

# Montana Board News

## Board of Accountancy

### March 2022

The Honorable Greg Gianforte  
Governor of Montana

#### Board Members

Dan Vuckovich, CPA, Chair  
Lucinda "Cindy" Willis, CPA, Secretary  
Mike Huotte, CPA  
John Jacobsen, CPA  
Mike Johns, CPA  
Ranetta Jones, CPA  
Kathleen VanDyke, Public Member

#### Executive Officer

Kevin Bragg  
Email: kevin.bragg@mt.gov

#### Contact Information

#### Current Licensee & Renewal Inquires

Email: [dlibsdhelp@mt.gov](mailto:dlibsdhelp@mt.gov)  
Phone 406-444-6880

#### Applying for a MT CPA license

Email: [licensing@nasba.org](mailto:licensing@nasba.org)  
Website: [nasba.org](https://nasba.org)  
Phone: 866-350-0017

#### General Inquires

Email: [dlibsdpac@mt.gov](mailto:dlibsdpac@mt.gov)  
Website: [publicaccountant.mt.gov](https://publicaccountant.mt.gov)

#### CPE Audit

Email: [cpeauditservice@nasba.org](mailto:cpeauditservice@nasba.org)  
Website: [cpeauditservice.nasba.org](https://cpeauditservice.nasba.org)

#### Peer Review Inquires

Email: [karnold@nevadacpa.org](mailto:karnold@nevadacpa.org)  
Website: [nevadacpa.org/peer-review](https://nevadacpa.org/peer-review)  
Phone: 775-826-6800

The mission of the Montana Board of Public Accountants is to protect the public by regulating Certified Public Accountants and their firms to ensure their compliance with professional standards and the laws of Montana.

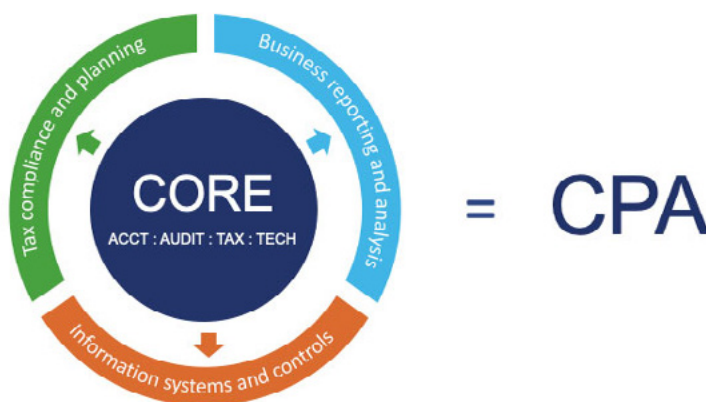
## CPA Evolution and What it Means to Montana State Board of Accountancy

Written by Dan Vuckovich, CPA, Chair

As many of you are aware the American Institute of CPAs (AICPA) and the National Association of State Boards of Accountancy (NASBA) are restructuring the CPA Exam into a new CPA licensure model. The CPA Evolution is the term used to describe the NASBA/AICPA initiative aimed at evolving CPA licensure to reflect the skills and knowledge CPAs increasingly need in a technology-driven marketplace.

The CPA Evolution is changing the CPA Licensure model to recognize the shift in knowledge and skills required of newly licensed CPAs today and in the future. NASBA and the AICPA are working together to align the 2024 CPA Exam with the updated CPA licensure model.

We at the Montana State Board of Accountancy are currently reviewing all aspects of our CPA licensing requirements to access what changes we may need to implement in preparation for the modifications that will be coming in the CPA exam. We also have been in discussions regarding what possible changes, if any, may need to be done to the current educational curriculum in order to make sure students will be ready for the change in the exam.



The proposed CPA licensure model requires CPA candidates to be skilled in a strong core based on accounting, auditing, and tax, with technology infused throughout. Candidates will be required to pass three core sections and one discipline on the CPA Exam. Also, candidates can only pass one discipline with no option to pass another. It is important to note the discipline passed will not change the CPA license granted.

When any changes have been made, we will make every effort to communicate these changes to all those that may be affected. This would include CPA candidates, students, educators, licensees and most importantly the public. The primary responsibility of the Montana State Board of Accountancy is to protect the public by regulating Certified Public Accountants and their firms to ensure their compliance with professional standards and the laws of Montana.



Dan Vuckovich



Montana Department of  
LABOR & INDUSTRY

## Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in Licensure

Legislatures continue to question the value of occupational and professional licensure. *Valuing Professional Licensing*, a recent report issued by the Alliance for Responsible Professional Licensing (ARPL) – in partnership with the internationally recognized research firm Oxford Economics – shows the value of licensure beyond public protection. The report found professional licensing is associated with higher wages across all professions and occupations. Women and minorities in particular benefit as a license narrows the gender-driven wage gap by about one-third and the race-driven wage gap by about half. Licensing helps level the playing field by setting a clear, evenly applied level of qualification and removing subjectivity. Licensure is also an important tool that helps build pay equity.

