



# Alaska Board of Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy Board Meeting November 21, 2025 Minutes

Alaska Division of Corporations, Business and Professional Licensing  
11/21/2025 8:30 AM AKST  
Virtual Meeting

## 1. Call to Order/Roll Call

The Alaska Board of Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy board meeting was called to order on Friday, November 21, 2025 by Chair Valerie Phelps at 8:51 am.

- Roll Call

Roll call taken.

Board members present: Valerie Phelps, Chair; Tori Daugherty, Secretary; Jonathan Gates, and Michelle Scott-Weber.

Board member Eliza Ellsworth, absent = excused.

Staff present: Shane Bannarbie, Program Coordinator and Sheri Ryan, License Examiner.

Guests: Leonard Hess, Alice Spencer, Eladio Vinas, Joan Franz, Mitchell St. Clair, Tina McLean, Litz Regis and unidentified phone - 8084.

Quorum in effect; 4 of 7 board members present. To board positions open. Public member seat vacated 09/23/2025. OT/OTA seat vacant since 03/2025.

- Ethics Reporting

No conflicts of interest for today's agenda items reported by any board members present.

- Review/Approval Agenda

There was a late start of the meeting due to quorum issues. It was determined that the meeting could not be extended past 10:00 am due to conflicts with board member work schedules.

Discussion to revise agenda to include two additional agenda items if time permitted:

- update on OT Scope Modernization Draft bill - Tori Daugherty
- Request for Jonathan Gates to attend 12/5/2025 Board of Chiropractic Examiners meeting to gather stakeholder input on title protection of "physiotherapist" change to AS 08.84.130 versus term protection in original PT scope modernization draft.

**Jonathan Gates moved to amend the submitted agenda for this November 21, 2025 Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy board meeting as discussed. Michelle Scott-Weber seconded. All in favor; none opposed. Motion passes unanimously.**

2. Public Comment

Public comment given as follows:

1. Eladio Vinas - no comment.
2. Alice Spencer - Reinstatement of temporary permit request before the board while she waits to retake and pass the next National Physical Therapy Examination (NPTE). Will continue to actively participating in board prep program and reduce hours to help ensure positive outcome. Asks for the board's consideration. NPTE scheduled for January, 2026.
3. Joan Franz - no specific comment. Here to listen about AO360 Regulatory Reform; concerned about regulatory changes.
4. Tina McLean - here to listen and offer specific suggestions for AO360 Regulatory Reform.
5. Litz Regis - no response when called upon.
6. Mitchell St. Clair - no specific comments - here to learn more about AO360 and offer suggestions.
7. Leonard Hess - no response when called upon.
8. Phone 8084 - no response when called upon.

3. AO 360 Regulatory Reduction Plan (Presenters: Sara Chambers)

Sara Chambers, Boards and Regulations Advisor, provided a brief, high level overview of the Governor's AO360 directive and strategies for the board to accomplish. Overarching goal of this administrative initiative is to improve the economic climate for Alaskans by reducing unnecessary burdensome regulations, updating outdated regulations, streamlining processes for licenses and permits, and internally looking at our regulations approval process and a quality control uplift of all of our existing regulations across the state as well as our internal processes. This is a statewide initiative. More information available on the Governor's AO360 website. Specific timeline and deliverables required.

The Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy board is required to submit a Regulatory Reform Plan due to the Division Director by February 13, 2025 which will be submitted to the Governor's office. The goals for the board are to identify reductions of the 12 AAC 54 regulations by 15% by December 21, 2026, and an additional 10% reduction by December 31, 2027 (25% cumulative). These are statewide goals of all boards. The board will need to review regulations reductions, streamlines, improvements without compromising public safety. The Governor's intention is not to reduce public safety. The board may determine reductions cannot be made in certain areas as it would impact public safety and there will be an avenue for documenting that within the plan. The board will be challenged with reviewing the regulations with a fresh lens and adhering to the principles of "right-touch regulation". Suggestions on tactics - look at other models utilized by other jurisdictions; possible streamlining methods - primary source verifications provided by national associations or through technological improvements; reductions in continuing education requirements, etc.

Resources provided by the division.

- Numerical count of the regulations completed by staff. Board to review the count and make sure there is agreement.
- Spreadsheet of verbal or written comments on AO360 received and to be added to with board responses.
- Spreadsheet to compile regulatory reduction plan and guidance documents.
- Cover sheet to explain why board cannot meet 25% reduction, regulatory reductions already made; complex reductions that can't be "mathed" out well.

Potential strategies to accomplish:

- Schedule additional board meetings
- Delegate to committee to make recommendations to the board for approval. Public comment can always be received during committee meetings.
- Form a work group w/key public persons, such as industry or representatives of certain constituencies.

Chair Valerie Phelps provided the regulation count provided. 316 regulations overall; reduction of 47 = 15%; reduction of 79 =25% Board already has lined up 27-30 reductions in regulatory changes that have been stalled in regulation projects. There are even more behind those projects that continue to make it easier for people to navigate their way into getting licenses. See this as a positive opportunity and confident that we will be able to accomplish the task. Tori Daugherty provided affirmation regarding the complex plan of regulatory changes that have already been discussed and mapped out in

the Regulations Committee and welcomes the opportunity for a complete overhaul of regulations. Chair Valerie Phelps requested written comments from public and submit to [physicalandoccupationaltherapy@alaska.gov](mailto:physicalandoccupationaltherapy@alaska.gov).

