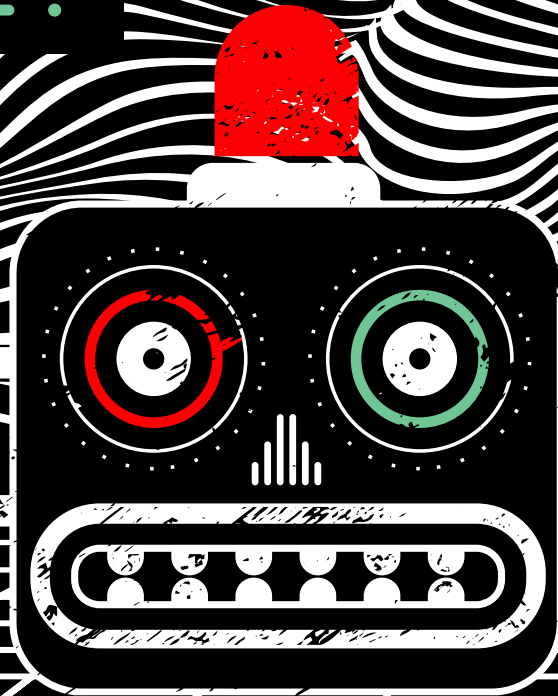


# CONSUMER CONNECTION

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**dca**

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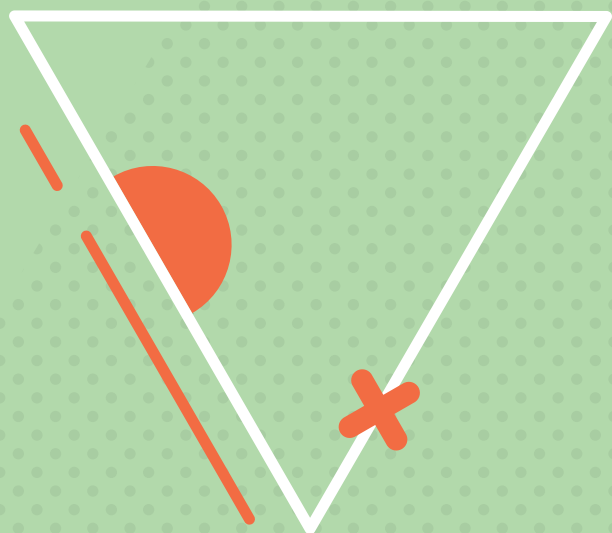
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**GAVIN NEWSOM**  
Governor

**ALEXIS PODESTA**  
Secretary, Business,  
Consumer Services and Housing Agency

STATE OF CALIFORNIA



DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS

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YOU HAVE QUESTIONS?

#ASKDCA

WE'VE GOT ANSWERS!



By **Matt Woodcheke**  
Consumer Connection staff

**G**ot a question about your contractor, dentist, doctor, cosmetologist, or one of the many other professionals licensed and regulated by the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA)? Maybe you'd like to know more about how DCA helps consumers make wise purchasing decisions by informing them about the laws that protect them? Now is your chance to ask!

Submit your question via email to **publicaffairs@dca.ca.gov** and it may be answered in a future issue of *Consumer Connection*.

**Please note:** We are not able to answer questions regarding the status of a license application, complaint, or investigation. Some questions have been edited for clarity or brevity.

**Q**

#ASKDCA

**I PURCHASED AN ITEM ON THE INTERNET AND I DID NOT RECEIVE WHAT I ORDERED. WHAT CAN I DO?**

If you're unable to negotiate a return or refund with the seller, we recommend you contact your local district attorney's (DA) office. The DA's office reviews and evaluates complaints received by the public or other agencies to determine whether to prosecute a business for unlawful business practices, and prosecutes actions involving fraudulent, deceptive, and illegal business activity on behalf of the general public. Enforcement actions typically seek a public remedy, such as a court order to stop the business practice, to pay penalties and, possibly, restitution.

You can also contact the regional Better Business Bureau (BBB) for assistance. The BBB is a voluntary, nonprofit service organization supported by businesses that stress compliance with ethical standards of marketplace conduct. They offer a variety of consumer services including information about a business, particularly whether there are unanswered or unsettled complaints. When assisting consumers, the BBB will work directly with the business owner or manager to seek a mutually acceptable solution. The BBB will arbitrate consumer business disputes informally and privately if the consumer and business cannot resolve an issue. To get contact information for the appropriate BBB office, please visit the BBB website at **www.bbb.org**.





## # A S K D C A

**I RECENTLY GOT A MANICURE AND A FEW DAYS LATER ONE OF MY FINGERS IS OBVIOUSLY INFECTED—SWOLLEN, IN PAIN. WHAT CAN BE DONE ABOUT THIS, AND HOW CAN I AVOID IT IN THE FUTURE?**

You may visit a barbershop or cosmetology establishment hundreds if not thousands of times during your life and never run into an issue, but the transmission of bacterium or viruses within the salon could present a very real and dangerous threat to an unaware consumer.

If you think you have an infection or an injury, such as a cut, as a result of a salon visit, contact a medical professional so your injury and infection can be treated. But an equally important step is to file a complaint with the Board of Barbering and Cosmetology, so the Board can look into it.

To protect yourself from potential contamination, the Board recommends you make sure your licensed professional washes his or her hands before he or she begins your requested service. You should also ask how the tools were disinfected—tools must be first washed with soap and water, then immersed in an Environmental Protection Agency-registered disinfectant for the manufacturer's recommended time, then stored in a clean, closed, and labeled container. Anything that cannot be disinfected, such as a cotton ball, nail file, or buffer, must be thrown away after use. If your professional hesitates to explain the proper disinfection requirements, or doesn't know them, take your business elsewhere. Your health is too important to risk!



## # A S K D C A

**I'M HANDLING THE AFFAIRS FOR A FAMILY MEMBER IN DECLINING HEALTH. DO I NEED A FIDUCIARY?**

You are not required to work with a professional fiduciary, but there are many good reasons to hire a professional fiduciary to help you handle the affairs of a family member. You may live far away, lack the appropriate skills, or be unprepared for the emotional burden of caring for another person. A professional fiduciary can help you ease that burden.

Services provided by professional fiduciaries include banking, paying bills, cash flow management, daily care, housing, estate management and administration, tax preparation and payment, and household maintenance and upkeep. They can also manage services such as medical care, insurance needs, investments, real estate, personal property, public benefits, and assets and distribution.

If you're considering hiring a professional fiduciary, the Professional Fiduciaries Bureau says you should interview at least three licensed professionals before making your choice, and offers a guide, "What You Should Know Before Hiring a Professional Fiduciary," on its website that includes questions to ask in the interviews. You can access the guide and check to make sure the professional fiduciary is licensed to operate in California at the Bureau's website, [www.fiduciary.ca.gov](http://www.fiduciary.ca.gov).




## # A S K D C A

**WHO CAN INSTALL AN IGNITION INTERLOCK DEVICE ON A CAR?**

Following a successful pilot program in Alameda, Los Angeles, Sacramento, and Tulare counties, Senate Bill 1046 (Hill, Chapter 783, Statutes of 2016) expanded the use of ignition interlock devices statewide on January 1 of this year. The device, which detects the presence of alcohol, is required to be installed into the vehicles of DUI offenders, who must blow into the device before starting their vehicle.

If alcohol is detected, the vehicle won't start.

All facilities that install ignition interlock devices must be licensed either by the Bureau of Automotive Repair, which oversees the automotive repair industry, or the Bureau of Household Goods and Services, which regulates consumer electronic repairs. To ensure your installer is properly licensed, visit [search.dca.ca.gov](http://search.dca.ca.gov). 

PREPARE FOR

# POWER SHUTOFFS



UTILITIES DE-ENERGIZE ELECTRIC LINES  
WHEN WILDFIRE RISK IS HIGH



By **Matt Woodcheke**  
Consumer Connection staff

Last year was the deadliest and most destructive wildfire season in California history. Nearly 1.9 million acres burned. More than 100 people were killed, and 17,000 homes and 700 businesses were destroyed. In many cases, including the deadly Camp Fire in Butte County that resulted in the deaths of 85 people, electric utility equipment was identified as the cause of these devastating fires.

