

# *Annual Report*

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# *Fiscal Year 2021*

**Board of Direct-Entry Midwives**



**Department of Commerce, Community  
and Economic Development**

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**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.

**Board of Direct-Entry Midwives  
FY 2021 Annual Report**

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**Board of Direct-Entry Midwives  
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**Identification of the Board**

<b>Board Member</b>	<b>Duty Station</b>	<b>Date Appointed</b>	<b>Term Expires</b>
<b>Bethel Belisle</b> Certified Direct-Entry Midwife Board Chair	Anchorage	March 1, 2020	March 1, 2024
<b>Tanya Kirk</b> Certified Nurse Midwife	City Location	March 1, 2021	March 1, 2025
<b>Dianna Kristeller</b> Certified Nurse Midwife	Fairbanks	December 18, 2017	October 17, 2020
<b>Dana Espindola</b> Physician/OB Practice	Eagle River	March 1, 2019	March 1, 2023
<b>Amanda 'Manga' Penwell</b> Certified Direct-Entry Midwife Board Chair	Anchorage	March 1, 2019	July 31, 2020
<b>Rachel Pugh</b> Certified Direct-Entry Midwife	Fairbanks	December 15, 2020	March 1, 2024
<b>Hannah St. George</b> Public Member	Fairbanks	July 9, 2019	March 1, 2022

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**Identification of Staff**

**Lacey Derr – Licensing Examiner and Records & Licensing Supervisor**

Department of Commerce, Community & Economic Development  
Division of Corporations, Business and Professional Licensing  
Post Office Box 110806  
Juneau, Alaska 99811-0806  
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**Andy Khmelev – Records & Licensing Supervisor**

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**Sonia Lipker, Christina Bond – Investigators**

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## Board of Direct-Entry Midwives FY 2021 Annual Report

### Narrative Statement

The Mission of the Board of Certified Direct Entry Midwives (CDM) is to ensure that competent, professional and regulated commercial Direct Entry Midwifery services are available to Alaskan consumers. Members of the board are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the legislature. The board consists of two direct-entry midwives, one OBGYN physician, one certified nurse midwife, and one public member. The board meets by teleconference at least twice per fiscal year, usually more often (quarterly) depending on circumstances, and conducts additional business through the OnBoard Passageways system.

The fiscal year (FY) is July 1st through June 30th; this report is for board business accomplished in FY 21, with proposed actions planned for FY 22. In FY 21, the board held 1 teleconference in which Manga Penwell was Chair, CDM presided as Chair and Dianna Kristeller, CNM as Secretary. The board held 3 more teleconferences with Bethel Belisle as Chair and both Manga Penwell and Diana Kristeller stepping down from the board in the fall of 2020.

In these teleconferences, Bethel Belisle was elected as the new board chair, a new CNM and CDM were welcomed to the board and the board was able to finalize the Emergency Courtesy License regulations for use in future should the need arise. The board successfully navigated the Legislative Sunset Audit with Chair Belisle answering many questions in regard to Peer Review, overall consumer safety, investigations, and licensee requirements. The board discussed and acted on apprenticeship and licensure applications, regulation projects, goals and objectives for the current and upcoming fiscal year, as well as sought input for various regulatory and licensing issues from the Department of Law. It is felt in the upcoming legislative session, the board will successfully have support for statutory changes, bringing the Certified Direct-Entry Midwives to meet and/or exceed National Certified Professional Midwifery standards.

For FY 20, total revenue was \$136,875 and expenses were \$23,036, leaving an annual surplus of **\$66,465**. This is the first year for a surplus in almost a decade.

