Annual Report Fiscal Year 2021

BOARD OF SOCIAL WORK EXAMINERS



Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development

Division of Corporations, Business and Professional Licensing

This annual performance report is presented in accordance with Alaska statute AS 08.01.070(10).

Its purpose is to report the accomplishments, activities, and the past and present needs of the licensing program.

Table of Contents

| Identification of the Board | Page 1 |
|--------------------------------------|---------|
| Identification of the Staff | Page 2 |
| Narrative Statement | Page 3 |
| Budget Recommendations | Page 4 |
| Proposed Legislative Recommendations | Page 9 |
| Regulatory Recommendations | Page 10 |
| Goals and Objectives | Page 11 |
| Sunset Audit Recommendations | Page 15 |
| | |

Identification of the Board

| Board Member | Duty Station | Date Appointed | Term Expires |
|---|--------------|----------------|----------------|
| Brandon Ercanbrack Licensed Clinical Social Worker | Kotzebue | July 25, 2019 | March 01, 2024 |
| Geoffry McCormick Licensed Master Social Worker | Fairbanks | May 14, 2018 | March 01, 2022 |
| Mindy Swisher Licensed Clinical Social Worker | Fairbanks | April 02, 2019 | March 01, 2025 |
| Sharon Woodward Licensed Baccalaureate Social Worker | Juneau | March 08, 2021 | March 01, 2022 |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

Identification of Staff

Stefanie Davis – Licensing Examiner

Department of Commerce, Community & Economic Development Division of Corporations, Business and Professional Licensing Post Office Box 110806 Juneau, Alaska 99811-0806 (907) 465-2550

Lacey Derr – Records and Licensing Supervisor

Department of Commerce, Community & Economic Development Division of Corporations, Business and Professional Licensing Post Office Box 110806 Juneau, Alaska 99811-0806 (907) 465-2550

Jun Maiquis – Regulations Specialist

Department of Commerce, Community & Economic Development Division of Corporations, Business and Professional Licensing Post Office Box 110806 Juneau, Alaska 99811-0806 (907) 465-2550

Marilyn Zimmerman – Paralegal II

Department of Commerce, Community & Economic Development Division of Corporations, Business and Professional Licensing Post Office Box 110806 Juneau, Alaska 99811-0806 (907) 465-2550

Lauren Osborn – Licensing Examiner

Department of Commerce, Community & Economic Development Division of Corporations, Business and Professional Licensing Post Office Box 110806 Juneau, Alaska 99811-0806 (907) 465-2550

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 appointment 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 FY2021 (July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021) there have been changes to the membership of the board. The board is currently comprised of four licensed social workers with the public member position vacant. In the fall of 2020, the former board chair left, and a new board chair was appointed. In FY2021 the Alaska Board of Social Work Examiners held four regular scheduled meetings and one emergency meeting.

In March 2020 the State of Alaska was hit by the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic. The Alaska Board of Social Work Examiners worked to remove barriers for licensees by extending the renewal period from June 30, 2020 to October 30, 2020, extending the Emergency Clinical Social Work Courtesy License, and waiving the requirement of a notary for the license application. In February 2021 the board adopted the Emergency Courtesy License into permanent regulation.

The board continues to work to identify outdated regulations and opportunities for improvement. Due to COVID-19, the Right Touch Regulation Project is on hold, but it is anticipated the changes proposed by the board in FY2020 will be adopted during FY2022.

In April 2021 the board met in person to complete the renewal continuing education audit. The Board successfully completed the majority of the audit review during the in-person meeting. During that same meeting the board received training on complaints and investigations. Several board members were 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 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.

Budget Recommendations for FY 2022

The 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 |
|---|---------------|---------|--|
| August 24, 2021 | Anchorage, AK | 4 | 1 |
| 区 Airfare: 区 Hotel: 区 Ground: 区 Other: Meals | | | \$1,045.90 \$1,200.00 \$200.00 \$1,000.00 |
| Total Estimated Cost: | | | \$3,445.90 |

| Board Meeting Date | Location | # Board | # Staff |
|---|------------|---------|--|
| January 22, 2022 | Juneau, AK | 4 | 1 |
| 区 Airfare: 区 Hotel: 区 Ground: 区 Other: Meals | | | \$2,000.00 \$2,000.00 \$200.00 \$1,000.00 |
| Total Estimated Cost: | | | \$5,200.00 |

| Board Meeting Date | Location | # Board | # Staff |
|-----------------------|---------------|---------|------------|
| April 11-12, 2022 | Anchorage, AK | 4 | 1 |
| 🗷 Airfare: | | | \$1,045.90 |
| 🗷 Hotel: | | | \$1,200.00 |
| 🗷 Ground: | | | \$200.00 |
| 🗷 Other: | | | \$1,000.00 |
| Total Estimated Cost: | | | \$3,445.90 |