As a result, the California Public Utilities Commission has approved a plan from California's three investor-owned energy companies to mitigate wildfire risk by de-energizing high-voltage power lines during times of windy, hot, and dry weather. This is known as a Public Safety Power Shutoff.

The decision to de-energize may be made by the individual utility, which must give local governments, public safety agencies, and emergency responders 48 to 72 hours notice when it is considering a shutdown. The public must be informed within 24 to 48 hours in advance.

Utility customers who depend on electricity for medical needs may qualify for a power plan called Medical Baseline. Medical Baseline customers may receive extra notifications in advance of a Public Safety Power Shutoff. Contact your utility provider to see if you qualify.

## SHUTTING OFF POWER FOR SAFETY

As a safety precaution, San Diego Gas and Electric, Southern California Edison, and Pacific Gas and Electric will monitor local fire danger and extreme weather conditions across California and evaluate whether to turn off electric power. Factors include, but are not limited to:

- High winds (including Red Flag warnings)
- Low humidity
- Dry vegetation
- Fire threat
- On-the-ground observations
- Public safety risk

## WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT

If a Public Safety Power Shutoff is needed due to extreme conditions, you can expect:

- **Early Warning Notification**—Your energy company will aim to send customer alerts before shutting off power.


- **Ongoing Updates**—Your energy company will provide ongoing updates through social media, local news outlets, and its website.
- **Safety Inspections**—After extreme weather has passed, your energy company will inspect the lines in affected areas before power is safely restored.
- **Power Restoration**—Power outages could last multiple days depending on the severity of the weather and other factors. It is important that you and your family have an emergency preparedness plan in place.

## WORKING WITH CALIFORNIANS TO PREPARE

While Public Safety Power Shutoff events are more likely to occur in high fire-risk areas, all Californians could be impacted by emergency events. In an emergency, there could be an extended power outage that lasts several days. With that concern in mind, every California household should have an emergency plan, so you'll know what steps to take if and when disaster strikes.

If you don't have an emergency plan, you can create one using these tips.

- Update your contact information with your local energy company.
- Identify backup charging methods for phones and keep hard copies of emergency numbers.
- Plan for any medical needs like medications that need to be refrigerated or devices that require power.
- Plan for the needs of pets and livestock.
- Build or restock your emergency kit with flashlights, fresh batteries, first aid supplies and cash.
- Designate an emergency meeting location.
- Know how to manually open your garage door.
- Ensure any backup generators are ready to safely operate.
- Identify the unique needs of your family and loved ones in the area for your emergency plan.

For more information on creating an emergency plan, visit [www.prepareforpowerdown.com](http://www.prepareforpowerdown.com). 



## RESOURCES

**[www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)**—Disaster preparedness information from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security

**[www.readyforwildfire.org](http://www.readyforwildfire.org)**—Cal Fire's wildfire preparedness website

**[www.cpuc.ca.gov/wildfiresinfo](http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/wildfiresinfo)**—Information on the CPUC's wildfire safety efforts

**[www.caloes.ca.gov](http://www.caloes.ca.gov)**—California Governor's Office of Emergency Services website

**[www.cafiresafecouncil.org](http://www.cafiresafecouncil.org)**—California Fire Safe Council website

**[www.noaa.gov](http://www.noaa.gov)**—National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration website



A close-up portrait of a woman with dark, wavy hair. Her eyes are a striking, glowing green, resembling cat eyes. She has bright red, glossy lips. The background is dark and textured, with some green leaves or feathers framing her face. A small, stylized orange witch hat with a black band and buckle is positioned above the word 'SIGHT' in the title.

# SIGHT FRIGHT

WEARING FASHION CONTACT LENSES  
WITHOUT A PRESCRIPTION COULD TURN  
YOUR VISION INTO A PERMANENT SCARE



By **Michelle Cave**  
Consumer Connection staff

**H**alloween is fast approaching and, for many, the perfect accessory for their costume will be a pair of fashion/costume contact lenses.

Unlike contact lenses used to correct vision problems, fashion contacts are only used to temporarily change the color or shape of your eyes and may also be referred to as:

- Halloween or costume contact lenses.
- Colored contact lenses.
- Cosmetic contact lenses.
- Theater or theatrical contact lenses.

Contact lenses are medical devices, regardless of whether they are used to correct vision or not. Because of this designation, contact lenses are regulated by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to confirm their safety and effectiveness. If you are committed to wearing costume contact lenses, be diligent and make sure that the lenses are FDA approved. If they are not FDA approved, you are putting your eye health and vision at risk.

Before you shop for the perfect costume eyes, you must have your eyes examined by an eye-care professional (e.g., optometrist or ophthalmologist), licensed through a board under the California Department of Consumer Affairs, and obtain a prescription for “noncorrective” fashion contact lenses.

#### HERE'S WHAT YOU SHOULD SEE IN THE PRESCRIPTION:

- Your name.
- The date of your exam.
- When your prescription was issued, and when it expires.
- The name, postal address, phone number, and fax number of the prescriber.

#### FOR CONTACTS, YOU SHOULD ALSO SEE:

- The power—not required for Halloween/costume lenses.
- Base curve. This number is an indication of how curved the inside of your lens is.
- Diameter or DIA. This is the width measurement from edge to edge of the eye. This helps to ensure that the contact lens covers the eye.

Don't be fooled. In California, cosmetic contacts that do not correct your vision must be prescribed by a licensed eye-care professional, just like contacts that correct your vision. They must also be sold by a reputable seller (optometrist, ophthalmologist, registered dispensing optician, or online retailer) that requires your prescription and will verify your prescription with your eye-care professional. You must purchase new lenses. Do not share or purchase previously worn lenses.

Moreover, contacts that do not fit your eyes properly can cause serious injury or complications. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention states that when decorative contact lenses are sold without a prescription and without proper fitting and education about wear and care from an eye-care professional, the potential for permanent eye damage—including blindness—increases.

Many reputable retailers no longer carry costume contact lenses. Spirit Halloween, the largest retailer of Halloween costumes, no longer sells costume contacts.

According to the Federal Trade Commission, anyone selling lenses without requiring a copy of your prescription and verifying your prescription with your eye-care professional, is selling the lenses illegally.

Additionally, the potential risks associated with nonprescription, decorative lenses include:

- Corneal abrasions (a cut or scratch to the outer layer of the eyeball)
- Corneal ulcers
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye)
- Allergic reactions like itchy, watery red eyes
- Infection
- Decreased vision
- Blindness

Don't risk your vision and eye health for a night of tricks and treats. Be safe and plan ahead. Visit an eye-care professional early to obtain your prescription and then search for retailers that require a prescription and carry FDA-approved fashion contact lenses.

The California State Board of Optometry has a brochure on its website ([www.optometry.ca.gov](http://www.optometry.ca.gov)) that contains helpful information about cosmetic contact lenses.

To verify the license of an eye-care professional, visit DCA's license search page at [search.dca.ca.gov](http://search.dca.ca.gov). 



# YOUR BODY KNOWS THE POWER OF FORGIVENESS

## LEARNING TO LET GO OF EMOTIONAL UNREST CAN BE VITAL TO YOUR HEALTH

By **Cheri Gyuro**  
Consumer Connection staff

**I**t's happened to most of us during our lives. Someone has caused emotional or physical harm. Forgiving an indiscretion can be difficult and, in some cases, feel downright impossible.

For Northern California resident Annabelle Rogers (names have been changed to protect the family's privacy), forgiving her boyfriend Jack proved to be a long battle within her heart. Jack unintentionally left Annabelle's beloved dogs in a blisteringly hot car. The dogs perished, and Rogers thought she would never be able to forgive Jack.

