

# Alaska Bar Association

2021 Annual Report



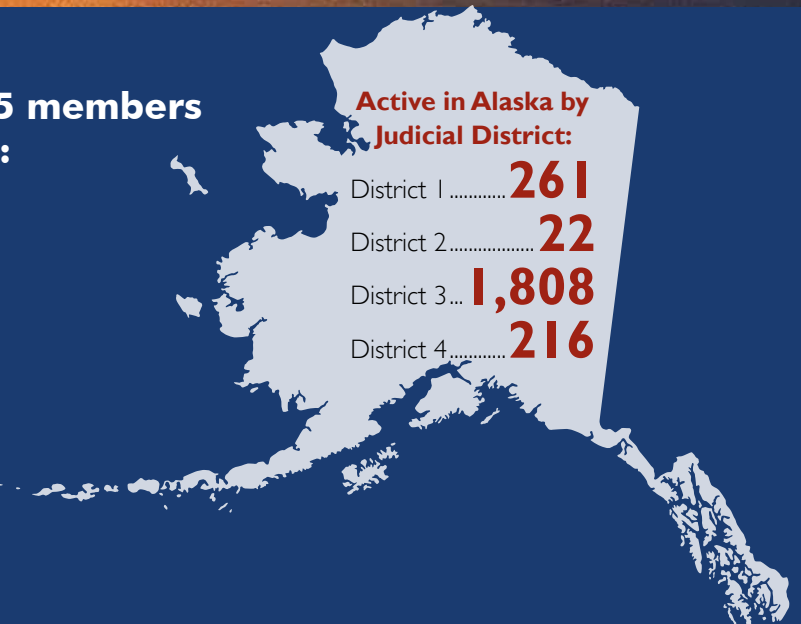
The Alaska Bar Association has 4,625 members in the following categories:

By Status:	Active in Alaska	Active Outside
	2,307	877

Inactive in Alaska	Inactive Outside	Retired
189	602	650

Active in Alaska by Judicial District:

District 1	261
District 2	22
District 3	1,808
District 4	216



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## Admissions/Licensing

2021 BAR EXAM RESULTS		
Date	Applicants	Passed
<b>Feb. 2021</b>	42	28
1st time takers	32	26
<b>July 2021</b>	62	36
1st time takers	36	35

**UBE:** Alaska administers the Uniform Bar Exam (UBE) with the passing score set at 280.

50 applicants were approved for admission by UBE score transfer.

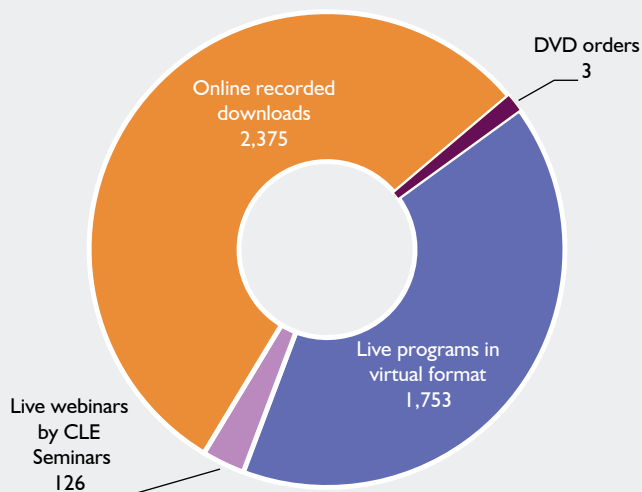
37 applicants were approved for admission by reciprocity.

## CLE

As a result of COVID-19, the Bar did not hold any live in-person programs. 27 CLE programs were delivered in virtual/Zoom format. Out of those 27, five were free of charge. In addition, the 2021 Annual Bar Convention was held in a virtual/Zoom format and 257 individuals attended.

Despite the pandemic, CLE programs continued to be delivered in a virtual format with the greatest attendance from online recorded downloads. Included in our Video-on-Demand library are 13.5 hours of free programming.

CLE Attendance by Program Format



## Mandatory Continuing Legal Education

**Active Bar members** are required to:

- earn at least 3 CLE ethics credits
- encouraged to earn at least 9 additional credits
- report MCLE compliance annually

**99.6%** reported compliance

**53.6%** reported earning at least 12 credits

**20%** reported earning between 3 and 11 credits

**26.4%** reported earning only 3 ethics credits

**9 Bar members** were administratively suspended for failure to comply

## Member Services

- **The Alaska Bar Rag:** The Bar's newspaper is published and sent to Bar members quarterly.
- **The Alaska Law Review:** Published online by Duke Law School.
- **ALPS (Attorney Liability Protection Society):** Bar endorsed malpractice insurance company.
- **E-News:** Electronic bulletin is sent weekly to Bar members.
- **Fastcase:** All Bar members have free access to this online legal research service.
- **Insurance programs:** Bar sponsored group disability and life insurance programs for Bar members.



## Public Service

The Lawyer Referral Service had 39 attorneys in 29 practice areas.

The Lawyer Referral Service provided referrals to 2,165 callers. The most frequently requested areas were divorce/custody; labor relations; and negligence.

The Alaska Bar Foundation distributed IOLTA (Interest on Lawyers Trust Accounts) grants to Alaska Legal Services Corporation (\$22,500) and Alaska Institute for Justice (\$7,500).

## Fee Arbitration

Clients may invoke the Bar's mandatory fee arbitration process if they have a fee dispute with their lawyers.

Caseload:	Fee Arbitrations
January 1, 2021 Pending	20
New Matters Opened	+21
Closed Matters	-9
December 31, 2021 Pending	32

## Committees and Sections

- In 2021 there were 26 active **substantive law sections**, with a total individual membership of 2,955 for all sections. The total, including members with multiple sections (and non-Bar members) was 3,739.
- There are ten **Standing Bar committees** and **five Bar Rule committees**.

