

Alabama Private Investigation Board (APIB)

February 13, 2019 News Blast

The Difference Between the Licensure Board (APIB) and the Association (APIA)

What is the purpose of the Licensure Board (APIB) and what is the difference between the APIB and the Association (APIA)? This is a common question and sometimes the two organizations are thought to be the same entity, creating confusion and misconceptions.

Let's start with the purpose of APIB. Our purpose is very clearly defined by State law: "**To regulate and license the practice of private investigation for the purpose of public protection.**" Other goals and objectives may not supersede public protection. A licensure board carries out this purpose by ensuring that the public is served by establishing minimum standards of proficiency in the regulated profession. When one serves on a regulatory board, the focus shifts from professional advocacy to the protection of the public. The APIB currently has 515 Licensed Private Investigators in Alabama. The state statute is the mandate for the APIB to follow in all its actions and requirements for licensing and regulation of private investigators in Alabama (this statute is found in its' entirety on the APIB web site at http://www.apib.alabama.gov/PDF/law/CHAPTER_25B.pdf).

In contrast, the Alabama Private Investigators Association (APIA) is the professional advocate for the private investigator industry. The IRS and Alabama Secretary of State registers associations as not-for-profit organizations and it has voluntary membership from the private investigator profession. In general, most associations typically make up approximately 1/3 of the population of their respective licensure board due to association membership being voluntary rather than mandated. Typically, an association can provide direct services to those who choose to become a member (that are not limited by statute) like education, professional networking, advocacy, resources and tools, inter-professional collaboration, and lobbying.

Although our purposes are different, one the consumer advocate and one the professions advocate, it benefits the state as a whole as our two organizations find ways to work together creating confidence in private investigator services in Alabama. This in turn accomplishes both professional advocacy and consumer protection. This is the ideal we strive for at APIB while still maintaining each individual organizations purpose and role as being separate.