Board discussed option to accomplish AO360 Regulatory Reform Plan due February 13, 2026. Board has a standing Regulations Committee that has the history and resources to make recommendations to the board. Regulations Committee made up of board members Valerie Phelps, Tori Daugherty, and Eliza Ellsworth. Future committee dates already scheduled in anticipation to address task - December 19, January 9, and January 23.

**Jonathan Gates moved to delegate the AO360 Regulatory Reform Plan to the Regulations Committee to research and compile recommendations to be approved by the board prior to the February 13, 2026 due date. Motion seconded by Michelle Scott-Weber. All in favor; none opposed. Motion passes unanimously.**

4. Tabled Application

Licensing Examiner Sheri Ryan provided overview of application for Eladio Vinas Jr. Foreign Educated occupational therapist applying by examination. Mr. Vinas passed his NBCOT OTR certification in November, 2014 which is before the 24 months immediately preceding his application date so he does not meet 12 AAC 54.610(6)(B). No active license in any county or US state or territory per 12 AAC 54.610(3) or verification of 60 hours of work history in past 24 months immediately preceding application date per 12 AAC 54.610(6)(A). The board previously discussed this application for licensure at their October 3, 2025 meeting and requested additional information - copy of Philippines license or statement as to why he had never received an OT license in the Philippines and statement regarding more recent work history than 2015-2020 work experience provided. Mr. Vinas provided statement that he had never received a license in the Philippines and had always only worked under his NBCOT OTR certification. He did provide a statement that he had left employment in 2020-2021 due to COVID-19 pandemic and workplace shutdown but did care for a private pediatric patient providing OT services from 2020-2025.

Board discussed possible next steps for applicant. Would need additional verification regarding private practice care provided and some type of verification in Philippines how he was employed without required Philippine licensure. Board member requested that rather than continue requests for additional verification, board make their decision on the application as submitted and however unfortunate, the applicant did not meet

statutory/regulatory requirements. If and when Mr. Vinas' circumstances were to change, he could reapply and provide additional documentation. Board discussed options that a denial would have with Mr. Vinas. Mr. Vinas decided to withdraw his application rather than have his application denied. Licensing Examiner to mark application as withdrawn per applicant's request as stated on the record this date.

5. Appeal Request

Sheri Ryan, Licensing Examiner provided overview. Ms. Spencer applied by examination on 07/01/2025. Statement of Responsibility provided and temporary permit approved 07/02/2025. NPTE scheduled for 10/28/2025. Ms. Spencer took the NPTE 10/28/2025 and did not pass. Temporary permit terminated effective 11/05/2025 when scores posted per AS 08.84.065(c). Ms. Spencer requesting reinstatement of temporary permit while she waits to take and pass the NPTE scheduled in January, 2026 based on employment as provider in underserved community and Oklahoma and Utah rules providing for extension of permits in these circumstances. Statements and recommendations provided by employer and supervising physical therapist.

Board provided clarification that Alaska statute does not grant the board latitude to reinstate temporary permits once scores have been posted. Statute passed by the Alaska Legislature dictates how temporary permits can be utilized by physical therapists when waiting to take and pass their national boards. The Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy board is unable to reinstate Ms. Spencer's temporary permit. The board informed Ms. Spencer that her permanent license has been conditionally approved so that once she does take and pass the NPTE in January, 2026, her permanent license can be administratively issued which will reduce processing time.

6. OT Scope Modernization Bill Update

Tori Daugherty informed the board that the Alaska Occupational Therapy Association (AKOTA) has moved forward with introduction of the OT Scope Modernization bill. The bill is currently in Leg Legal with potential sponsorship by the House Labor and Commerce Committee. AKOTA is currently looking for OT constituent(s) in downtown Anchorage willing to meet with legislators and asked for the board's assistance.

7. PT Scope Modernization Draft Language

Jonathan Gates gave a brief overview of the PT Scope Modernization Work Group meeting from 11/19/2026 and potential change in strategy of term protection of "physiotherapy" to title protection only for "Physiotherapist". Jonathan Gates requested the board's approval to attend the 12/5/2025 Board of Chiropractic Examiners meeting

to gather stakeholder input on title protection of "physiotherapist" change to AS 08.84.130 versus term protection as listed in the original PT scope modernization draft. Board in agreement with gathering input from chiropractic profession on potential changes.

**Jonathan Gates moved he be approved to attend the 12/5/2025 Board of Chiropractic Examiners meeting to gather stakeholder input on title protection of "physiotherapist" change to AS 08.84.130 versus term protection as listed in the original PT scope modernization draft. Tori Daugherty seconded the motion. All in favor; none opposed. Motion passes unanimously.**

8. Meeting Summary - Action Items

- Staff to request Jonathan Gates to be added to Board of Chiropractic Examiners board agenda for December 5, 2025.

9. Adjourn

The Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy Board meeting was adjourned at 10:04 pm on Friday, November 21, 2025 as board member Jonathan Gates left the meeting and a quorum of board members was no longer in attendance.

**These minutes were approved by the board in accordance with PL-12/online voting 12/09/2025.**