

BOARD OF EXAMINERS IN OPTOMETRY

CONDENSED MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD *JANUARY 07, 2026*

THESE DRAFT MINUTES WERE PREPARED BY THE STAFF OF THE DIVISION OF CORPORATIONS, BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL LICENSING. THEY HAVE NOT BEEN REVIEWED OR APPROVED BY THE BOARD.

Date:	January 07, 2026
Time:	09:00 AM
Location:	Teleconference (Zoom)
Attending:	Members: Kathleen Rice (Chair, OD), Ethan Arndt (OD), Charles Rustrom (Public Member) Staff: Ashley Carabajal (Licensing Examiner III), Lacey Derr (Program Coordinator 2), Shane Bannarbie (Program Coordinator 1)
Absent:	Pamela Steffes (OD), Sheryl Lentfer (OD)

1a. Call to Order/Roll Call: <u>Ethics Report</u>		
Brief Discussion:	<i>Before beginning the meeting, Ms. Carabajal informed the board Dr. Steffes will not be able to join this meeting. Dr. Rice let the board know Dr. Lentfer will join as soon as she can. A quorum was established and maintained. Ms. Derr and Mr. Bannarbie introduced themselves to the board.</i>	
	<i>Each member of the board confirmed they had no ethical conflicts to disclose.</i>	
1b. Call to Order/Roll Call: <u>Review/Approve Agenda</u>		
Brief Discussion:	<i>No discussion to amend the agenda.</i>	
Motion:	<i>Motion to approve the agenda as written. (First: Dr. Rice; Second: Dr. Arndt)</i>	
Recorded Votes:	Dr. Rice – Y	Dr. Lentfer – Absent
	Dr. Steffes – Absent	Dr. Arndt – Y
	Mr. Rudstrom – Y	
Action Items:	<i>The board will follow the agenda as written unless amended later in the meeting.</i>	
2. <u>Public Comment</u>		
Brief Discussion:	<i>Ms. Carabajal informed the board there were two people present during the public comment period.</i>	
	<i>No public member had any comments.</i>	

3. AO360 Discussion: Regulation Review

Brief Discussion:

Ms. Derr informed the board on AO360 and gave examples of regulations they could consider removing. She mentioned the notary requirement under 12 AAC 48.011(a)(1), 12 AAC 48.020(b)(1), and 12 AAC 48.026(c)(1) to require notaries as an example.

The board began reviewing regulations beginning with 12 AAC 48.011.

12 AAC 48.011 (License by Examination)

The board discussed potentially removing or reducing the hours required under 12 AAC 48.011(a)(2) but agreed to not change the hours.

Dr. Lentfer joined the meeting at 09:22 AM.

12 AAC 48.015 (Examinations)

*Dr. Rice asked what the passing rate was for the Alaska State Law Examination mentioned in 12 AAC 48.015(b). Ms. Carabajal informed the board only one applicant failed but passed the exam on their second attempt and a majority of the applicants scored at least 94% or higher. Dr. Arndt reminded the board that we updated the exam in 2024, and MS. Carabajal confirmed. Ms. Carabajal stated a lot of applicants do get Part 2 of the last question incorrect: **"A licensee must receive no less than _____ hours of education in pain management and opioid misuse and addiction in the two years preceding application for renewal, unless the person has demonstrated to the satisfaction of the board that the person does not currently hold a valid federal DEA registration number."** by referencing the incorrect statute. Mr. Rudstrom asked Ms. Carabajal to make a note of this to discuss and review at the next scheduled regular board meeting in the spring.*

12 AAC 48.022 (Restricted Licenses)

The board reviewed 12 AAC 48.022. Ms. Carabajal informed the board there are three active restricted licenses. Dr. Rice brought up that there would be no future restricted licenses issued and the board agreed to remove 12 AAC 48.022(a) and (b) and keeping the remaining regulations.

12 AAC 48.026 (Retired License Status)

The board moved on to review 12 AAC 48.026 (Retired License Status). Dr. Lentfer brought up 12 AAC 48.026(c)(3) regarding reinstating a retired license to active status which requires 400 hours of practice per year in another state two years preceding the date of their application – the board decided to keep this requirement.

The board agreed to remove 12 AAC 48.026(c)(5), requiring a statement of dates and employment places while retired.

