

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL APPEALS BOARD

STAFF REPORT

BOARD MEETING

April 8, 2022

SUBJECT:

Alcoholic Beverage Control Appeals Board ("Board") Proposed Regulations

BACKGROUND:

At the Board's hearing on April 9, 2021, the Board voted on, and approved, proposed regulations adding, amending, or revoking rules 176-178, 181.1, 183-184, 187-190, 193-197.1, 198-199. The Board filed its proposed regulations with the Office of Administrative Law ("OAL") and published its Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on June 25, 2021. The 45-day public comment period allowed interested persons to submit written comments to the Board on or before August 10, 2021. Initially, the Board did not schedule a public hearing. However, a public hearing was held on July 29, 2021 after one was requested. The Board received one oral comment at the July 29th hearing and one written comment prior to the August 10th deadline.

At the Board's public hearing on September 3, 2021, the Board determined that neither of the comments received were responsive or relevant to the Board's proposed rulemaking. On that basis, the Board determined that no changes to the proposed regulations were needed and voted to submit the proposed rulemaking file to OAL for review, and ultimately, publication.

After its review, OAL contacted the Board to discuss the proposed rulemaking package. Several additional revisions were made to sections 177, 178, 181.1, 194, 195, 196, 197, 197.1, 198, and 199. On January 4, 2022, the Board voted to adopt the proposed changes and initiate a 15-day comment period. The 15-day comment period concluded on January 20, 2022. No public comments were received.

On January 27, 2022, the Board voted to submit the modification to proposed regulation back to OAL for final review and approval. During OAL's review, OAL informed the Board that the Board's second and pending proposed rulemaking package regarding electronic filing was "substantially related" to the Board's current rulemaking package. On that basis, OAL recommended that the Board

withdraw its current rulemaking file and complete a second 15-day notice to include all proposed changes related to electronic filing.

The Board approved this course of action on March 11, 2022. That same date, the rulemaking file was withdrawn, and the Notice of Second Modified Text, amending and/or adding proposed rules 178, 181, 181.1, 184, 193, and 195, was published for a second 15-day comment period.

ANALYSIS:

The Board did not receive any comments during the 15-day comment period. As such, there are no comments to analyze or responses to give. The second modified proposed regulations (Attachment 1) remain the same as the Board approved on March 11, 2022. Further, the justifications given for the proposed changes remain unchanged, and can be found in the Second Addendum to the Initial Statement of Reasons (ISOR) (Attachment 2). The Board has complied with the Administrative Procedures Act in all aspects of the rulemaking process to this point. If approved, the Board will submit the proposed rulemaking file back to OAL for review, and ultimately, publication.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Text of Modified Proposed ABCAB regulations
2. Addendum to ISOR

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the proposed ABCAB modified regulations and transmit the regulatory package to OAL for final review/approval. Allow for the Board's Executive Officer to make nonsubstantive changes to the proposed regulations during OAL's review process.

STAFF CONTACT:

Taryn Kinney, Executive Officer
ABCAB
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**ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL APPEALS BOARD
TEXT OF SECOND MODIFIED PROPOSED REGULATIONS
April 8, 2022
ATTACHMENT 1**

Legend

Text of Regulations Noticed to the Public	Additions in <u>underline</u> Deletions in striketrough
Text of Modified Regulations Noticed to the Public	Additions in <u>double underline</u> Deletions in double striketrough
Text of Second Modified Regulations Noticed to the Public	Additions in <u>bold, underline and italics</u> Deletions in bold, striketrough, and italics

4 CCR § 176

§ 176. Location of Offices. ~~[Repeated]~~

(a) Any reference to the Board's "principal office" means the Board's physical mailing address as listed at abcab.ca.gov.

(b) Any reference to the Department's "principal office" means the Department's headquarters and its physical mailing address as listed at abc.ca.gov.

Note: Authority cited: Section 23077, Business and Professions Code; and Article XX, Section 22, California Constitution. Reference: Sections 23050 and 23075, Business and Professions Code.

4 CCR § 177

§ 177. ~~Tenses, Gender, and Number. [Repealed]~~

For purposes of these rules and regulations, any reference to gender shall extend to all genders and any reference to the singular number shall extend to and include the plural number also.

Note: Authority cited: Section 23077, Business and Professions Code; and Article XX, Section 22, California Constitution. Reference: ~~Section 23077, Business and Professions Code; and Article XX, Section 22, California Constitution Sections 23081 and 23083, Business and Professions Code.~~

4 CCR § 178

§ 178. Definitions.

