elevators, Escalators & Related Equipment	41,715
Architectural Barriers	24,063
Industrialized Housing and Buildings	722
<b>TOTAL: 302,908</b>	



# TDLR: AT A GLANCE

## Licensee Population (Continued)

<b>Business &amp; Occupations</b>	
Towing Companies	34,536
For-Profit Legal Services	10,908
Vehicle Storage Facilities	5,302
Driver Education and Safety	3,956
Used Automotive Parts Recyclers	3,300
Combative Sports	3,052
Professional Employer Organizations	393
Service Contract Providers	354
Polygraph Examiners	273
Licensed Breeders	172
Temporary Common Worker Employers	84
Vehicle Protection Product Warrantors	64
<b>TOTAL: 62,394</b>	
<b>Natural Resources</b>	
Water Well Drillers & Pump Installers	2,012
Weather Modification	16
<b>TOTAL: 2,028</b>	
<b>CUMLATIVE TOTAL: 713,520</b>	

## Key Statistics for Fiscal Year 2016

<b>Compliance &amp; Field Operations</b>	
Inspections Completed	125,769
<b>Customer Service</b>	
Telephone Calls Received	399,065
Emails Received	82,759
Faxes Received	7,010
<b>Enforcement</b>	
Complaints Opened	11,305



## TDLR: AT A GLANCE

### HOW WE DO IT

#### *Functional Alignment*

TDLR has been the catalyst for the transformation of occupational and business licensing in Texas. Beginning in 1999, TDLR moved from a government agency silo structure that duplicated positions for each program to a business model planned along functional lines.

While a silo structure uses the same employee positions for each program, duplicating work and wasting reserves. TDLR uses a functionally-aligned business model that provides shared services across licensing programs. This dynamic structure allows TDLR to manage, support, and deliver a high level of service to an increasingly diverse mix of programs while maintaining a lean workforce.

TDLR's functional business model enables the agency to continually scale its operations and retain flexibility, ensuring greater productivity and lower fees as demands on the agency's resources change.

Our functional business model and philosophy is rare in state government. It allows TDLR to be the leader in saving money, protecting consumers, and lowering fees for licensees. The following is an overview of key TDLR divisions.

#### *Executive Office*

The Executive Office exemplifies the agency's core values while providing the leadership, motivation, and direction to achieve the agency's vision and mission. The Executive Office is passionate and sincere about building trust and serving the TDLR family, public officials, licensees, and the citizens of Texas.

The success of the Executive Office is attributed to a respect-based management philosophy, a firm commitment to open and free communication with all employees and customers, recognition of the importance of industry trends to implement process improvements, and the aggressive pursuit of government transparency and efficiency. Within the Executive Office there are also two sections:

*Office of Innovation:* manages and leads agency innovation efforts, focusing on process improvement, research and data analysis, trend forecasting, and listening to the Voice of the Customer.

*Office of Strategic Communication:* responsible for all agency communications; policy advice and support for leadership; intergovernmental relations; legislative analysis and cost estimates; maintaining the agency web and social media presence; and support to TDLR's Advisory Boards.



## **TDLR: AT A GLANCE**

### ***Compliance Division***

The Compliance Division consists of technical and professional experts for our 32 programs. Staff determines compliance of buildings and equipment through plan reviews and inspections. Additionally, staff provides information through association meetings, professional conferences and participates in speaking engagements and forums.

The Division responds to technical questions asked by the public and licensees. The staff's skills and experience are critical to the agency's mission to ensure public safety and customer protection and assure Texans that the services they receive are from qualified individuals.

### ***Customer Service Division***

The Customer Service Division is the agency's primary point of contact, responding to calls, emails, and social media posts for all programs. Our customer service representatives assist walk-in customers at TDLR headquarters in downtown Austin; and provide English, Spanish, Vietnamese and Mandarin language assistance to customers.

Our automated phone system helps non-English speaking customers reach the appropriate customer service representative. It also routes callers making electronic payments and those inquiring about specific programs.

### ***Education and Examination Division***

The Education and Examination Division is responsible for developing continuing education and pre-license education requirements for a wide variety of TDLR programs. Education and Examination Division staff ensure that schools and continuing education providers are in compliance with laws and rules by evaluating and approving schools, providers and courses, providing technical support and assistance to applicants, and conducting periodic audits of schools, providers and courses.

The Division also coordinates exam development and monitors administration of examinations for TDLR programs requiring knowledge and competency tests to obtain a license. The Division collaborates with its current exam delivery public-private partners, PSI Services, LLC and eStrategy Solutions, Inc.; industry subject matter experts; and Advisory Board members to review and update examination content.