"I was so devastated and I was angry; how do you forget? How do you forget dogs that were always in our presence?" Rogers said. Hurtful actions caused by others can create feelings so intense, anger, frustration, and resentment start to build. According to scientists, harboring such feelings and the need for vengeance may lead to a constant state of bitterness and emotional unrest. It can affect a person's mental health, harm internal organs, and can cause heart conditions.

"I was sick. My heart hurt. I lost weight. I couldn't eat. Physically, I was so stressed, my hair started falling out," Rogers said. Along with her grief, Rogers struggled to dismiss Jack's negligence from her mind.

"These inner pains can be a motivator to consider forgiving as an option, to be set free from the negative emotional effects of unjust treatment from others," said Dr. Robert Enright, Ph.D., the co-founder of the International Forgiveness Institute. His decades of research indicate a willingness to forgive someone after they have offended you can help decrease anger and lead to a healthier life.

For victims of crime or couples going through a nasty divorce, feelings of animosity toward an offender can linger for a lifetime. "Sometimes, living with resentment for a long time can lead to restlessness, anxiety, and even depression," Enright said.

Enright suggests forgiveness therapy can benefit people who suffer from several issues, including survivors of physical and emotional abuse, heart patients, and people who struggle with substance abuse. "Forgiveness therapy is a paradox. The focus is on the one who offended and emotionally hurt the client," Enright said.

If a forgiver can see the inherent worth in the offender, it will help them see the worth in themselves, Enright said. "We begin to see statistically significant improvement in the client's well-being, such as reduced anger, anxiety, and depression."

After living with health issues for months, Rogers decided it was time for a change. When she saw her kids forgive Jack, Rogers agreed to attend couples therapy, which put her on track to forgive him as well. "It wasn't intentional and I just had to move on. I had to move forward," Rogers said.

Recent studies show that going through forgiveness therapy has exceptional healing benefits. It can save us from wasting time thinking about painful memories of the past that hurt us in the present. For those going through extreme types of hurt, violence, or trauma, forgiveness therapy is at the top of the list for modalities in treatment.

According to a 2018 study by researchers at the University of Warwick, England, forgiveness interventions among teens and adults are effective in reducing depression, anger, and hostility. Although more research is needed, the findings support strong evidence of improvements in their state of mind and mental well-being.

Enright said his forgiveness therapy studies have mostly produced positive results. Even cardiac patients in his research realized the benefits. "As they learned to forgive and decreased their



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*Recent studies show that going through forgiveness therapy has exceptional healing benefits.*

”

anger, there was a statistically significant increase in blood flow through their heart. Their hearts were not returned to normal, but they did show improvement,” Enright said.

Though it may seem like you are letting someone who has wronged you off the hook, forgiveness is not exactly a selfless act. For Rogers, it was about self-healing, empowerment, and liberation. She says it helped her let go of hurtful memories that were self-damaging in her present life. She decided to redirect her anger into something productive by starting a nonprofit fund for pet rescue shelters. “That’s when I started feeling better,” Rogers said with a sigh of relief. “You have to think of it in a sense that mentally, it’s not healthy. You have to be positive. It’s kind of like the law of attraction.”


When is a good time to get past the anger and resentment? Psychologists say the appropriate time to forgive is when the forgiver is good and ready. Living with constant restlessness and anxiety often prompts people to lean toward forgiveness to find relief for themselves.

#### **SIGNS THAT YOU MIGHT WANT TO CONSIDER FORGIVENESS THERAPY**

- Engaging in substance abuse.
- Unhealthy behaviors, such as self-mutilation or harm.
- Risky sexual behavior.
- Feelings of depression or anxiety as a result of another person’s indiscretion.

#### **TIPS TO HELP YOU FORGIVE AN OFFENDER**

- Be ready to let go and realize it’s good for your physical and mental health.
- Admit you’ve been wrong in the past and have empathy.
- Accept that you can only control yourself and you can’t change the offender.
- Express your feelings in a letter, then destroy it.
- Take negative energy and turn it into something positive.
- Treat yourself to something you enjoy as a reward for letting go.

If you’re ready to forgive but can’t do it on your own, a therapist might be able to assist you in formulating a plan to reclaim your life. If you decide to seek therapy from a psychologist, you can check if they have a valid license by visiting the California Board of Psychology at [www.psychology.ca.gov](http://www.psychology.ca.gov). 





# WHY CAN'T I HAVE MY PRESCRIPTION?

## WHAT PHARMACY PATIENTS SHOULD KNOW WHEN SEEKING PAIN MEDICATIONS



By **De'Bora White and Bob Dávila**  
Consumer Connection contributors

**“I have been on Norco for 10 years, and the pharmacist never questioned the prescription before.”**

*“Lately, the pharmacy never has my pain medication in stock and won’t let me get my refill a few days early. I feel they are discriminating against pain patients.”*

*“The pharmacist is NOT a medical doctor. He cannot override my doctor’s prescription!”*

A growing number of consumers are filing complaints like these with the California State Board of Pharmacy about difficulty getting pain medication prescriptions filled. Many prescription pain drugs contain opioids or other controlled substances, which are strictly regulated by state and federal laws.

Pharmacists are often the last line of defense in a growing battle against prescription drug abuse. Nationwide, more than 70,200 Americans died from drug overdoses in 2017, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The total includes 17,029 deaths involving prescription opioids, compared with 3,442 deaths in 1999.

In California, more than 21.7 million prescriptions for opioids were written in 2017, according to the California Department of Public Health. Opioid overdose resulted in 8,368 visits to hospital emergency departments and 2,194 deaths statewide.

As licensed professionals, pharmacists must weigh their responsibility to serve patients against their obligation to prevent controlled substances from getting into the wrong hands. This means a pharmacist sometimes may delay or decline to fill a prescription for an opioid medication if he or she has doubts that the prescription is legitimate.

### A PHARMACIST’S OBLIGATION

Under California law, a pharmacist has a duty (known as a “corresponding responsibility”) to ensure a prescription is for a legitimate medical purpose and is not intended for abuse. The law requires pharmacists to use their professional judgment in determining whether a prescription is suspicious. To make that determination, a pharmacist may:

- Contact your doctor or other prescriber to clarify or adjust a prescription.
- Discuss with your prescriber other medications you are taking or other health care practitioners you are seeing.





“  
*Pharmacists are often the last line of defense in a growing battle against prescription drug abuse.*  
 ”


- Ask for documentation of your medical condition, diagnosis, or treatment plan.
- Consult medical reference materials regarding the dosing, indication, or appropriateness of the prescribed medication.
- Review your patient medication profile in a statewide database known as CURES that monitors controlled substances prescriptions issued to patients in California.
- Consider the number of pharmacies or prescribers you use, and the distances between those locations.
- Consider your prescriber's specialty scope of practice and the amount of medication prescribed.

#### TIPS TO HELP GET YOUR PRESCRIPTION FILLED

The Board of Pharmacy cannot require a pharmacist who exercises professional judgment to fill a prescription. But there are some things you can do to make it easier to get your prescriptions for opioid medications or other controlled substances filled as quickly as possible:

- **Talk to your pharmacist.** Establish and maintain a relationship with the pharmacy that fills your prescriptions. This relationship enables a pharmacy to better understand your needs so that the pharmacist can order and have your medications in stock when you need them.

- **Talk to your prescriber.** Discuss your medication needs and contact your doctor or other prescriber if you have problems getting your prescription filled. Your pharmacist may also contact your prescriber. This relationship will make it easier for the pharmacist to validate your prescription.

The Board of Pharmacy is committed to protecting and promoting the health and safety of consumers through the highest quality of pharmacist care. If you have a concern about your experience with a pharmacy, you may file a complaint with the Board online or in writing. For information, visit the Board's website at [www.pharmacy.ca.gov](http://www.pharmacy.ca.gov). 



# SMASHING STIGMAS



## IGNORING YOUR MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES COMES AT A HIGH COST

By **Laurel Goddard**  
Consumer Connection staff

**O**ne in four people will be affected by mental or neurological disorders at some point in their lives, says the World Health Organization.

