



CALIFORNIA
Governor's Office of Business
and Economic Development

STATE OF CALIFORNIA • OFFICE OF GOVERNOR GAVIN NEWSOM

Office of Permit Assistance (OPA) Annual Report

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OVERVIEW: OFFICE OF PERMIT ASSISTANCE (OPA):

The Office of Permit Assistance (OPA) is housed within the Governor’s Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz) to provide support to the business community by:

- Providing permitting and regulatory compliance assistance to businesses;
- Assisting businesses in accessing information and resources related to permitting and regulatory compliance;
- Providing mediation and third-party facilitation to resolve conflicts between applicants and permitting and regulatory entities; and
- Working with federal, state, regional, and local permitting, and regulatory entities to exchange best practices and implement improvements to modernize permitting processes.

The following are highlights of OPA achievements during the reporting period of October 1, 2020 – September 30, 2021:

- Resolution of a total of 2,379 permitting inquiries.

Permit Assistance Type	Count
Complex Permit Mediation Projects	36
Complex Permit Identification Projects	60
Phone Calls – General Permit Inquiries	410
GO-Biz Help Desk Inquiries	1,873
Total	2,379

- Review and comment of 4 Standard Regulatory Impact Assessments (SRIA)
- Design, Data Validation and Development of online permit assistance tool, CalGOLD 2.0 (historically, California Government On-Line to Desktops). CalGOLD is an easy-to-use tool that allows businesses to search for permit requirements tailored to their business type and location in California.
- Implementation of new Quick Start Guides to cover additional industries. OPA staff developed three additional quick start guides to provide information on what permits to obtain to start the following industries:
 1. Janitorial Services
 2. Foreign Banking Organization

PERMITTING ASSISTANCE ACTIVITIES

The following sections detail significant activities of the OPA for the reporting period of October 1, 2020-September 30, 2021.

Regulatory Compliance Assistance

The OPA staff assists business owners in identifying permits and other regulatory requirements needed to start a new business or expand an existing one. Staff respond to business inquiries by email or phone and provide a list of regulatory entities and specific permitting requirements. Staff also coordinate pre-application meetings between business owners and the appropriate regulatory agencies to bring more clarity on more complex permitting requirements if this level of intervention is requested or if necessary.

In addition, OPA staff provide responses to requests submitted through the online California Business Portal Service Help Desk (<https://gobiz.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/requests/new>). Requests are typically resolved within 48 hours with permit specialists providing individually tailored permit identification information. Some requests may take longer based on the complexity of the situation.

For this reporting period, OPA answered a total of 1,873 permitting inquiries received through the Help Desk. The chart below is a summary of the inquiries received by region:

California Region	Count
Bay Area	320
Central Coast	56
Central Sierra	8
Central Valley	95
Greater Los Angeles Region	475
Greater Sacramento	121
Inland Empire	129
Northern California	136
Not Available	320
San Diego & Imperial County Region	213
Grand Total	1,873

Permit Identification

During the reporting period, OPA staff received 60 requests that required more complex permit identification services. A complex request requires additional research and engagement with regulatory partners to ascertain permitting requirements and typically takes more than a day to resolve.

A few case studies of engagement on permit identification services are highlighted below:

