

Department of Commerce, Community
and Economic Development

Division of Corporations, Business
and Professional Licensing

Board of Social Work Examiners

Annual Report

Fiscal Year 2023



Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development
Division of Corporations, Business and Professional Licensing

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**Board of Social Work Examiners
FY 2023 Annual Report**

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**Board of Social Work Examiners
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Identification of the Board

Board Member	Duty Station	Date Appointed	Term Expires
Anne Applebee - Chair Licensed Clinical Social Worker	Palmer	May 25, 2022	March 1, 2025
Stacey Stone Public Member	Anchorage	March 8, 2023	March 1, 2027
Amber Taylor Licensed Master's Social Worker	JBER	August 3, 2022	March 1, 2026
Sharon Woodward Licensed Baccalaureate Social Worker	Juneau	March 8, 2021	March 1, 2026

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Identification of Staff

Rebecca Clay – Occupational Licensing Examiner

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(907) 465-2550

Jeanne Pace – Program Coordinator I

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Renee Carabajal – Program Coordinator II

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Marilyn Zimmerman – Paralegal II

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Jasmine Bautista – Investigator

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Identification of Staff (continued)

Alison Osborne – Regulations Specialist

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(907) 465-2550

**Board of Social Work Examiners
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Narrative Statement

The Board of Social Work Examiners is staffed by the Division of Corporations, Business, and Professional Licensing. The board consists of licensed social workers and one public member. Board members are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Legislature. The primary function of the Board of Social Work Examiners is protection of the public, which is accomplished by adopting regulations to carry out laws governing the practice of social work in Alaska. The board makes final licensing decisions and takes disciplinary action against people who violate licensing laws.

During FY 2023 (July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023) there have been changes to the membership of the board. The board is currently comprised of three licensed social workers and one public member position. The board continues to encourage Social Workers to apply to join the Alaska Board.

In March the former board chair left, and a new board chair was appointed. In FY 2023, the Alaska Board of Social Work Examiners held four regular scheduled meetings. These were all via Zoom with the option of being in person. There are plans to hold in-person meetings going forward.

There has been an addition to the continuing education requirements for licensees. As of June 11, 2023, three hours of Suicide Education CEU's will be required for license renewal as well as for new license applications. The board has also taken into consideration the amount of CEU's required for first time renewals who have had their license for less than 12 months. For these Social Workers, CEU's will be prorated to include only the required AK Native, Substance Use, Telehealth and Suicide Education.

The Board of Social Work Examiners was tasked with determining if social workers should be able to administer Naloxone (Narcan) to individuals who have overdosed. It was determined that social workers have the option to administer after proper education and training. This is not a requirement.

The board continues to work to identify outdated regulations and opportunities for improvement. The Right Touch Regulation Project is a priority.

The board has developed a new disciplinary matrix for guidance with cases that require discipline. It is posted on the website.

Board members are able to attend trainings through the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB), a nonprofit association of social work boards in the United States and Canada.

The board's activities include but are not limited to reviewing applications for licensure, auditing continuing education credits, reviewing supervisor requests, reviewing requests for extension exam time, approving continuing education trainings, and writing regulation. Finally, the board works collaboratively with the board investigator to review licensing complaints and act on cases brought forward for determination.

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Budget Recommendations for FY 2024

Budget Recommendations section anticipates the board’s fiscal priorities for the upcoming year. Please complete all parts of this section with details about anticipated meetings, conferences, memberships, supplies, equipment, to other board requests. Meeting expenses that are being funded through third-party reimbursement or direct booking must be identified separately from expenses paid through license fees (receipt- supported services or RSS). Be sure to explain any items listed as “other” so they may be tracked appropriately.

Board Meeting Date	Location	# Board	# Staff
December 11-12, 2023	Anchorage	4 (1 Traveling)	1
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Airfare:			\$ 700.00
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hotel:			\$ 500.00
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ground:			\$ 200.00
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Please Specify):			\$ 1,000.00
Total Estimated Cost:			\$ 2,400.00

Board Meeting Date	Location	# Board	# Staff
Spring 2024	Juneau	4 (3 Traveling)	1
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Airfare:			\$ 2,000.00
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hotel:			\$ 2,000.00
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ground:			\$ 250.00
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Please Specify):			\$ 1,000.00
Total Estimated Cost:			\$ 5,250.00

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Budget Recommendations for FY 2024 (continued)

Travel Required to Perform Examinations

Not Applicable

Date	Location	# Board	# Staff

Description of meeting and its role in supporting the mission of the Board:

- Airfare:
- Hotel:
- Ground:
- Conference:
- Other (Please Specify):

Total Estimated Cost:

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Budget Recommendations for FY 2024 (continued)

Out-of-State Meetings and Additional In-State Travel (Rank in order of importance)

#1 Rank in Importance or Not Applicable

Date	Location	# Board	# Staff
September 28-30, 2023	Washington, D.C.	1	0

Description of meeting and its role in supporting the mission of the Board:

The Association of Social Work Boards New Board Members Training is vital to new board members in understanding their roles as Social Work Regulators. Training topics include roles and responsibilities of board regulators/members, licensure exams, advocacy of board members, political realities of the board, adjudication/discipline/enforcement and other current regulatory issues. Board members will network with other members to learn best practicing standards that work throughout the various states. New board members are invited to attend the training at no cost to the board.