Despite the availability of successful treatment options, nearly half of all Americans who have a severe mental illness do not seek treatment because of the stigma that many in our society attach to mental illness and to people who have it. According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), some people describe the stigma as a feeling of shame or judgment from someone else, and it can even come from an internal place, confusing feeling bad with *being* bad.

Stigma and the lack of understanding of mental illness leads people to discriminate against those who have it by avoiding them socially, from hiring them or renting a home to them. Stigma also deters the public from wanting to pay for care and, thus, reduces consumers' access to resources and opportunities for treatment and social services. Because people experiencing

mental health conditions often face rejection, bullying, and discrimination, this can make their journey to recovery longer and more difficult.

This stigma exists despite a very real cost on individual lives and society as a whole. According to NAMI:

- Mental health conditions are the leading cause of disability across the United States.
- The average delay between the onset of symptoms and intervention is eight to 10 years.



- Suicide is the second leading cause of death of youth ages 15–24 and the 10th leading cause of death for all Americans.

For some, asking for help might feel like a sign of weakness or putting themselves out to be judged as inferior, incompetent, or unable to care for oneself.

But in reality, mental illness often has a biological root just like any other illness. It's a disorder of the brain, your body's most important organ. A groundbreaking 1999 report by former U.S. Surgeon General David Satcher explains it this way: Mental disorders are characterized by abnormalities in cognition, emotion or mood, or the highest integrative aspects of behavior, such as social interactions or planning of future activities. These mental functions

are all mediated by the brain. It is, in fact, a core tenet of modern science that behavior and our subjective mental lives reflect the overall workings of the brain. Symptoms related to behavior or our mental lives clearly reflect variations or abnormalities in brain function.

*“Stigma and the lack of understanding of mental illness leads people to discriminate against those who have it by avoiding them socially, from hiring them or renting to them.”*

Mental health-related diseases and disorders often have a needless shame linked with them, but getting help is not a sign of weakness, it's a sign of true strength. If you are seeking care for someone in your family, it shows your support for their well-being.

#### WHEN SHOULD YOU SEEK HELP?

We all experience stress and anxiety in our lives. But experts say if you're having major bouts of anxiety or depression more days than not, this could indicate that something is wrong. Mental health conditions go beyond emotional reactions and become longer lasting. They are medical conditions that cause changes in mood or how we think and feel. If family and friends are telling you you're not acting like

yourself, that you frequently look or seem sad, take note. Here are additional signs NAMI lists that might indicate that you need to seek help:

- Excessive worrying or fear.
- Feeling excessively sad or low.
- Confused thinking or problems concentrating and learning.
- Extreme mood changes, including uncontrollable “highs” or feelings of euphoria.
- Prolonged or strong feelings of irritability or anger.
- Avoiding friends and social activities.
- Difficulties understanding or relating to other people.
- Changes in sleeping habits or feeling tired or lethargic.
- Changes in eating habits such as increased hunger or lack of appetite.
- Changes in sex drive.
- Difficulty perceiving reality, delusions or hallucinations.
- Inability to perceive changes in one’s own feelings, behavior or personality.
- Abuse of alcohol or drugs.
- Multiple physical ailments without obvious causes such as headaches, stomachaches, or other vague and ongoing aches and pains.
- Suicidal thoughts.
- Inability to carry out daily activities or handle daily problems and stress.
- An intense fear of weight gain or concern with appearance.

If you feel you might need to talk to someone or seek help, don’t isolate yourself. Confide in a trusted friend, family, or clergy member. Any of these individuals might be able to recommend a therapist while also offering support. Many employers also have employee assistance programs that provide confidential access to mental health professionals and other services at no charge.

Remember that you are not your illness: You may have bipolar disorder, but don’t think of yourself as “bipolar.” We don’t want others to use labels, so we shouldn’t label ourselves.

Make your mental health a priority—this is key to getting relief and living a happier, healthier life. A high-profile positive



example is when pop star Selena Gomez famously took three months off from touring and social media to take care of her mental and emotional health, reports *Harper's Bazaar*.

She previously revealed she suffers from anxiety, depression, and panic attacks. She joins a long list of celebrities coming forward about their struggles with mental illness and their success stories—all of which is taking a bite out of the stigma.

Actress and activist Glenn Close co-founded Bring Change to Mind (BC2M) in 2010 after two close family members were diagnosed with mental illness. The nonprofit's mission is to end the stigma and discrimination surrounding mental illness by encouraging



dialogue and raising awareness, understanding, and empathy, with the belief that every individual who speaks out inspires another, and so on. Their website, <https://bringchange2mind.org>, has a wealth of success stories as well as tools to help initiate conversation about mental illness.

#### FIGHTING STIGMA—WHAT IS CALIFORNIA DOING?

In a historic effort to reduce the stigma of mental illness, California voters approved the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) in 2004. The law funds a comprehensive statewide prevention initiative that places stigma and discrimination reduction at its center, with projects providing interventions at the institutional, societal, and individual levels with hopes to build a community-based mental health system as an alternative to institutionalization. By imposing a 1% tax on personal income in excess of \$1 million, the MHSA provides funding and a framework to transform California's traditional community mental health system to one focused on prevention and wellness, while expanding services to underserved populations and California's diverse communities.

Also, DCA's Board of Behavioral Sciences is also joining the fight against stigma. Its most recent strategic plan includes developing an outreach program to educate the public about the benefits of mental health care to help reduce barriers and destigmatize it.

The Board also created a list of organizations, service locators, brochures (such as "Self-empowerment: Choosing a mental health professional in California"), and other mental health resources under its "Consumers" section at [www.bbs.ca.gov](http://www.bbs.ca.gov).

#### FINDING HELP AND TREATMENT

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration ([www.samhsa.gov/find-treatment](http://www.samhsa.gov/find-treatment)) National Helpline

provides 24-hour, free, confidential referrals and information about mental and substance use disorders, prevention, treatment, and recovery in English and Spanish at (800) 662-HELP (TTY: 800-487-4889). The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is available at (800) 273-TALK or contact the Crisis Text Line by texting HOME to 741741.

Several of the Department of Consumer Affairs' healing arts boards license therapists and offer resources. Visit [search.dca.ca.gov](http://search.dca.ca.gov) to verify a professional license and visit [www.dca.ca.gov](http://www.dca.ca.gov) for additional consumer resources. 

“  
*Make your mental health a priority—this is key to getting relief and living a happier, healthier life.*  
”

# SEEING PAST THE DISTRACTIONS

## UNIVERSITY STUDIES WHETHER VIRTUAL REALITY CAN HELP KIDS WITH ADHD

By **Ryan Jones**  
Consumer Connection staff

**V**irtual reality, the immersive simulation technology once known mainly for gaming and touring exotic locations, is now used for everything from training pilots and astronauts to working out.

Researchers at the University of California, Davis, hope to add another valuable function to the growing virtual reality, or VR, field—treating kids with attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

A study by UC Davis' Medical Investigation of Neurodevelopmental Disorders (MIND) Institute has started testing whether VR technology can help reduce the negative effects of distractions for children and teens.

When kids in this program slip on a VR headset, they are immersed in a virtual classroom, facing a large whiteboard at the front of the class. The kids are then exposed to classroom distractions to the point that they become accustomed to them while still being able to focus on tasks in "class" that demand attention, according to a UC Davis news release.

This type of treatment is called "exposure therapy," which was developed to help people confront their fears by eliminating avoidance, according to the American Psychological Association. When people are fearful of some situation or thing, they tend to avoid it. This has short-term benefits for the person experiencing anxiety but can worsen the phobia over time.

Nearly 10% of children age 17 and under in the U.S. have been diagnosed with ADHD, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. ADHD, which can continue into adulthood, is a condition marked by persistent inattention, hyperactivity, distractibility, and sometimes impulsiveness. Kids with ADHD often do poorly in school and in their social interactions with peers and others.