April 2021	<p>Foreign-based Autonomous Vehicle Company (Kern County)</p> <p>Background: On April 14th 2021, a Brazilian autonomous vehicles company contacted OPA indicating interest in expanding to California. They sought to locate near customers with large industrial facilities (for example, mines) that could use autonomous vehicles for internal transportation needs, thereby, avoiding regulations related to driving on public roads.</p> <p>Permitting Challenge: The company was struggling to ascertain which forms and permits would be required to operate.</p> <p>Achieved Result: OPA staff walked the company through the GO-Biz Quick Start Guide for general businesses. OPA staff also connected the company with permitting specialists at Department of Motor Vehicles autonomous vehicles section and other applicable state and local regulatory agencies to provide the business with the appropriate forms and information.</p> <p>Resolution Time: 2 Days</p> <p>Involved Agencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> California Department of Motor Vehicles
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • California Secretary of State • California Department of Tax & Fee Administration • California Franchise Tax Board • California Employment Development Department • California Department of Industrial Relations
<p>April 2021</p>	<p>Out-of-State Company (San Francisco County)</p> <p>Background: On April 28th 2021, a corporate officer for a Radiological imaging company from Fitchburg, Massachusetts contacted OPA for permit and other regulatory assistance to introduce their products in California and hire employees in California.</p> <p>Permitting Challenge: Company did not know who to contact nor which permits they would need.</p> <p>Achieved Result: OPA Staff connected the company with Secretary of State to register their company; California Tax and Fee Administration to obtain seller’s permit and resale certificate; California Franchise Tax Board to pay taxes for their business entity; Department of Industrial Relations to get information about the labor laws; and the California Department of Employment Development to register as an employer.</p> <p>Resolution Time: 1 week</p> <p>Involved Agencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • California Secretary of State • California Department of Tax & Fee Administration • California Franchise Tax Board • California Employment Development Department • California Department of Industrial Relations
<p>February 2021</p>	<p>Home Health Care Business (Solano County)</p> <p>Background: On February 18th, 2021 a prospective business contacted OPA regarding the permitting requirements for launching a new home health care facility business.</p> <p>Permitting Challenge: Needed assistance with determining the regulatory requirements for operating such a business.</p> <p>Achieved Result: OPA connected the company with Home Care Services Bureau (HCSB) and provided a list of all the local, state and federal permits along with contact information for the regulatory agencies.</p> <p>Resolution Time: 2 days</p> <p>Involved Agencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • California Secretary of State’s Office (SOS) • California Franchise Tax Board (FTB) • California Employment Development Department (EDD) • California Department of Industrial Relations (DIR)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home Care Services Bureau (HCSB) • California Department of Tax and Fee Administration (CDTFA)
December 2020	<p>Out-of-State Speech, Language and Audiology Practice (Sacramento County)</p> <p>Background: On December 18, 2020, a speech, language, and audiology practice from Georgia contacted OPA. They were interested in opening a clinic in California.</p> <p>Permitting Challenge: The company was unable to determine information on permitting requirements to operate such a business.</p> <p>Achieved Result: OPA reached out to the California Board of Speech-Language & Audiology & Hearing Aid Dispensers and scheduled a meeting between the practice owner and Board representatives. OPA also provided them with a list and contact information for local, state and federal permitting requirements. The permitting needs of the practitioner were addressed, and the practice moved forward with filing application under the direction of a Board of Speech-Language & Audiology & Hearing Aid Dispensers representatives.</p> <p>Resolution Time: 2 days.</p> <p>Involved Agencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA)- Board of Speech-Language & Audiology & Hearing Aid Dispensers

Mediation Services

OPA offers neutral mediation services for business entities and regulating government agencies. Case resolution can last anywhere from a few weeks to several months, depending on the complexity of the dispute. Mediation services are not unique to any specific industry or issue type.

During the reporting period, OPA staff received 36 requests that required complex permit mediation services. Complex permit mediation projects took between one and 60 days to resolve.

OPA helped identify permits and permit processes related to local, state, and federal permitting authorities.

A few case studies of OPA engagement on permit mediation assistance are highlighted below:

September 2021	<p>Alcoholic Beverage License for a Bar (Sacramento County)</p> <p>Background: On September 27th, 2021, a wine bar owner contacted OPA staff to assist them in getting their permit issued before their grand opening. The business’s address suite number was reassigned by the city and the business owner submitted the updated information to the Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC). They were informed that a one-month wait would be needed before they could utilize their license.</p> <p>Permit Challenge: The company contacted OPA to ask for help to get their license issued as soon as possible due to extenuating circumstances.</p> <p>Achieved Results: OPA reached out to ABC and discussed the possibility of letting</p>
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	<p>the bar open to avoid additional financial burden on the bar owner. ABC worked with the business owner and the license was issued next day.</p> <p>Resolution Time: 2 days</p> <p>Involved Agencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC)
August 2021	<p>Energy Company (Tehama County)</p> <p>Background: On August 3rd, 2021, an energy company contacted OPA regarding a lien against the operation of their potential business site due to environmental concerns and violations from previous business owners.</p> <p>Permit Challenge: The company could not connect with the regulatory agencies to address the clean-up issue and removal of lien.</p> <p>Achieved Results: OPA scheduled a meeting with the California Department of Toxic Substance (DTSC), site mitigation staff of Tehama County, an environmental testing consulting firm, and the company. DTSC and the county laid out path forward to completion of the investigation and removal of lien against the site.</p> <p>Resolution Time: 4 weeks</p> <p>Involved Agencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Toxic Substances (DTSC) County of Tehama
June 2021	<p>Garment Manufacturing (Los Angeles County)</p> <p>Background: On June 14th, 2021, an unpermitted garment manufacturer located in Asia contacted OPA to seek assistance. The business had been operating since January 2021 with approximately 50 employees.</p> <p>Permit Challenge: The business did not know they needed to have the Garment Manufacturing Permit from Department of Industrial Relation to operate a garment business and did not know about the process or how to apply. Without this permit the company could be shut down.</p> <p>Achieved Results: OPA scheduled a roundtable meeting with DIR-Garment Manufacture Unit, company and CalBIS Team. The DIR Supervisor of the Garment Manufacture Unit was able to get a waiver from their legal department to allow the company’s HR representative to take the state test, required for permit processing and was also able to issue a temporary permit to the company for 30 days.</p> <p>Resolution Time: 1 day</p> <p>Involved Agencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Industrial Relations (DIR) -Garment Manufacture Unit
May 2021	<p>Revitalization Project (Santa Clara County)</p> <p>Background: On May 11th, 2021, OPA was contacted by the City of San Jose to assist</p>

