

**Regulatory Board Review:**

West Virginia Board of Hearing Aid Dealers and Fitters

**Licensure of Hearing Aid Dealers Is Needed, But Could Be Administered by the Board of Examiners for Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology.**

**What Did PERD Find?**

The Legislative Auditor finds that the Board is inaccessible and does not protect the public. Although federal regulations are easing, licensure of hearing aid dealers is necessary. However, the Board itself is unnecessary and licensure could be administered by the Board of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology. Furthermore, its end-of-year cash balance has declined to a concerning level. PERD also noted the following significant administrative issues:

- Meeting minutes provided by the Board contain an “off the record” section documenting conversation pertaining to reestablishing a lobbying organization.
- The Board keeps inadequate records. The audit team could not establish a definitive count of current licensees.
- The Board’s financial records are insufficient to determine the likelihood fraud occurred.
- The Board’s end of year cash balance is declining.

**PERD’s Objectives:**  
The objective of this review was to determine if licensure of hearing aid dealers is necessary to protect the public and if so, whether an independent board is necessary to administer licensure. This review also assessed the Board’s compliance with Chapter 30 requirements and other applicable sections of West Virginia Code.

**Key Recommendations:**  
*The Legislature should consider terminating the Board of Hearing Aid Dealers and Fitters and transferring its regulatory responsibilities to the Board of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology*

*The Legislature should review current state hearing aid law for conformity with the Food and Drug Administration Reauthorization Act of 2017 once the final regulations are published.*

**Board of Hearing Aid Dealers and Fitters and Budget Information  
FY 2016-2020**

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Beginning Cash Balance</b>	<b>Revenue</b>	<b>Disbursements</b>	<b>Ending Cash Balance</b>	<b>End-of-Year Cash as a Percent of Annual Expenditures</b>
<b>2016</b>	\$44,545	\$11,700	\$15,773	\$40,473	257%
<b>2017</b>	\$40,473	\$13,700	\$20,937	\$33,236	159%
<b>2018</b>	\$33,236	\$12,000	\$15,278	\$29,958	196%
<b>2019</b>	\$29,958	\$16,000	\$19,895	\$26,063	131%
<b>2020</b>	\$20,063	\$10,600	\$18,416	\$18,247	99%
<b>Average</b>	\$35,745	\$13,117	\$16,775	\$32,087	212%

*Source: West Virginia Our Advanced Solution with Integrated Systems (OASIS) reports (WV-FIN-GL-151 for fiscal years 2015 through 2019) and PERD calculations.*