Kids with ADHD are most commonly treated with prescription drugs such as stimulants, which help them concentrate on tasks and reduce hyperactivity. The VR treatment, however, has benefits medications do not have while also being free of side effects like trouble sleeping and loss of appetite—common with some ADHD drugs, said Julie Schweitzer, a UC Davis psychiatry and behavioral sciences professor and MIND Institute researcher.

"We need to teach people to learn to ignore distractions, teach them to learn to enhance their attention, and medications don't do that," Schweitzer said in a video on the UC Davis Health YouTube channel.

### HOW IT WORKS

After an initial consultation at the MIND Institute, researchers give study participants a VR headset and cellphone (used with the headset) to take home. Kids are required to go through about 25 daily sessions that



LVL 2



last 25 minutes over the course of five to six weeks.

In the virtual classroom, participants will be tested on completing attention-demanding tasks such as math problems or memory tests while a range of distractors (fellow “students” talking, passing vehicles, a teacher’s clicking footsteps) happen around them. Kids come back to the lab in the middle of the home sessions and again at the end.

How well kids stay focused on assigned tasks is measured through the scores they record, head movement, and eye-tracking technology. Researchers hope to see improvements first in the virtual classroom sessions and then, eventually, determine whether the repetition translates to lower levels of distraction at home and in real classrooms.

“That’s the beauty of virtual reality, that it should transfer to real settings, and so we want to assess whether there actually are changes in their real settings,” Schweitzer said.

#### MIND INSTITUTE HOPES TO EXPAND STUDY

A major component of the study, researchers said, was accessibility. In addition to participants being able to do the bulk of the testing at home, Schweitzer noted that VR headsets are widely available and falling in price (many are less than \$50).




The virtual reality view of the “classroom” kids are immersed in who are participating in a UC Davis study on treating ADHD. Photo credit: UC Davis Health.

“If a parent could download an app to purchase the treatment, families in many places around the world could access it,” Schweitzer said.

The MIND Institute was seeking 50 children between the ages of 8 and 12 to participate in the study, which was funded with a \$1 million award from the National Institutes of Health (NIH). If the pilot study is successful, NIH may fund a much larger project involving hundreds of participants.

Parents who suspect their child may have ADHD have options, experts say. A good place to start is by talking to the child’s pediatrician. Some pediatricians have experience diagnosing ADHD. If they don’t, they can likely make a referral to a trained psychiatrist who has that experience. Another option for parents is to ask your child’s school psychologist to do an evaluation or a school counselor to recommend someone for an evaluation.

The Department of Consumer Affairs’ Medical Board of California licenses psychiatrists and pediatricians. Before sitting down with either, be sure to consult the Medical Board’s website ([www.mbc.ca.gov](http://www.mbc.ca.gov)) to confirm their license is active and in good standing. 





COVER  
STORY

# ROBOTIC PSYCHIATRY

## RESEARCH POINTS TO BENEFITS OF NONHUMAN INTERACTION

By **Ben Deci**  
Consumer Connection staff

**T**he year was 1950, and a man named Alan Turing was thinking about the nature of ... well ... thinking. Could, for example, a computer think? To explore this question, he proposed what's come to be known as the Turing Test, or Imitation Game.

Here's how it works: The player has two conversations, one with another person, the other with a computer. The conversations are conducted only in text. The player then has to guess, based on those text conversations, which is the computer and which is the real person. A computer that can fool players repeatedly is said to have passed the Turing Test.

In Alan Turing's lifetime, no computer ever came close.

Fast-forward to 2019. I have a friend who plays a version of this same game online. He's a user of the dating app Tinder. But he says most of the time he's not meeting potential dates on the application, he's meeting robots or chatbots—computer programs designed to simulate human interaction. They are created to fool him. The “bots” message him, strike up conversations, even shamelessly flirt with him, but

eventually they try to sell him something or harvest his personal data. In his contemporary version of the Turing Test, my friend tries to figure out if the owner of the dating profile he's messaging is a robot before their conversation takes that turn toward the commercial.

Now imagine a future where the realization that you've been chatting with a robot all along isn't necessarily grounds for rejecting them as a potential romantic partner. That future is coming fast.



“The future is ‘Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner’ but isn’t going to eat anything,” said Joanne Pransky, a San Francisco-area robotics expert and futurist. Google ‘World’s First Robotic Psychiatrist’ and the result you’ll get is Joanne Pransky. Her entire career has been dedicated to the study of human-robot interaction.

She believes that in the not-too-distant future robots will become so integrated with the human experience that we’ll be tackling policy questions about the legality of marrying a mechanical social companion.

Sound farfetched?

“We are looking at a generation now more at ease with a device than they are with each other, because they’ve spent their lives with a device,” Pransky said.

### PRACTICAL ADVANCES

Robots, as a result, are already starting to serve our most human needs in the most sensitive and intimate zones of our lives. Consider Milo. A plastic boy sized to stand on a desktop, Milo was designed to help children with autism. He’s facially expressive and programmed to imitate human social interactions. It’s perhaps ironic that his developers from Dallas-based Robokind say he’s especially well-suited to help children with autism recognize and express emotion, precisely because he is not human.

“Research shows that children with autism can often more quickly relate to a humanoid robot than with an adult because of their mechanical inclinations,” claims Robokind’s website.

Robokind points to research claiming that, in a typical hour-long therapy session with a human alone, a child with autism will be so reluctant to participate that they will be engaged with the therapist for only about a minute and a half. But with Milo

“  
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”



present, Robokind claims engagement goes up drastically, to 52 and a half minutes.

Robokind isn't suggesting that Milo replace human therapists. He is offered as an additional tool for therapists, and Pransky said that's key.

"The key is what's at the other end of that communication," Pransky said. "Who's created that interface? They must be trained."

She said robots providing health care or therapy services should not supplant or replace humans, but for some needs they can be good "first responders."

A prime example of that is Mabu, the personal health care companion. Mabu is a product of Catalia Health based in San Francisco. It's a social robot engineered to monitor and report on a patient's condition and medication regime from the patient's home. Mabu has daily conversations with patients about how they are feeling, whether they are taking their medications and when, and if they are experiencing any side effects. The robot then transmits that information back to physicians or pharmacists who can use it to adjust and improve the patient's care plan.

A robot doesn't need to be verbal, or even humanoid, to play a role in health care. PARO is a robotic, baby harp seal. Like any flesh-and-blood seal, PARO can't speak. But it does respond by moving when it is spoken to or petted, and that's all it takes. When introduced to an elderly care facility, the effects can be pronounced. Seniors who typically spend their days in sedentary silence will engage with PARO, pet him, talk to him, and even sing to him. And the benefits don't stop at those interactions. The seniors were also much more likely to talk to each other about PARO, too, and that, Pransky said, is vital.

"Loneliness, among elderly in particular, is a killer," she said.

## ETHICAL ISSUES

Most humans don't have access to, and wouldn't avail themselves of a therapist 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Pransky said that kind of access may be ideal, but isn't practical. As an alternative, what she calls "embodied artificial intelligence" is always on, infinitely



**MILO**

*Image courtesy  
of Robokind*

patient, and could be programmed with the input of therapists to meet the mental health needs of a person struggling with, say, depression.

Ethical issues abound. What if robots become so realistic that, like the dating profiles encountered by my friend the Tinder user, it becomes difficult to tell the difference between human and machine? What if robots become so adept at reading and responding to our emotional states that malicious programmers use them to manipulate us? Pransky said it's not a question of if this will happen, but when.


The first step toward bracing for the challenges, and embracing the advantages, is to see them coming on the horizon. And until that day arrives, there are



**PARO**

*Image courtesy  
of Catalia  
Health*

plenty of humans ready to help you. Call (800) 273-TALK (8255) anytime of the day or night to get that help from the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. The call is completely free.

And if you need something more in addition to a phone conversation with an understanding voice, they can refer you to a licensed clinical social worker, licensed professional clinical counselor, a psychologist or psychiatrist in your area. 



