

REGISTRANT AND STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

PROPOSED CURRENCY OF PRACTICE POLICY

The College of Opticians is seeking stakeholder feedback on a proposed policy that will set out currency of practice requirements for registered opticians. The Board of Directors will be meeting in June 2023 to review the feedback and make a final decision on the contents of the policy.

Why is the College creating a Currency of Practice Policy?

The College of Opticians is currently seeking amendments to the Registration Regulation. The proposed amendments were submitted to the Ministry of Health in June 2017 and are currently awaiting final approval.

One of the changes that will happen when the amendments to the Registration Regulation are approved is that Registered Opticians will be required to demonstrate, on an ongoing basis, that their skills and knowledge are “current”.

The College is therefore creating a policy that outlines the steps opticians will need to take to meet the new currency requirement.

To read more about the proposed amendments to the Registration Regulation, click [here](#).

What is “Currency”?

“Currency” means the optician can show that their skills and knowledge are up to date, based on recent practice experience. It is a way of making sure that opticians are providing their patients with safe, ethical and competent care that is based on the latest practice standards.

When will the Currency of Practice Policy come into effect?

The Currency of Practice Policy will come into effect when the Ontario Government approves the amendments to the Registration Regulation. The College is taking steps to ensure that the policy is ready by August 31, 2023, which is when the Ontario Government is planning to implement other amendments to the Registration Regulation that will create an emergency class of registration.

Who will the Currency of Practice Policy apply to?

The Currency of Practice Policy will apply to all persons holding a current certificate of registration as a Registered Optician. It will not apply to persons who have not renewed their certificate of registration, or who have changed their status to the new Inactive class.

What will Registered Opticians have to do to maintain currency?

Registered Opticians will be required to declare their practice hours every year at annual renewal. Opticians who have engaged in at least 500 practice hours within the previous 3-year period will be considered current.

What types of activities will count as “practice hours”?

Under the proposed Currency of Practice Policy, the following activities will count toward practice hours:

1. Dispensing of eyeglasses, contact lenses and subnormal vision devices, and related duties (e.g. record keeping, laboratory work, cleaning and disinfecting eyewear, optical appliances, tools or equipment).
2. Teaching opticianry at an accredited opticianry program in Canada.
3. Supervising student and/or intern opticians in accordance with the Student/Intern Supervision Policy and/or the Contact Lens Mentor Policy.
4. Directly supervising, managing or assuring the quality of services of opticianry staff engaged in dispensing.
5. Completing continuing education activities accredited by the College.
6. Completing up to 4 hours of self-directed continuing education activities.

What happens if an optician does not meet the currency requirement?

Registered opticians who have not practised for at least 500 hours within the previous three years will have the option of completing a refresher program. Alternatively, they may opt to change their registration status to inactive or resign their certificate of registration.

Links to Details of the Proposed Changes

A draft of the proposed Currency of Practice Policy can be viewed [here](#).

Click [here](#) to provide your comments or feedback by **May 14, 2023**.