



March 19, 2020

Dear Licensees and Stakeholders,

While California continues to navigate the uncertainty of Novell Coronavirus (COVID-19) and limit its spread, the State Board of Optometry is committed to supporting our licensees, applicants, and consumers throughout the course of this pandemic and to provide continuity of service at all times. The Board is closely monitoring the COVID-19 situation, coordinating with the state and local governments, and working with our partners to protect the health of Californians.

The Board understands the ability to perform your jobs with a license is a priority. We appreciate your patience as we work on implementing new technologies to work remotely and adhere to social distancing guidelines. We apologize in advance for any delays in reaching our staff or potential delays in our processing times.

We have received a number of inquiries from our licensees. We are providing the below FAQ's in an effort to provide information.

The best general guidance will continue to come from the [California Department of Public Health](#), the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), and the [World Health Organization](#).

Frequently Asked Questions:

1. Will Continuing Education Requirements Be Postponed or Waived?
At this time the law does not allow this.
2. Are There Fee Waivers Available?
At this time the law does not allow this.
3. Should My Business or Practice Remain Open?
The State Board Optometry does not have authority to close businesses or practices solely as a result of COVID-19. We strongly encourage you to assess whether your business is an essential job function as outlined by the Governor and follow the guidelines from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#). Check with your local county health department to determine what activities are also considered essential and non-essential.
4. My License is Retired. Can I Renew to Help Combat Coronavirus?
At this time you need to follow requirements on restoring a license.
5. My Exam Was Canceled. What Does that Mean?

The Board will be working to ensure that expedited exam processing will occur when they return and will be looking at ways to mitigate delays. We are actively working to reschedule exams and honoring any fees applied or providing refunds when necessary.

6. I am licensed in a state outside of California. Does California allow licensing reciprocity during the State of Emergency?

If you are a licensed healthcare provider in a state other than California, please visit the Emergency Medical Services Authority (<https://emsa.ca.gov/covid19/>) for information to be able to practice in California. Please visit the “Authorization of Out-Of-State Medical Personnel” section on this website.

The State Board of Optometry reminds all licensees to be particularly mindful and respectful that this is a time of high anxiety for all Californians.

We encourage any other inquiries to be sent through email to optometry@dca.ca.gov as a response time may be faster. Additionally, please continue to monitor the Board’s website for further updates.

Stay safe!

Shara Murphy, Executive Officer
California State Board of Optometry