	<p>a real estate developer who was looking to purchase redevelopment property in downtown San Jose. To do this, they needed approval from Housing and Community Development Department (HCD)</p> <p>Permitting Challenge: The company was facing challenges in getting approval from HCD. The developer had a contract with a property owner that was going to expire within a week.</p> <p>Achieved Result: OPA reached out to the Loan/Grant Closings unit of HCD to discuss the path forward. OPA arranged a meeting between HCD staff and the company. On May 14th, HCD delivered the requested information and approval to the company and the project was able to move forward.</p> <p>Resolution Time: 4 days</p> <p>Involved Agencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD)
<p>May 2021</p>	<p>Bakery (Alameda County)</p> <p>Background: On May 21st, 2021, OPA was contacted by a Berkeley, CA Bakery owner who was having difficulty in getting his processed food registration application approved. As a result, inspection of his facility was delayed.</p> <p>Permitting Challenge: The company needed help in understanding the reasons for delay and mitigating the ripple effect on other processes needed to operate.</p> <p>Achieved Result: OPA contacted California Department of Public Health (CDPH) to learn more about the process and was informed that due to Covid-19 emergency coupled with an increased influx in applications was causing delays. CDPH conducted the inspection and worked with the company for issuance of the permit</p> <p>Resolution Time: 3 days</p> <p>Involved Agencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • California Department of Public Health (CDPH)
<p>April 2021</p>	<p>Fast Food (Los Angeles County)</p> <p>Background: On April 12th, 2021, a chain of food service stores wanted to bring healthy fast food to underserved communities at reasonable prices. The company submitted their plans to the City of Monterey Park Building and Planning Department. The City approved their plans and issued city permits.</p> <p>Permitting Challenge: The business owners also submitted their plans to the County of Los Angeles Health Department. Due to COVID-19, the county had a shortage of staff. Through regular processing timeframes, it would have taken 45 days or longer to get their plans approved.</p> <p>Achieved Result: OPA was able to meet with the County public health officer, explain the company's situation. After review, the county was able to expedite the final plan review and issue the permit to the company chain.</p>