Budget Recommendations for FY 2022

The 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 |
|-----------------------|---------------------|---------|------------|
| September 22-24, 2021 | Fairbanks, AK | 4 | 1 |
| 🗷 Airfare: | | | \$1,045.90 |
| 🗷 Hotel: | I Hotel: \$1,200.00 | | |
| 🗷 Ground: | \$200.00 | | |
| 🗖 Other: | | | \$1,000.00 |
| Total Estimated Cost: | | | \$3,445.90 |

| Board Meeting Date | Location | # Board | # Staff |
|-----------------------|----------|---------|---------|
| | | | |
| □ Airfare: | | | \$0.00 |
| 🗆 Hotel: | | | \$0.00 |
| Ground: | | | \$0.00 |
| 🗆 Other: | | | \$0.00 |
| Total Estimated Cost: | | | \$0.00 |

| Board Meeting Date | Location | # Board | # Staff |
|-----------------------|----------|---------|---------|
| | | | |
| □ Airfare: | | | \$0.00 |
| 🗆 Hotel: | | | \$0.00 |
| Ground: | | | \$0.00 |
| 🗆 Other: | | | \$0.00 |
| Total Estimated Cost: | | | \$0.00 |

Budget Recommendations for FY 2022 (continued)

| Travel Required to Perfo | orm Examina | tions | | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|---|--|--|--|
| Image: Date Location # Board # Staff | | | | | | | |
| Date | | Location | # Board | # Stall | | | |
| Description of meeting and | its role in supp | orting the mission o | of the Board: | | | | |
| □ Airfare: | | | | \$0.00 | | | |
| 🗆 Hotel: | | | | \$0.00 | | | |
| Ground: | | | | \$0.00 | | | |
| Conference: | | | | \$0.00 | | | |
| □ Other: | | | | \$0.00 | | | |
| Describe "Other" (b | reak out all see | ctions): | | | | | |
| Total Estimated Cost: | | | | \$0.00 | | | |
| Out-of-State Meetings a #1 Rank in Importance | | al In-State Travel | (Rank in orde | r of importance) | | | |
| Date | | Location | # Board | # Staff | | | |
| August 19-21, 2021 | Alexa | andria, Virginia | 3 | 0 | | | |
| Description of meeting and The Association of Social Work Boar role as Social Work Regulators. Tr exams, advocacy of board member regulatory issues. Board members out the various states. New board | ards' New Board I aining topics inclu rs, political realition will network with | Member Training is vital ude: roles and responsib es of the board, adjudica n other members to lear | to new board members in ilities of board regulators/ tion/discipline/enforcemer n best practicing standards | members, licensure at and other current s that work through | | | |
| EVNONAITIIRO | nse Fees RSS) | Third-Party Reimbursement | Third-Party Direct Booked | Total | | | |
| 🗷 Airfare: \$ | 0.00 | \$0.00 | \$1,000.00 | \$1,000.00 | | | |
| - | 0.00 | \$0.00 | \$1,000.00 | \$1,000.00 | | | |
| - | 0.00 | \$150.00 | \$0.00 | \$150.00 | | | |
| - | 0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | | | | |
| | 0.00 | | | \$0.00 | | | |
| | | \$720.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 \$720.00 | | | |
| Describe "Other" (break | | \$720.00 | \$0.00 | - | | | |

Out-of-State Meetings and Additional In-State Travel

#2 Rank in Importance

| Date | Location | # Board | # Staff |
|----------------------|------------------------|---------|---------|
| November 18-20, 2021 | New Orleans, Louisiana | 4 | 1 |

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 |
|-----------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------|
| 🗷 Airfare: | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$1,263.40 | \$1,263.40 |
| 🗷 Hotel: | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$1,000.00 | \$1,000.00 |
| 🗷 Ground: | \$0.00 | \$75.00 | \$0.00 | \$75.00 |
| Conference: | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 |
| 🗷 Other | \$0.00 | \$540.00 | \$0.00 | \$540.00 |
| Describe "Other | " (break out all sect | ions): Meals | | |
| Net Total: | \$0.00 | \$615.00 | \$2,263.40 | \$2,878.40 |

