



OHIO OPTICAL DISPENSERS BOARD

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FAQ's

(Frequently Asked Questions)

Optical Dispensers Board
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EXAM PROCESS

Q. How do I register for the national qualifying spectacle/contact lens exam?

A. To schedule to take either the ABO or NCLE, you need to contact the American Board of Opticianry (ABO) directly at the number below.

The Optical Dispensers Board (Board) does not register people for the exam nor administer the exam. The Board cannot answer questions about the scheduling of the exam, score results or fees. You can reach ABO by calling 1-800-296-1379 or through the link on the Board's web page, www.optical.ohio.gov

NOTE: The ABO certificate does not authorize an individual to practice optical dispensing in Ohio. After notification of having passed the national spectacle/contact lens qualifying exam, individuals must apply for licensure by the Board in order to practice as a licensed dispensing optician in the state of Ohio.

(2/12)

Q. How often and where are the spectacle/contact lens exams given? How much does it cost?

A. The exams are generally given twice a year in Columbus, in May and November. Contact ABO at the number or web page address above for exact dates, times and costs associated with the exam. (2/12)

Q. Where can I get study materials for spectacle/contact lens exam preparation?

A. The National Academy of Opticians provides study materials as well as do some of providers of Board-approved continuing education. You may contact the Academy at 1-800-229-4828 for more information.

(2/12)

LICENSURE

Q. How do I know if I have enough apprentice time to be eligible to apply for my license?

A. It is the responsibility of the supervisor and the apprentice to maintain all records of apprenticeship. Verification of hours by the Board may be done only upon written request to the Board from the supervisor or apprentice. Please allow two weeks for a written response. (2/12)

Q. I am a spectacle licensed dispensing optician and now I want to get my contact lens license to become a spectacle/contact lens licensed optician. Am I required to have two more years of apprenticeship as a contact lens apprentice?

A. No.

The Rules of the Board, specifically 4726-3-01 of the Administrative Code, states that an individual who holds a current spectacle license needs only an additional one year of no less than 1,000 hours of contact lens registered apprenticeship, and successful completion of the NCLE exam prior to application for licensure as a spectacle/contact lens dispensing optician.

Individuals who are completing the apprenticeship under the direct supervision **and** are employed by a doctor do not need to be registered with the Board.

Supervisors, whether a licensed optician or a doctor, will be required to complete the "Certification by Supervisor" portion of the application for licensure.

Q. How do I obtain an application for licensure?

A. You may obtain an application for licensure as a dispensing Optician or Ocularist by down loading the application from the Board's web site under the section "Applications and Forms."

You may also contact the Board office directly either by e-mail at odb@odb.ohio.gov or by phone: 614 466 9709 and an application will be mailed to you.

All directions for completing the application are supplied with the application. (2/12)

Q. I heard that I have to do a criminal records check and be finger printed to be licensed. What is a "criminal records check?"

A. Section 4725.501 of the Ohio Revised Code (Law regulating the practice of Opticianry and Ocularistry in Ohio) requires all individuals applying for licensure by the Board to submit fingerprints for a criminal records check completed by the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation (BCII) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). Instructions on how to accomplish this is included with each application. Individuals seeking licensure will need to go to the local Sheriff's office or other approved locations that use the services of "National WebCheck" to submit electronic fingerprints. The Sheriff's office in most of the 88 counties of Ohio participate in National WebCheck. A list of WebCheck vendors in Ohio, arranged by county can be accessed through a link

on the Board's Web Page: optical.ohio.gov
(11/12)

By law, the Board cannot approve any application for initial licensure until the Board receives both the FBI and BCII reports. The Board will only accept results that are less than 4 months old. (2/12)

Q. How much does the fingerprinting cost?

A. Fees must be paid at the time of the fingerprinting.

BCII \$22

FBI \$24

The electronic fingerprinting company may charge its own fee to process the fingerprints. You may wish to contact the vendor to confirm costs.(2/12)

Q. How does the Board get the results of the fingerprinting?

A. The results of the fingerprinting completed by both the FBI and BCII come directly to the Board offices from BCII.

The Board cannot accept any results that do not come directly from BCII. (2/12)

Q. How long does it take the Board to get results from BCII?

A. The Board will typically receive the results of a criminal records check between 30-60 business days. (2/12)

Q. What if I have a criminal record that shows up on the BCII/FBI report? Does this mean I can't get a license.

A. No, a "positive hit" on the results does not automatically mean you will not be licensed. It does mean, however, that the Board will need to do additional investigation with the applicant and the appropriate law enforcement agency determine the seriousness of the charges and the likelihood that the applicant may pose a threat to patients seeking the services of an optical dispenser. (2/12)

APPRENTICESHIP

Q. Can the Optical Dispensers Board (Board) accept hours of lab experience when the experience is completed in a non-licensure state where the supervisor of the apprentice is not licensed as a dispensing optician nor is the apprentice registered? If the supervisor is ABO certified?

A. No. Rule 4726-3-01(D) Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) requires that the supervisor of an apprentice optician must be a **licensed** optician. (2/12)

Q. Can the Board accept hours of lab experience when completed in Ohio and not supervised by a licensed optician?

A. No, for the same reason stated above. (2/12)

Q. Can the Board accept any supervised lab experience towards licensure requirements for a contact lens license?

A. Yes, but only one year of laboratory experience of at least 30 hours per week, and only if supervised by a licensed contact lens dispensing optician (2/12)

Q. Can the Board accept lab experience obtained in Ohio for licensure if the apprentice is not registered with the Board?