	<p>Resolution Time: 3 weeks</p> <p>Involved Agencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Monterey Park Economic Development • County of Los Angeles Public Health Department
<p>April 2021</p>	<p>Cannabis Manufacturer (Monterey County)</p> <p>Background: On April 19th, 2021, a Cannabis farmer from King City contacted OPA seeking assistance for their immature stock and seed to be approved to enter licensee’s inventory without a source. The reason for this request was that the unsourced inventory embodies proprietary genetics that were preserved for purposes of future cultivation, and they were protected in the meantime to avoid intellectual property theft and/or contamination.</p> <p>Permitting Challenge: The nursery facility was ready to begin operations, however, the owners were waiting for the approval from California Department of Food & Agriculture (CDFA) for the entry of immature stock and seeds into the facility.</p> <p>Achieved Result: OPA reached out to the registration unit and organized a meeting with the company and CDFA representative to resolve the issue. CDFA advised the business owner about the regulations and steps to become compliant to get immature stock and seed from the licensed nursery.</p> <p>Resolution Time: 10 days</p> <p>Involved Agencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • California Department of Food & Agriculture
<p>November 2020</p>	<p>Nonprofit Food Delivery (Santa Clara County)</p> <p>Background: On November 3, 2020, a nonprofit business reached out to OPA seeking assistance with approval of their food delivery to elderly citizen’s project. After their application was deemed complete, they were informed of additional requirements. The Permit Streamlining Act states that new requirements may only be added after an initial application if they resulted from conditions which were not known and could not have been known by the public agency at the time the application was received. State Responsibility Area (SRA) Fire Safe Regulations were not new. Both the CAL FIRE and Santa Clara County planning departments were aware of these requirements in September of 2020 when the application was first submitted. These requirements were not listed in any of the application checklists or materials on the County permitting website.</p> <p>Permitting Challenge: The business’s application approval was delayed due to additional requirements. They also needed a certificate of registration from the Secretary of State.</p> <p>Achieved Result: OPA staff contacted the County permitting agencies to provide the background. County officials requested additional documents from the nonprofit and subsequently approved the application.</p>

	<p>Resolution Time: 7 days</p> <p>Involved Agencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Santa Clara County • Secretary of State
<p>October 2020</p>	<p>Grocery Market (Los Angeles County)</p> <p>Background: On October 14th, 2021, A member of the Pico Rivera Chamber of Commerce contacted OPA asking for permit to establish a Market located in the City of Carson.</p> <p>Permitting Challenge: The owners submitted the application to the County of Los Angeles Public Health for inspection and a grading permit and were waiting for four months to hear back from the county.</p> <p>Achieved Result: OPA contacted the Los Angeles County Public Health Department regarding the status of the permit application. The County granted a temporary permit to allow the store to open on schedule along with the permit to accept Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards. The opening of the Market resulted in the creation of 30 jobs.</p> <p>Resolution Time: 4 days</p> <p>Involved Agencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County of Los Angeles Public Health Department

CONSOLIDATING & DISSEMINATING INFORMATION

California Online Permit Assistance Tool (CalGOLD)

The OPA is responsible for maintaining the California Online Permit Assistance Tool – CalGOLD (www.calgold.ca.gov). CalGOLD is a tool that allows businesses to search for permit requirements tailored to their business type and location in California. Search results are sorted by local, state, and federal requirements, and, for each regulatory agency listed, contact information including physical address, web address, and telephone number is provided.

CalGOLD also includes a Forms and Fees Finder, developed, and maintained by the relevant department, to help businesses find application forms and associated fees.

Website traffic for CalGOLD during the reporting period is not available. The California Department of Technology (CDT) currently manages/hosts the current CalGOLD application. CDT made a change in August 2020 and that inadvertently changed the CalGOLD analytics tracker which resulted in a stop of all data collection. GO-Biz’s Informational Technology (IT) unit contacted CDT to resolve the issue and potentially recover web traffic data; however, the historical data was not recoverable. The issue has been addressed and web traffic data will be available for the next reporting period.

CalGOLD 2.0 New Application & Data Migration Activities

Currently the OPA and the GO-Biz IT Unit have been working on the development of CalGOLD 2.0 to transfer existing permits data into a new system that will allow GO-Biz staff to better manage the database, make timely updates and additions, allow for external partners to update content, and

provide a platform for further agency collaboration to improve the overall permitting process in California.

CalGOLD 2.0 implements new technology, design, and information to improve the overall user experience and quality of permit assistance information. These are the achievements of the update in the current reporting period:

- Applied the current State of California web template.
- Implemented responsive design to allow for CalGOLD 2.0 to be used on desktop computers, laptops, tablets, phones, and other devices.
- Redesigned CalGOLD 2.0 to be hosted in GO-Biz's cloud environment. CalGOLD 1.0 was previously hosted in a physical server environment. CalGOLD 1.0 has been moved to CDT's cloud environment.
- Redesigned the new application to improve the ability to create and update all permit related information, permit authorities, contacts, and cities.
- Performed data migration and clean up from CalGOLD 1.0 to CalGOLD 2.0, updating all permit and administrative contact information, and removing redundancies. Original data included unique records for every combination of business type (North American Industry Classification System - NAICS), business location (ZIP code), and administrative entity under which each permit applied: the new version restructures this information to a single record per permit. Original data made up 370,000 entries, including near duplicates of many permits that required both computational and by-hand analysis for cleanup.
- In the completed form, the current data covers 1,260 unique permits across nearly 400 entities at the federal, state, regional, county, and city level.