### ***Enforcement Division***

The Enforcement Division investigates and resolves complaints received from consumers, industry, municipalities, inspections, and TDLR staff for all our programs. The Division's structure, operations, and processes are aligned to ensure fair and efficient complaint resolution. The Enforcement division consists of three sections: Intake, Investigations, and Prosecution.

The Intake section reviews all complaints received to determine if the agency has jurisdiction and recommends whether an investigation should be opened. The Investigation section compiles all the facts related to a complaint, including eyewitness interviews, in-depth research, on-site investigations, and prepares the written report based on these findings. It also coordinates and



## **TDLR: AT A GLANCE**

conducts sting operations to combat unlicensed activity. The Prosecution section includes prosecutors, legal assistants, and legal support. The prosecutors and legal assistants ensure the efficient resolution of each case and pursue penalties and sanctions whenever violations are found. The legal support staff track Agreed Orders, collect penalties, and assure compliance with probation requirements. The Prosecution section also screens applicants' criminal history information from the Department of Public Safety to identify crimes that may necessitate license denials or revocation.

Complainants and licensees have an opportunity to participate in the investigation process and help to ensure that information obtained is accurate. Consistency is maintained throughout the process by the use of the Enforcement procedures manual, Commission-approved penalty matrices, and criminal offense evaluation guidelines.

### ***Field Operations Division***

The Field Operations Division performs inspections and educates licensees for the Cosmetology, Barber, Towing, Vehicle Storage Facility, Booting, Used Auto Parts Recycler, Licensed Breeder, and Orthotists and Prosthetists programs. In the FY 2018-19 biennium, this division will also take on the Massage Therapists and Laser Hair Removal programs. Our inspectors are the face of TDLR for many of our licensees, performing scheduled pre-license and unscheduled periodic inspections of licensed facilities.

### ***Licensing Division***

The Licensing Division reviews applications and issues licenses to qualified individuals and businesses. Licensing staff have extensive knowledge of licensing requirements and procedures for processing applications and issuing licenses. The agency's 32 programs include nearly 714,000 licensees.

The Licensing Division evaluates applicants' criminal history; required education and credentials; experience and employment history; and insurance, bonding, and net worth requirements. Licensing employees are cross-trained to assist with seasonal workload spikes. During peak times, the entire Division works to process the high volume of applications. The Licensing staff is empowered through teamwork, open and free communication, and innovation to provide the best customer service from start to finish.

### ***Financial Services Division***

The Financial Services Division manages TDLR's fiscal resources in compliance with state and federal requirements. Its staff operates in a prudent and responsible manner, carrying out all of their duties to get the most value from each appropriated dollar. The Division is organized into four cross-trained teams: Payroll and Accounting, Budget and Administrative, Reporting and Financial Support Services, and Purchasing and Procurement.

Financial Services balances the agency's budget and ensures all divisions spend within their means. The main functions of the Division are accounting; budgeting; cash receipt processing; payroll; expenditure and payment processing; revenue recognition and reconciliation; financial



## **TDLR: AT A GLANCE**

interface for USAS and the Texas.gov portal; fixed asset management; mail processing; purchasing, property management and contract administration; risk management; and vehicle fleet management.

### ***Office of the General Counsel***

The Office of the General Counsel provides critical legal opinions and advice to the agency and the Commission. In this role, the Office of General Counsel proactively identifies and addresses issues that may expose the agency or Commissioners to legal liability. The Office of General Counsel also advises the Commission, the Executive Office, and agency staff about pending litigation, bills and laws affecting the agency, ethics questions, and sensitive legal matters. The general counsel is TDLR's Chief Audit Executive and Ethics Officer.

Other functions of the Office of the General Counsel include: draft and review rules; draft and review Commission orders; respond to open records requests; support Advisory Boards and workgroups; draft and review contracts and requests for proposals; provide legal opinions for the agency; oversee the collection of administrative penalties; and work with the Office of the Attorney General in administrative appeals, injunctive relief, collecting delinquent fines, and coordinating other legal proceedings.

### ***Human Resources Division***

The Human Resources Division promotes the agency vision and mission by fostering a healthy and respectful work environment. This is accomplished by attracting, developing, and retaining qualified employees who are dedicated to public service and who uphold TDLR's core values.

The Division staff provides recruiting and hiring; training and career development; employee benefits, compensation, and related matters; personnel policies and procedures; employee relations; workforce planning; wellness programs; compliance with state and federal employment law; prevention of employee fraud; and legal support on personnel matters.