Out-of-State Meetings and Additional In-State Travel

#3 Rank in Importance

| Date | Location | # Board | # Staff |
|----------------------|----------|---------|---------|
| April 29-May 1, 2022 | 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 |
|-----------------|------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------|
| 🗷 Airfare: | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$1,500.00 | \$1,500.00 |
| 🗷 Hotel: | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$1,000.00 | \$1,000.00 |
| 🗷 Ground: | \$0.00 | \$75.00 | \$0.00 | \$75.00 |
| Conference: | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 | \$0.00 |
| 🗷 Other | \$0.00 | \$450.00 | \$0.00 | \$450.00 |
| Describe "Other | " (break out all secti | ons): Meals | | |
| Net Total: | \$0.00 | \$525.00 | \$2,500.00 | \$3,025.00 |

Budget Recommendations for FY 2022 (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 | \$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 I Not Applicable | Cost Per Event: Number of Eve | · |
|--|----------------------------------|------------|
| Product or Service | Provider | Total Cost |
| | | \$0.00 |
| Description of item and its role in supporting the mission of the Board: | | |

| Summary of FY 2022 Fiscal Requests | |
|--|-------------|
| Board Meetings and Teleconferences: | \$15,537.70 |
| Travel for Exams: | \$0.00 |
| Out-of-State and Additional In-State Travel: | \$8,773.40 |
| Dues, Memberships, Resources, Training: | \$500.00 |
| Total Potential Third-Party Offsets: | -\$8,773.40 |
| Other: | \$0.00 |
| Total Requested: | \$16,037.70 |

Legislation Recommendations Proposed Legislation for FY 2022

I No Recommendations

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

Recommendations

The Board has the following recommendations for proposed legislation:

Regulation Recommendations Proposed Legislation for FY 2022

□ No Recommendations

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

E Recommendations

The Board has the following recommendations for proposed regulations:

The Alaska Board of Social Work Examiners completed the Right Touch Regulation Project in January 2020. The board proposed several regulation changes. Due to COVID-19, the Right Touch Regulation Project was put on hold, but it is anticipated the changes proposed by the board in FY2020 will be adopted during FY2022.

Goals and Objectives

Part I

FY 2021's goals and objectives, and how they were met:

1) Public protection will continue to be the goal of this board. Face-to-face/in-person meetings ensure less distraction, instant feedback and creates strong bonds between board members. The Alaska Board of Social Work Examiners will continue to advocate for in-person meetings and work with the Division of Corporations, Business and Professional Licensing to complete its duties.

The Alaska Board of Social Work Examiners took guidance from the Division of Corporations, Business and Professional Licensing and the State of Alaska regarding current COVID rules and restrictions. As a result, several board meetings were conducted via Zoom. Due to the pandemic and declaration of emergency status, this created the need to have more emergency meetings in order to give guidance to our licensee's. The board held meetings to discuss Emergency Courtesy Licensing and how to make the transition once the emergency declaration expired. FY2021 was a renewal year for our licensees and therefore required an audit of ten percent of our licensee base. The board has learned from previous experience that audits are best completed in person as it allows for instant feedback and quick processing of audit files. All but one of the board members have never completed an audit before and having an in-person meeting was found to be very productive.

2) The board will continue collaborative relationships to strengthen current partnerships with other agencies.

The Alaska Board of Social Work Examiners continued to maintain a strong relationship with the Association of Social Work Boards. The board had some of its members attend the New Board Member Orientation via Zoom. Traditionally this training is held in-person over a couple of days. Due to the current pandemic, this was not the case during FY2021. It was instead provided in a one-day virtual training format. There was a lot of valuable information given during this training, but it should be noted that there was too much information to be shared in one day. The board members that attended felt like it was worthwhile but wish that they could have attended the traditional format as to gain more needed information. The board continues to look to the Association of Social Work Boards for future trainings and information.

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

The Alaska Board of Social Work Examiners has been able to maintain its surplus and maintained fiscal stability. The board was able to continue to practice sound fiscal responsibilities while not causing additional costs to its licensee base. There was a not a need to increase our licensing fees. The board will continue to be fiscally conservative to maintain this status.

