

FAQs – Consumer Protection Enforcement Initiative (CPEI)

What is the Consumer Protection Enforcement Initiative (CPEI)?

The CPEI is a *comprehensive initiative* the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) has launched to overhaul the enforcement process at the healing arts boards it oversees.

Why is the CPEI needed?

The program is needed to enable healing arts boards to more efficiently investigate and prosecute consumer complaints against licensees under their regulation. The *systemic* problems embedded in the enforcement process at some of these boards have pushed the timeline for investigation and prosecution of licensee violation cases to an average of three years.

How will the CPEI streamline the enforcement process?

The CPEI will target three critical ways to reform the enforcement process and ultimately reduce the average timeline from 36 months to between 12 and 18 months. The CPEI will address:

- **Administrative improvements**, such as focusing on cases one year or older, employing better methods for complaint intake, and developing enhanced training for enforcement staff;
- **Increased enforcement resources** that include authorizing boards to hire non-sworn investigators for more effective workload distribution;
- **Pursuit of legislation** to help boards better protect consumers in areas where their enforcement authorities have not kept up with legal trends.

What will the CPEI cost and how will it be funded?

DCA is requesting an additional \$27 million over the next two years in a Budget Change Proposal to the Governor. Because DCA is specially funded through professional licensing fees, the project will not drain the General Fund. Additional funds will come from existing board resources or license fee increases.

Who will benefit from the CPEI and how?

The initiative will benefit California consumers as well as the healing arts boards under DCA that serve them.

- DCA ensures consumer protection as its first priority and as the first priority of its health-related boards. Consumers will have increased confidence in their health professionals when boards can more speedily resolve complaints or exercise the authority to suspend or limit the practice of violators who may pose a potential threat.
 - Consumers can see efforts DCA has already made toward accountability in enforcement. DCA is issuing a regular [Enforcement Progress Report](#) through its Web site. The report provides practical information for consumers, including links to enforcement actions taken against licensees and updates on evolving enforcement reform.
- Healing arts boards will be able to use their staff and resources more effectively in enforcement matters.