

**MINUTES
FOR THE REGULAR MEETING
CALIFORNIA UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BOARD
Docket No. 5662**

Open Session

The Appeals Board meeting convened at 1:00 p.m., February 17, 2021, via Zoom conferencing with Chair Marty Block presiding.

1. Roll Call: <u>Members</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Marty Block, Chair	x	
Dan Reeves, Vice-Chair	x	
Mike Eng	x	
Michael Allen	x	
Laura Kent-Monning	x	

2. Approval of the Minutes:

The January 21, 2021, Meeting Minutes were approved unanimously.

3. Chair's Report:

Chair Block reminded viewers that most of the Board's work is not done during the meetings, but in-between meetings. The Board resolved 472 appeals in the past month.

Chair Block reported that Members Allen and Kent-Monning have officially been confirmed. As a result, CUIAB has five confirmed Board Members.

On February 16, Chair Block attended the Leadership Meeting for the Labor Workforce Development Agency. During the meeting, George Okamoto, Information Technology Officer for the Labor Agency, complimented the work of Jefferson Willoughby and his staff on the Appeals Modernization Program.

4. Board Member Reports:

Member Allen thanked CUIAB's staff for their assistance during the confirmation process. Member Allen discussed the positive experience interacting with the Rules

Committee and Senate, and advised that CUIAB's independence from EDD was well understood. Member Allen thanked the entire CUIAB organization for its work.

Kent-Monning reported on the confirmation process and expressed her appreciation for the work of CUIAB's staff.

5. Public Comment

No public comment.

6. Chief ALJ/Executive Director Report:

Executive Director Cutri congratulated Board Members Allen and Kent-Monning on their confirmations.

CUIAB did not have any field office closures or security items since the last meeting.

Executive Director Cutri reported that during January, for the second consecutive month, appeals transmittals from the Employment Development Department decreased. EDD recently acknowledged that since December, it has taken approximately four to six weeks to send appeals from EDD to CUIAB, making it nearly impossible for CUIAB to meet DOL timeliness standards. CUIAB's field operations closed 5% of appeals within 30 days and 14.3% within 45 days. The average case age is approximately 75 days.

Appeal timeliness has become a nationwide problem and California has the highest first-level appeal workload in the nation. On a national level, as of December, 14% of appeals were resolved within 30 days and 28% within 45 days.

To address increases in appeals, in 2020, CUIAB brought on 22 new ALJs and 20 new support staff. Additional ALJs are being trained and recruited. ALJs have been hearing elevated caseloads and Presiding Judges continue to hear a large number of cases in addition to their other duties.

Executive Director Cutri reported that to date California has not opened a priority tier that includes CUIAB staff for receiving vaccinations.

Vice-Chair Reeves thanked Executive Director Cutri for his work responding to the pandemic crisis and bringing on additional ALJs and support staff to CUIAB.

Member Eng thanked Executive Director Cutri for his continued assistance in

between meetings.

Member Allen thanked Executive Director Cutri for his continued assistance and availability. Member Allen commented on using plain language in the Board's decisions and continuing work to ensure their clarity.

Member Kent-Monning thanked Executive Director Cutri for his hard work and frequent, timely communication.

7. Presiding ALJ of Appellate Operations, Jodi Remke Report:

Presiding Administrative Law Judge for Appellate Operations, Jodi Remke reported that AO has improved in meeting DOL's time-lapse standards. During January, AO resolved 87.5% of its cases within 45 days and 95.5% within 75 days. The average case age is 24.6 days.

Vice-Chair Reeves thanked Presiding Administrative Law Judge Remke for her hard work during this unprecedented crisis.

Members Eng, Allen and Kent-Monning thanked Presiding Administrative Law Judge Remke for her assistance and emphasized the importance of clarity in the Board's decisions to help parties' understanding of the issues and resolutions of their cases.

8. Chief Information Officer, Jeff Willoughby Report:

CIO Willoughby thanked Chair Block and Information Technology Officer George Okamoto for the kind words and confidence. CIO Willoughby thanked the IT staff and the subject-matter expert group for their continued work and the entire organization for their work on this major change. The next sprint will focus on the hearing process.

Member Eng thanked CIO Willoughby and his staff for their technical assistance.

Member Allen advised that during the confirmation process, he encountered some skepticism in the legislature about the Appeals Modernization Program, but that he described the development process and received favorable responses.

Member Kent-Monning thanked CIO Willoughby and the IT staff for their technical assistance and expressed appreciation for their ongoing work.

9. Chief Administrative Services, Robert Silva Report:

Chief Silva reported that CUIAB is in the process of hiring 14 new ALJs. Six recently-hired ALJs are currently in training.

Approximately 25 support staff positions are pending in the hiring process. Nine candidates are currently in the name approval process.

CUIAB has filled 46 support staff positions since the onset of the pandemic.

On January 28, Administrative Services released the Personnel and Operating Expenses Budget Call Letters for State Fiscal Year 2021-2022. The budget requests will be consolidated and reviewed by the Executive Director.

Member Allen inquired about Chief Silva's experiences with personnel support services administered by EDD. Chief Silva advised that EDD has been very responsive.

Members Eng and Kent-Monning thanked Chief Silva for his continued hard work.

Closed Session:

There was no Closed Session.

Adjournment