To help expand the usage of this report and to educate legislators about the value of licensure beyond public protection, ARPL is seeking examples on the benefits of licensing in the accounting profession to reinforce the Oxford findings, especially those pertaining to the benefits of women and persons of color in the profession.

## Do We Have Your Current Information?

It is vital that the Board office has your current contact information. The Department, on behalf of the Board, sends notices primarily via e-mail. You can visit the board [website](#) and update your physical and digital addresses by clicking on the Change Address tab. Failing to update your address can lead to discipline if notifications are missed. You are to notify the board within 10 days of any change to your contact information. Please help us keep you in compliance by keeping your records updated.

## Wait, Did We Skip 2021?

*Did you miss us? Last year was a year of transition and as a result the board newsletter did not make it to print. Let's get you caught up on what you may have missed!*

### Board Members:

Last year saw Linda Harris, CPA left the Board after multiple years of service to the public. The Board and Department staff are grateful to Linda for having given so much of her time in service to the citizens of Montana. We will miss Linda's expertise and wish her all the best moving forward.

After Linda's resignation, the Board was delighted to welcome a prior member back to the fold. Governor Gianforte appointed Mike Johns, CPA of Deer Lodge to fill the vacant seat. If you would like to apply to be a Board member you can always do so, regardless of openings, at [boards.mt.gov](https://boards.mt.gov).

In July of 2021, Dan Vuckovich, CPA was elected President of the Board, replacing John Jacobsen who helped the Board maintain an even keel in a tumultuous year. Cindy Willis was elected Secretary replacing Dan Vuckovich.

### Board Counsel:

A Departmental staffing realignment sees the Board no longer having assigned counsel, but utilizing a case-by-case attorney assignment moving forward for legal issues. Over the past several years the Board has been blessed to have Jennifer Stallkamp as its assigned legal counsel. Jennifer has proven during her time to not only be a thoughtful and intuitive practitioner but also an affable one. The Board and staff are disappointed to lose her expertise on a regular basis; however, it is hopeful that future assignments bring Jennifer back into our orbit.

### Executive Officer:

Many of you know already, after 42 years with the Department of Labor & Industry, Grace Berger retired at the end of December. Grace's work with the Board spanned more than a decade and her commitment to licensees was never-ending. The Department chose Kevin Bragg to fill the remaining void. Over the last year Kevin has been working to streamline application processes for the Board as well as streamline some regulations for the Board. Information on how to reach Kevin is available on the sidebar of this newsletter.

### Rulemaking:

Last year, the Board passed [MAR 24-201-54](#) which contained several amendments and repeals to its current rules; to read the package in its entirety, please click on the link.

The major change which resulted from this rule package was the removal of all initial licensure applications as nonroutine. Previously the Board reviewed every application for initial licensure. This review was time consuming for the Board and arduous for staff in preparing materials for Board review. Staff may now, after appropriate review, approve routine applications submitted to the Board. The change will expedite licensure for applicants and free up the Board to attend to matters which require their expertise related to public safety. A list of approved applications will be provided in the Board's newsletter moving forward.

The change in application review also allows the Board to stick to a quarterly meeting schedule. Meetings for 2022 include February 8, May 24, August 26, and November 17. Please keep an eye out for Board meetings on the Board's website under Board events. If you have matters which you feel the Board should review or consider, please submit them to [dlibsdpac@mt.gov](mailto:dlibsdpac@mt.gov) or by calling the Board office. Public input is always encouraged and welcomed. You can also sign up for the Board's interested parties list by emailing a request to the same address noted above. By joining the Board's interested parties list, you will be notified of meetings and rule amendments automatically.

## CPE Audit Results

In June of 2021, the Board voted to randomly audit 20% of the eligible licensees for CPE compliance. The audit resulted in 356 licenses being selected and an ultimate passage rate of 92%.

Any licensee who fails the audit is referred to the Department for further follow up. Those licensees are given 60 days to cure the deficiency. If they cure the deficiency nothing more is required. If they do not cure the deficiency within the 60 days, their license is administratively suspended.

Failure of more than one CPE audit in a 5-year period may result in potential disciplinary action.

The Board appreciates the patience of those licensees selected multiple times for audit. The statute requires an audit of randomly selected licensees. Passing the audit one year does not remove you from the audit pool in future years. Keeping your CPE records updated will help eliminate the stress of being audited multiple times.

NASBA's CPE Audit Service can assist you in keeping track of your CPE for the Board. You are not required to utilize the service unless selected for audit; however, the board has provided the service as an on-going. If you have specific technical questions about using or accessing the system, please contact CPE Audit Services at [cpeauditservice@nasba.org](mailto:cpeauditservice@nasba.org)

For specific questions related to the Board's continuing education rules you may reach out to the Department's Audit unit at [audit@mt.gov](mailto:audit@mt.gov).



