

## Board Elections 2020

### Frequently Asked Questions

Registrants elected to the Board of Directors **do not represent the interests of the opticians in their electoral district**, but rather make decisions that further the College's mandate to regulate and improve the practice of opticianry in the public interest.

For more information regarding the elections, eligibility to run/vote, nominations terms of office and electoral districts, please contact the College at (416) 368-3616 ext 201 or [elections@collegeofopticians.ca](mailto:elections@collegeofopticians.ca)

#### **What is the Board of Directors of the College of Opticians?**

The Board is the governing body of the College, and is composed of at least 7 elected members and 5 public members. Elected Board members are Registered Opticians elected by their peers in accordance with the By-laws. Public members of the board are appointed by the Ontario Government.

#### **Why is it important to be involved in self-regulation?**

Self-regulation means that opticians in Ontario are involved in determining and overseeing the rules that govern the profession. The Board governs the College and is responsible for establishing the policies, programs, and standards that regulate the profession of opticianry. Registrant participation is at the heart of being a self-governed profession and essential in ensuring that professional standards and all related activities respond to opticianry practice today. The optician members of the Board and Committees bring expertise about the practice of opticianry and an understanding of today's practice realities to their decision-making. They reflect each optician's commitment to the public's right to safe, ethical and competent care.

#### **What kind of work is involved?**

As an elected member of the Board of Directors, you will contribute to the self-regulation of opticianry in Ontario in a host of meaningful ways. Elected Board members participate in decision-making about:

- Standards of Practice and professional conduct
- competencies for entry-to-practice and ongoing practice
- the development of new programs and policies to guide the profession as well as relevant regulations and by-laws required under legislation

Members of the Board fulfill a critical role through participation on statutory Committees including:

- Inquiries, Complaints and Reports Committee
- Discipline Committee
- Registration Committee

- Quality Assurance Committee
- Executive Committee
- Fitness to Practice Committee
- Patient Relations Committee

In addition, there are other specific expectations that potential candidates should be prepared to fulfill, which include:

- arranging schedules to meet time commitments
- reviewing preparatory materials in advance of meetings
- participating in discussions and decision-making
- maintaining confidentiality
- implementing and supporting Board and Committee decisions and directives
- demonstrating accountability to the public through decision-making in the public interest

### **What do I need to know to serve on the Board of Directors or a Committee?**

Opticians do not require prior experience to serve as Board members but should make themselves familiar with all the relevant [legislation](#), [policies](#) and [Standards of Practice](#). The [Pre-Election Training Module](#) will also assist opticians who are interested in running for election in familiarizing themselves with the College's mandate and governing legislation. Board members will receive a comprehensive orientation, including all aspects of governance and related expectations as well as a resource manual containing all relevant governance documents. Board directors also receive additional training based on the learning needs and objectives of the board.

### **What attributes and competencies will help me serve on the Board or a Committee?**

Possessing some or all of the competencies and attributes listed below will help you serve on the Board:

- Governance and/or board experience
- Leadership experience and/or skills
- Problem-solving skills
- Strategic thinking
- Financial literacy
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills
- Demonstrated commitment to the College's public protection mandate
- Diversity

In order to be eligible for election, each Candidate will need to complete the [Pre-Election Training Module](#). Completion of this module ensures that candidates possess a base-level of knowledge necessary to carry out their fiduciary duties as a director if elected. The module is accredited for 1 PG hour.

### **Is this a volunteer position?**

Being an elected Board member requires dedication and commitment; it is not a volunteer position. Board members are compensated for their time and reasonable expenses.

### **What's in it for me?**

By participating in the election, either as a candidate or through voting, every optician has an opportunity to help shape the future of opticianry practice and self-regulation. Serving as an elected Board member broadens your professional scope by offering you:

- an opportunity to shape policy and decisions made by the College in the public interest
- an opportunity to be directly involved in self-regulation
- a greater understanding of governance
- an insight into the trends that influence professional practice

### **What is the time commitment?**

While members find serving on Board both personally and professionally rewarding, it requires a significant time commitment. Board members must generally attend four to six full-day meetings per year. Dates are set well in advance to facilitate planning for members. Preparation time associated with Board meetings averages two to four hours for each meeting. This generally involves reviewing material in advance of meetings in order to contribute constructively to Board discussions and decision-making.

In addition to attending Board meetings, Board members may also serve on one or more statutory or non-statutory Committees. The time commitment varies significantly depending on which Committees you serve. Some Committees may meet only quarterly for one day while others meet on a more frequent basis. Information about the terms of reference and mandate for each statutory Committee is available [here](#).

Registrants who are interested in running for election must consider whether they can commit the time to serve and may also wish to discuss the commitment with their employer.

### **How long can I serve as a member of Board?**

Board terms are governed by the *Regulated Health Professions Act* as well as the College's by-laws. Currently, members of the Board serve a three-year term of office, and are limited to three consecutive terms.

### **How do I know if I'm eligible to run for a position on the Board?**

Detailed information regarding eligibility for election is available in the College's [By-law](#) and is also included in this nomination package.

### **Do I have to resign from a professional association before I can be nominated?**

A candidate who is a **member** of a professional association related to opticianry will not be disqualified because of that membership.

However, section [6.3\(h\) of the By-laws](#) requires candidates to **resign at least 3 years prior to being nominated for election, any position such as director, owner, board member, officer or employee** that the optician holds with a professional association relating to opticianry. A school whose sole purpose is to educate is not considered a professional association.

The requirement to resign before being nominated is intended to ensure that individuals who hold positions with professional associations related to opticianry no longer hold them at the time they are soliciting support from their peers for nominations.

### **How do I know if a registrant can nominate me, or if I can nominate a candidate?**

A registrant of the College can nominate a candidate if they:

- support the candidate's nomination
- are a registered optician (who is not suspended at the time of nomination, and who is not in default of any fee or other amount owed to the College, or of returning any required form or information to the College)
- principally resides in the candidate's electoral district, or if the registrant does not reside in Ontario, principally practices opticianry in the candidate's electoral district

To ensure that a registrant is eligible to nominate a candidate, please check the [public register](#) or contact the College at (416) 368-3616 x 201.

### **How will I know if my nomination is approved?**

Once the College receives your completed nomination form and supporting documentation, the College will correspond with you to confirm your eligibility to run for election. Not less than 30 days before the date of the election, a ballot notification will be sent to every registered optician eligible to vote in their respective electoral district. Ballot notifications will include the biographical statement summaries and photographs of all eligible candidates running for election in that district. **Prospective candidates may not campaign for election until they have received written notification from the College that their nomination has been approved.**