## EXECUTIVE SPOTLIGHT

**GINA CHIAVERINI SANCHEZ**  
 CEMETERY AND FUNERAL BUREAU

**G**ina Chiaverini Sanchez certainly hit the ground running as the new bureau chief for the Cemetery and Funeral Bureau (CFB), a job she began February 20, 2019.

Within her first six months she: testified before the state Legislature on behalf of CFB; announced the acceptance of credit cards for license renewal as a first step in the CFB's Business Modernization Plan; completed and released CFB's Strategic Plan; participated in multiple consumer outreach events; and released draft language for regulations as part of three Senate and Assembly bills.

All of this is in addition to the day-to-day oversight of the CFB.

Gina has 12 years of experience working for DCA in various capacities. Most recently, she served as the licensing division chief at the California Board of Accountancy (CBA), where she was able to implement a credit card payment system for license renewal, and develop and implement new regulations to keep up with an ever-changing industry.

We recently spoke with Gina about her background and her vision in her new role.

**WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR THE BUREAU?**

I am charged with educating consumers to make informed end-of-life decisions. The CFB team is accomplishing that by making updates to our website, and staff has already attended four consumer outreach events this year. It has been a pleasure to connect with Californians and I was pleasantly surprised by how many have already documented or even funded arrangements and have shared this information with their family. My personal vision is to bring CFB into the 21st century by releasing online applications for our stakeholders and developing automated business practices to streamline workflow.

**WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE CONSUMERS TO KNOW ABOUT THE BUREAU?**

CFB has 13 different license types including personal and businesses licenses. Our licenses include more

than just private cemeteries and funeral homes (or funeral establishments as we call them); we also license crematories, embalmers, and even cemetery salespersons. The Cemetery and Funeral Act is thorough and quite complex as it includes oversight of not only the profession, but has fiduciary oversight of trust funds, which involves the protection of consumer monies.

**WHAT IS YOUR BIGGEST CHALLENGE?**

I would say it's becoming a subject matter expert in the Cemetery and Funeral Act. Although we may be a smaller bureau, we are very busy, and the demand is that I become proficient in the laws I am here to enforce. Although I am not yet an expert, I have many within CFB who assist me and have support from the Department's executive team to lead with me.

**WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR BEST MEMORIES OF YOUR JOBS PRIOR TO THIS ONE?**

I can say that CFB bureau chief has officially become my favorite "job." Each position I've held within DCA has brought me a wealth of experience which has allowed me to refine my skills and abilities and grow in my state career. Prior to state service, my favorite job (when I was a lot younger) was working at a full-service salon and spa in Newport Beach. During that time, I had the greatest skin, hair, and relaxed muscles! I guess that says a lot about the current team I am working with!

**WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE YOUR YOUNGER SELF?**

That they are not kidding when they say life is hard, so find what brings you joy, whether it's your family, serving others, or your career. That is what will support you and motivate you as you grind through the day-to-day. I would also say to be patient and put in your sweat and time, learn from others who are successful, and when you get tired of trying things your way, look to them for a road map. ☺



# NEED FOR LAND SURVEYORS GROWS WITH STATE'S NATURAL DISASTERS

## REBUILDING HOMES AND BUSINESSES LOST TO WILDFIRE REQUIRES PROFESSIONALS TO STAKE OUT PROPERTIES

By **Lana K. Wilson-Combs**  
Consumer Connection staff

**A**s California grapples with the after effects of wildfires, floods, and most recently a 7.1 magnitude earthquake—one of the biggest to hit the Golden State in nearly 20 years—the state's infrastructure is getting a closer look.

Licensed land surveyors will play an important role in the rebuilding process. They work with engineers, architects, and builders. They provide the initial surveys and the construction staking for the infrastructure projects such as monument preservation and surveying properties in the rebuilding of the homes and businesses lost to wildfire.

Fortunately, as the need has increased, the number of licensed surveyors has outpaced California's increase in population over the past decade (see chart).

Year	CA population (millions)	Number of licensees	No. of surveyors per million
2009	36.89	3,626	98.3
2014	38.63	4,143	107.2
2019	39.75	4,120	103.6

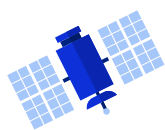
Source: Board for Professional Engineers, Land Surveyors and Geologists

At the same time, California has seen an increase in the number of people taking the two exams required to become licensed as a land surveyor.

Still, natural disasters, especially in concentrated areas, continue to be a reality for the Golden State, so the need for additional licensed land surveyors is as great as ever.

So, what will it take to attract more workers to this valuable profession?





It's up to the colleges, current licensees, and their respective professional organizations to promote the profession and recruit future land surveyors. Once the interested individuals are in college or working in the profession, the California Department of Consumer Affairs' Board for Professional Engineers, Land Surveyors and Geologists (BPELSG) can help.

BPELSG regulates the practices of engineering and land surveying in California and partners with colleges, universities, and professional organizations to educate students and those interested in the process for becoming licensed.

"The lack of recruits to the profession isn't because land surveying isn't interesting, it's because many don't realize what it is," BPELSG outreach coordinator Brooke C. Phayer said. "One of the first things we do as part of our outreach efforts is educate as to the process for becoming licensed."

Phayer adds that the BPELSG website ([www.bpelsg.ca.gov](http://www.bpelsg.ca.gov)) has educational videos on how to become a certified engineer in training or land surveyor in training, which is the first step toward obtaining a license.

Since 1982, there have been approximately 8,000 civil engineers licensed to perform land surveying—and who are also available to help disaster-stricken areas rebuild.



*“It's up to the colleges, current licensees, and their respective professional organizations to promote the profession and recruit future land surveyors.”*

Overall, land surveying is a career that's growing in popularity and in high demand throughout the industry, government, and the private sector. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics lists the nationwide average annual salary in 2018 for land surveyors at \$62,580 and projects employment of surveyors to grow 11% through 2026, an above-average growth rate. The areas of urban planning, architecture, construction, and disaster and emergency planning will be particularly strong.

While all states require land surveyors be licensed, they are not required to have a college education. Employers look favorably on college or vocational school courses in civil engineering, mathematics, physics, statistics, geometry, drafting, blueprint reading, and computer science. Many of those who don't attend college find work as technical assistants. Many eventually become licensed while gaining their experience and education on the job. College graduates generally must have two to four years of surveying experience while high school graduates must have six to 10 years.

The following are some of the colleges in California that offer land surveying.

1. Fresno State University
2. Santiago Canyon College





3. Cal Poly Pomona
4. College of the Canyons
5. Santa Rosa Junior College
6. Cuyamaca College
7. East Los Angeles College
8. Mt. San Jacinto College

To find out more information on land surveyor licensing requirements and the functions and responsibilities of a land surveyor, visit [www.bpelsg.ca.gov](http://www.bpelsg.ca.gov).

*BPELSG Staff Senior Registrar Dallas Sweeney, PLS, contributed to this report.*

## Q&A: SURVEYORS HAVE OVERSIGHT, TOO

We sat down recently with staff Senior Registrar Dallas Sweeney, PLS, from the Board for Professional Engineers, Land Surveyors, and Geologists (BPELSG) to learn more about the Board in general and how it oversees one specific profession, land surveyors.

### Q: WHAT IS THE ROLE OF BPELSG?

A: Our primary role is to protect the public's safety and property by promoting standards for competence and integrity through licensing and regulating the Board's professions.

### Q: WHAT TYPE OF OUTREACH EFFORTS DOES BPELSG DO TO HELP EDUCATE THE PUBLIC ABOUT THE PROFESSION?

A: The Board's outreach efforts are many and varied:

- We reach out to the colleges and universities with land surveyor programs on a yearly basis with an "educational package" sent to every dean and department chair.
- We follow up with yearly "in-classroom" presentations to the individual programs.
- We have a presence at the yearly events that the programs hold, such as Fresno State's and Cal Poly Pomona's Annual Geomatics Conferences, where we distribute our printed material on the path to professional licensure.
- We reach out to state and municipal entities that work with land surveyors (such as city and county building officials), and professional societies such as the California Land Surveyors Association (CLSA), that will invite us to meetings at locations throughout the state. At these meetings and events, we discuss the path to professional licensure, the current practices in the profession, and address any other questions that may arise.