Mr. Rudstrom suggested keeping 12 AAC 48.026(c)(8), which states if a license is retired for 10 or more years, they may not reinstate the license into active status and must apply for a new license.

12 AAC 48.035 (Temporary Military Courtesy License)

Ms. Derr informed the board the division overall has military licenses, and the recommendation was to leave the sections in there and remove any parts that can be removed. Ms. Derr explained that an applicant submits an application/form and a \$100 fee to the division, submits active military orders or their spouses' military orders, and the license is good for 180 days to allow them to work while in the process of receiving their full license. Ms. Derr did not have any suggestions for the board. The board agreed to leave 12 AAC 48.035 as is.

Ms. Derr suggested taking a short break and the board agreed.

Off the Record: 09:55AM

On the Record: 10:04AM

A quorum was maintained. The board continued with the AO360 Discussion: Regulation Review.

12 AAC 48.040 (Expanded Therapeutic Procedures)

Dr. Rice mentioned 12 AAC 48.040(d)(1)(A-X) and (2)(A-C) talks about what the classroom instruction must be and asked the board if they needed it in regulation. Dr. Lentfer agreed that this section was not needed. Dr. Rice stated a course should still be approved by the board, but listing course instructions does not need to be listed. Ms. Derr stated the Board of Barbers and Hairdressers had hairdressing school regulations similar to OPT, that lists everything required.

Ms. Derr suggested amending (d) to be reduce to one sentence. Mr. Rudstrom suggested removing (A-X) from (d)(1) instead of having a long list of requirements. Dr. Rice suggested "a course in expanded therapeutic procedures shall include coursework pertinent to what can be approved in expanded therapeutic procedures" because it can change over time.

Mr. Rudstrom suggested keeping the wording in (d)(1) and (2) to state courses should include didactic classroom instruction and clinical or laboratory experience. Dr. Arndt agreed.

Ms. Derr informed the board that by removing the suggested items, the board would be removing 27 items and replacing them with one. Ms. Derr confirmed with the board their suggested changes: Removed (2) and amend (d)(1) to state "didactic classroom instruction and clinical or laboratory experience."

12 AAC 48.200 (License Renewals and Continuing Education)

Dr. Arndt brought up a recent meeting where the board discussed a letter from a licensed OD regarding potentially increasing the maximum online hours a licensee can take for renewal. Dr. Rice strongly disagreed with increasing the hours of online hours because it is in the public's best interest to have optometry and ODs would not have optometry in AK if the Alaskan Optometric Association (AOA) did not exist, which is what helps all OD's and allows them to practice the way OD's practice and advocates for Alaska licensed ODs. The board agreed and made no changes to 12 AAC 48.200.

	<p>12 AAC 48.210 (Hours of Continuing Education Required) The board made no changes to this section.</p> <p>12 AAC 48.220 (Report of Continuing Education) The board made no changes to this section.</p> <p>12 AAC 48.300 (When a Practice is Conveyed to Another) The board agreed to remove this section entirely, as it is not needed for public safety.</p> <p>12 AAC 48.310 (Visual Analysis Records) Dr. Arndt stated it could be removed because records are kept electronically more than hard copies.</p> <p>Dr. Rice mentioned this is not needed because record retention is regulated by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). The board agreed to remove 12 AAC 48.310 entirely.</p> <p>Dr. Rice mentioned the board can most likely get rid of a lot of the prescription requirements under 12 AAC 48.920. Dr. Lentfer and Dr. Arndt confirmed 12 AAC 48.920 was already on the AO360 spreadsheet.</p> <p>The board determined they would be able to get through the remaining regulations review with one more meeting.</p>
Action Items:	<p>The AO360 spreadsheet will be updated, and Ms. Derr will email it to Ms. Carabajal to distribute to the board.</p> <p>Ms. Carabajal will make a note to add reviewing the last question of the Jurisprudence Exam to the agenda for the next regular scheduled board meeting.</p> <p>The board will continue reviewing regulations for AO360 at the next meeting beginning with 12 AAC 48. 330 (Unprofessional Conduct); Ms. Carabajal will make a note as a reminder.</p>

Next Meeting:	January 28, 2026
Adjournment:	10:56 AM