### ***Information Technology Division***

The Information Technology Division creates and supports custom software, IT strategic planning, project management practices, network services, and security compliance to help carryout TDLR's regulatory responsibilities. To ensure a smooth transfer of Phase I programs, our team worked to integrate the VERSA system used by DSHS and enhance how TDLR will use the system to better provide services to licensees. TDLR also uses the Texas Umbrella Licensing Information Project (TULIP) software system which is scalable and accommodates most of our license types and licensees, and the Texas Occupations Online Licensing System (TOOLS) software program, for a specific set of programs, which allows for more specialized applications.

This Division also supports the agency's vision and strategic focus by planning for growth, installing systems, and supporting and maintaining all information technology, including phone systems and mobile devices. The Division also manages the agency's infrastructure by providing maintenance, upgrades, and troubleshooting at each of the Austin offices and all field locations.



## TDLR: AT A GLANCE

### WHY IT WORKS

#### *Advisory Boards*

TDLR's Advisory Boards consist of licensees and representatives from the businesses and industries TDLR regulates, as well as public members and other professionals. Advisory Board members are appointed by the Commission and provide important technical knowledge and industry expertise, giving the Commissioners and TDLR staff real-world insight into their respective occupations and industries. Input from each Advisory Board is critical in helping TDLR effectively carry out its mission and achieve its vision. In addition, Commission members attend and participate in Advisory Board meetings so the Commission better understands these occupations and industries.

With the addition of seven Advisory Boards from the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) program transfer in FY 2016, and the new Driver Training and Traffic Safety Advisory Committee, **26 of TDLR's 32 programs now have Advisory Boards.** In the FY 2018-19 biennium, TDLR will receive six additional licensing programs from DSHS; from these six programs, we anticipate the creation of at least two new Advisory Boards. Supporting the Advisory Boards and communicating with our stakeholders is now even more critical, requiring full-time attention. In FY 2016, we **realigned resources in TDLR's Office of Strategic Communication** to better serve all of our new and existing board members and the public.

Each Advisory Board plays a key role to review rules affecting their professions and to advise the Commission and Department on how to eliminate unnecessary, outdated, or burdensome regulation. Advisory Boards provide input for the development of the agency's criminal conviction guidelines and enforcement plan – identifying crimes that relate to the licensed professions and recommending appropriate penalties for violations of laws and rules.

Additionally, the Commission will not adopt or amend new health-related standard of care rules for the Health Professions at TDLR unless those rules have been proposed by the respective advisory board. The Commission must either adopt the rule as proposed by the advisory board or return it to the advisory board for revision. The Commission retains authority for final adoption of all rules and is responsible for ensuring compliance with all laws regarding the rulemaking process.

The advisory board system at TDLR is an inclusive process, and we listen closely to the advice and opinions of our board members. While we understand there may be some concern about moving away from an independent board governance structure, it has been our experience that the TDLR's Commission appointed Advisory Board model has been successful in its effectiveness, transparency, and independence. Our Advisory Board model provides more consistency in the enforcement process and improves services to all the licensees.



## TDLR: AT A GLANCE

### *Your Voice Matters*

TDLR has a history of success with program consolidation that often results in increased services and reduced fees. In fact, TDLR strives to serve its regulated industries and the public at the lowest cost possible without compromising the quality of that service. Over the past 14 years, licensees have benefited from our efforts with a cumulative cost savings of over \$34 million. TDLR works hard to lay the tracks and build the necessary relationships for a successful consolidation and transition.

During the most recent DSHS program transfers to TDLR, we implemented a Health Consolidation Team to coordinate every aspect of the transfer. TDLR began early by working on the rules for each program so that they would be fully functioning when they were officially transferred. We created a Health Professions Facebook page specifically to address the unique needs of these programs being transferred so that interested parties had specialized information concerning the process. We sent our staff to DSHS to shadow and learn the strengths and weaknesses of these program, but also to help alleviate backlogs so that we could hit the ground running when TDLR officially took over these programs.

TDLR understands just how important it is to build relationships and trust with our licensees. We strive to reach out to all our licensees and staff and ask them all to look at every aspect of the regulatory process to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of our overall operating model. Our strategic planning process is designed to embody TDLR's core value of Open and Free Communication which ultimately leads to exceptional Customer Service. Even before the Phase I programs were transferred to TDLR, we reached out to all the new licensees using online surveys, statewide face-to-face planning sessions, and social media outlets. Every voice, idea, comment, suggestion, and criticism was considered and does make a difference. Some of the suggestions made by Phase I program attendees have either been implemented or incorporated into our official agency strategic plan.