

Alaska Board of Examiners in Optometry FY 2021 Annual Report

Narrative Statement

During FY 21:

- 19 new licenses were issued.
- 20 licenses lapsed after the 12/31/2020 renewal deadline.
- 213 Active Optometry licenses at the time of this report.

3 teleconferenced meetings were held during fiscal year 2021: (in person meeting not available during COVID-19 pandemic)

- October 29, 2020 – Teleconference
- January 22, 2021 – Special Topic Limited Teleconference
- April 28, 2021 – Teleconference

Meetings were necessary due to the ongoing COVID-19 issues, multiple regulation projects, license reviews, correspondence issues and further implementation of the regulation changes following AS 08.72.278.

Public trust and protection remained the primary mission of the board and were the primary foci of the meetings and regulation projects. Licensure applications were carefully reviewed throughout the year via OnBoard Passageways Board Secure Board Portal Software, and on-line voting allowed expedient decisions; however, those requiring full board discussion were reviewed during teleconferenced meetings.

Licensure renewal, continuing education audits and reviews, as well as investigative reports were also reviewed with recommendations made when appropriate during these live meetings. All correspondence requiring board attention, input and decision were also carefully reviewed.

Implementation and integration of 12 AAC 48.040 required judicious study and review.

Michael Mavencamp, OD, of Fairbanks was appointed and confirmed to the board and Pam Steffes, OD, of Sitka was reappointed and confirmed during FY2021. Staffing issues created challenges for some board activities, however with the appointment of the current examiner these deficiencies have been properly addressed.

Emergency waiver of selected continuing education restrictions during FY2021 renewal allowed for continued licensee competency and education opportunities while mitigating risk of inadvertent COVID-19 spread through mandatory live meeting attendance.

There were several investigations requiring board action during FY2021. Four involved continuing education issues and were closed following further investigation. One investigation remains ongoing, and several intakes were taken that did not require board action.

FY 2021 Narrative Statement (continued)

During FY2021, seven regulation projects were studied, sent for public comment, and forwarded to the lieutenant governor for approval and adoption. 12 AAC 48.015 allows for provision for completion of open book state optometry law examinations electronically. 12 AAC 48.022 amends the requirements for restricted license renewal. 12 AAC 48.200 allows for documentation or attestation of continued education instead of submission of proof of continued education, unless selected for mandatory audit. 12 AAC 48.330 provides clarification when licensees can designate themselves as specialists. 12 AAC 48.900 updates provisions related to reinstatement of a lapsed license and removes reference to incorrect regulation citation. 12 AAC 48.920 streamlines the necessary items required for an eyeglass and contact lens prescription. 12 AAC 48.990 removes regulation that no longer have statute reference or authorization.

Due to ongoing deficits, although improving, a future increase in 2022 license fees may be necessary to reduce and eventually eliminate any residual revenue deficit following the increase freeze due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Travel expenses for FY2021 were kept minimal through the exclusive use of teleconferenced meetings.

The board chair and several board members participated in the Legislative Sunset Audit proceedings. The full report was being reviewed by the legislative auditor at the time of annual report.

The board was represented during the biweekly Joint Board Chair meetings as well as the biweekly PDMP meetings.

COVID-19 mitigation recommendations were made available to licensees to help licensees continue to minimize potential for propagation through the provision of medical care to patients and staff following the expiration of Health Mandate 15.

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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
July 9, 2021	Teleconference	5	1
<input type="checkbox"/> Airfare:			\$0.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Hotel:			\$0.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Ground:			\$0.00
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: Teleconference technology and staffing			\$300.00
Total Estimated Cost:			\$300.00

Board Meeting Date	Location	# Board	# Staff
October TBD, 2021	Teleconference	5	4
<input type="checkbox"/> Airfare:			\$0.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Hotel:			\$0.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Ground:			\$0.00
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: Teleconference technology and staffing			\$1,000.00
Total Estimated Cost:			\$1,000.00

Board Meeting Date	Location	# Board	# Staff
January TBD, 2022	Anchorage/ Juneau	5	1
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Airfare:			\$2,000.00
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hotel:			\$600.00
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ground:			\$200.00
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: Per diem			\$360.00
Total Estimated Cost:			\$3,160.00

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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
April, TBD, 2022	Teleconference	5	4
<input type="checkbox"/> Airfare:			\$0.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Hotel:			\$0.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Ground:			\$0.00
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: Teleconference technology and staffing			\$1,000.00
Total Estimated Cost:			\$1,000.00

