

PROFESSIONAL LICENSING
BOARDS & COMMISSIONS

Welcome to the Board: A New Member Quick-Start Guide

Thank you in advance for your service to the state of Alaska as a volunteer on a professional licensing board. The staff of the Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development (DCCED) and the Division of Corporations, Business and Professional Licensing (CBPL) would like to welcome you, and we encourage you to begin learning about the role, rules, and responsibilities of your new position.

First Steps to Take as You Launch Into Service

- 1. Contact your board liaison.** This valuable staff member was probably the first person to welcome you to the board. This member of your team will be your primary point person for all things board or licensing program-related during your service. Some teams have multiple licensing or investigative staff; however, there is only one liaison assigned to each board. Ask all the questions you have, and you will receive more information than you even knew you needed.
- 2. Read the statutes and regulations relevant to your licensing program.** Statutes are state laws that give your board and the division authority to govern this program. Regulations are the board and division's clarification of requirements in statute. These are the most important documents you will need to do your job.
- 3. Review your program's web site.** All licensing programs have their own pages under professionallicense.alaska.gov. License applications and instructions, FAQs, proposed regulations, and many additional useful resources exist on the division's web site.
- 4. Review your Board Resources.** Board member training documents are located on the sidebar of every licensing program's web page under [Board Resources](#). The [Guide to Excellence in Regulation](#) is your handbook for successful operation as a board member. It answers many questions and addresses many situations that board members may face. The [Guide](#) has also been presented in seven short video modules, available on [Vimeo](#) for you to review on demand.
- 5. Become familiar with the Executive Branch Ethics Act.** The Act is a set of laws that ensure conflicts of interest are minimized. It can be found in AS 39.52 and is summarized on the [Department of Law web site](#). The site also explains how to declare a conflict, how to report a potential conflict, and how one is cured.

Key Points to Understand as You Launch Into Service

- 1. Licensing boards are quasi-judicial bodies.** This means that their work is more than advisory. Boards make decisions about the scope of practice of a profession, whether a person is qualified for licensure, and whether a violation of a statute or regulation has occurred. These processes require familiarity with the laws governing the profession, understanding of the legal processes involved, and a willingness and ability to think critically and deliberate fairly about facts and issues.

- 2. Boards meet in person and electronically to do business.** Our boards are required by law to meet a few times a year. These meetings can happen either in-person or telephonically/via videoconference. They are open to the public, and sometimes you will need to travel to the meeting location. The state will pay for your travel expenses; however, you will be required to adjust your schedule—including taking time off work or missing a recreational event—to attend. Occasionally, meetings will be called on short notice; however, they are usually scheduled well in advance and tailored to participants' schedules. Be sure to communicate with your board liaison about attendance.
- 3. The business of licensing is ongoing.** In addition to attending scheduled public meetings, board members must be able to devote sufficient time to preparing for those meetings. Board membership also requires regular and dependable access to a computer or tablet with internet access as board members are sometimes called upon to provide staff with guidance, input on scheduling, or vote on a matter electronically. Further, members may need to research issues in preparation to propose or evaluate regulations, review investigative material, testify in legislative hearings, or complete special projects in between meetings. Depending on what is happening in the life of the board, a member may find himself or herself busy for a few hours a week.
- 4. Board members remain impartial and open to all perspectives.** Board members must weigh the concerns of consumers, licensed professionals, and stakeholders without prejudice and in the public interest. A board member serves the public, and even where the member takes a seat specifically reserved for a particular constituency, the member's obligation is always to do what is in the best interest of the public.
- 5. Board members adhere to state and federal law, a Code of Conduct, the Open Meetings Act, and the Executive Branch Ethics Act.** It is imperative that the board and its individual members maintain the public's trust. Upon appointment, you agreed to abide by a Code of Conduct, which is intended to ensure that the highest level of integrity and ethical standards are upheld:
- Demonstrate professional civility for fellow board members, staff, and the public in all matters.
 - Avoid emotional outbursts or anything that could be considered threatening or intimidating.
 - Respect and adhere to rules, policies, and guidelines of the board or commission.
 - Ensure each matter is dealt with in a fair, equitable, and impartial manner.
 - Courteously accept decisions made by the majority of the board, regardless of a possible conflicting opinion.
 - Ensure the ability for full participation by all members.
 - Strive beyond the norm to avoid any actual or perceived conflict of interest that may compromise the integrity of the board.

Serving on a quasi-judicial professional licensing board requires a lot of learning, hard work, and willingness to collaborate as a team. We are excited to help you along your journey!

Questions? Please contact the staff member assigned to support your professional licensing board. You are always welcome to contact the department's Boards and Regulations Advisor with questions or concerns.



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