

BOARD OF OPTOMETRY

PROPOSED LANGUAGE

Amend section 1536 in Division 15 of Title 16 of the California Code of Regulations to read as follows:

§1536. Continuing Optometric Education; Purpose and Requirements

(a) Except as otherwise provided in Section 1536(b), each licensee shall complete 40 hours of formal continuing optometric education course work within the two years immediately preceding the ~~renewal deadline~~ license expiration date. Such course work shall be subject to Board approval. ~~No more than~~ Up to eight hours of course work ~~may~~ shall be in the area of patient care management or ethics in the practice of optometry. ~~Courses dealing with business management shall not be approved.~~ Business management courses are not accepted by the Board.

(b) An optometrist certified to use therapeutic pharmaceutical agents pursuant to Business and Professions Code Section 3041.3 shall complete a total of 50 hours of ~~continuing education~~ continuing optometric education every two years in order to renew his or her ~~certificate~~ license. ~~Thirty-five of the required 50 hours of continuing education~~ continuing optometric education shall be on the diagnosis, treatment and management of ocular disease and consistent with Business and Professions Code section 3059, subdivision (f).

(c) Up to 20 hours of required biennial course work may be accomplished by using any or all of the following alternative methods:

(1) Documented and accredited self study through correspondence or an electronic medium.

(2) Teaching of continuing optometric education courses if attendance at such course would also qualify for such credit, providing none are duplicate courses within the two-year period.

(3) Writing articles that have been published in optometric journals, magazines or newspapers, pertaining to the practice of optometry (or in other scientific, learned, refereed journals on topics pertinent to optometry), providing no articles are duplicates. One hour of credit will be granted for each full page of printing or the equivalent thereof.

(4) A full day's attendance at a California State Board of Optometry Board meeting. Up to two credit hours shall be granted for a full day.

(5) Completion of a course to receive certification in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) from the American Red Cross or the American Heart Association. Up to four credit hours shall be granted for this course.

(d) A credit hour is defined as one classroom hour, usually a 50-minute period, but no less than that.

(e) Continuing optometric education programs which are approved as meeting the required standards of the Board include the following:

(1) Continuing optometric education ~~offerings~~ courses officially sponsored or ~~accredited~~ recognized by any accredited school or college of optometry.

(2) Continuing optometric education ~~offerings~~ courses provided by of any national or state affiliate of the American Optometric Association, the American Academy of Optometry, or the Optometric Extension Program.

(3) Continuing optometric education ~~offerings~~ courses approved by the Association of Regulatory Boards of Optometry committee known as COPE (Council on Optometric Practitioner Education).

(f) Other ~~educational programs~~ continuing optometric education courses approved by the Board as meeting the criteria as set forth in paragraph (g) below, after submission of a ~~program~~ course, schedule, topical outline of subject matter, and curriculum vitae of all instructors or lecturers involved, to the ~~Executive Officer of the~~ Board not less than 45 days prior to the date of the program. The Board may, upon application of any licensee and for good cause shown, waive the requirement for submission of advance information and request for prior approval. Nothing herein shall permit the Board to approve ~~of an educational program~~ a continuing optometric education course which has not complied with the criteria set forth in paragraph (g) below.

(g) The criteria for judging and approving ~~education programs~~ continuing education courses by the Board for continuing optometric education credit will be determined on the following basis:

(1) Whether the program is likely to contribute to the advancement of professional skill and knowledge in the practice of optometry.

(2) Whether the ~~speakers~~ instructors, lecturers, and others participating in the presentation are recognized by the Board as being qualified in their field.

(3) Whether the proposed course is open to all optometrists licensed in this State.

(4) Whether the provider of any mandatory continuing optometric education course agrees to maintain and furnish to the Board and/or attending licensee such records of course content and attendance as the Board requires, for a period of at least three years from the date of course presentation.

(h) Proof of continuing optometric education course attendance ~~at continuing education programs~~ shall be provided in a form and manner specified in writing by the Board and distributed to all licensed optometrists in this State. Certification of continuing optometric education course attendance ~~at continuing education courses~~ shall be submitted by the licensee to the ~~Executive Officer or his/her designee~~ Board upon request, and shall contain the following minimal information:

(1) ~~The~~ Name of the sponsoring organization.

(2) ~~The~~ Name, signature, practice address, and license number of the attending licensee.

(3) ~~The~~ Subject or title of the ~~educational program~~ course.

(4) ~~The~~ Number of continuing optometric education hours ~~in actual attendance provided for attending the course~~.

(5) ~~The~~ Date of the ~~educational program~~ course was provided.

(6) ~~The~~ Location of the ~~educational program~~ where the course was provided.

(7) ~~The~~ Name(s) and signatures of the course instructor(s).

(8) Such other evidence of course content or attendance as the Board may deem necessary.

~~Use of a Board-specified certificate form~~ certificate of course completion provided by the Board is recommended for any ~~educational programs~~ continuing optometric education course approved by the Board pursuant to the above. Such forms will be furnished by the ~~Executive Officer on Board~~ upon request.

The Board will also recognize and utilize the Association of Regulatory Boards in Optometry's online Optometric Education (OE) Tracker system as proof of continuing education course attendance.

(i) The following licensees shall be exempt from the requirements of this section:

(1) Any licensee serving in the regular armed forces of the United States during any part of the ~~24 months~~ two years immediately preceding the ~~annual license renewal~~ license expiration date.

(2) Those licensees as the Board, in its discretion, determines were unable to ~~attend~~ complete sufficient hours of continuing optometric education courses due to illness, incapacity, or other unavoidable circumstances. An extension may be granted if the Board, in its discretion, determines that good cause exists for the licensee's failure to complete the requisite hours of continuing optometric education.

(3) Any licensee who is renewing an active license for the first time, if ~~he/she~~ he or she graduated from an accredited school or college of optometry less than one year from the date of initial licensure.

(j) The Board may conduct an audit of any licensee's attendance ~~at continuing education programs~~ of a continuing optometric education course as a means of verifying compliance with this section.

~~(k) As a condition of license renewal, all licensees are required to maintain current certification in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) from the American Red Cross, American Heart Association, or other association approved by the Board. Training required for the CPR certificate shall not be credited toward the requirements of subdivision (a). Exemptions will be made for licensees as the Board, in its discretion, determines were unable to maintain current CPR certification due to physical impairment, illness, incapacity, or other unavoidable circumstances.~~

Note: Authority cited: ~~Sections 3023.1 and 3059~~, Business and Professions Code. Reference: Section 3059, Business and Professions Code.