



Strategic Plan

2023–2026

DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS



PROFESSIONAL FIDUCIARIES BUREAU

Prepared by:
SOLID Planning Solutions
Department of Consumer Affairs



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Professional Fiduciaries Bureau Advisory Committee Members

Bertha Sanchez Hayden, Chair

Denise Nelesen, Vice Chair

Chi K. Elder

Wendy Hatch

Elizabeth R. Ichikawa

James Moore



Gavin Newsom, Governor

Lourdes M. Castro Ramírez, Secretary,
Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency

Kimberly Kirchmeyer, Director,
Department of Consumer Affairs

Rebecca May, Bureau Chief,
Professional Fiduciaries Bureau

Message from the Bureau Chief

On behalf of the Professional Fiduciaries Bureau, I am pleased to present the Bureau's 2023–2026 Strategic Plan. The goals outlined in this Strategic Plan and their corresponding objectives will serve as a roadmap guiding the Bureau toward measurable and effective outcomes over the next four-year period.

This Strategic Plan represents a collaborative effort by the Bureau's esteemed stakeholders—Advisory Committee members, Bureau and Department of Consumer Affairs staff, licensees, and the public—to examine the mission-critical functions of the Bureau and identify areas of strength and weakness in ensuring those functions are fulfilled. This diverse and candid stakeholder feedback aided the Bureau in recognizing areas for improvement and in setting lofty yet achievable goals.

I would like to thank the Department of Consumer Affairs' SOLID Training and Planning Solutions staff for overseeing the creation of this plan, and to the many stakeholders who offered their time to provide their observations regarding the Bureau. I especially want to thank the hard-working employees of the Bureau, whose commitment to the consumers they serve each day is exemplary.

Sincerely,
Rebecca May, Bureau Chief

About the Bureau

The Professional Fiduciaries Bureau (PFB) within the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) is responsible for the licensure and regulation of non-family-member professional fiduciaries, including conservators, guardians, trustees, personal representatives of a decedent's estate, and agents under durable power of attorney, as defined by the Professional Fiduciaries Act. The Act was established in 2006 by Senate Bill 1550 (Figueroa, Chapter 491, Statutes of 2006).

Professional fiduciaries provide critical services to seniors, people with disabilities, and children, including daily care, housing and medical needs, and financial-management services ranging from basic bill paying to estate and investment management. Professional fiduciaries are responsible for the well-being of their clients and coordinate overall care for their clients' medical and/or financial needs. A professional fiduciary is not necessarily an expert in all service areas and may hire other persons to handle duties for the trusts or estates. However, as the ultimate decision-maker, the professional fiduciary has the responsibility to ensure appropriate and adequate services are provided for their clients.

The Bureau began operations July 1, 2007, and is charged with carrying out the following functions:

- Ensuring protection of the public as its highest priority.
- Promoting legal and ethical standards of professional conduct.
- Ensuring that applicants meet minimum requirements prior to licensure.
- Investigating all complaints.
- Taking disciplinary and administrative actions against licensees when appropriate.

Mission, Vision, and Values

Mission

To protect consumers through licensing, consumer education, and enforcement of the Professional Fiduciaries Act and promote and uphold competency and ethical standards across the profession.

Vision

The well-being of consumers receiving professional fiduciary services is safeguarded.

Values

- Consumer Protection
- Diversity
- Equity
- Professionalism
- Responsiveness
- Teamwork
- Transparency



GOALS

GOAL 1

Licensure and Professional Education

Uphold licensing standards and entry into the profession while safeguarding consumers.

- 1.1** Work with the Office of Professional Examination Services to revise and clarify testing processes for greater transparency.
- 1.2** Clarify the Americans with Disabilities Act examination process on the Bureau's website to address inquiries.
- 1.3** Update the Bureau's website to effectively assist applicants and licensees and help the Bureau use staff resources efficiently.
- 1.4** Explore accepting payments and filing of annual statements online to simplify the application and renewal process and decrease processing times.
- 1.5** Educate licensees about the Bureau's role in protecting consumers by increasing the licensees' awareness of the Bureau's mission.