For the purpose of these rules and regulations:

(a) "Board" means Alcoholic Beverage Control Appeals Board.

(b) "Department" means Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control.

(c) ~~Unless the context otherwise requires, the words "appellant" or "party," include the attorney or other authorized agent of such person.~~ "Appellant" means any person or entity who files an appeal with the Board.

(d) ~~"Party" includes the Department, the appellant and any person, other than an officer or an employee of the Department in his official capacity, who has been allowed to appear in the proceeding before the Department.~~ "Respondent" means any person or entity who responds to an appeal filed with the Board.

(e) "Party" includes the Department, appellant(s), and respondent(s)

(f) "Person or entity" includes the attorney or authorized agent of a party.

(g) "Day" refers to a calendar day, unless otherwise stated.

(h) "File" or "filed" refers to ~~when the date~~ a document is received by the Board ~~except when a document is electronically at the Board's electronic mail address as listed at www.abcab.ca.gov, or by mailed~~ to the ~~Board principal office;~~ ~~provided, however, an appeal mailed to the Board by means of~~ ~~via~~ registered or ~~certified~~ mail, ~~in which case, the document is~~ ~~shall be~~ deemed "filed" ~~with the Board~~ on the date of ~~the registry or certification~~ with the United States Post Office.

(i) "Section" or "subsection" refers to the rules and regulations contained in Title 4, Division 1.1 of the California Code of Regulations, unless otherwise specified.

(j) "Serve" or "served" refers to the manner of service listed in section 181.1.

(k) "Sign," "signed," or "signature" includes both physical and electronic

signatures.

Note: Authority cited: Section 23077, Business and Professions Code; and Article XX, Section 22, California Constitution. Reference: Sections 23077 and 23081, Business and Professions Code; and Article XX, Section 22, California Constitution.

4 CCR § 181

§ 181. ~~Administration. [Repealed]~~ Proof of Service.

(a) A proof of service shall be attached to any documents filed or served under sections **184, 187, 193, 195, 196, 198 and 199175 through 200.1.**

(b) A proof of service shall include all of the following:

(1) The address where the document was served;

(2) the date of service;

(3) the manner of service;

(4) a statement that the person making service is over the age of 18 years; and;

(5) signature of the person making service, under penalty of perjury.

(c) Proof of electronic service may be in electronic form, subject to the provisions of sections 181.1 and 181.2.

Note: Authority cited: Section 23077, Business and Professions Code; and Article XX, Section 22, California Constitution. Reference: Sections 23081 and 23081.5, Business and Professions Code.

4 CCR § 181.1

§ 181.1 Manner of Service.

(a) A party may serve a document to the Board using any of the following means of service:

(1) in-person service, ~~or~~;

(2) service by mail ~~(regular or certified)~~; ~~or~~

(3) electronic service to the Board's electronic mail address as listed at www.abcab.ca.gov.

(b) A party may serve a document to the Department or other party using any of the following means of service:

(1) in-person service, ~~or~~;

(2) service by mail ~~(regular or certified)~~; ~~or~~

(3) electronic service, subject to the requirements of section 181.2.

Note: Authority cited: Section 23077, Business and Professions Code; and Article XX, Section 22, California Constitution. Reference: Sections 23081, 23081.5, and 23088, Business and Professions Code.

4 CCR § 181.2

§ 181.2. Electronic Service.

(a) A party agrees to accept electronic service by:

(1) serving a notice on all parties that the party accepts electronic service; and

(2) filing the notice with the Board.

(b) The notice must include the electronic mail address at which the party agrees to accept service.

(c) The notice must be signed by the party agreeing to accept electronic service.

(d) Termination or modification of electronic service

(1) A party may terminate its agreement to accept electronic service by filing a notice of termination of electronic service with the Board and serving the notice on all other parties.

(2) A party may modify its electronic service by filing a notice of modification of electronic service with the Board and serve the notice on all other parties.

Note: Authority cited: Section 23077, Business and Professions Code; and Article XX, Section 22, California Constitution. Reference: Sections 23077, 23081, and 23081.5, Business and Professions Code; and Article XX, Section 22, California Constitution.

4 CCR § 183

§ 183. ~~Form of Appeal [Repealed]~~ Notice of Appeal.

Any person or entity aggrieved by the decision of the Department as defined in Business and Professions Code section 23080 may appeal the Department's decision to the Board as follows:

(a) The appellant shall file a Notice of Appeal with the Board in accordance with Business and Professions Code section 23081.5.

(b) The appellant must file the Notice of Appeal with the Board on or before the tenth day after the last day on which reconsideration of the underlying decision of the Department can be requested pursuant to Government Code section 11521(a).