Expenditure	License Fees (RSS)	Third-Party Reimbursement	Third-Party Direct Booked	Total
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Airfare:			\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,000.00
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hotel:			\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,000.00
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ground:			\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Conference:				\$ 0.00
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other:		\$ 800.00		\$ 800.00
Describe "Other" (break out all sections): Meals				
Net Total:	\$ 0.00	\$ 800.00	\$ 6,200.00	\$ 7,000.00

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Budget Recommendations for FY 2024 (continued)

Out-of-State Meetings and Additional In-State Travel (Rank in order of importance)

#2 Rank in Importance or Not Applicable

Date	Location	# Board	# Staff
November 3-4, 2023	Memphis, TN	1	0

Description of meeting and its role in supporting the mission of the Board:

The Association of Social Work Boards Annual Meeting of the Delegates Assembly. The Assembly provides board members with developing long-range regulatory goals and provides the latest information in regulatory research. This three-day meeting includes board member exchanges where board members have the opportunity to interact with other members of ASWB and where member boards and colleges share experiences in a self-structured session designed to support ongoing regulatory leadership development. The meeting also includes an administrative forum which is intended for staff of ASWB member boards and colleagues, with the focus of the meeting primarily on administrative processes and issues. The intent of the meeting is to give staff an opportunity to discuss issues with other administrators doing the same type of work. ASWB offers scholarships at no cost to the board.

Expenditure	License Fees (RSS)	Third-Party Reimbursement	Third-Party Direct Booked	Total
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Airfare:			\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hotel:			\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ground:			\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Conference:				\$ 0.00
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other:		\$ 400.00		\$ 400.00
Describe "Other" (break out all sections): Meals				
Net Total:	\$ 0.00	\$ 400.00	\$ 2,100.00	\$ 2,500.00

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Budget Recommendations for FY 2024 (continued)

Out-of-State Meetings and Additional In-State Travel (Rank in order of importance)

#3 Rank in Importance or Not Applicable

Date	Location	# Board	# Staff
Spring 2024 - TBD	TBD	1	1

Description of meeting and its role in supporting the mission of the Board:

The Association of Social Work Boards Spring Education Conference provides board members with developing long-range regulatory goals. Topics have included continuing competence, social work practice mobility and working with legislators. ASWB offers scholarships at no cost to the board.

Expenditure	License Fees (RSS)	Third-Party Reimbursement	Third-Party Direct Booked	Total
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Airfare:			\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hotel:			\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ground:			\$ 150.00	\$ 150.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Conference:				\$ 0.00
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other:		\$ 500.00		\$ 500.00
Describe "Other" (break out all sections): Meals				
Net Total:	\$ 0.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 3,150.00	\$ 3,650.00

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Budget Recommendations for FY 2024 (continued)

Out-of-State Meetings and Additional In-State Travel (Rank in order of importance)

#4 Rank in Importance or Not Applicable

Date	Location	# Board	# Staff
TBD	Anchorage	4 (1 Traveling)	1

Description of meeting and its role in supporting the mission of the Board:

The Board of Social Work Examiners will meet for two days of strategic planning. This face-to-face time together will allow members to work together to create a mission and vision for the board moving forward, as well as do a deep dive into the current statutes and regulations.

Expenditure	License Fees (RSS)	Third-Party Reimbursement	Third-Party Direct Booked	Total
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Airfare:	\$ 500.00			\$ 500.00
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hotel:	\$ 700.00			\$ 700.00
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ground:	\$ 100.00			\$ 100.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Conference:				\$ 0.00
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other:	\$ 1,000.00			\$ 1,000.00
Describe "Other" (break out all sections): Food and supplies/materials for the meeting				
Net Total:	\$ 2,300.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 2,300.00

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Budget Recommendations for FY 2024 (continued)

Non-Travel Budget Requests

- Not Applicable Resources Examinations
 Membership Training Other

Product or Service	Provider	Cost Per Event
Membership	Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB)	\$ 500.00

Description of item and its role in supporting the mission of the Board:

The Association of Social Work Boards provides the Alaska Board of Social Work Examiners with trainings and guidance on the regulation of social work practice to include comparison studies of the blueprint of successful boards within other states and national examinations for licensees. In addition, ASWB has created a rigorous review process for social work continuing education, called the ACE program. This simplifies the process for our licensees in finding approved continuing education activities.