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

As to be expected, board members advance in their education and licensing. During FY2021, one board member did exactly that. This caused said board member to leave their current seat on the board, which created a vacancy. That position has since been filled. We had an additional board member who had other obligations that required their time. These positions on the board are voluntary and we wish past board members the best as they move onto their other obligations. The board will continue to focus on having a full board.

Goals and Objectives

Part II

FY 2022's goals and objectives, and proposed methods to achieve them. Describe any strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats and required resources:

1) Public protection will continue to be the goal of this board. Face-to-face/in-person meetings ensure less distraction, instant feedback and creates strong bonds between board members. The Alaska Board of Social Work Examiners will continue to advocate for in-person meetings and work with the Division of Corporations, Business and Professional Licensing to complete its duties.

•Strengths: The Alaska Board of Social Work Examiners is committed to public protection by applying the statues and regulations appropriately and ensuring that licensees meet the requirements for initial licensing and/or renewal. Additionally, the Alaska Board of Social Work Examiners works with the Department of Law to review complaint investigations and provide advisement as to whether a licensee is practicing within their code of ethics and adhering to the statutes and regulations. This practice allows the Alaska Board of Social Work Examiners to safeguard the public from unethical and/or unlawful practice.

•Weaknesses: The board has agreed that in-person board meetings are the most effective way for the board to conduct business. The ability for in-person meetings was changed due the current pandemic. Understandably, necessary precautions were needed. However, as the pandemic comes to an end, travel for board business will be needed to make the most effective use of board and Division staff time.

•Opportunities: The board has the opportunity this year to bring in new board members due to vacancies. This will require onboarding and training in order for them to perform the required tasks of a board member. The most effective way to do this is for that person to be able to attend meetings and training in person. This allows for the person to have a fully immersive experience free from other distractions. Furthermore, the Association of Social Work Boards will be offering invaluable training resources for board members. Often these opportunities include scholarships in order for a person to attend. This creates less financial burden on the budget. We would still rely on the State to approve those travel requests.

•Threats: Threats to the board's ability to meet this goal include state travel restrictions, board member travel restrictions, and delay to fill vacant board seats. There is an increased demand on existing board members to complete the required tasks when there are vacancies.

•**Required Resources:** The Alaska Board of Social Work Examiners is a financially self-sustaining board. The board will need to maintain a fiscally responsible budget in order to support the cost of in-person meetings.

Part II (continued)

FY 2022's goals and objectives, and proposed methods to achieve them. Describe any strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats and required resources:

2) The board will continue to review upcoming legislation, and evaluate the need for additional licensure types including teletherapy practice.

•Strengths: The board is invested in learning about current trends and best practice guidelines in regards to social work practice. The board has had discussions about whether a board approved supervisory license is needed. The board has looked at other licensing boards that have a similar license. The board has also started having conversations about an associate level of licensure. Yet another discussion and invaluable lesson from this last year was the benefit of teletherapy practice. Throughout this last year we have seen how allowing social workers to practice via teletherapy has greatly improved the ability to reach those in need. This has removed previous barriers of access to care in many remote areas. While there is still the need for more indepth research and discussion the board remains committed to do what is in the best interest of the public and licensee base.

•Weaknesses: The board does not always receive information from outside sources in the timeliest manner, allowing time for adequate deliberations. This further illustrates the need for in person meetings that would allow for real time discussion without distractions or connectivity issues.

•Opportunities: The board has had the opportunity to briefly meet with legislative staff and would like to invite continued interactions. As proposed legislation is moved forward the board would like to respectfully request the opportunity to receive detailed instruction on the rationale and purpose of that legislation. The board feels that this can be an amazing opportunity to improve social work practice in the state. The board believes with adequate discussion and feedback that meaningful legislation can be passed and in the end the public will receive a higher quality of service by competent social workers.

•Threats: Limited information that is given to the board which does not allow them to make a well-informed decision. Also that the information is given within a timeframe that coordinates with the legislative calendar allowing it to move forward and not remain stagnant. If Federal and State guidelines are returned to a more restrictive state this could greatly jeopardize the ability to provide teletherapy services.

•Required Resources: The Alaska Board of Social Work Examiners will need the full text and description of proposed Social Work legislation in a timely manner. Furthermore, the board will need to hear the most current and up to date practice guidelines to make the best decision. Regular contact with authority sources such as the Association of Social Work Boards will be required.

3) Continue to maintain financial stability.

•Strengths: The Alaska Board of Social Work Examiners will continue to work with the Division of Corporations, Business and Professional Licensing to conduct financial audits and adjust licensing fees as appropriate.