(c) An appellant shall also serve a copy of the Notice of Appeal upon all parties, including the Department at its principal office.

(d) Failure to comply with the provisions in this section shall result in dismissal of the appeal pursuant to section 199.

Note: Authority cited: Section 23077, Business and Professions Code; and Article XX, Section 22, California Constitution. Reference: Sections 23081 and 23084, Business and Professions Code; and Article XX, Section 22, California Constitution.

4 CCR § 184

§ 184. Contents of Notice of Appeal.

~~(a) The Notice of Appeal shall be signed by the appellant **or his its authorized agent.** The Notice of Appeal should state the general grounds for appeal and the specific questions to be considered by the Board on review. The **original and three copies of the** Notice of Appeal shall be filed with the Board and **a copy** shall also be served upon **the Department and** all parties to the proceeding before the Department, **including the Department at its principal office.** Proof of service shall be filed with the **original** Notice of Appeal.~~

~~(b) The Notice of Appeal should state the general grounds for appeal (see Business and Professions Code Section 23084) and the specific questions to be considered by the Board on review. The original and three copies of the Notice of Appeal shall be filed with the Board and a copy shall also be served upon all parties to the proceeding before the Department, including the Department at its principal office in Sacramento. Such service shall be made by delivering or mailing a copy of the Notice of Appeal to each party. Proof of service shall be filed with the original Notice of Appeal.~~

~~(c) The Notice of Appeal should be typewritten or printed upon paper 8 1/2 x 11 inches in size and be double spaced.~~

Note: Authority cited: Section 23077, Business and Professions Code; and Article XX, Section 22, California Constitution. Reference: Sections 23081 and 23084, Business and Professions Code; and Article XX, Section 22, California Constitution.

4 CCR § 187

§ 187. Filing Record. Preparation, Payment, and Filing of the Record of Appeal.

(a) Upon the filing of the Notice of Appeal, the Department shall calculate the estimated cost of the record of appeal, **including the transcript in accordance with the fee schedule provided in Section 69950 of the Government Code**, notify appellant thereof, and demand payment. When a Notice of Appeal has been filed with the Board, the Board shall request the Department to furnish appellant an itemized statement of the estimated cost of the record on appeal **in accordance with the fee schedule provided in Section 69950 of the Government Code**.

(b) Appellant shall make payment to the Department within fifteen days after the date of the Department's demand for payment.

(c) Cost of the record ~~on~~ appeal shall include the ~~filing of an original and three copies of the reporter's transcript and file transcript, accompanied by the original exhibits, with the Board~~ preparation and filing of the record of appeal with the Board.

(d) Such statement of costs shall also include the cost of preparing and ~~delivering to appellant~~ serving a copy of the reporter's transcript, exhibits and file transcript ~~record of appeal on appellant~~, should any or all ~~it~~ be requested by appellant.

(e) ~~In those instances, however, w~~Where the Department has previously ordered an original copy of the reporter's transcript because of action taken by it pursuant to Government Code Section 11517(c), the appellant need only pay the fee for a first copy of the reporter's transcript, plus the fee for each additional copy, as provided by Section 69950, for the record on appeal furnished to the Board and appellant.

(f) Upon receipt of payment from appellant, the Department shall ~~forthwith~~ immediately arrange for the preparation of the record on appeal and file it with the Board.

Note: Authority cited: Section 23077, Business and Professions Code; and Article XX, Section 22, California Constitution. Reference: Section 23083, Business and Professions Code; and Article XX, Section 22, California Constitution.

4 CCR § 188

§ 188. Contents of Record.

The record on appeal filed with the Board shall consist of:

~~(1)~~(a) The Department's file transcript, which shall include:

- (1) all notices and orders issued by the administrative law judge and the Department, including any proposed decision by an administrative law judge and the final decision issued by the Department;
- (2) pleadings ~~and correspondence by a~~ filed by any party;
- (3) any filed notices, orders, or pleadings ~~and correspondence~~ pertaining to reconsideration;

~~(2)~~(b) the hearing reporter's transcript of all proceedings;

~~(3)~~(c) exhibits admitted or rejected.

Note: Authority cited: Section 23077, Business and Professions Code; and Article XX, Section 22, California Constitution. Reference: Section 23083, Business and Professions Code; and Article XX, Section 22, California Constitution.

