

Continuing Education Information for Optometrists

As a requirement for optometry license renewal, licensees must complete at least **30 hours of Board-approved continuing education** in each biennial renewal period. Optometry licenses expire on November 30th of even-numbered years. The following chart explains the requirements at each licensure level:

Licensed optometrist with an “L” license	Licensed for diagnostics only. “P” license	Licensed for therapeutics only. “T” license	Licensed for therapeutics and glaucoma. “G” license
Must take 30 hours of continuing education.	Must take 30 hours of continuing education.	Must take 30 hours of continuing education, at least 6 hours must be in therapeutics.	Must take 30 hours of continuing education. At least 4 hours must be in glaucoma, and at least an additional 2 hours must be in therapeutic pharmaceutical agents.

All courses, including pre-approved courses, must comply with the Board’s regulations regarding continuing education course content. 49 Pa. Code § 23.83.

§ 23.83. Continuing education subject matter.

- (a) Acceptable courses of study are limited to those pertaining to the use of means or methods for examination, diagnosis and treatment of conditions of the human visual system and may include examination for and adapting and fitting of all types of lenses. **The Board will not accept courses of study which do not relate to the actual practice of optometry such as studies in office management and financial procedures.**
- (b) Courses that will meet the requirements for certification in the prescription and administration of pharmaceutical agents for therapeutic purposes in accordance with section 4.1 of the act (63 P. S. § 244.4a) shall concern the treatment and management of ocular or oculo-systemic disease.
- (c) Courses that will meet the requirements for certification to treat glaucoma in accordance with section 4.2 of the act (63 P. S. § 244.4b) shall concern the treatment and management of primary open angle glaucoma, exfoliation glaucoma and pigmentary glaucoma.

Online Courses and Webinars

Twenty-five percent of the required continuing education (7½ hours) of the biennial requirement may be in approved “online or correspondence” courses. This includes webinars.

Other Methods of Continuing Education

Twenty-five percent of the required continuing education (7½ hours) may also be credited for service as a teacher, preceptor, lecturer, or speaker and for publications, articles, books, and research relating to the practice of optometry. Applicants should apply to the Board prior to the performance of the above services to ensure that the service is creditable.

Child Abuse Recognition and Reporting and Opioid Continuing Education Requirements

Child Abuse Recognition and Reporting Continuing Education

Per Act 31 of 2014, at least **two (2) hours of Board-approved continuing education in child abuse recognition and reporting** requirements must be completed for renewal or reactivation of a license. Details regarding the requirements of this continuing education and a list of Board-approved providers can be found at www.dos.pa.gov. **Verification of completion must be sent electronically and directly from the course provider. It may take up to seven days for the provider to submit the records to the Board's office.** The continuing education requirements of Act 31 count towards the total number of continuing education credits required for renewal. If a three-hour Board-approved course is taken, the additional hour may also be applied towards the 30 hours of Board required continuing education.

Opioid Continuing Education

Section 9.1(a)(2) of The Achieving Better Care by Monitoring All Prescriptions Program Act 124 (ABC-MAP) requires optometrists with a license category in **Therapeutics or Therapeutics and Glaucoma** to complete at least **two (2) hours of continuing education in pain management, the identification of addiction or the practices of prescribing or dispensing of opioids during each biennial period.** The continuing education requirements of ABC-MAP count towards the total number of continuing education credits required for renewal; however, the opioid continuing education may not be applied toward the six hours required to maintain therapeutic certification. The opioid continuing education must be taken from a Board-approved continuing education provider listed in Section 23.86(a) of the Board's regulations.