A current version of the CalGOLD 2.0 production environment can be viewed and accessed through the following link: <https://prod.calgold.ca.gov/>.

A main goal for the CalGOLD 2.0 platform is to allow permitting agencies to update their permits content in real-time. This would shift the responsibilities for maintaining data in the tool to local and state permitting authorities, with GO-Biz providing technical assistance to agency partners for data maintenance.

GO-Biz sees the build-out of CalGOLD 2.0 as an opportunity for future collaboration with permitting officials to provide more customer service focused engagements with applicants in the overall permitting process.

Quick Start Guides

Quick Start Guides for common industry types are available for business owners to serve as reference tools for new business launch. These guides are available on the California Business Portal at <http://businessportal.ca.gov/business-assistance/start-a-business/quick-start-guides/>.

The Quick Start Guides are intended to be used as a singular guide for commonly asked questions as it relates to specific industries.

For this reporting period, the GO-Biz Business Portal Quick Start Guide webpage received over 13,000 unique visits from users. The site maintains Quick Start Guides on the following industries:

- Alcoholic Beverage Licenses
- Aquaculture
- Automotive Repair

- Barber Shops and Beauty Salons
- Building or Engineering Contractor
- Business Consultants
- Cannabis Operations
- Catering Businesses
- Cottage Food Operation
- Domestic Repair (Handyman)
- Fitness Centers
- Mobile Food Vendors
- Pet or House Sitting
- Photographer
- Physical Therapist
- Restaurants, Bakeries, and Bars
- Retail Stores
- Software/Mobile App Developer
- Tutoring
- Recycling and Recovery

For this reporting period, the OPA developed and uploaded 2 new Quick Start Guides for the following industries:

- Janitorial Services
- Financial Institutions- Banks

MAJOR REGULATIONS - STANDARDIZED REGULATORY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS (SRIA)

The OPA team reviewed and commented on a total of four Standardized Regulatory Impact Assessments (SRIAs) from State departments in the current reporting period. State agencies must conduct a Standardized Regulatory Impact Assessment (SRIA) when it estimates that a proposed regulation has an economic impact exceeding \$50 million. Within 10 days of receiving an SRIA, the Department of Finance (DOF) must provide a copy of the form to GO-Biz. GO-Biz may provide comment to the DOF within 10 days thereafter.

September 2021

1. Department of Industrial Relations: Regulations for the Heat Illness Prevention in Indoor Places of Employment

August 2021

2. California Air Resources Board's Proposed Amendments to the heavy-duty inspection and maintenance regulation for Emission Control

July 2021

3. California Air Resources Board's Proposed Amendments to the Regulation to Reduce Emissions from Diesel Engines on Commercial Harbor Craft Operated within California Waters and 24 Nautical Miles of the California Baseline

July 2020

4. California Department of Justice's Proposed Regulatory Amendments to New Dealer Record of Sale (DROS) Fee

CALIFORNIA BUSINESS PORTAL REGULATIONS & COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE

For this reporting period, OPA hosted one interagency meeting with multiple State departments, OPA worked with the following state agencies to go over targeted efforts to streamline permitting processes. A summary of those efforts is provided below:

Correspondence with Specific State Regulatory Agencies:

1. Department of Consumer Affairs / Boards & Bureaus
 - a. Contractors State Licensing Board
 - b. Board of Barbering & Cosmetology
2. Alcoholic Beverages Control Department
3. Department of Financial Protection and Innovation
4. Department of Food & Agriculture
5. Department of Public Health
6. Department of Toxic Substances Control
7. Secretary of State's Office
8. Department of Fish & Wildlife
9. California Air Resources Board
10. Employment Development Department
11. Department of Tax & Fee Administration
12. Franchise Tax Board
13. Department of Industrial Relations
14. California Commission on Disability Access
15. Department of Housing and Community Development
16. Department of Real Estate
17. Department of Insurance

Plans for Quarterly Meetings Next Report Cycle

OPA's intent for the next reporting cycle will be to partner with these departments to pilot their registration and content update engagements within CalGOLD 2.0.