**Board of Direct-Entry Midwives  
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**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
October 5, 2021	Juneau/Teleconference	5	1
<input type="checkbox"/> Airfare:			\$0.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Hotel:			\$0.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Ground:			\$0.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Other:			\$0.00
<b>Total Estimated Cost:</b>			<b>\$0.00</b>

Board Meeting Date	Location	# Board	# Staff
February 7-8, 2022	Juneau	5	1
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Airfare:			\$1,200.00
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hotel:			\$1,000.00
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ground:			\$200.00
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other:			\$250.00
<b>Total Estimated Cost:</b>			<b>\$2,650.00</b>

Board Meeting Date	Location	# Board	# Staff
<input type="checkbox"/> Airfare:			\$0.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Hotel:			\$0.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Ground:			\$0.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Other:			\$0.00
<b>Total Estimated Cost:</b>			<b>\$0.00</b>

**Board of Direct-Entry Midwives  
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**Budget Recommendations for FY 2022 (continued)**

**Travel Required to Perform Examinations**

Not applicable

Date	Location	# Board	# Staff
<b>Description of meeting and its role in supporting the mission of the Board:</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Airfare:			\$0.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Hotel:			\$0.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Ground:			\$0.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Conference:			\$0.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Other:			\$0.00
Describe "Other" (break out all sections):			
<b>Total Estimated Cost:</b>			<b>\$0.00</b>

**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	
<b>Description of meeting and its role in supporting the mission of the Board:</b>				
Expenditure	License Fees (RSS)	Third-Party Reimbursement	Third-Party Direct Booked	Total
<input type="checkbox"/> Airfare:	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Hotel:	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Ground:	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Conference:	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Describe "Other" (break out all sections):				
<b>Net Total:</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>

**Board of Direct-Entry Midwives  
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**Budget Recommendations for FY 2022 (continued)**

**Non-Travel Budget Requests**

- Not Applicable                       Resources                       Examinations  
 Membership                               Training                               Other

Product or Service	Provider	Cost Per Event
		\$0.00

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

**Other Items with a Fiscal Impact**

**Cost Per Event:                      \$0.00**

- Not Applicable

**Number of Events:                      0**

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:	\$2,650.00
Travel for Exams:	\$0.00
Out-of-State and Additional In-State Travel:	\$0.00
Dues, Memberships, Resources, Training:	\$0.00
Total Potential Third-Party Offsets:	-\$0.00
Other:	\$0.00
<b>Total Requested:</b>	<b>\$2,650.00</b>



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**Legislation Recommendations Proposed Legislation for FY 2022**

**No Recommendations**

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

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**Recommendations**

The Board has the following recommendations for proposed legislation:

- Bring Alaska Midwifery Statute to meet or exceed the national standards of a Certified Professional Midwife.
- Enhance protections by elevating application processing and educational verifications through NARM.

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**Regulation Recommendations Proposed Legislation for FY 2022**

**No Recommendations**

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

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**Recommendations**

The Board has the following recommendations for proposed regulations:

- Checking for an applicant's potential licensing issues /disciplinary actions in other states.
- Removal of the Jurisprudence Exam.
- Return to practice regulation: Specifications of requirements to renew/receive a license after being lapsed/expired for 5+ years.
- Removal of Peer Review, 12 AAC 14.900.

# Board of Direct-Entry Midwives Fiscal Year 2021 Annual Report

## Goals and Objectives

### Part I

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

##### **Objective #1:**

**Conduct two meetings per year. Continue to meet by teleconference.**

- How met: The board held 5 scheduled teleconferences in an effort to reduce expenses and be fiscally conservative. We used Zoom teleconference services to conduct board meetings and facilitate communication. We also used Passageways OnBoard to conduct board business, including review of licensure applications, voting responsibilities as required, and to share and review documents in between meetings.

##### **Objective #2:**

**Complete regulation projects. Work with the division to streamline the regulation process.**

- How met: The board has completed 2 regulations projects with the Division of Corporations, Business and Professional Licensing (CBPL) and the Department of Law (DOL).
  - The first regulation project updated the CDM education programs approved by the board to be required to have MEAC accreditation, which reflects national standards for midwifery education. The board will continue moving forward to allow MEAC or any route of study as approved by NARM.
  - The second regulation project updated the Peer Review process to be separated from the investigations process. 12 AAC 14.900 has been approved by the board to be removed and replaced by 12 AAC 14.455 – Community Peer Review – as defined by the board. The project is being sent out for public comment and final approval.