4 CCR § 189

~~§ 189. Documents Filed with Board.~~

~~In addition to the Notice of Appeal and the record on appeal, other documents which may be legally filed with and received by the Board in connection with the appeal, shall also become part of the record.~~

~~Note: Authority cited: Section 23077, Business and Professions Code; and Article XX, Section 22, California Constitution. Reference: Sections 23083 and 23085, Business and Professions Code; and Article XX, Section 22, California Constitution.~~

4 CCR § 190

~~§ 190. Cost of Record and Payment Therefor.~~

~~The Department shall calculate the cost of the record on appeal as provided by Section 187, shall notify appellant thereof, and demand payment. Payment shall be made by appellant to the Department within fifteen days after the date of issuance of such demand.~~

~~Note: Authority cited: Section 23077, Business and Professions Code; and Article XX, Section 22, California Constitution. Reference: Section 23083, Business and Professions Code; Section 69950, Government Code; and Article XX, Section 22, California Constitution.~~

4 CCR § 193

§ 193. Filing of Briefs ~~by Parties.~~

(a) Appellant may file an opening brief, respondent may file a reply brief, and appellant may thereafter file a closing brief.

~~(a) Form and Filing of Briefs. Briefs shall be typewritten or printed upon paper 8 1/2 x 11 inches in size. Reproduction thereof may be by any process, provided all copies are clear and permanently legible. Only one side of the paper shall be used, unless printed, and the margins shall not be less than one inch on all sides of the page. The lines shall be double spaced. Headings shall be capitalized. An original and three copies of all briefs shall be filed with the Board. The original of each brief shall contain a certification that copies have been served upon or mailed to each party, his attorney or agent, as well as the Department, and the Attorney General's office.~~

~~(b) Time for Service and Filing. The opening brief shall be served and filed with the Board and served on all parties to the appeal within fifteen³⁰ days after of the date on the notice issued by the Board stating that the record on appeal has been filed with the Board. The reply brief shall be served and filed with the Board and served on all parties within fifteen²⁰ days after the filing date of the opening brief with the Board is served. The Any closing brief shall be served and filed with the Board and served on all parties within five^{seven} days after the filing date of the reply brief with the Board is served. An extension of time within which to file a brief will be granted only upon a showing of good cause. A proof of service shall be included with each brief indicating the date it was served.~~

(c) A party to the appeal may request an extension of time to file a brief. Any objections to an extension request may be filed with the Board within three days of the request. The extension request will be decided by the Board, or its executive director if so authorized, without hearing and will be granted only upon a showing of good cause.

Note: Authority cited: Section 23077, Business and Professions Code; and Article XX, Section 22, California Constitution. Reference: Sections 23081 and 23083, Business and Professions Code; and Article XX, Section 22, California Constitution.

4 CCR § 194

§ 194. ~~Briefs by Other Interested Persons.~~~~[Repealed]~~ Requirements for Briefs.

(a) All briefs shall be double-spaced on paper 8 1/2 x 11 inches in size. Only one side of the paper shall be used, and the margins shall be at least one inch on all sides of the page. Headings shall be capitalized, in bold, or underlined. If typed, a minimum of size 12 font shall be used.

(b) Briefs shall comply with the following length restrictions:

(1) Opening briefs shall be no more than 20 pages in length.

(2) Reply briefs shall be no more than 15 pages in length.

(3) Closing briefs shall be no more than 10 pages in length.

(c) The page limitations set forth in subsection (b) do not include exhibits, appendices, tables of contents, or cover or title pages.

(d) Any party to the appeal may request a waiver of the page length restrictions in subsection (b). The waiver request will be decided by the Board, or its executive director if so authorized, without hearing and will only be granted upon a showing of good cause.

Note: Authority cited: Section 23077, Business and Professions Code; and Article XX, Section 22, California Constitution. Reference: Sections 23081 and 23083, Business and Professions Code; and Article XX, Section 22, California Constitution.

4 § CCR 195

§ 195. Motions.

~~The provisions of Section 193(a) as to form and filing of briefs shall apply to a motion filed with the Board. Any showing in opposition to the motion of a party shall be served and filed within ten days after the date on the notice by the Board providing therefor. The Board may place any motion on the calendar for hearing or the Board may otherwise dispose of the motion.~~

(a) A party may file a motion with the Board as follows:

(1) A motion shall follow the same formatting requirements for briefs set forth in section 194(a).

(2) A motion shall be no more than 10 pages in length unless accompanied by a declaration showing good cause for additional pages, but in no case shall be more than 15 pages in length.

(3) A motion filed ~~to~~with the Board shall include proof of service that the motion was served on all parties to the appeal.