Exemption and Waiver of Continuing Education Requirements

Exemption

If you are a new licensee who graduated from optometry school during your first biennial renewal period, you are exempt from optometric continuing education requirements for your first renewal period. **Please note that this exemption does not apply to the Act 31 child abuse recognition and reporting continuing education and Act 124 opioid continuing education, which are required for every renewal.**

Waiver

Waiver of the continuing education requirements may be permitted as follows:

- The board may grant a hardship waiver of all or a part of the continuing education requirement in cases of certified illness or undue hardship.
- A request for waiver must be made in writing, with appropriate documentation, and include a description of circumstances sufficient to show why compliance is impossible.
- Waiver requests will be evaluated by the board on a case-by-case basis. The board will send written notification of its approval or denial of a waiver request.
- **The waiver request should be submitted to the Board prior to the end of the biennial renewal period for which the waiver is being sought.**

Certificates of Attendance

Be sure to obtain official Certificates of Attendance from the sponsor of the course which indicate: the name of the sponsor; name of attendee; title and date of the course; number of clock hours; signature of person authenticating attendance; **which courses are designated as therapeutic and/or Glaucoma; and the PA Board Approval number (if applicable), as follows:**

1. A Pennsylvania Board Approval Number must be indicated on the Certificate. Please note that it is your responsibility to verify the PA Board Approval number with the sponsor **prior to taking the course.**
2. Pre-approved courses do not have a Pennsylvania Board Approval Number. Instead, through its regulations, the Board has granted pre-approval to the following providers: American Optometric Association; PA Optometric Association; accredited colleges of optometry; College of Optometrists in Vision Development; Council on Optometric Practitioner Education (COPE# required); eye and vision related continuing education courses offered by accredited medical colleges as defined in Section 2 of the Medical Practice Act of 1985 (63 P.S. Section 422.2); Optometric Extension Program; American Academy of Optometry and its state affiliates; American Academy of Ophthalmology and its state affiliates; eye and vision-related courses offered by the American Medical Association and its state affiliates.

It is the licensee's responsibility to maintain and track personal continuing education credit hours. Licensees must keep official Certificates of Attendance for six years after the biennial expiration date because the Board will conduct a random audit. **Do not send any Certificates of Attendance to the Board unless you are selected for the audit.**

Failure to Comply with Continuing Education Requirements

FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH CONTINUING EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS MAY RESULT IN DISCIPLINARY ACTION WHICH MAY ALSO BE REPORTED TO THE NATIONAL PRACTITIONER DATA BANK.

Provider Enrollment Reminder



The Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (DHS) implemented the Affordable Care Act (ACA) provision requiring all CHIP network providers to be screened and enrolled with DHS. Thus far provider enrollment has been gradual at best.

Providers may have been reluctant to enroll for several reasons. Some providers have raised questions about the application fee. Individual providers are not required to pay a fee. The application fee of \$560.00 applies to institutional providers such as Inpatient Facilities, Extended Care Facilities and DME/Medical Suppliers. The uncertainty regarding the federal reauthorization of CHIP may have been another concern. We have good news -- CHIP has been reauthorized for the next 10 years!

The deadline for CHIP providers to enroll with DHS was December 31, 2017. However, there is still time to enroll and continue receiving payment for services to CHIP children.

Remember: registering as a CHIP-only provider does **not** mean providers must accept Medical Assistance beneficiaries.

Enrollment information and the ability to enroll electronically are available at the following website: <http://dhs.pa.gov/provider/promise/enrollmentinformation/CHIPProEnrollInfo/index.htm>.

Providers are encouraged to enroll electronically.

If you have any questions or issues with the enrollment process, contact the Provider Enrollment Hotline at 1-800-537-8862, select options 3, 1, 1, and finally option 4 to speak to a representative.

NOTICES

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Approval of Drugs Which May be Used by Certain Optometrists

[48 Pa.B. 2348]

[Saturday, April 21, 2018]

Under the Optometric Practice and Licensure Act (63 P.S. 244.1—244.12), as amended by the act of December 16, 2002 (P.L. 1950, No. 225) (Act 225), the Secretary of Health (Secretary) has the authority to approve drugs for use in the "practice of optometry" as defined in Act 225. The Chairperson of the State Board of Optometry (Board) sent the Secretary a letter on February 8, 2018, and requested that the Secretary approve the use of the following drug. Act 225 requires the Secretary, within 90 days of the receipt of a request from the Board, to approve or disapprove for good cause each drug submitted. The Secretary has found good cause to approve the use of the following drug in the practice of optometry:

Netarsudil ophthalmic solution (Rhopressa®) 0.02%

The approval of the use of this drug is effective upon publication of this notice in the Pennsylvania Bulletin.