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
Total Estimated Cost:			\$0.00

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
Total Estimated Cost:			\$0.00

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Budget Recommendations for FY 2022 (continued)

Travel Required to Perform Examinations

Not applicable

Date	Location	# Board	# Staff
Description of meeting and its role in supporting the mission of the Board:			
<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):			
Total Estimated Cost:			\$0.00

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	
June 12-14, 2022	Chicago, IL	2		
Description of meeting and its role in supporting the mission of the Board:				
Annual Conference for the Association of Regulatory Boards of Optometry (ARBO) where member boards congregate to discuss emerging or emergent topics related to the profession.				
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):				
Net Total:	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00

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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
Membership	ARBO	\$850.00

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

The mission of ARBO is to represent and assist member licensing boards in regulating the practice of optometry for the public welfare. ARBO's purpose is to exchange information and engage in programs and joint activities relating to the professional education, licensure and continuing education of optometrists, to improve reciprocal relations and help in solving the mutual problems of the member boards.

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:

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:

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Budget Recommendations for FY 2022 (continued)

Other Items with a Fiscal Impact		Cost Per Event:	\$0.00
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 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:			

Other Items with a Fiscal Impact		Cost Per Event:	\$0.00
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 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:	\$5,460.00
Travel for Exams:	\$0.00
Out-of-State and Additional In-State Travel:	\$0.00
Dues, Memberships, Resources, Training:	\$850.00
Total Potential Third-Party Offsets:	-\$0.00
Other:	\$0.00
Total Requested:	\$6,310.00

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Legislation Recommendations Proposed Legislation for FY 2022

No Recommendations

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

Recommendations

The Board has the following recommendations for proposed legislation:

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Regulation Recommendations Proposed Legislation for FY 2022

No Recommendations

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

Recommendations

The Board has the following recommendations for proposed regulations:

- PDMP- 30-day deadline to register
- 12 AAC 02.960- CE requirements
- 12 AAC 02.900

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Goals and Objectives

Part I

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

1. Integration of a prior extensive regulation project (12 AAC 48.040) was implemented to further enhance access to care for the public.
2. Board reports were provided to stakeholders through annual reports posted to the board website.
3. Three video conferences were held to address a large number of regulation projects.
4. Travel expenses in FY2021 were minimized through teleconference.
5. There were no significant non-discrimination legislative issues requiring board action.
6. The board continued to carefully manage issues regarding controlled substances and opioid use and misuse as well as additional topic-specific educational requirements. The board is pleased to report there were no significant issues concerning this issue during FY2021 and the board now has representation on biweekly PDMP meetings.
7. Seven new regulation projects (12AAC48.330, 12AAC48.015(b), 12AAC48.920, 12AAC48.022, 12AAC48.200, 12AAC48.900, 12AAC48.990) were further reviewed, edited by the regulation specialist, sent for public comment, reviewed again and forwarded for final approval and signature from the Lt Governor.
8. Cumulative deficit showed an appropriate reduction following a department recommended fee increase; however, additional fee increases may be necessary to bring the budget into a neutral position.
9. COVID-19 issues remain central for the board and rendering guidance to practitioners to mitigate risks to patients and staff was a core objective for FY2021. Additional continued education limitations variances may require board action pending the progress of the pandemic, however seems unlikely at this time.
10. Legislative Sunset Audit was completed and awaits final review by the legislative auditor.

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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:

All of those issues listed in FY 2021 will remain as goals and objectives for FY 2022, however with the following items added:

1. Assure implementation of the 7 regulatory projects completed in FY2021.
2. Assess the cumulative deficit near the end of 4Q FY2022 to determine if an additional license fee increase appears necessary for renewal in early FY2023.
3. Remain vigilant in monitoring the COVID-19 pandemic and act quickly to address changing needs to maintain and mitigate the pandemic and assure safety of patients and practitioners. Temporary continued education regulation project may become necessary depending on availability of live continued education, however appears unlikely at this time.
4. Provide board updates to licensees at the annual Alaska Optometric Association meeting in early FY2022.
5. Implement any recommendations of the Legislative Sunset Audit.

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Sunset Audit Recommendations

Date of Last Legislative Audit: 6/30/2013
Board Sunset Date: 6/30/2022

Audit Recommendation:	DCBPL's Director should continue efforts to improve the investigative case management system's integrity and confidentiality.
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Action Taken:	The division has taken action to address deficiencies and improve the investigative case management systems efficiency and reliability in service areas.
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Next Steps:	N/A
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Date Completed:	
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