

Department of Commerce, Community
and Economic Development

Division of Corporations, Business
and Professional Licensing

Board of Veterinary Examiners

Annual Report

Fiscal Year 2023



Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development
Division of Corporations, Business and Professional Licensing

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**Board of Veterinary Examiners
FY 2023 Annual Report**

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**Board of Veterinary Examiners
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Identification of the Board

Board Member	Duty Station	Date Appointed	Term Expires
Rachel Bergartt, DVM, JD Veterinarian	Juneau	March 1, 2016	March 1, 2024
Hal Geiger, PhD Public Member	Juneau	March 1, 2016	March 1, 2024
Denise Albert, DVM Veterinarian	Denali Park	March 1, 2020	March 1, 2024
Ciara Vollaro, DVM Veterinarian	Anchorage	March 1, 2022	March 1, 2026

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Identification of Staff

Lacey Derr – Records & Licensing Supervisor

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(907) 465-2550

Warren Gordon – Occupational Licensing Examiner

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Gerald Mayeda – Occupational Licensing Examiner

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Tami Bowman – Occupational Licensing Examiner

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Sara Chambers – Boards and Regulations Advisor

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Identification of Staff (continued)

Dawn Bundick – Investigator

Department of Commerce, Community & Economic Development

Division of Corporations, Business and Professional Licensing

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**Board of Veterinary Examiners
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Narrative Statement

Current board members are Dr. Rachel Bergartt, Dr. Hal Geiger, Dr. Denise Albert, and Dr. Ciara Vollaro. Our licensing examiner is Tami J. Bowman. The board works with the Division of Corporations, Business and Professional Licensing.

The Board of Veterinary Examiners met five times during FY 23:

- August 25, 2022
- October 7, 2022
- January 6, 2023
- February 23 and 24, 2023
- June 8, 2023

During FY 23:

- 34 new veterinarian licenses were issued—45 veterinarian licenses lapsed after the renewal period
- 54 courtesy licenses were issued
- 23 student permits was issued
- 9 temporary permits were issued
- 15 veterinary technician licenses were issued- 49 vet tech licenses lapsed after the renewal period

The board has continued to monitor national issues relevant to regulatory medicine, and especially regulatory veterinary medicine. Such issues include the Federal Trade Commission's actions against state regulators, the increase in the misuse of the veterinary drug Xylazine, antimicrobial stewardship in veterinary medicine, pathways to licensure for graduates of foreign veterinary schools, variations in prescription drug monitoring programs among the states, and many other issues.

The board drafted new regulations, or considered modifying existing ones, in response to emerging needs, public testimony, or request from other governmental organizations. Notably, the board drafted regulations in this fiscal year defining a veterinarian-client-patient relationship to bring Alaskan regulations into compliance with federal regulations.

The board has also closely monitored and commented on state legislation relevant to the practice of veterinary medicine, mindful of our duty to protect the public. This legislative session was particularly busy as our board was again involved in educating legislators regarding proposed veterinary exemption from the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP). House Bill 56, with its companion bill SB 130, were the bills that would afford this exemption during this last session. House Bill 56 did indeed pass this last year. Additionally, this bill gives the board added power to approve pathways to allow graduates of foreign veterinary schools to receive licenses in Alaska. These legislative changes are expected to reduce the cost of veterinary care in Alaska and will hopefully reduce the shortage of veterinarians in this state.

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Budget Recommendations for FY 2024

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 2023	Anchorage	3	2
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Airfare:			\$ 1,600.00
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hotel:			\$ 775.00
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ground:			\$ 500.00
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Please Specify): M&IE			\$ 450.00
Total Estimated Cost:			\$ 3,325.00

Board Meeting Date	Location	# Board	# Staff
February 2024	Juneau	2	1
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Airfare:			\$ 1,200.00
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hotel:			\$ 465.00
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ground:			\$ 300.00
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Please Specify):			\$ 270.00
Total Estimated Cost:			\$ 2,235.00

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Budget Recommendations for FY 2024 (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:

- Airfare:
- Hotel:
- Ground:
- Conference:
- Other (Please Specify):

Total Estimated Cost:

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Budget Recommendations for FY 2024 (continued)