### Of the 4,625 members of the Alaska Bar Association, Female Attorney Categories:

Total Female Attorneys	Active in Alaska	Active Outside	Inactive	Retired
1,761	953	290	355	163

## 2021 Board of Governors

- Jessica Graham, President
- Diana Wildland, President-Elect
- Jeffrey Robinson, Vice President
- Bill Granger (Public Member), Treasurer
- Janell Hafner, Secretary
- Ricardo Castillo (Public Member)
- Jed Cox (Public Member)
- Rachel Espejo
- Ben Hofmeister
- Aimee Oravec
- Hanna Sebold
- Rob Stone
- Meghan "Sig" Topkok, New Lawyer Liaison

## Pro Bono Services

- Martin Luther King Day:** As a result of COVID-19, the Bar hosted the 12th annual MLK Day free legal clinics via a telephone hotline and Alaska Free Legal Answers. During the event, 25 volunteers provided 101 volunteer hours to 85 low to moderate income Alaskans with civil legal needs.
- Alaska Free Legal Answers:** Provided assistance to 210 Alaskans by 30 volunteer lawyers who work with low-income Alaskans on a free web-based legal clinic where clients can ask up to three civil legal questions in one year.
- The Alaska Youth Law Guide:** Assisted in guiding Alaskans through 38,134 downloads of the guide—a service project of the Law Related Education Committee.

## Awards

### Board of Governors

*Distinguished Service* - Deborah O'Regan

*Professionalism* - Susan Pollard

*Layperson Service* - Bill Gordon

*Judge Nora Guinn* - Cheryl McKay

*Robert Hickerson Public Service* - Nikole Nelson

*Honorary Bar Member* - Dean Erwin Chemerinsky

### Bryan P. Timbers Pro Bono

*Private practitioner* - Scott Sterling

*Firm* - Davis Wright Tremaine

*Public sector* - Dave Jones

### Alaska Bar Foundation

### Jay Rabinowitz Public Service

Magistrate Judge Kimberley Sweet

## Financial & Administration

### 2021 Bar Dues Breakdown for Active Members

Bar Dues: <b>\$660</b>			
Discipline	\$270	LFCEP	\$10
Administration	\$187	Fastcase	\$8
CLE	\$60	Bar Rag	\$6
Pro Bono	\$38	Sections	\$3
Fee Arbitration	\$25	Web Page	\$3
BOG	\$19	Committees	\$2
Lawyer Referral	\$16	MLK Day	\$1
MCLE	\$11	Sunset	\$1
Total general fund revenue: <b>\$2,995,235</b>			
Total expenses: <b>\$2,715,542</b>			
Net Gain: <b>\$279,693</b>			

## Attorney Discipline

The Discipline Section processed 159 new grievances against lawyers in 2021 compared to 151 grievances in 2020, a 5% increase.

Of the 159 new grievances, 137 were thoroughly reviewed but did not warrant investigation, 3 were opened for formal investigation.

Caseload:	Grievances	Lawyers
Open for Investigation on January 1, 2021	50	
Files Opened for Investigation*	+8	
Closed by Disbarment	0	0
Closed by Suspension by Alaska Supreme Court	-14	(2 lawyers)
Closed by Public Censure	0	0
Closed by Private Reprimand	0	0
Closed by Written Private Admonition	0	0
Dismissed after Formal Investigation	-13	(9 lawyers)
Open for Investigation on December 31, 2021	31	

\*Includes matters filed previous to 2021

The change in open caseload decreased by 38% in 2021.

The Discipline Section did not track contacts with the public because our offices were closed beginning in March 2020 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and our staff worked remotely through the end of 2021.

## Lawyers' Fund for Client Protection

The Lawyers' Fund is responsible for reimbursing clients or others who have lost money or property due to a lawyer's dishonest conduct. One claim was filed in 2021 and the LFCEP Committee decided to hold the claim in abeyance pending resolution of a related civil lawsuit.

The Fund may also pay for the fees and expenses of Trustee Counsel who are appointed to assist clients of a deceased or unavailable attorney. No fees or expenses were paid in trustee counsel fees in 2021.

## BAR BYLAWS, REGULATIONS, AND COURT RULES ACTED ON IN 2021

### The Board of Governors:

Amended Article IV, Section 3 and Article VI, Section 1 of the Bylaws of the Alaska Bar Association to have Board of Governor members and officer terms start on November 1 and end on October 31.

### The Alaska Supreme Court:

The Supreme Court signed SCO 1966 amending Bar Rule 3 to change the application deadlines for the Alaska Bar Examination; amending Bar Rules 28(g) and 30(e) to change the publication requirements for public notices for discipline and transfers to disability inactive status.

Upon the recommendation of the Alaska Rules of Professional Conduct Standing Committee and the Board of Governors, the Alaska Supreme Court signed SCO 1964, adopting a new Rule of Professional Conduct, prohibiting harassment and invidious discrimination and adding a related definitional term. ARPC 8.4(f) & (g) and ARPC 9.1(k).

### ETHICS GUIDANCE

The Board of Governors adopted one formal ethics opinion proposed by the Bar's standing Ethics Committee in 2021. Formal ethics opinions provide the Bar Association's official position on ethics issues.

In addition, Bar Counsel's office responded to 757 requests from lawyers for informal ethics guidance in the course of the year.

### Cover art: "Glacier at Sunset" by Alice Tersteeg

Juneau artist Alice Tersteeg has been painting and studying Alaskan wildlife and habitats since her arrival in Alaska in 1973. She has interpreted wildlife in many media including oils, watercolors, serigraphs, etchings, relief prints, pastels and various combinations.