Persons with a disability who require an alternative format of this notice (for example, large print, audiotape, Braille) should contact Susan Coble, Director, Bureau of Community Program Licensure and Certification, 132 Kline Plaza, Suite A, Harrisburg, PA 17104, (717) 783-8665, or for speech and/or hearing-impaired persons, call the Pennsylvania AT&T Relay Service at (800) 654-5984 (TDD users) or (800) 654-5988 (voice users).

RACHEL L. LEVINE, MD,
Secretary

[Pa.B. Doc. No. 18-610. Filed for public inspection April 20, 2018, 9:00 a.m.]

Meet the Newest Members of the Board

Kimberly Frantz Boyer, O.D. was appointed to the State Board of Optometry by Governor Tom Wolf. Dr. Boyer practices in a group Optometric Practice in Newport, Perry County. She provides family vision care with an interest in contact lenses, occupational lenses, and ocular disease. She obtained a bachelor's degree in Biology from Millersville University in 1997, graduating with cum laude honors. Dr. Boyer attended the Pennsylvania College of Optometry and gained her doctorate in Optometry in 2000. She then traveled west to fulfill a one-year primary-care optometry residency at the Crownpoint Indian Hospital on the Navajo Reservation in rural northwest Mexico. Following a year in private practice in Santa Fe, Dr. Boyer returned to Pennsylvania. She joined her current practice and eventually became a partner at Sisson-Boyer Eyecare. She was awarded the Central Pennsylvania Optometric Society "Young Optometrist of the Year Award" in 2004 and the "Optometrist of the Year Award" in 2013. Dr. Boyer is a past President of the Central Pennsylvania Optometry Society, and she continues to be very involved in her local and state professional organization, serving on the POA continuing education committee. Along with her practice partners, she is a preceptor for students from the Pennsylvania College of Optometry at Salus. She and her family reside in Blain. She loves living in beautiful Perry County, enjoys gardening and raising their small herd of beef cattle, goats and chickens.

Jeffrey Becker, O.D. was recently appointed to the State Board of Optometry by Governor Tom Wolf. Dr. Becker is a 1978 graduate of the Pennsylvania State University and graduated from The Illinois College of Optometry in 1983. He has been a practicing Optometrist in Northeastern Pennsylvania for over 34 years, with a specialty practice in Rehabilitative Optometry. Dr Becker is an adjunct faculty member at Misericordia University, Dallas, PA., where he teaches vision rehabilitation courses to master's level occupational and physical therapy students. Dr. Becker, in his 34 years of clinical and research experience, has examined and treated over 3000 head injury, stroke, and neurologically impaired patients ranging in ages from birth to senior citizens. Dr. Becker is a consultant to many rehabilitation hospitals and has spoken on the topic of Vision, Learning, and Autism at national and international conferences including Autism International in Dubai and Autism One in Chicago. He has been the Keynote Speaker for the National Board of Medical Examiners in Washington D.C. He has also been a guest on Voice America and has published articles and chapters for "The Autism File", and "Cutting Edge Therapies for Autism". He has also authored and has lectured at many international rehabilitation conferences and has had recent publications in "Primary Eye Care News" related to mTBI and Concussions.