### Q: HOW OFTEN ARE THESE EVENTS HELD?

A: We visit each major college program yearly; the local meetings occur several times each month. We are very good at responding to requests for information about our licensees.

### Q: MILLENNIALS LOVE TECH/GADGETS AND THINGS. HOW IS THE LAND SURVEYOR PROFESSION CHANGING AND WHAT NEW TECHNOLOGY/ADVANCES ARE ON THE HORIZON, IF ANY?

A: In recent years, land surveying has seen many benefits with new technology such as robotic total stations, LIDAR, GPS, and UAV/UAS (drones). The advancements in technology provide millennials an opportunity with current land surveyors to work together and teach each other.

### Q: WHERE CAN THOSE WHO ARE INTERESTED IN BECOMING LAND SURVEYORS FIND MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROFESSION?

A: Our website is full of information about obtaining a professional license. To find out more about land surveying as a profession, I would suggest going to either of the two major college programs' websites or professional societies: Cal Poly Pomona ([www.cpp.edu](http://www.cpp.edu)); Fresno State University ([www.csufresno.edu](http://www.csufresno.edu)); or California Land Surveyors Association ([www.californiasurveyors.org](http://www.californiasurveyors.org)). In addition, our outreach efforts extend to the practices of engineering, where we work with 38 college, university, and military programs, and geology, where we work with 35 colleges and universities. 



## B R I E F S

## REAL ID: DO YOU NEED ONE?

*By Laurel Goddard, Consumer Connection staff*

Passed by Congress in 2005, the REAL ID Act enacted the recommendation of the 9/11 Commission (also known as the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States) that the federal government set standards for the issuance of identification sources such as driver licenses.

The act established minimum security standards for state-issued driver licenses and identification cards and prohibits federal agencies from accepting for official purposes licenses and identification cards from states that do not meet these standards.

Beginning October 1, 2020, if you fly within the United States or enter secure federal buildings or military bases, you will need a valid passport or another federally approved document, such as a REAL ID driver license or identification card. However, if you're willing to carry around your passport for these purposes, there is no urgency to get a REAL ID.

The Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) has a flow chart to help you determine if you should get a REAL ID. Go to **[www.dmv.ca.gov](http://www.dmv.ca.gov)** and click on the REAL ID icon. The site also has an application guide video, an interactive checklist, and a list of the documents needed to apply for a REAL ID, which must be done at a DMV office.

## STUDENTS IN ONLINE, OUT-OF-STATE COLLEGE PROGRAMS CAN NOW FILE COMPLAINTS

*By Ryan Jones, Consumer Connection staff*

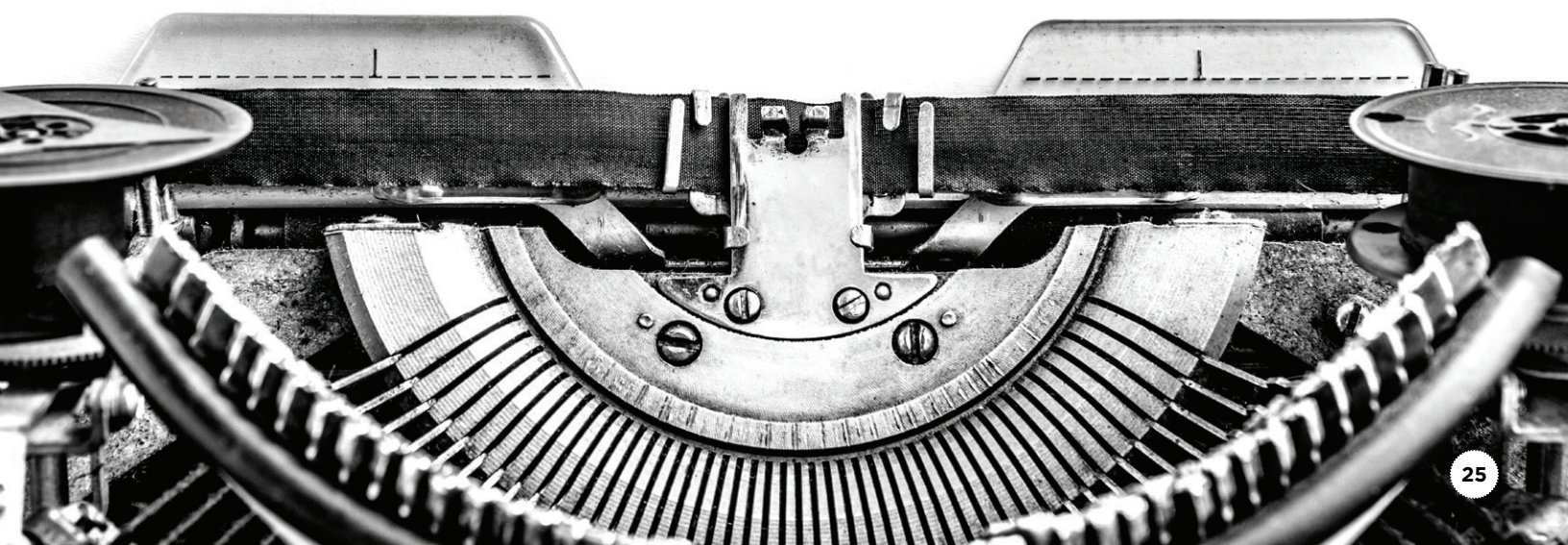
California students who are enrolled in an online, out-of-state college or university can now file a complaint with the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA).

DCA announced the new complaint process in July, and complaints will be handled with assistance from the Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education, which DCA oversees. The process applies to any and all complaints, including those about actions or events that occurred prior to the July announcement.

The new process brings the state into compliance with recent regulations announced by the federal Department of Education, which said California students enrolled in online programs at out-of-state colleges were no longer eligible for federal financial aid because the state did not have a complaint process in place.

"As the state's consumer protection agency, we are committed to ensuring students are protected and that we are both in full compliance and responsive," DCA Chief Deputy Director Chris Shultz said in a July 29 news release.

Affected students can file a complaint online at **[www.dca.ca.gov](http://www.dca.ca.gov)** or by calling DCA's Consumer Information Center at (833) 942-1120.





## OCTOBER IS A GOOD TIME TO ADOPT A DOG

*By Lana K. Wilson-Combs, Consumer Connection staff*

Every dog deserves a loving and nurturing home, which is why the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) and the American Humane Association (AHA) have joined forces and deemed October “National Adopt a Shelter Dog Month” and “Adopt a Dog Month.”