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
September 26-30	Kansas City, KS	2	

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

The American Association of State Veterinary Boards (AASVB) provides an annual opportunity for representative of member boards to discuss emerging topics in regulatory medicine. The 2023 meeting will take place in Kansas City, Kansas on September 28th to 30th. This meeting provides attending members extensive training in legal issues, trends in regulation in all states and some other countries, trends in veterinary education, and many other issues. Typically, this meeting is attended by representatives from the Federal Trade Commission, the Drug Enforcement Administration, testing agencies that test entering veterinary professionals, and many, many others whose work affects regulatory medicine, the recruitment of new veterinarians, and licensure. AASVB is involved in gathering and managing licensing documents, decreasing the complexity and cost of licensing in Alaska. Importantly, travel costs for one or two Alaskans are usually paid by AASVB.

Expenditure	License Fees (RSS)	Third-Party Reimbursement	Third-Party Direct Booked	Total
<input type="checkbox"/> Airfare:				\$ 0.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Hotel:				\$ 0.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Ground:				\$ 0.00
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Conference:	\$ 500.00			\$ 500.00
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other:			\$ 4,000.00	\$ 4,000.00
Describe "Other" (break out all sections): \$4,000 is from CBPL Estimated Costs for Lower 48				
Net Total:	\$ 500.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 4,500.00

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Budget Recommendations for FY 2024 (continued)

Out-of-State Meetings and Additional In-State Travel (Rank in order of importance)

#2 Rank in Importance or Not Applicable

Date	Location	# Board	# Staff
TBD	TBD	2	

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

The AASVB also offers a specialized training program called Board Basics and Beyond for new board members and staff. The course covers the difference between regulations and statutes, legal traps, and how to avoid license discipline problems. The course also covers the commonalities and differences among state licensure, Robert’s Rules of Order, important legal rulings affecting regulatory bodies, and many other topics. Because most of the board will be made up of relatively new members at the end of this fiscal year, attendance this year is viewed as a high priority for these new members. Importantly, travel costs for one or two Alaskans per year are usually paid by AASVB.

Expenditure	License Fees (RSS)	Third-Party Reimbursement	Third-Party Direct Booked	Total
<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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other:	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00		\$ 4,000.00
Describe “Other” (break out all sections): AAVSB will reimburse costs for one person; estimate per CBPL travel pairs				
Net Total:	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 4,000.00

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Budget Recommendations for FY 2024 (continued)

Non-Travel Budget Requests

- Not Applicable
 Resources
 Examinations
 Membership
 Training
 Other

Product or Service	Provider	Cost Per Event

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

Other Items with a Fiscal Impact

- Not Applicable
 Cost Per Event:
 Number of Events:

Product or Service	Provider	Cost Per Event

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

Summary of FY 2024 Fiscal Requests:

Board Meetings and Teleconferences:	\$ 5,560.00
Travel for Exams:	\$ 0.00
Out-of-State and Additional In-State Travel:	\$ 8,500.00
Dues, Memberships, Resources, Training:	\$ 0.00
Total Potential Third-Party Offsets:	- \$ 6,000.00
Other:	\$ 0.00
Total Requested:	\$ 8,060.00

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Legislative Recommendations - Proposed Legislation for FY 2024

No Recommendations

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

Recommendations

The Board has the following recommendations for proposed legislation:

We ask that the legislature consider adding a dedicated board seat for a licensed veterinary technician.

We also ask that the board's investigative fees continue to be paid out of general funds.

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Regulation Recommendations - Proposed Regulations for FY 2024

No Recommendations

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

Recommendations

The Board has the following recommendations for proposed regulations:

Consider developing regulations for a euthanasia permit. This may require statutory revisions.

