

## **Ohio Chemical Dependency Professionals Board**

### **Executive Budget Recommendations SFY2022-2023**

#### **Ohio Senate Health Committee**

April 21, 2021

Chairman Huffman, members of the Senate Health Committee, I am Jill Smock, Executive Director of the Ohio Chemical Dependency Professionals (CDP) Board. Thank you for the opportunity to be here today to provide testimony and answer any questions you may have regarding the Board's proposed budget for fiscal years 2022 and 2023.

The CDP Board's mission is to cultivate, certify and license quality prevention and addiction treatment professionals. Our vision is a network of competent, ethical professionals practicing evidence - informed services that promote health lifestyles and communities.

This is accomplished by the following regulatory roles:

- establishing and maintaining educational and experience standards for those who seek a license or certification
- protecting consumers through investigation of ethic complaints and guiding professional practice through the enforcement of ethical standards
- providing oversight and monitoring of continuing education activities
- overseeing the administration of professional examinations

The CDP Board licenses the professionals with the specialized knowledge and skills to treat those with substance use disorders, supports those in recovery to obtain employment in the field through license and/or certification opportunities, and allows communities and schools to provide behavioral health prevention services through certified prevention professionals thus supporting the infrastructure of many current initiatives of our state. The public is further served by the Board's ongoing efforts to develop a workforce of appropriate size and skill to serve the needs of Ohio's citizens.

Currently the CDP Board provides licensing and certification services to close to 13,000 substance use disorder treatment and prevention professionals. The Board has continued to have a steady

increase in new applications received on an annual basis, especially within our entry-level (CDCA) certification many of them from the recovery community. From FY19 to FY20 there was a 24% increase in active CDCA certifications due to increased efforts to supplement the workforce by OHMHAS and providers, and also as I mentioned those in recovery choosing to enter the field in this assistant role.

The Board seeks to facilitate professional development opportunities for these professionals as well. It reviews and endorses substance use disorder treatment and behavioral health prevention continuing education trainings, courses, conferences and workshops to ensure CEU Sponsors and Providers are meeting continuing education standards and requirements. The board had a 50% increase in those reviews over the last 2 years for a total of close to 700 individual board reviewed and approved training courses as more initiatives focus on providing specific education and training related specifically to substance use disorder treatment and prevention to increase the workforce.

The CDP Board is also responsible for investigating violations of the laws and rules governing our licenses and certificates. If a licensee or certificate holder is found to have violated the laws and rules, appropriate action is taken by the Board to impose discipline and ensure the public is protected. Thanks to additional funding in our budget last biennium to hire a fulltime Investigator position, in calendar year 2020 we have more than doubled the number of disciplinary actions through consent agreements and hearings conducted; thus closing more ethical violation cases than FY 18 and 19 combined. With an average new case load of 150 cases per year, we anticipate the investigations to protect the public and the profession to continue to remain a large percentage of the workload for our board.

### **Organizational Structure**

Organizationally, the Board has positions for thirteen members on our Board and 6 full time staff members.

The staff provides technical expertise and knowledge to the professionals in the field, allowing them to move efficiently through the licensing process. Thoroughness of application review and timeliness of staff responses are all a part of the quality customer service the Board values and expects. Our full time Investigator has allowed the Board to address grievances, conduct investigations and close cases in a timelier manner.

## **Budget**

The CDP Board is a fee-based entity and does not receive any general revenue funding. Revenue is generated by licensing fees, renewal fees, fees for approval of continuing education providers & sponsors, and fees for college endorsements. OCDPB is part of the 4k90 Fund group. The Board expects increases in our revenue in future years as the demand for our licensed and certified workforce continues.

The Board respectfully requests its appropriation authority to be set at \$833,131.00 for FY 2022 and \$850,305.00 for FY 2023. This reflects an extended budget to include sufficient funds to cover all operational expenses, anticipated increases in payroll and health care costs, increases in elicense costs, necessary staffing needs, and an investment in process improvements in both fiscal years. These appropriation levels are necessary to allow our Board to maintain a service level that corresponds with the resources being invested in our State priorities delivered by the same workforce that we license, certify, and the population we protect.

The budget includes an additional staff position to be split to handle the increase in CDCA applications and administrative duties to assist our Investigator. This will allow the Investigator to focus specifically on investigations, as opposed to the administrative workload of processing and monitoring of ethical cases, thus preventing a backlog of ethic cases that may be impossible to resolve without this additional staff.

Our funding request includes one-time payments for necessary adjustments within elicense to give CDP the similar functionality prior to the integration and to align improvements with other Boards. This functional improvement will rectify license status issues within the system and improve data collection and reporting requirements. It will also allow the board to cover expenses to make improvements for licensees and applicants enacted by the Board or legislative requirements that impact our board exclusively. It also includes funding for technology equipment (computers) replacements when necessary.

The Executive budget recommendation aligns with the Board's priorities for the upcoming biennium and its overall strategic plan and will:

- Support the operations of the board and staff

- Ensure the Board can provide consumer protection through the enforcement of ethical standards
- Enable functions within elicense to ensure current information to licensees, and accurate and improved data to the board
- Support continuous efforts to improve services and communication for the Board's credentialed professionals and increase efficiencies in the processing of applications
- Enable the Board to continue its work with colleges, universities, and educational providers to expand professional development opportunities

The Board will continue to use DAS' Central Service Agency (CSA) to help contain costs and as a vehicle to expand its participation in the sharing of services whenever and wherever possible.

No fee changes are included in this budget request.

In closing, with state and federal resources being invested to combat the consequences of the opioid epidemic and now the COVID pandemic, along with the funding and support of Recovery Ohio and Student Wellness initiatives, we are requesting that the CDP Board that licenses the individuals who provide the services addressing these issues receive a budget that reflects our important mission. This will allow CDP to maintain all services and priorities and continue to provide a competent and trained workforce to meet the needs of the individuals and communities in our state.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted: Jill Smock, Executive Director, Ohio Chemical Dependency Professionals (OCDP) Board