•Weaknesses: There appears to be licensing complaints requiring more time of board members and Division staff. This additional time comes with the increased costs for Division staff members to address those issues.

•**Opportunities:** The board has the opportunity to adjust the licensing fees when determined necessary and to maintain a sustainable budget.

•Threats: There is some discussion about making a combined mental health licensing board. This would involve combining with other boards that do not have the same fiscal stability as this board. It would also require more administrative and investigative costs.

•Required resources: The board will need to remain fiscally responsible and consider the cost associated with board actions and/or decisions. Additionally, the Division of Corporations, Business, and Professional Licensing will need to continue to supply the board with a division update that includes the schedule of revenues and expenditures for the board to review during scheduled board meetings.

4) 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.

•**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 Commissions' 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.

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

•Strengths: The Alaska Board of Social Work Examiners has recently received training by Division staff assigned to investigate license violations. Newer board members have now had the opportunity to complete disciplinary reviews and gain experience on the process.

•Weaknesses: Often there is not a clear disciplinary path when reviewing possible license violations.

•Opportunities: This creates the opportunity for the current board members to create a disciplinary matrix as seen in other licensing boards. This would ensure more uniformity and consistency in disciplinary actions. It would also alleviate much of the stress on board members who are trying to make the best decision in such cases. It would allow for future board members to be able to quickly learn how to complete those reviews.

•**Threats:** Any significant changes to statutes and regulations could hinder this process. Also, if there is high turnover with Division staff and/or board members, it could slow the process down. Not being able to meet in person to create the matrix could unnecessarily extend the completion date.

•**Required Resources:** The board will more than likely require some guidance from the investigative staff within the Division and possible the Department of Law. The board will want to have access to and review the disciplinary matrices of other licensing boards as a guide.

| Fiscal Year 2021 Ar | nnual Report |
|---------------------------------|------------------|
| Sunset Audit Recon | nmendations |
| Date of Last Legislative Audit: | October 24, 2017 |
| Board Sunset Date: | June 30, 2026 |
| | |

| Audit Recommendation: | DCBPL's director should improve procedures to ensure board-required documentation is obtained prior to licensure. |
|-----------------------|---|
| | One of 25 licenses tested as part of the audit did not contain sufficient evidence that the licensee had met regulatory requirements. The Board of Social Work Examiners appropriately approved licensure pending receipt of key documentation. However, the license was issued without obtaining proper documentation by DCBPL staff, resulting in noncompliance with regulatory requirements. Licensing a person that has not met the requirements for licensure increases the risk to public safety. |
| | According to AS 08.01.050(a)(3), (9), and (14), DCBPL is responsible for overseeing the licensing activity for the board. The audit identified a lack of procedures to ensure board-required documentation is received prior to licensure. |
| | We recommend DCBPL's director improve procedures to ensure board-required documentation is obtained prior to licensure. Additionally, corrective action should be taken to address the noncompliant licensee. |
| Action Taken: | The board has met with the licensee and after obtaining more information and reviewing the regulations the board notified the licensee that she did not meet the licensing requirements. The board chair drafted a letter to send to the licensee on 7/19/2019 and is awaiting response from division staff. |
| Next Steps: | Awaiting response from division staff. |
| Date Completed: | TBD |

| Audit Recommendation: | The Office of the Governor, Boards and Commissions director should work with the board to identify potential applicants for the board's vacant clinical social worker position. |
|-----------------------|---|
| | One clinical social worker position on the board became vacant March 2017 and remained vacant through October 2017. |
| | Per AS 08.95.010(a), the board is statutorily required to consist of five members appointed by the governor, including two clinical social workers. One of the five board members must be a social worker who is not employed by a federal, state, or local government or a federally tax exempt non-profit organization. According to Boards and Commissions staff, the stringent requirements make it difficult to find qualified applicants. The lack of a clinical social worker may limit the board from conducting business with appropriate professional input and perspective. |
| | The Office of the Governor, Boards and Commissions section is responsible for actively recruiting, interviewing, and vetting board applicants. The board is in the unique position to help identify potential applicants. |
| | We recommend the Boards and Commissions director work with the board to identify potential applicants for the board's vacant clinical social worker position. |
| Action Taken: | As of April 2019 there are no vacancies on the board. |
| Next Steps: | None |
| Date Completed: | April 02, 2019 |