(b) Any party opposing a motion may file a written opposition with the Board within seven days of service of the initial motion. The opposition shall follow the same requirements described in subsections (a)(1) through (3).

(c) The Board may place any motion on the calendar for a hearing or may ~~otherwise~~ elect to rule on the motion without oral argument.

Note: Authority cited: Section 23077, Business and Professions Code; and Article XX, Section 22, California Constitution. Reference: Sections 23081 and 23083, Business and Professions Code; and Article XX, Section 22, California Constitution.

4 CCR § 196

§ 196. Hearing.

(a) After the Record of Appeal is filed with the Board, the Board shall set a hearing date and time, and serve notice to all parties.

(b) Any party wishing to present oral argument before the Board shall notify the Board and all parties in writing at least 21 days before the scheduled hearing date. Failure to timely request oral argument ~~may~~ shall result in submission of the appeal on the pleadings. However, failure to timely request oral argument does not preclude a party from seeking a continuance of the hearing in accordance with subsections (d) and (e).

(c) Notwithstanding subsection (b), the Board may direct for oral argument to be conducted on the appeal even if no party requests it. If oral argument is directed by the Board, a separate notice shall be sent by the Board to all parties.

(d) A party seeking a continuance of the hearing shall first attempt to stipulate to an alternative hearing date with all other parties to the appeal, and then make a request to the Board to reschedule. If any other party will not stipulate to continuance, the requesting party can submit a request to the Board to continue the hearing. A party may object to the continuance request within five days of such request.

(e) Requests by any party for a continuance of oral argument may be granted by the Board, or its executive director if so authorized, without a hearing and upon a showing of good cause.

Note: Authority cited: Section 23077, Business and Professions Code; and Article XX, Section 22, California Constitution. Reference: Sections 23081 and 23083, Business and Professions Code; and Article XX, Section 22, California Constitution.

4 CCR § 197

§ 197. Oral Argument.

(a) In the event oral argument is requested or ordered:

~~(a) Unless otherwise ordered by the Board: (1) A party~~ Each side ~~The appellants, collectively, and respondents, collectively, shall each be allowed a maximum of 30~~15 minutes for oral argument;

~~(2) not more than~~only one person ~~on a side for a party need~~ may ~~be~~ heard;

~~(3) the appellant, or moving party, shall have the right to open and close; however, both statements shall count towards the 15-minute total limit;~~

~~(4) No evidence, other than what is contained in the administrative record, shall be referenced by any party.~~

~~(b) Continuances. Requests for continuances of oral argument will~~ Additional time for oral argument may ~~be~~ granted upon a showing of good cause.

Note: Authority cited: Section 23077, Business and Professions Code; and Article XX, Section 22, California Constitution. Reference: Section 23083, Business and Professions Code; and Article XX, Section 22, California Constitution.

4 CCR § 197.1

§ 197.1. Quorum.

(a) The Board may decide an appeal so long as there is a quorum of at least two members present for:

(1) oral argument and deliberation in closed session; or;

(2) deliberation in closed session where an appeal has been submitted on the pleadings.

(b) In the event there are three members appointed to the Board, and a two-member quorum cannot reach a unanimous decision, oral argument and deliberation in closed session will be continued ~~for~~ to a time when the third member can be present.

(c) In the event there are only two members appointed to the Board, and the Board cannot reach a unanimous decision, the Department's decision shall stand.

Note: Authority cited: Section 23077, Business and Professions Code; and Article XX, Section 22, California Constitution. Reference: Section 23077, Business and Professions Code; Article XX, Section 22, California Constitution; **Clark v. City of Hermosa Beach (1996) 48 Cal.App.4th 1152, 1176 [56 Cal.Rptr.2d 223]; Lopez v. Imperial County Sheriff's Office (2008) 165 Cal.App.4th 1, 4 [80 Cal.Rptr.3d 557, 559].**

4 CCR § 198

§ 198. ~~Nature of New Evidence and Showing.~~

- (a) When the Board is requested to remand the case to the Department for reconsideration upon the ground that there is relevant evidence which, in the exercise of reasonable diligence, could not have been produced at the hearing before the Department, the party making such request must, in the form of a declaration or affidavit, set forth:
- (1) The substance of the newly-discovered evidence;
 - (2) Its relevancy and that part of the record to which it pertains;
 - (3) Names of witnesses to be produced and their expected testimony;
 - (4) Nature of any exhibits to be introduced;
 - (5) A detailed statement of the reasons why such evidence could not, with due diligence, have been discovered and produced at the hearing before the Department.
- (b) Merely cumulative evidence ~~or the exclusion of evidence~~ shall not constitute a valid ground for remand.