John A. Godfrey, O.D. was recently appointed to the State Board of Optometry by Governor Tom Wolf. Dr. Godfrey has roots on both geographic ends of Pennsylvania. He was raised in western Pennsylvania, in Belle Vernon, and graduated Summa Cum Laude with a Bachelor of Science degree in Natural Science from Indiana University of Pennsylvania in 1989. He is a 1992 graduate of the Pennsylvania College of Optometry and has practiced optometry in eastern Pennsylvania, at Bucks-Mont Eye Associates in Sellersville, since 1993. After optometry school, Dr. Godfrey completed a residency in Primary Care Optometry with an emphasis on the diagnosis, treatment and management of ocular disease at The Eye Institute of the Pennsylvania College of Optometry. After his residency, he taught optometry students on a consulting, part time basis at PCO until 2003. During this timeframe, he also participated in various continuing education programs for practicing optometrists both nationally and internationally. Dr. Godfrey

is a member of the American Optometric Association, the Pennsylvania Optometric Association, the Bucks-Montgomery Optometric Association, the AOA Cornea and Contact Lens Section and the Beta Sigma Kappa International Optometric Honor Fraternity. He is a past President and Treasurer of the Bucks-Montgomery Optometric Society and was named “Optometrist of the Year” in 2004 by his colleagues. He is also a board certified Diplomate of the American Board of Optometry and an Active Staff Member of Grand View Health in Sellersville. Dr. Godfrey resides in Harleysville with his wife and three children.

Luanne Chubb, O.D. F.A.A.O. was recently appointed to the State Board of Optometry by Governor Tom Wolf. Dr. Luanne Chubb is a staff Optometrist at the Michael J Crescenz VA Medical Center in Philadelphia, PA where she passionately serves our nation’s veterans and instructs the rotating interns in clinical care. She graduated from the Pennsylvania College of Optometry and stayed to complete her residency in Primary Care and Ocular Disease. She became a Diplomate of the American Board of Optometry in 2012 and achieved her fellowship in the American Academy of Optometry in 2015. She was appointed to the State Board of Optometry in 2017 and currently holds the position of Vice Chairperson. As part of the American Regulatory Boards of Optometry (ARBO), Dr. Chubb was a member of the National Board of Examiners Review Committee in 2017 and continues as part of the committee in 2018. She is highly involved in continuing education and has been a reviewer for Council on Optometric Practitioner Education (COPE) since 2013. She is a member of the Pennsylvania Optometric Association continuing education committee, the Armed Forces Optometric Society continuing education committee, the ARBO COPE national committee, and has participated in the Education Quality Assurance Committee for the Academy. She has presented ocular disease posters and lectured at the Pennsylvania Optometric Association meeting. As a native Pennsylvanian, she grew up in Western Pennsylvania and currently resides in Upper Merion Township.

Gerald Olson, O.D. was recently appointed to the State Board of Optometry by Governor Tom Wolf. Dr. Gerald E Olson, OD, is an Optometry specialist in White Oak, Pennsylvania. He attended and graduated from Pennsylvania College of Optometry in 1971, having over 47 years of diverse experience, especially in Optometry.

PALS

The Pennsylvania Licensing System (PALS) modernizes the licensing and renewal process for professionals across the commonwealth. Through PALS, users can quickly and easily complete applications, submit documents, communicate with Boards, and receive real time-updates on applications and licenses.

As you may know, as BPOA transitioned to a fully online system, there were delays in processing times for applications as PALS functionality stabilized and users became acclimated to the new process. However, many of the bugs and issues have been corrected, and current processing times are much more in line with previous years. At this time, current processing times are at 7 days or less.

The Bureau of Professional and Occupational Affairs remains committed to providing outstanding and efficient customer service for applicants and licensees, and we continue to see these processing times trend downwards.

Please note that these times include applications that are submitted with discrepancies, which cause delays and increase processing times. We encourage applicants to visit the PALS Support Page at www.pals.pa.gov, where applicants and licensees are able to quickly find answers to frequently asked questions on licensing, renewals, registration and login, continuing education, and applications. Users will also find printable application instructions designed to guide applicants through the process by highlighting the information and documentation needed to successfully submit their application. This site also serves as a way for users to communicate directly with the Board. By using the resources and tools available on the Support Page, applicants and licensees can ensure a successful submission and avoid delays in licensure.