##### **Objective #3:**

**Pursue Certified Professional Midwife (CPM) certification to help alleviate the need for the state to approve licensure yet allow the board to continue regulating practice for the midwifery profession.**

- How met: The board has researched pursuing CPM certification and will continue to work to meet this objective into FY 21 and is part of the legislative goals.

##### **Objective #4:**

**Review investigative reports and monitor disciplinary actions.**

- How met: The board has reviewed investigative reports and monitored disciplinary actions in consultation with the division staff and DOL at board meetings during this fiscal year. The board advocated for expeditious completion of investigations. We will continue this into FY 21.

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**Goals and Objectives (continued)**

**Objective #5:**

**Review and approve curriculum and adopt basic education, training, and apprentice programs. Approve new continuing education programs that meet regulatory requirements.**

- How met: The board has addressed struggles in the cost and accessibility of MEAC only accredited education and is committed to amending the regulation to all MEAC OR other route as accepted by NARM. This would also remove the boards need to approve courses of study, reducing overall costs to the board.

**Objective #6: *COVID Response***

**The board met and discussed how best to support Alaskan midwives through unprecedented stressors related to the COVID-19 global pandemic. This is an ongoing objective that we will continue to focus on into the next fiscal year.**

- We drafted a letter of support and recommendations, with a resource list for Alaskan midwives. This has assisted with opening more communication with hospital staff and will continue to foster positive working relationships moving forward.
- This global pandemic has had a significant impact on birthing women and the choices they face, with more women seeking to birth outside of hospital settings. We are discussing ways to grow the midwifery workforce in our state, and to support our midwives who provide community birth setting options.

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**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:**

**Objective #1:**

**Conduct two meetings per year. Continue to primarily meet via teleconference.**

- Use Passageways OnBoard and Zoom to facilitate board business and communication.
- With improved finances, meet in person in Juneau to speak with legislative leaders on potential statutory changes the board is looking at accomplishing.

**Objective #2:**

**Complete regulation projects. Work with division to streamline the regulation process.**

- CPM national certification as the licensure standard for Alaska's CDMs.
- The board is tasked with the protection of public safety. As such, the board will continue to pursue a regulatory change that will bring Alaska in line with the national certification standard for CDMs, which will ensure the highest standards for competency are met and maintained by Alaskan midwives.
- This change will alleviate the need for the state to approve licensure yet allow the board to continue regulating practice for the midwifery profession.

**Objective #3:**

**Review investigative reports and monitor disciplinary actions.**

- The board is tasked with the protection of public safety. As such, the board will continue to monitor investigations and disciplinary actions and advocate for expeditious processing and completion of these cases.

**Objective #4:**

**Review and approve curricula and adopt basic education, training, and apprentice programs. Approve new continuing education programs that meet regulatory requirements.**

- To move toward CPM and NARM as being facilitators and verifiers of continuing education curricula, rather than the board. This will bring the state further in line with meeting or exceeding national standards of midwifery care but also reduce overall costs to the board.

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**Sunset Audit Recommendations**

**Date of Last Legislative Audit: 4/30/2016**  
**Board Sunset Date: 6/30/2021**

<b>Audit Recommendation:</b>	Division management, in consultation with the board, may consider a small decrease in licensing fees as the board's operating deficit is improving.
<b>Action Taken:</b>	Licensure renewal fees for Apprentice Midwives were decreased \$500 for the 2020-2022 renewal cycle.
<b>Next Steps:</b>	The division will perform a fee analysis prior to each renewal to determine if adjustment (increase or decrease) of fees is needed.
<b>Date Completed:</b>	The division continues to monitor and work on this recommendation.

<b>Audit Recommendation:</b>	The DCBPL director should take steps in ensuring license records are accurately recorded.
<b>Action Taken:</b>	These records in question were corrected, and training and accountability processes have improved.
<b>Next Steps:</b>	The division will continue to review records to ensure accuracy in record keeping.
<b>Date Completed:</b>	The division continues to monitor this recommendation.

<b>Audit Recommendation:</b>	The legislature should consider alternate forms of regulating the midwife profession.
<b>Action Taken:</b>	DCCED has no action to take on this recommendation.
<b>Next Steps:</b>	N/A
<b>Date Completed:</b>	TBD