Note: Authority cited: Section 23077, Business and Professions Code; and Article XX, Section 22, California Constitution. Reference: Sections 23084 and 23085, Business and Professions Code; and Article XX, Section 22, California Constitution.

4 CCR § 199

§ 199. Dismissal of Appeal.

The Board ~~may~~ shall issue an order dismissing an appeal:

(a) Upon appellant filing a request to dismiss the appeal with the Board ~~with the Board a request to dismiss the appeal;~~

(b) Upon motion of a party, or ~~the Board itself~~ upon the Board's own notice to the parties, that appellant has failed to timely file the Notice of Appeal or pay for the record on appeal as set forth in sections 183 and 187 ~~perfect his appeal by failure to timely file same or to pay the amount specified pursuant to Sections 187 and 190 of these rules;~~

(c) Upon certification by the Department that reconsideration has been granted ~~in the case,~~ after the Notice of Appeal has been filed, and dismissal on this ground shall be without prejudice to the submission of a subsequent appeal in the same case; ~~said dismissal to be without prejudice to the filing of a subsequent appeal;~~
~~or~~

(d) Upon a motion by ~~the Department or other~~ any party, or upon the Board's own ~~motion~~ notice to the parties, where sufficient cause exists for dismissal. In such an instance, the Board's order shall set forth the sufficient cause for the dismissal;
or;

(e) Upon stipulation of the parties.

Note: Authority cited: Section 23077, Business and Professions Code; and Article XX, Section 22, California Constitution. Reference: Sections 23081, 23083 and 23087, Business and Professions Code; Section 11521, Government Code; and Article XX, Section 22, California Constitution.

**ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL APPEALS BOARD
SECOND ADDENDUM TO INITIAL STATEMENT OF REASONS
APRIL 8, 2022
ATTACHMENT 2**

PURPOSE OF THE PROPOSED REGULATIONS

The purpose of the second modified regulations is to support government efficiency by allowing the Board, and all parties appearing before it, the option of serving and receiving documents electronically. The regulations would also eliminate the need for appellants to serve multiple copies of a Notice of Appeal. These proposed revisions also remove superfluous language from existing regulations.

Proposed rules 178(h), 178(j), 178(k), 181(a)-(c), 181.1(a)(1)-(3), 181.1(b)(1)-(3), 181.2, 184, 187(a), 187(c), 197.1 (a)(1), 197.1 (Note), and 199(d) will: add to the definition of "file" or "filed" to include electronic filing; add the definition of "serve" or "served" to include in-person service, service by mail, and electronic service; add the definition of "sign," "signed," or "signature" to include both physical and digital signatures; require proof of service to contain either a physical or electronic address where a document is served; allow proof of service to be in electronic form; allow electronic service to the Board's email address, and electronic service to all parties, so long as the party gives notice that it agrees to accept electronic service, files said notice with the Board, lists any email address where it is to receive service, and signs the notice; allows for parties to terminate or modify their agreement to accept electronic service, and; eliminate the requirement for an appellant to file the original and three copies of the Notice of Appeal with the Board, and to serve a hard copy to the Department at its principal office.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The Board did not have the authority to allow electronic filing and service until AB 1589 (Chapter 306) (amending Business and Professions Code sections 23081, 23081.5, and 23088) was approved by the Governor, filed with the Secretary of State on September 24, 2021, and became effective as of January 1, 2022.

Thus, for more than 60 years, the Board was limited to utilizing a paper and mail-based process. Current regulations require the Board, Department, and all other parties to deliver documents to one another by hand or mail. Electronic service of documents does not satisfy the Board's procedural requirements.

Law offices, administrative bodies, and courts are modernizing at a faster pace than the Board by enabling electronic filing of pleadings and orders. As the extent to which society keeps paper records continually declines, electronic filing will be the standard across all professions.

As a government entity, it is important for the Board to promote efficiency, modernize the appeals process, and improve access to due process. The Board would also like to save state funds due to decreased postage, paper, and printing.

BENEFITS ANTICIPATED FROM THE REGULATORY ACTION

The proposed amendment of Rules 178(h), 178(j), 178(k), 181(a)-(c), 181.1(a)(1)-(3), 181.1(b)(1)-(3), 181.2, 184, 187(a), 187(c), 197.1(a)(1), 197.1 (Note), and 199(d) will benefit alcohol license applicants, licensees, the Department, and the public by making the appeals process more user-friendly and cost efficient for licensees and members of the public who want to exercise their right to appeal through electronic filing and service. Considering the COVID-19 pandemic, the option of electronic service will also help minimize any close contact that may otherwise result from filing or serving documents in person. Moreover, by being able to file and serve documents electronically, instead of through mail, this will streamline the appeals process. This proposal would also save state funds due to decreased postage, paper, and printing, as well as reduce waste created by paper and supplies.

