

Board of Registration in Midwifery

February 19, 2026

Meeting Summary for MA-NACPM Members

The Massachusetts Board of Registration in Midwifery met on February 19, 2026, marking one year since the board was convened following passage of the law expanding access to midwifery care and out-of-hospital birth options in the Commonwealth.

The meeting included board leadership elections, updates on the temporary licensure regulation, discussion of the upcoming application process, and continued work on the regulatory framework that will govern CPM practice in Massachusetts.

Board Leadership Elections

Because the board has completed its first year, annual leadership elections were held. Rebecca Herman was re-elected to serve another term as Board Chair, and Kristin Brennen was elected Board Secretary. The secretary role includes assisting with meeting documentation and stepping in to chair meetings when the chair is unavailable.

Temporary Licensure Moving Toward Public Hearing

The board received an update that the temporary licensure regulation is now at the final stage of administrative review.

Once that review is complete, the next steps will include:

1. Scheduling a public hearing
2. Posting the regulation publicly
3. Opening a public comment period

The public hearing will likely be conducted via moderated conference call to allow broad participation. After the comment period closes, the board will review submitted comments and determine whether any revisions are necessary before the regulation is finalized.

Board counsel indicated the regulation is very close to reaching this stage, and a hearing date may be set before the next board meeting.

Temporary Licensure Application System

While the regulation moves through final review, the Bureau of Health Professions Licensure has already completed the temporary licensure application system. Once licensure opens, midwives will apply through the state's online e-licensing portal. Applications that clearly meet all requirements may be processed by licensing staff. Applications involving non-standard pathways, credentials from other jurisdictions, or documentation requiring interpretation may be reviewed by the board. Applicants will also complete a CORI background check as part of the licensing process.

Complaint, Investigation, and Disciplinary Framework

A substantial portion of the meeting focused on draft regulations governing complaints, investigations, and potential board action.

This conversation reflected one of the more complex aspects of establishing licensure for community midwives. While professional regulation requires clear systems for addressing concerns about practice, board members also acknowledged that midwives have historically experienced regulatory systems very differently from many other health professions.

For generations, midwives in the United States have faced criminalization, surveillance, and professional exclusion, often through regulatory or legal mechanisms. Board members noted that this history shapes how midwives experience the language and processes of regulation today. Even terms commonly used in licensing systems, such as “investigation,” can carry significant weight within the midwifery profession.

As a result, the board discussed the need to build procedures that meet legal requirements for professional oversight while avoiding unnecessarily punitive or adversarial structures that could disproportionately affect community-based practitioners.

Under the draft framework, when a complaint is received the board must first review and investigate the complaint itself. This stage is intended to determine whether the issue falls within the board’s jurisdiction and whether further action is necessary.

Many complaints may be resolved at this stage if the concern cannot be substantiated, if there is insufficient information, or if the issue is outside the board’s authority.

Board members also emphasized the importance of recognizing the realities of independent midwifery practice. Many CPMs work in solo or small community practices without the institutional resources that larger healthcare systems rely on. The board discussed how regulatory procedures should take these realities into account while still maintaining professional standards.

At the same time, board members acknowledged that licensure will include situations where concerns about professional conduct or clinical decision-making must be reviewed. The regulatory framework being developed is intended to ensure that any board action is transparent, consistent, and proportionate, with clear procedures and opportunities for midwives to respond.

This discussion reflects a broader challenge the board is navigating: building a regulatory system that protects the public while also recognizing the historical and structural realities of community midwifery.

Controlled Substance Registration

The application portal will allow midwives to apply for Massachusetts Controlled Substance Registration (MCSR) alongside licensure.

Because the duration of temporary licensure is not fixed, the state plans to extend MCSR registrations as needed until standard licensure begins and renewal cycles can be synchronized.

Fees and License Renewal

The board also discussed anticipated licensing costs.

Temporary licenses will not require an application fee. Once the standard license becomes available, the licensing fee will not exceed \$200, as stated in statute.

Currently Massachusetts Controlled Substance Registration (MCSR) fees range between \$150 - \$300. Midwives who wish to apply for MCSR license will pay the standard MCSR fee— verification needed.

Standard licenses will operate on a two-year renewal cycle.

Temporary licenses will remain valid until the standard license application becomes available, after which midwives will have 180 days to transition to the standard license.

Continuing Work on the Regulatory Framework

The board continues drafting the additional regulations needed for full licensure.

Current work includes:

- * disciplinary procedures
- * standards of conduct
- * definitions of key professional terms

Board counsel suggested combining ethics and standards of practice regulations to streamline the final regulatory packet. Members were also encouraged to review and expand the definitions section to ensure the regulations are clear to reviewers unfamiliar with midwifery terminology.

Support for Midwives Transitioning to Licensure

Board members also noted the role of several organizations supporting midwives through the transition to licensure, including:

- * MA-NACPM
- * Massachusetts Midwives Alliance
- * Bay State Birth Coalition
- * Community Birth Integration Initiative
- * the BEE Collaborative at Boston College

In addition, Greenfield Community College is developing a bridge certificate program to support midwives pursuing licensure pathways.