GOAL 2

Enforcement

Protect consumers through the enforcement of laws and regulations governing professional fiduciaries.

- 2.1** Identify inconsistencies in existing statutes and regulations to determine necessary changes.
- 2.2** Educate licensees on licensure and renewal requirements to increase compliance.
- 2.3** Strengthen relationships with the courts and law enforcement to enhance enforcement.
- 2.4** Utilize the Franchise Tax Board's Interagency Intercept Collection Program to collect outstanding fines and cost recovery, when appropriate.
- 2.5** Hire enforcement staff to implement Assembly Bill 1194 (Low, Chapter 417, Statutes of 2021).
- 2.6** Improve external communications regarding the Bureau's authority, discipline process, and time frames to increase consumer awareness of the enforcement process.
- 2.7** Enhance the subject matter expert program and recruitment to strengthen enforcement effectiveness.

GOAL 3

Communication and Outreach

Disseminate important information to stakeholders.

- 3.1** Explore new ways to educate licensees about existing requirements and new updates to laws and regulations to improve licensees' understanding of their responsibility as a licensee.
- 3.2** Work with other DCA entities and the Bureau's Advisory Committee to increase audience, resources, and awareness of the Bureau.
- 3.3** Update the Bureau's website, brochures, and social media to provide updated resources to consumers and licensees.
- 3.4** Strengthen partnerships with professional groups and schools to educate about licensing requirements, deter unlicensed practice, and increase recruitment to the profession.

GOAL 4

Regulation and Legislation

Identify necessary legislative and regulatory changes to better protect consumers and work with DCA to provide expertise regarding pending legislation.

- 4.1** Identify deficiencies in current statutes and regulations to determine ways to improve the Bureau's ability to protect consumers.
- 4.2** Work with DCA to achieve necessary legislative and regulatory changes.
- 4.3** Review pending legislation to identify inconsistencies, unclear language, and potential costs.

GOAL 5

Administration

Efficiently use resources and personnel to meet Bureau goals and objectives.

- 5.1** Utilize the Advisory Committee's expertise to effectively assist the Bureau in completing its Strategic Plan goals.
- 5.2** Complete desk manuals to aid in succession planning and allow for the successful transition of staff.
- 5.3** Cross-train all staff to provide continuity and flexibility.
- 5.4** Research converting to a paperless system to reduce costs for the Bureau, consumers, and licensees.
- 5.5** Determine feasibility of moving to a smaller office to reduce costs and reduce environmental impact.

Strategic Planning Process

Information for the Bureau’s environmental scan report was gathered by surveying external stakeholders and internal stakeholders (Advisory Committee members, executive management, and Bureau staff) using the following methods:

- Interviews were conducted with PFB’s Advisory Committee members, DCA executive management, and staff during the months of May and June 2022 to assess the Bureau’s effectiveness, as well as the challenges and opportunities PFB is currently facing or might face in the upcoming years.
- An online survey was sent to external stakeholders on May 3, 2022 and closed on May 31, 2022. In the survey, external stakeholders provided anonymous input regarding the Bureau’s effectiveness as well as the challenges and opportunities PFB is currently facing or might face in the upcoming years. A total of 198 people participated in the external stakeholder survey.

Bureau staff and executive staff were provided the results of the environmental scan, along with an objectives worksheet, three weeks before the strategic planning session on September 21, 2022. The most significant themes and trends identified in the environmental scan were discussed and guided strategic planning participants in their creation of objectives for the Bureau’s new Strategic Plan.



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PFB

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Professional Fiduciaries Bureau

1625 North Market Blvd., Suite S-209
Sacramento, CA 95834
(916) 574-7340

www.fiduciary.ca.gov

Prepared by:

SOLID Planning Solutions

1747 North Market Blvd., Suite 270
Sacramento, CA 95834