NECESSITY

Article 1. General

§ 178. Definitions.

Proposed rule 178 provides definitions for terms used throughout these rules and regulations.

Subsection (h) amends the definition of “File” or “filed” to include a document received by the Board by electronic service. When a document is mailed to the Board through registered mail, the document is deemed “filed” on the date of registry with the United States Post Office. This is necessary because certain procedures (e.g., serving briefs) require the deadline to be based off the filing date. Therefore, this regulation provides needed guidance to parties on how to properly identify the filing date. Further, this allows for a new type of service (electronic) to allow for greater access to the Board’s appeals process. Finally, even though this proposed regulation substantially tracks existing statutory language, duplication is necessary for clarity, as it includes reference to the specific e-mail address to serve the Board and where that e-mail address can be found.

Subsection (j) adds the definition “Serve” or “served” to include all means of authorized service listed in section 181.1. This is necessary to set the limits on how parties can serve one another and the Board, and to ensure that documents are sent to the designated addresses of the parties.

Subsection (k) adds the definition of “sign,” “signed,” or “signature” to include both physical and electronic signatures. This is necessary to allow flexibility in signing a document electronically should a party wish to do so. It would defeat the purpose of streamlining appeals and making the process more cost effective if the Board required parties to print out digital copies of documents merely to sign them by hand.

§ 181. Proof of Service.

Proposed rule 181, subsection (a) is amended to include all the sections in these regulations where documents require a proof of service. This is necessary to make it clear for all parties which documents, when served, require a proof of service.

Subsection (c) is added so that proof of service may be in electronic form, subject to the provisions of rules 181.1 and 181.2. Having an alternative option for electronic service is necessary in order to streamline the appeals process as well as offer a user-friendly and cost-effective method of service for all parties to an appeal.

§ 181.1. Manner of Service.

Proposed rule 181.1, subsection (a)(3), is added to allow a party to serve a document to the Board electronically by sending the document to the Board's electronic mail address as listed on the Board's website. This is necessary so that when a party serves a document to the Board, they are sending it to the right email address.

Subsection (b)(3) is added so that parties may serve one another electronically subject to the requirements of rule 181.2. This is necessary to ensure fairness in the appeals process. Having an alternative option for electronic service is also necessary in order to streamline the appeals process as well as offer a user-friendly and cost-effective method of service for all parties to an appeal.

Additionally, legal offices and courts are modernizing at a faster pace than the Board by enabling or requiring electronic filing of pleadings and orders. The proposed revisions in sections 181.1(a)(3) and 181.1(b)(3) are necessary so that the Board and its operations may keep pace with this evolution. Through decreased postage, paper, and printing, this proposal would save state money and resources.

§ 181.2. Electronic Service.

Proposed rules 181.2(a)(1)-(2) are added to allow a party to agree to accept electronic service, so long as the party serves a notice on all other parties and files the notice with the Board.

This is necessary because it will allow for parties to agree to electronic service which will also streamline appeals and pass on those cost savings to the Department and other parties. By requiring a written notice, filed with the Board and served on all parties, the Board and all parties will share the same understanding regarding electronic service between the parties of the appeal.

Proposed rule 181.2(b) requires the notice to list the email address where a party is to receive service. This is necessary to hold parties to the email addresses listed in the notice, and prevents a party from attempting to delay the appeals process by electronically serving a document to an incorrect email address.

Proposed rule 181.2(c) requires the notice to be signed by the party agreeing to accept service. This is necessary to ensure that the individual agreeing to receive electronic service has the authority to do so.

Proposed rule 181.2(d)(1) allows a party to terminate its agreement to accept electronic service by filing a notice with the Board and serving the notice on all parties. Proposed rule 181.2(d)(2) allows a party to modify its agreement to accept electronic service by filing a notice with the Board and serving it on all other parties. Allowing a party to terminate or modify its agreement to receive electronic service is also necessary in case a party no longer wishes to receive electronic service, or wants to modify its agreement in the event its email address or other circumstance changes.

Article 2. Filing of Appeal

§ 184. Contents of Notice of Appeal.