A. No, unless the direct supervisor for the lab experience is an optometrist or physician who employs and directly supervised the apprentice. (2/12)

PRACTICE

Q. When the supervising CL licensee is absent (lunch, vacation, regular day off, out sick) what duties may the apprentices do when the other CL licensee (not their supervisor) is on duty?

A. Apprentices should not be scheduled to work when the licensed direct supervisor is not scheduled to work. In order to avoid this, many employers are now registering apprentices with two supervisors, so that the apprentice is registered with the Board under, and, directly supervised by a licensed supervisor whenever that apprentice is scheduled to work. (2/12)

Q. Are apprentices allowed to pull contacts from inventory, be it a locked cabinet, back room, whatever?

A. Apprentices who are apprenticing for a CL license, and, when the apprentice is directly supervised by a licensed CL supervisor registered with the Board, may pull the contacts from inventory.

A. See Above (2/12)

Q. Are apprentices (with and without their immediate supervisor on duty) allowed to “place” orders, hand written, computer entry or received by phone if the prescription already exists in the office computer or patient chart?

A. Apprentices are to perform the functions of optical dispensing, such as placing orders which requires an interpretation of the prescription, only when the licensed direct supervisor registered with the Board is providing direct supervision to the apprentice. In a 2002 opinion by the then Attorney General Betty Montgomery, AG Montgomery stated the following:

...it is my opinion, and you are hereby advised as follows:

1. Reviewing a patient's prescription for replacement

contact lenses and selecting from inventory lenses that comply with the instructions set forth in the prescription constitute "optical dispensing" as defined in R.C. 4725.40...

2. A person who is not licensed or permitted to dispense contact lenses under R.C. 4725.40-.59 may not review a patient's prescription for replacement contact lenses and select from inventory lenses that comply with the instructions set forth in the prescription.

The registered apprentice may place orders only at the delegation of the licensed supervisor registered with the Board, and only if the apprentice is registered for the type of order being placed; i.e., registered as spectacle apprentice for spectacle orders or registered as a contact lens apprentice for contact lens orders. (2/12)

Q. Can apprentices ever, under any circumstances enter a prescription in the office computer?

See answer above.

Q. Is "LDO" after my name acceptable on business cards, letterhead, etc.? I thought at one time I was told it is not recognized by our state board, however it is used often by many opticians. What should I put on my badge?

The initials "LDO" are not recognized by the law and rules regulating the practice of Opticianry in Ohio. Section 4726-13-02(F) of the Ohio Administrative Code states:

At all times when a licensed dispensing optician is providing Opticianry care to a patient, all licensed opticians shall:
wear an identifying badge with his/her name and designation of licensed dispensing optician.

There is nothing in either the law or rules that specifically prohibits the use of the term LDO on letterheads, business cards, etc.
(2/12)

Release of P.D. by a licensed optician

Q. Is a licensed dispensing optician required to give a patient the P.D. measurements that the optician completed knowing that the patient wants to use these measurements to order glasses on the internet?

A. Section 3701.74(A)(4)(d) of the Revised Code designates all opticians as a "health care practitioner" as well as a "health care provider." This same section of law defines

medical record to mean “data that is generated and maintained by a health care provider in the process of the patient’s health care treatment.”

Standards of safe care dictate that all patient information collected by the optician in the course of practice is documented in the patient’s medical record. The information that the licensed dispensing optician (optician) obtains and records constitutes a medical record.

We have established the fact that the optician is required to maintain a record of the patient’s care. Now to answer the question about providing that information to the patient upon request.

Patient’s, or their authorized personal representative, have the right to request the patient’s information that has been recorded in their medical record.

Opticians have the right to do the following prior to releasing the requested information:

- 1) Require that the patient or the authorized representative provide a written request for the information;
- 2) Require a reasonable fee for copies of the record*; and,
- 3) Require proper identification before release of the records.

The above mentioned law also states:

Within a reasonable time after receiving a request that meets the requirements of this division and includes sufficient information to identify the record requested, a health care provider that has the patient’s medical records shall permit the patient to examine the record during regular business hours without charge, or on request, shall provide a copy of the record.

What if the optician fails to provide the information? The law has an answer for that as well.

If a health care provider fails to furnish a medical record,...the patient,...may bring a civil action to enforce the patient’s right of access to the record. (3701.74 (C) of the Revised Code)

It is strongly recommended that opticians review the policy and procedure established by the employer for the individual employer’s policy and procedure for releasing medical records.

*Reasonable Fees as defined in Section 3701.741 of the Ohio Revised Code

(B)...a health care provider or medical records company that receives a request for a copy of a patient’s medical record shall charge not more than the amounts set forth [below]:

For data requested by the patient or the patient’s personal representative

Data recorded on paper:

- 1.) \$2.50 per page for the first ten pages;
- 2.) \$0.51 per page for pages eleven through fifty;
- 3.) \$0.20 per page for pages fifty-one and higher; and
- 4.) the actual cost of any related postage incurred by the health care provider.

Data recorded on other than paper:

- 1.) \$1.70 per page; and,
- 2.) the actual cost of any related postage incurred by the health care provider.

For data requested by someone other than the patient or the patient's personal representative

- 1.) An initial fee of \$15.35, which shall compensate for the records search;
- 2.) \$1.02 per page for the first ten pages
- 3.) \$0.51 per page for pages eleven through fifty;
- 4.) \$0.20 per page for pages fifty-one and higher; and
- 5.) The actual cost of any related postage incurred by the health care provider or medical records company.

(2/12)