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Goals and Objectives

Part I

FY 2023's goals and objectives and how they were met:

- Continue membership in the American Association of Veterinary State Boards and send two members (one voting member and one alternate) to the national regulatory board meeting if the meeting is scheduled in the western states.
The membership was maintained. The meeting was attended by Alaskan board members.
- Continue to implement, monitor, develop and review, as necessary, the state jurisprudence examination.
The board reviewed the most commonly missed questions and tried to understand why these questions were missed. As a result, the exam was improved.
- Continue licensing veterinarians and veterinary technicians and continue monitoring continuing education hours. Currently, the board has enacted an emergency regulation regarding waiver of CE requirements for the 2020 renewal period. This will be reevaluated for 2023.
The board licensed new veterinarians and technicians in fiscal year 2023 and monitored CE hours. The emergency CE waiver was reconsidered and not renewed.
- Continue to review and evaluate current statutes and legislative proposals and develop new proposals as needed.
The board supported two legislative proposals to improve licensing and improve the practice of veterinary medicine in fiscal year 2023: (1) changes to the PDMP program, and (2) changes to statute to create alternate paths to the licensing of graduates of foreign veterinary schools.
- Resolve ongoing investigations and litigation in a timely fashion through direct involvement of the board in the early review process. Continue to update as necessary the Veterinary Handbook. A mailing of the Handbook will occur following a major revision.
The board has provided a timely review of investigations. The board does not currently have any litigation issues. The board has reviewed the Veterinary Handbook and is now considering whether a major revision is reasonable, or even possible, given the reduction in staff time available to the board. It may be that this handbook is no longer needed, as much of the information in it is now available online.
- Continue to review and evaluate current regulations for veterinarians and veterinary technicians and regulatory fees and develop new regulations as needed.
The board has continued to review regulations to look for ways to simplify and streamline regulations and to respond to emerging issues. Notably, during this fiscal year, the regulation project created regulations to define a veterinarian-client-patient relationship to ensure Alaskan regulations are consistent with federal regulations regarding antimicrobial stewardship.

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Goals and Objectives (continued)

Part I

FY 2023's goals and objectives and how they were met:

- Continue to monitor continuing education programs and requirements.

The board has voted to accept all RACE (Registry of Accepted Continuing Education) continuing education opportunities. RACE-approved courses went through an AAVSB review process. For non-RACE-approved courses, the board reviewed proposed continuing education and the board approved courses that were demonstrated to be genuine educational opportunities for veterinarians or technicians.

- Continue to monitor the budget as it pertains to the self-supporting fees. Fiscal responsibility is of paramount importance to the board. The board will need to address issues relating to a significant increase in investigatory fees resulting from PDMP alleged violations, despite the well-known problems with the PDMP. The board will develop a resolution to convey continued investment in and ownership of our budget. Current challenges also include a suspension of scheduled fee increase due to COVID 19 financial impact.

The board has continued to monitor the budget and make recommendations to slow the increase in the budget.

- Continue to pursue the mission and vision statements of the board.

The board's mission statement is read at the beginning of each meeting to set a tone and to remind board members of the board's mission.

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Goals and Objectives (continued)

Part II

FY 2024's goals and objectives, and proposed methods to achieve them.

Describe any strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats and required resources:

- Continue membership in the American Association of Veterinary State Boards and to send two members (one voting member and one alternate) to the national AAVSB meeting in Kansas City, Kansas. Continue to use the AAVSB to monitor emerging issues in veterinary regulatory medicine. Send new members to the "Board Basics and Beyond" course sponsored by AAVSB.
- Continue to administer and improve the jurisprudence state examination.
- Continue licensing veterinarians and veterinary technicians and continue auditing a sample of license holders for required continuing education hours.
- Continue to review and evaluate current statutes and legislative proposals, and develop new proposals, as needed.
- Continue to resolve ongoing investigations and litigation in a timely fashion through direct involvement of the board in the early review process.
- Continue to review the Veterinary Handbook and evaluate its usefulness. If necessary, based on staffing availability, suspend the production of this document.
- Continue to review and evaluate current regulations for veterinarians and veterinary technicians, and to develop new regulations as needed. As time permits, review all regulations for relevance in 2024.
- Continue to monitor proposed continuing education programs.
- Continue to monitor the board's budget as it pertains to the self-supporting fees.
- Continue to pursue the mission and vision of the board.

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Sunset Audit Recommendations

Date of Last Legislative Audit:

Board Sunset Date:

Audit Recommendation:

Action Taken:

Next Steps:

Complete : **No** **Yes** **If yes, date completed:**