

Agency 5-Year Plan

Issue 1 Timeliness and statutory time frames

Description: The Board’s statutes require portions of the application process to be completed within specific time frames. A.R.S. § 41–619.55 requires the Board to comply with the following time frames.

- 20 days from receipt of application (which is defined in A.A.C. R13-11-104) to expedited review (which is the initial review by the Board of the application without the applicant being present)
- 45 days from expedited review to administrative hearing
- 80 days from administrative hearing to Board decision

In FY 2021, the Board Investigator exceeded the Board’s goal (96%) for the percentage of recommendations accepted at an expedited review. The very high acceptance rate (99.76%) makes Board meetings more efficient. The Board received 3,435 applications. This represents a 22.9% decrease in applications from FY 2020 (4,460), which was an all-time high for the Board. The Board continues to process applications very efficiently and overall wait times for applicants continues to decline. The average number of days spent processing applications from receipt to expedited review decreased by more than one full day (7.19 days total), which represents a 15% decrease. For the second year straight year, the Board is in 100% compliance with all statutory time frames. The Board communicates with applicants effectively and efficiently based on the high level of applications completed on initial submission (89.32%)

In upcoming fiscal years, the Board will continue to take steps to reduce the time for processing applications and continue to achieve full statutory compliance in all areas. Reducing processing time will help return eligible applicants to work more quickly.

Solutions:

- Improve the database and Board technology to reduce the amount of time spent entering data.
- Assess whether additional staff are needed to handle the increasing workload.
- Cross-train staff to help cover the investigator’s caseload during high-caseload periods.
- Schedule hearings more frequently to decrease applicant wait time.

Issue 2 Improve e-government services

Description: Government agencies have increasingly used new technology to improve the accessibility and ease of use of government services. Although there are some obstacles unique to the Board—for example, it receives documents from numerous agencies, especially in rural areas, that still rely on paper—the Board nonetheless believes that opportunities exist for electronic services. The Board improved its website in FY 2021, and will have its application processes available for submission online by FY 2022.

The Board believes that improving e-government services is necessary not just for the purpose of keeping up with dominant business-process trends but also to increase accessibility to applicants. The Board does not have the resources to establish field offices or to travel extensively, but some applicants live far from Phoenix and would benefit from the ability to attend meetings and hearings by videoconference. Expanding these services would limit the disproportionate impact on applicants who live far from Phoenix. In addition, allowing for hearings by videoconference will enable those who have been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic to attend their hearing virtually helping to maintain the safety of all participants.

Solutions:

- Identify security and legal issues and, as necessary, receive ASET approval.
- Work with ASET on a plan to migrate the Board application process to a web based interface.
- Approve funding in budgets for future fiscal years.
- Update Board Rules to allow for testimony by telephone or electronic means.

Issue 3 Review of statutes

Description: A.R.S. §§ 41–1758.03 and 41–1758.07 identify the crimes that require the Department of Public Safety to deny or suspend a fingerprint clearance card. These lists of crimes were developed and modified primarily through collaboration among several state agencies: the Board, the Department of Public Safety, and the agencies that require fingerprint clearance cards. On occasion, these agencies have reviewed the lists to identify new needs and changes to the criminal code and have requested legislative changes and to identify areas where the statutes are not working well.

In 2012, the Legislature established the central-registry exception process at the Board of Fingerprinting. Since the establishment of the central registry exception, the Legislature has added new programs to the system of using Central Registry background checks. The statutes for the central-registry exception application process require periodic review and appropriate modification. The Board should review of the process and have a discussion with appropriate stakeholders.

Solutions:

- Hold regular meetings of stakeholders to discuss appropriate modification or clarification of statutes.

Resource Assumptions

	FY2024 Estimate	FY2025 Estimate	FY2026 Estimate
Full-Time Equivalent Positions	0.0	0.0	0.0
General Fund	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other Appropriated Funds	0.0	0.0	0.0
Non-Appropriated Funds	750.0	750.0	750.0
Federal Funds	0.0	0.0	0.0