

# Strategic Lean Project Report



## Complaint Form Disclosures and Jurisdiction

**Agency:** Washington State Board of Accountancy (ACB)

**Partners and Customers:** Consumers

### Project Impact

The Board of Accountancy revised its complaint form to provide more information and disclosures to possible complainants, resulting in the reduction of complaints outside the Board’s jurisdiction from four to zero per year. The reduction benefits both significant staff time, and directs consumers to those agencies that can address their issues when the Board of Accountancy cannot.

The Board’s jurisdiction is limited to licensed CPAs, and those falsely representing themselves as CPAs; the Board has no jurisdiction over non-licensed accountants, bookkeepers, or tax preparers. When the Board receives a complaint it has no authority over, this requires time invested from the complainant, from numerous staff members, and does not result in a helpful outcome to the complainant. Revising the complaint form and website helps ensure consumers receive the guidance they need upfront, and do not expend effort completing and submitting a complaint form when it will not benefit them.

### Project Summary

The complaint process involves at least four staff members, and involves incoming mail, inputting information into electronic systems, reviewing the complaint file, drafting letters, and review and authorization from the Executive Director. Removing complaints outside the Board’s jurisdiction saves multiple staff hours, and avoids consumer unhappiness due to the Board’s legal inability to assist.

4 complaints outside the Board’s jurisdiction compared to our target of 0, which we wanted to reach by 12/1/2018. The target of 0 was accomplished through these changes.

The Board implemented the following improvements:

- Recreated our complaint webpage to better describe process, authority, and provide more information.
- Complete recreation of the complaint form to provide simpler and clearer language.
- Included in the complaint form a walk-through process that directs consumers to other agencies when the Board has no authority over their complaint.

#### Project Results



#### Quality

Increased the quality of the Board’s complaint form and website **from** including all complaints as valid **to** restricting the complaint form to complaints within jurisdiction.



*Eliminates complaints outside jurisdiction.*



#### Time

Decreased the number of complaints received that the Board cannot process **from** 4 complaints **to** 0 complaints.



*The reduction saves numerous staff hours, and time from consumer.*



#### Customer Satisfaction

Decreased the amount of complaints the Board cannot process **from** 4 **to** 0.



*Consumers do not submit complaints that the Board cannot handle.*



#### Employee Engagement

Decreased the number of transfers required between employees **from** 6 transfers **to** 0 transfers, for complaints outside Board authority.



*The improved process helped free up time for employees to focus on other tasks.*

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The following section of the complaint form help guide consumers to agencies that can help:

## Part 1: Other Authorities

If you are uncertain whether ACB is the appropriate agency for your complaint, please contact us at (360) 664-9266. If ACB does not have authority over the respondent and content of your complaint, please consider the following, which is not a complete list of your options or legal rights:

- [Attorney General's Office – Consumer Protection Division.](#)
- [IRS, for complaints against tax preparers.](#)
- [Consult an attorney for legal advice and/or representation.](#)
- More at our website: <http://cpaboard.wa.gov/consumer-protection/complaints>

If you believe ACB may still have authority over the respondent and content of your complaint, please proceed to file your complaint and we will review all information received.

## Project Details

Date improvement project was initiated: 10/1/2017

Project Contact: Taylor Shahon

Email: [taylor.shahon@acb.wa.gov](mailto:taylor.shahon@acb.wa.gov)

Phone: 360-664-9193

Report reviewed and approved by: Charles Satterlund, CPA, Executive Director

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Charles E. Satterlund". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned over the printed name of the reviewer.