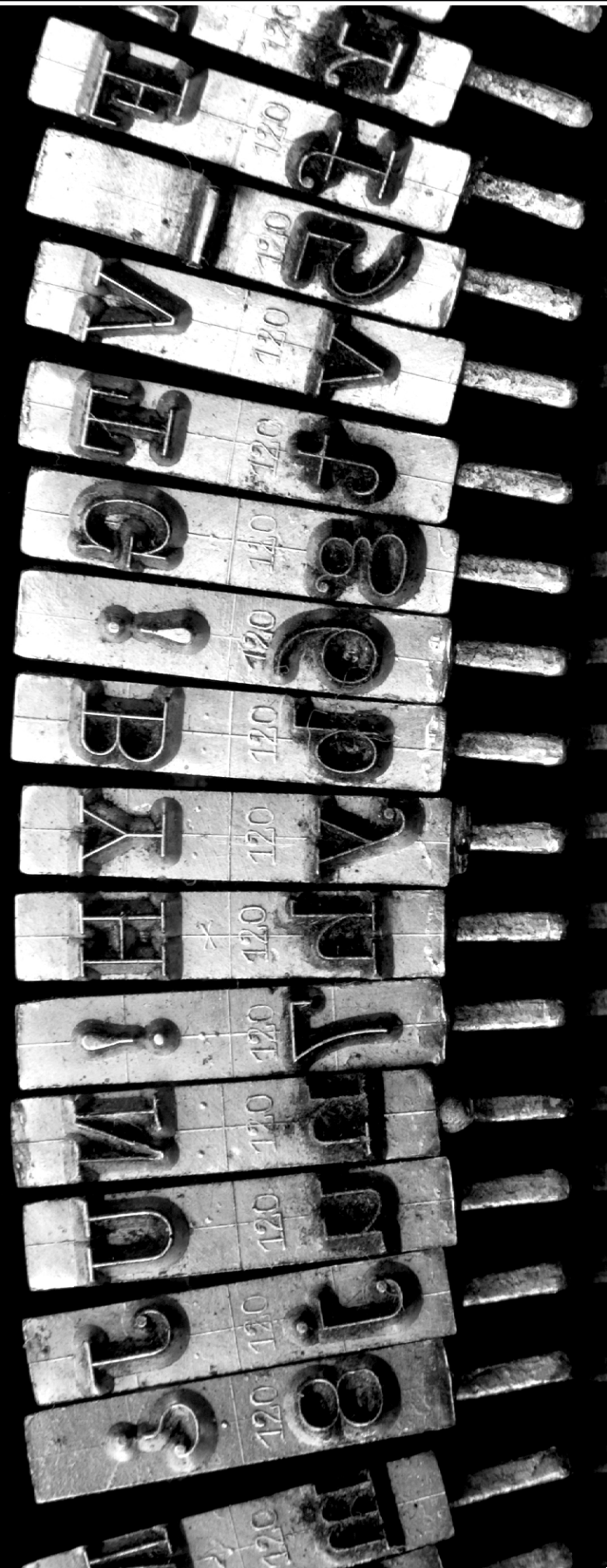
Since 1981, the AHA has promoted “Adopt a Shelter Dog Month” in response to the growing number of dogs and puppies that enter shelters every year. According to the ASPCA, that’s an average of nearly 3.3 million a year.

Most of these dogs are strays. Some have even been abused. However, all need the same thing: lots of love and companionship.

It’s no secret that pets can enrich and enhance our lives. While research on human-animal interactions is still relatively new, studies by the National Institutes of Health have shown that a pet’s unconditional love can have positive health effects, like decreased stress and anxiety. Plus, having a furry friend to play with is just a lot of fun.

Before dogs are available for adoption, most shelters work with veterinarians to ensure they are healthy and don’t have any temperamental issues. So, whether you’re looking for a big or small pooch, a shelter can help find the canine companion that’s just right for you.

To check that a veterinarian is licensed in California, use DCA’s license search page at [search.dca.ca.gov](https://search.dca.ca.gov). For more information on the dog days of October, visit [www.americanhumane.org](https://www.americanhumane.org) and [www.asPCA.org](https://www.asPCA.org).



# REACH OUT

**T**he Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) protects and serves California consumers while ensuring a competent and fair marketplace. DCA accomplishes this by administering more than 3.9 million licenses in 250 license types, including permits, certificates, and registrations through the licensing and regulatory entities under its jurisdiction.

DCA provides consumers with current license status information on the millions of professionals licensed or certified through its entities. To check licenses, report concerns with a licensed professional, or to find out more about a profession, contact one of the many DCA entities listed below.

## **ACCOUNTANCY, CALIFORNIA BOARD OF**

2450 Venture Oaks Way, Suite 300  
Sacramento, CA 95833  
(916) 263-3680  
[www.dca.ca.gov/cba](http://www.dca.ca.gov/cba)

## **ACUPUNCTURE BOARD**

1747 North Market Blvd., Suite 180  
Sacramento, CA 95834  
(916) 515-5200  
[www.acupuncture.ca.gov](http://www.acupuncture.ca.gov)

## **ARBITRATION CERTIFICATION PROGRAM**

1625 North Market Blvd., Suite N-112  
Sacramento, CA 95834  
Toll-free: (800) 952-5210  
(916) 574-7350  
[www.dca.ca.gov/acp](http://www.dca.ca.gov/acp)  
[www.LemonLaw.ca.gov](http://www.LemonLaw.ca.gov)

## **ARCHITECTS BOARD, CALIFORNIA**

2420 Del Paso Road, Suite 105  
Sacramento, CA 95834  
(916) 574-7220  
[www.cab.ca.gov](http://www.cab.ca.gov)

## **ATHLETIC COMMISSION, CALIFORNIA STATE**

2005 Evergreen St., Suite 2010  
Sacramento, CA 95815  
(916) 263-2195  
TTY: (800) 326-2297  
[www.dca.ca.gov/csac](http://www.dca.ca.gov/csac)

## **AUTOMOTIVE REPAIR, BUREAU OF**

10949 North Mather Blvd.  
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670  
Toll-free: (800) 952-5210  
[www.bar.ca.gov](http://www.bar.ca.gov)

## **BARBERING AND COSMETOLOGY, BOARD OF**

2420 Del Paso Road, Suite 100  
Sacramento, CA 95834  
Toll-free: (800) 952-5210  
[www.barbercosmo.ca.gov](http://www.barbercosmo.ca.gov)

## **BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES, BOARD OF**

1625 North Market Blvd., Suite S-200  
Sacramento, CA 95834  
(916) 574-7830  
[www.bbs.ca.gov](http://www.bbs.ca.gov)

## **CANNABIS CONTROL, BUREAU OF**

Mailing address:  
P.O. Box 419106  
Rancho Cordova, CA 95741-9106  
Toll-free: (833) 768-5880  
[www.bcc.ca.gov](http://www.bcc.ca.gov)

## **CEMETERY AND FUNERAL BUREAU**

1625 North Market Blvd., Suite S-208  
Sacramento, CA 95834  
(916) 574-7870  
Toll-free: (800) 952-5210  
[www.cfb.ca.gov](http://www.cfb.ca.gov)

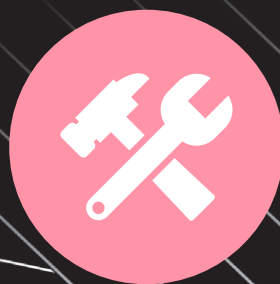
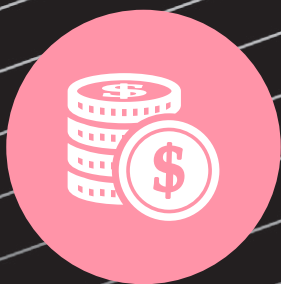
## **CHIROPRACTIC EXAMINERS, CALIFORNIA BOARD OF**

901 P St., Suite 142A  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
(916) 263-5355  
Toll-free: (866) 543-1311  
[www.chiro.ca.gov](http://www.chiro.ca.gov)

## **CONTRACTORS STATE LICENSE BOARD**

9821 Business Park Drive  
Sacramento, CA 95827  
(916) 255-3900  
Toll-free: (800) 321-2752  
[www.cslb.ca.gov](http://www.cslb.ca.gov)





#### **COURT REPORTERS BOARD OF CALIFORNIA**

2535 Capitol Oaks Drive, Suite 230  
Sacramento, CA 95833  
(916) 263-3660  
Toll-free: (877) 327-5272  
(877-3ASKCRB)

[www.courtreportersboard.ca.gov](http://www.courtreportersboard.ca.gov)

#### **DENTAL BOARD OF CALIFORNIA**

2005 Evergreen St., Suite 1550  
Sacramento, CA 95815  
(916) 263-2300  
Toll-free: (877) 729-7789

[www.dbc.ca.gov](http://www.dbc.ca.gov)

#### **DENTAL HYGIENE BOARD OF CALIFORNIA**

2005 Evergreen St., Suite 2050  
Sacramento, CA 95815  
(916) 263-1978

[www.dhbc.ca.gov](http://www.dhbc.ca.gov)

#### **HOUSEHOLD GOODS AND SERVICES, BUREAU OF**

4244 South Market Court, Suite D  
Sacramento, CA 95834  
(916) 999-2041

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