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## CPA Exam Performance Summary: 2021 Q-4 Montana

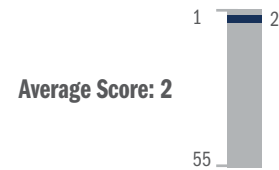
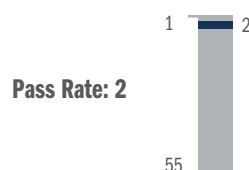
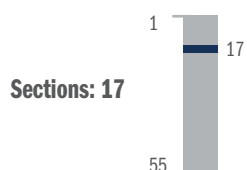
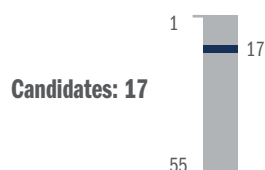
### OVERALL PERFORMANCE

Unique Candidates	581
New Candidates	180
Total Sections	790
Passing 4th Section	100
Sections/Candidates	1.36
Pass Rate	56.96%
Average Score	73.64

### SECTION PERFORMANCE

	Sections	Score	%Pass
First-Time	307	75.19	63.52%
Re-Exam	482	72.63	52.70%
AUD	263	69.98	47.53%
BEC	189	77.55	62.43%
FAR	202	72.56	54.46%
REG	136	76.85	71.32%

### JURISDICTION RANKING



## The Board, What Is It Good For?

The Board of Public Accountants was established by the legislature to set and enforce standards and adopt and enforce rules governing the (1) licensing, (2) certification, (3) registration, and (4) conduct of the members of the profession or occupation within the board's jurisdiction. In addition, the board is to apply its regulations in a manner that does not discriminate against any person licensed by the board with regard to how the standards and rules are applied to other persons licensed by the board and that does not restrain trade or competition unless necessary to protect public health and safety. See § [37-1-131](#), MCA et seq.



Photo by Steven Cordes on Unsplash

The board's mission is public safety. This differs from the mission of the Montana Society of Certified Public Accountants (MSCPA), which exists to advocate for the profession. Members of the board must remove their CPA caps when conducting board business to do what is best for the citizens of Montana. This includes setting minimum standards for applicants and licensee conduct.

The board, through the Department operates several on-going processes which must be funded. These funds, by law, come from licensees and not the state general fund. The most visible of these processes is the application process. A few of the other processes include

compliance, audit, and customer service. While most licensees do not interact with the board on an on-going basis the board is functioning continuously to ensure its duties are fulfilled.

It is vital for the board to solicit and obtain information from not only its licensees but also the public. We maintain several different ways for comments to be submitted. You are strongly encouraged to reach out to the board with issues you may notice in your practice resulting from the effect of regulation on your daily work. Similarly, if you notice the board is missing a key area of regulation that endangers the public, we encourage you to reach out.

## Board Committee Appointments

Board Chair Dan Vuckovich, CPA, made the following standing committee appointments in 2021.

### Screening Panel

Dan Vuckovich, CPA, Great Falls  
Mike Huotte, CPA, Anaconda  
John Jacobsen, CPA, Billings  
Kathleen VanDyke, Public Member, Bozeman

### Adjudication Panel

Ranetta Jones, CPA, Billings  
Cindy Willis, Public Member, Polson  
Mike Johns, CPA, Deer Lodge

## New Licensees

The Board issued the following licenses from December 15, 2021, through March 9, 2022. We congratulate and welcome our new colleagues to the profession.

Al Smadi, Anas	Gunda, Sathithi	Kalindi, Kalindi	Ost, Tyler
Alberakadar, Albarazi Tarek	Gupta, Bhoomika	Kang, Uksoo	Outerbridge, Jahlae
Alghannam, Annas	Elliott, Alixandra	Kapuluru, Vasantha Kumar	Parakh, Sagar
Alzubaidi, Mohammad	Evje, Scott	Katti, Sanjay	Parikh, Shaival
An, Unjee	Fernandes, Evan	Kolathu, Rincy	Pimley, Hannah
Anderson, Chenelle	Fossum, Chase	Kurian, Melvi	Ramesh Babu, Dheepshika
Anderson, Mary	Garg, Sumit	Lee, Jong Ho	Rodriguez, Jason
Arumugam, Sathyamoorthy	Haugo, Zoe	Lee, Kyungjin	Shah, Arpit
Auguste, Kheinz	Harvey, Esther Ann	Li, Wanying	Song, Sae Gyul
Aune, Tee	Hong, Dabin	Losso-Andreatini, Vinicius	Song, Xiaofei
Bagasrawala, Murtuza	Hong, Seong-Gyun	Mani, Gansh	Spaabeck, Haelee
Carpenter, Julie	HR, Manoj	Mankad, Wasim	Subramaniyan, Swathi
Champion, Katelyn	Jain, Ankit	Martin, Natoya	Thibault, Daniel
Chaturvedi, Nimisha	Jaiswal, Ashkay	Mehta, Prashant	Vora, Jenish Sudhir
Drye, Misty	Jaiswal, Meena	Mimani, Shalini	Watson, Tena
Gada, Sagar	James, Jerin	Mittal, Harsh	Ye, Zijie
Ghadiyali, Tejas	Johnson, Kristen	Mohammed, Salam	Zalinsky, Andrea
Goel, Rohit	Kadam, Neha	Nielsen, Darci	