Other Items with a Fiscal Impact

- Not Applicable

Cost Per Event:

Number of Events:

Product or Service	Provider	Cost Per Event

Description of item and its role in supporting the mission of the Board:

Summary of FY 2024 Fiscal Requests:

Board Meetings and Teleconferences:	\$ 7,650.00
Travel for Exams:	\$ 0.00
Out-of-State and Additional In-State Travel:	\$ 15,450.00
Dues, Memberships, Resources, Training:	\$ 500.00
Total Potential Third-Party Offsets:	- \$ 13,150.00
Other:	\$ 0.00
Total Requested:	\$ 10,450.00

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Legislative Recommendations - Proposed Legislation for FY 2024

No Recommendations

The Board has no recommendations for proposed legislation at this time.

Recommendations

The Board has the following recommendations for proposed legislation:

The Alaska Board of Social Work examiners would like to respectfully recommend legislative changes be made regarding the following:

- Define teletherapy.
- Add suicide CEU requirement.
- Change the CEU requirement for social workers with less than 12 months left until renewal.
- Add date on the application for when licensing test was taken.

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Regulation Recommendations - Proposed Regulations for FY 2024

No Recommendations

The Board has no recommendations for proposed regulations at this time.

Recommendations

The Board has the following recommendations for proposed regulations:

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Goals and Objectives

Part I

FY 2023's goals and objectives and how they were met:

1. The Alaska Board of Social Work Examiners will look for ways to reduce licensing delays in accordance with Administrative Order 335 issued by Governor Dunleavy on May 20, 2022.

The Alaska Board of Social Work Examiners, along with Division Staff, has worked hard to keep up with the licensure applications and will continue to do so.

2. Continue to maintain financial stability with fees being adjusted as necessary.

It was determined that there is not a need to adjust any fees at this time.

3. The Alaska Board of Social Worker Examiners will maintain a full board with all positions filled.

At this time the Alaska Board of Social Work Examiners has a full board.

4. The Alaska Board of Social Worker Examiners will create a disciplinary matrix.

This task was finalized in May 2023 and will be sent to Legal for review.

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Goals and Objectives (continued)

Part II

FY 2024's goals and objectives, and proposed methods to achieve them.

Describe any strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats and required resources:

1. The Alaska Board of Social Work Examiners will strategically create a mission and vision statement in continued efforts to guide our work around licensure and regulation.

Strengths: A clearly defined vision and mission will provide a guide for the Alaska Board of Social Work Examiners to draw from as they continue the work of licensing and regulation.

Weaknesses: Because the board composition changes frequently, the mission and vision may not always be agreed upon by new board members.

Opportunities: The current board members have the opportunity to thoughtfully organize the board's purpose and collective goals moving forward.

Threats: N/A

Required Resources: Meeting space and materials for a two-day strategic planning meeting.

2. The Alaska Board of Social Work Examiners will do a deep dive into current Statutes and Regulations to ensure they are current and on course with the needs of the State, as well as on par with licensing bodies from across the country and Canada.

Strengths: This will provide the board opportunity to be proactive and forward directed in regards to Social Work Statutes and Regulations.

Weaknesses: This will be time-consuming and require extensive research and diligence from board members, who are all volunteers.

Opportunities: This will provide social workers licensed in Alaska to be in the forefront of best practices, potentially increasing the effectiveness of practitioners from across the state.

Threats: N/A

Required Resources: N/A

3. The Alaska Board of Social Worker Examiners will maintain a full board with all positions filled.

Strengths: The Alaska Board of Social Work Examiners remains active in its commitment to maintain a full board at all times. Upon seat vacancy, board members often reach out to their colleagues to notify them of an available position on the board.

Weaknesses: Seat positions are filled through the Office of the Governor/Boards and Commissions and the board is notified of a newly appointed board member via CBPL staff. The board is not directly involved in this process. Various board members have advised the board that upon appointment they received little information about the duties, workload, and time requirements of the board. This has caused board members to relinquish their positions due to an inability to fulfill the needs of the board.

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Goals and Objectives (continued)

Part II

FY 2024's goals and objectives, and proposed methods to achieve them.

Describe any strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats and required resources:

Opportunities: This creates the opportunity for the current board members to work more closely with the Office of the Governor/Boards and Commissions in selecting new board members. It also creates the opportunity to create a more streamlined and educationally focused onboarding process for new board members.

Threats: The Alaska Board of Social Work Examiners is an ongoing active board that requires significant commitment from voluntary board members. This includes but is not limited to traveling, taking personal leave from work for board meetings, regularly reviewing applications, complaints, and special requests, drafting regulations, etc. When new board members are not fully informed of the required commitments prior to appointment they may be unable fulfill their duties, leaving the bulk of the workload on the remaining board members, resulting in delayed service delivery, burnout, frustration, and unwillingness to continue serving on the board.

Required Resources: The Boards and Commission staff who are responsible for the vetting process should fully inform potential board members of the commitments of the board members to ensure that these duties can be fulfilled.

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Sunset Audit Recommendations

Date of Last Legislative Audit:

Board Sunset Date:

Audit Recommendation:

Action Taken:

Next Steps:

Complete : **No** **Yes** **If yes, date completed:**