
Optometrists and Dispensing Opticians

Optometrists examine eyes and assign prescriptions while Dispensing Opticians consult on eyewear and make adjustments as necessary. Ophthalmologists are medical doctors that specialize in the eyes. They are rarely licensed separately and tend to be under the “Medical Doctor” license.

Trends

In some states there are apprenticeships for Dispensing Opticians, and some separately regulate contact lens dispensing.

Common Qualifications

The requirements for Optometrists tend to be degree programs and for Opticians it is trade school or apprenticeship.

Examples of License Titles

These are nearly universally licensed occupations. While there are only 102 licenses nationally in this category, 50 states and territories have a specific Optometrist license, for an average of 1.04 per state. There are 19 states that separately license Opticians and 15 with a related license (contact lens dispenser, mail-order ophthalmic provider, ocularist, spectacle lens dispenser).

Most common license titles:

Optometrist
Dispensing Optician
Doctor of Optometry
Apprentice Optician Registration

Outlier license title examples:

Contact Lens Distributors
Optician in Charge (OIC) Registration
Spectacle Lens Dispenser
VISION SCREENING TECHNICIAN

ONET codes

For the most part, licensure is clearly associated with Opticians or Optometrists. There are some Ophthalmologic Dispensers that are more closely aligned with Opticians than their medical doctor counterpart.

29-1041.00 Optometrists

Diagnose, manage, and treat conditions and diseases of the human eye and visual system. Examine eyes and visual system, diagnose problems or impairments, prescribe corrective lenses, and provide treatment. May prescribe therapeutic drugs to treat specific eye conditions.

29-2081.00 Opticians, Dispensing

Design, measure, fit, and adapt lenses and frames for client according to written optical prescription or specification. Assist client with inserting, removing, and caring for contact lenses. Assist client with selecting frames. Measure customer for size of eyeglasses and coordinate frames with facial and eye measurements and optical prescription. Prepare work order for optical laboratory containing instructions for grinding and mounting lenses in frames. Verify exactness of finished lens spectacles.

Adjust frame and lens position to fit client. May shape or reshape frames. Includes contact lens opticians.

Examples of License Boards

Optometry and Opticians may be separate boards, often in the Department of Health.

Most common board titles:

Board of Optometry

Board for Opticians

BOARD OF EXAMINERS IN
OPTOMETRY

Outlier board title examples:

Division of Health Related Boards

Related Occupations

Ophthalmologic assistants and Ophthalmologists can be related.

Associated Certifications

National Contact Lens Examiners Advanced Certification

https://www.abo-ncle.org/ABO/AdvCert/ABO/Advanced_Certification/AdvCert.aspx?hkey=57a3691b-58db-4dcd-a6a4-9b27fe71d4ea

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Contact Lens Registry Certification

<https://www.abo-ncle.org/ABO/BasicCert/ABO/BasicCert/Exams.aspx?hkey=ff340704-2924-4641-9cd7-36d50539df80>

Certified Paraoptometric

<https://www.aoa.org/education/paraoptometric-resources-and-certification/paraoptometric-certification-and-renewal?sso=y>

Applied Basic Science

https://www.optometry.org/exams/part_1

American Board of Opticianry Advanced Certification

<https://www.abo-ncle.org/ABO/BasicCert/ABO/BasicCert/Exams.aspx?hkey=ff340704-2924-4641-9cd7-36d50539df80>

Advanced Competency in Medical Optometry

<https://www.optometry.org/exams/acmo>

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<https://www.optometry.org/exams/acmo>

The National Opticianry Competency Certification

<https://www.abo-ncle.org/ABO/BasicCert/ABO/BasicCert/Exams.aspx?hkey=ff340704-2924-4641-9cd7-36d50539df80>

Treatment and Management of Ocular Disease

<https://www.optometry.org/exams/tmod>

Diplomate, American Board of Optometry

<https://americanboardofoptometry.org/become-certified/>