Rule 184 relates to the contents of a notice of appeal, but the proposed amendments to rule 184 delete the requirement to provide an “original and three copies” of the Notice of Appeal to the Board and to physically serve a copy of the Notice to the Department at its principal office. This is necessary to streamline the appeals process and minimize waste of resources, especially given the Board's shift to allow for electronic filing through email. If filing by email, there is no need to file copies; the Board can simply create copies of the attached file on its own. If filing by mail, the elimination of the requirement to provide three copies would result in saved resources for parties. Specific mention of the Department is added, which is necessary to clarify that a Notice of Appeal must be sent to them and to avoid confusion as some may not consider the Department a “party” to the appeal. Further, the elimination of the requirement to mail the Notice to the Department's physical address is necessary if a party wanted to serve the Department electronically, and the Department agreed, in writing. The elimination of the requirement to file an “original” Notice of Appeal is necessary because if utilizing electronic filing, there are not originals and copies – there is just one filed Notice. Additionally, reference to an appellant's “authorized agent” is removed, as “authorized agent” is included in the definition of a person or entity.

Finally, legal offices and courts are modernizing at a faster pace than the Board by enabling or requiring electronic filing of pleadings and orders. The proposed revision is necessary so that the Board and its operations may keep pace with this evolution. Through decreased postage, paper, and printing costs, this proposal would save money and resources.

Article 3. Record on Appeal

§ 187. Preparation, Payment, and Filing of the Record of Appeal.

The proposed change to section 187(a) is necessary to clarify that Government code section 69950 applies only to the transcript, which is part of the overall record of appeal. Without this change, there would be confusion as to whether section 69950 applies to the entire record of appeal.

Article 5. Oral Argument

§ 197.1. Quorum.

The proposed change to section 197.1 (Note) is necessary to add supporting legal authority as a reference.

Nonsubstantive Changes

All other changes not specified are for syntax, cross-reference, grammar, and punctuation changes, and are therefore nonsubstantive in nature.

ECONOMIC IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The Board concludes:

- (1) Creation/Elimination of jobs within the state: It is unlikely that the proposal would create or eliminate jobs within the state because the proposed amendments only allow for an alternate means of service (electronic). Parties may still utilize in-person service and service by mail. The regulations in no way alter or enhance the legal or factual basis for a party's appeal, and do not affect the Board's decision to affirm or reverse an adverse action taken by the Department.
- (2) Creation/Elimination of businesses within the state: It is unlikely that the proposal would create new businesses or eliminate existing businesses within the state

because the proposed amendments only allow for an alternate means of service (electronic). Parties may still utilize in-person service and service by mail. The regulations in no way alter or enhance the legal or factual basis for a party's appeal, and do not affect the Board's decision to affirm or reverse an adverse action taken by the Department.

(3) Expansion of existing businesses within the state: It is unlikely that the proposal would result in the expansion of businesses currently doing business within the state because the proposed amendments only allow for an alternate means of service (electronic). Parties may still utilize in-person service and service by mail. The regulations in no way alter or enhance the legal or factual basis for a party's appeal, and do not affect the Board's decision to affirm or reverse an adverse action taken by the Department.

(4) Benefits of proposed action to the health and welfare of California residents, worker safety and the state's environment: The proposed regulations will benefit alcohol license applicants, licensees, and the Department by making the appeals process more user-friendly and cost efficient for licensees and members of the public who want to exercise their right to appeal through electronic filing and service. The option of electronic service will also help minimize any close contact that may otherwise result from serving documents in person. Moreover, electronic filing and service will streamline the appeals process by not having to wait for documents to be hand-delivered or mailed. The Board anticipates cost savings and reduced waste due to decreased postage, paper, and printing. Otherwise, these regulations do not benefit worker safety or the state's environment.

EVIDENCE SUPPORTING DETERMINATION OF NO SIGNIFICANT STATEWIDE ADVERSE ECONOMIC IMPACT DIRECTLY AFFECTING BUSINESS

Historically, non-government shareholders in the Board's appeals process have mailed documents to the Board and to the Department. The Board anticipates that those parties wishing to file and serve documents electronically will decrease the amount of money they spend on printing and mailing these documents. Accordingly, the Board concludes the proposed regulations do not have any significant, statewide, and adverse economic impact on businesses.

PERFORMANCE STANDARD AS ALTERNATIVE

The Board made every effort to consider performance standards where possible by removing overly restrictive requirements. To the extent a regulation prescribes a specific action or procedure, the requirement is necessary to create greater access to the appeals process through electronic filing and service and will streamline the overall appeals process.

MANDATED USE OF TECHNOLOGY

The proposed regulations do not mandate the use of any technology. Any party not able to utilize electronic service may still serve the Board or the Department in-person or by mail.