

**MINUTES
FOR THE REGULAR MEETING
CALIFORNIA UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE APPEALS BOARD
Docket No. 5705**

Open Session

The Appeals Board meeting convened at 11:00 a.m., September 18, 2024, with Chair Michael Allen presiding.

1. Roll Call: <u>Members</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Michael Allen, Chair	X	
Laura Kent-Monning, Vice-Chair	X	
Mike Eng	X	
Bob Wieckowski	X	

2. Approval of Minutes:

The Board approved the August 21, 2024, Meeting Minutes.

3. Chair's Report:

Since the last meeting, the Board resolved approximately 608 second-level appeals, 600 of which were issued within CAMS. Chair Allen expressed his appreciation for the CUIAB staff.

4. Board Member Reports:

Member Eng expressed his appreciation for Chief Cutri's work between Board meetings and his assistance with Board member inquiries.

Member Wieckowski reported on his recent visit to the San Jose field office.

5. Public Comment

No public comment.

6. Chief ALJ/Executive Director, Michael Cutri Report:

In August, the field offices closed approximately 25,694 cases. Incoming appeals

have returned to within 1% of pre-pandemic levels, and the average case age decreased to 68 days, significantly ahead of the 219-day national average.

Since the last Board meeting, Chief Cutri visited the Bay Area Office of Appeals and reported that this office has benefited significantly from the CAMS improvements.

Chief Cutri met with the Department of Labor, Region Six, and reported the positive feedback received.

Chief Cutri congratulated Supervising Judge Swenson on his appointment as Supervising ALJ for the Office of Tax Petitions. He also thanked Retired Annuitant ALJ Madlyn Hilton for her work with the Office of Tax Petitions over the past five years.

Chair Allen thanked ALJ Hilton for her years of service and congratulated Supervising ALJ Swenson on his appointment.

Vice-Chair Kent-Monning thanked Chief Cutri for visiting the field offices and commended them for their ongoing work with CAMS.

Member Wieckowski inquired about the field office case assignment process through CAMS. Chief Cutri explained that a team reviews the cases constantly to determine the assignment of cases to the appropriate field offices. Chief Cutri also explained the historical process of assigning cases.

There have been no security incidents since the last meeting.

7. Supervising ALJ for Appellate Operations, Rebecca Bach Report:

Supervising Judge Bach reported that during August, 91.8% of second-level appeals were resolved within 45 days and 97.1% within 75 days. The average case age was 22.4 days.

Vice-Chair Kent-Monning commended AO on their work and SJ Bach on her efforts in the AO cross-training program.

Member Wieckowski commended SJ Bach for the work on the cross-training program and thanked SJ Bach for allowing him to participate in the training.

8. Chief Information Officer, Jefferson Willoughby Report

CIO Willoughby reported that the CAMS stabilization team has delivered the first of four major software releases. The remaining software releases will be released in two-to-three-week waves. CIO Willoughby described the process of “user acceptance” testing when implementing updates.

11. Action Item – Revision to Board Policy Statement No. 6, Nepotism:

Member Eng inquired about the policy’s application to unspecified relationships that could cause a conflict of interest or ethical concern. Chief Counsel Woo-Sam confirmed that the policy would apply in these circumstances and that this coverage has existed since the Board’s initial adoption of its anti-nepotism policy in 2008.

Member Wieckowski inquired about the specific listing of certain familial relations as subject to the anti-nepotism policy. Chief Counsel Woo-Sam advised that the amendments to the policy were intended to conform to the State Personnel Board’s specifically listed anti-nepotism requirements as well as maintain the Board policy’s existing coverages.

Chair Allen commented on the merit principle in State employment and how personal relationships based on prior experiences working together should be considered. Chief Counsel Woo-Sam advised that knowledge of an individual’s performance gained from working together in the agency would be considered professional experience rather than a personal relationship as contemplated by the anti-nepotism policy.

Member Eng moved to adopt the revisions to Board Policy Statement No. 6 and authorize staff to implement conforming regulatory changes. The Board adopted the motion unanimously.

9-10. Action Item – Review and Approval of 2024-2025 Fiscal Year Budget:

Chief Silva provided an overview and proposal for the adoption of CUIAB’s \$79.4 million 2024/2025 Budget.

Member Wieckowski inquired about the decrease in amounts proposed allocated for training. Chief Silva explained that the allocated amount is based on field office requests. Member Wieckowski also inquired about the sites where field office paper files are stored. Chief Silva explained that the field offices are no longer utilizing the

State Records Center to store case files. Lastly, Member Wieckowski inquired about the allocation for interpreter services and whether interpreters are paid when they do not appear. Chief Silva stated he would confirm and advise the Board.

Member Eng inquired about a “reserve” allocation category in the proposed Budget. Chief Silva advised that there is a \$12.6 million reserve allocation in the proposed budget and explained how it can be utilized.

Vice-Chair Kent-Monning offered her comments on the proposed budget amounts and the impacts of CAMS on the budget allocations. Chief Silva advised that Administrative Services works with CUIAB’s program groups to develop the budget allocations and project the impact of CAMS on various categories of expenses.

Chair Allen thanked Chief Cutri and the senior staff for their work.

The Board adopted the Fiscal Year 2024/2025 budget proposal unanimously.

Closed Session:

There was no closed session.

Adjournment