**02 DEPARTMENT OF PROFESSIONAL AND FINANCIAL REGULATION**

**382 MAINE BOARD OF OPTOMETRY**

**Chapter 1: EXAMINATION; APPROVED SCHOOLS; LICENSE RENEWAL; FEES; CONTINUING EDUCATION**

**SUMMARY**: This chapter consists of rules and regulations covering application for examination, approved schools of optometry, license renewal, establishment of fees levied by the Board and continuing education requirements.

**1. Application for Examination**

 A. A complete application for examination, with all supporting documentation, is to be filed with the executive secretary at least thirty (30) days prior to the examination.

 B. All information given on the application shall be given under oath.

 C. The licensing examination is conducted twice per year. The exact dates and place of examination are determined at least ninety (90) days prior to the examination. Information regarding the examination dates is available from the Board’s executive secretary.

 (1) Initial applicants must pass all three parts of the exam administered by the National Board of Examiners in Optometry prior to acceptance of the application.

 (2) The Board shall administer an examination consisting of the practical aspect of the practice of optometry.

 (3) Applicants who fail an examination and wish to reapply must complete a new application form and submit the licensing examination fee. All applicants who have failed the licensure examination three (3) times must wait two (2) years before reapplying to take the examination and must successfully complete 100 hours of Board-approved continuing education in optometry prior to reapplication. Upon request by the applicant, the Board shall make recommendations as to specific areas of study in which the applicant was deficient.

**2. Approved Schools**

 Approved schools of optometry shall be those schools approved the American Optometric Association’s Council on Optometric Education.

**3. License Renewal Requirements**

 Licenses must be renewed annually. In order for a license to be renewed, the applicant must submit: a completed application form (provided by the Board); the license renewal fee; and proof of the requisite number of hours of continuing education.

 Every optometrist holding a nonactive license for a period of three (3) years or more who wishes to resume active practice shall pass Part III of the National Board exam if the optometrist has not already done so, and must also pass the Board’s oral examination before being granted a Maine active license.

**4. Fees**

 All fees are nonrefundable. They should be made payable to the Maine Board of Optometry as follows:

 A. Application for Licensing Examination

 The fee for a licensing examination application is $300.00.

 B. Annual license fee

 (1) The annual license fee is $380.00.

 (2) Initial License fee will be prorated based on date of licensure.

 C. Late renewal fee

 A license may be renewed up to sixty (60) days after the date of expiration upon payment of a late fee of $100.00 in addition to the $380.00 annual license fee.

 PLEASE NOTE: The sole purpose of the 60-day period is to permit expedited processing of renewals. It does not in any way operate to extend the expiration date of your license to practice.

**5. Continuing Education**

 A. Licensed optometrists are required to complete twenty-five (25) hours of approved continuing education per calendar year in order to renew their license. A maximum of two hours in practice management may be applied toward this requirement. At least fifteen (15) hours of continuing education must pertain to the diagnosis and treatment of ocular diseases for those optometrists who hold an advanced therapeutic license.

 B. Courses offered in the State of Maine sponsored by optometric colleges, or national, state or regional optometric associations are subject to Board approval.

 C. Courses defined as Category I and approved by: the American Optometric Association; the American Medical Association; the American Academy of Ophthalmologists; the American Council on Pharmaceutical Education; or the Council on Optometric Practitioner Education (COPE) will be accepted by the Board without the requirement of prior Board review.

 Any course not approved by the above listed organization may be submitted to the Board for prior approval. The Board may, in its discretion, approve such courses submitted to it, if the request for approval and pertinent course materials are received by the Board at least thirty (30) days in advance of the date for which the course is scheduled.

 D. If there is an increase in the number of continuing education hours required, up to a maximum of the thirty (30) allowed by 32 M.R.S.A. §2426, all licensed optometrists will be notified at the beginning of the year in which the increase becomes effective.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: 32 M.R.S. §§ 2417(5), 2422-2423

EFFECTIVE DATE:

 August 23, 1979

AMENDED:

 September 30, 1984 - Sections 2, 3, 6

 January 11, 1993

 February 20, 1995

 May 15, 1996 - Sections 3(A, C), 7

 October 14, 1996 - all sections (effectively repealed and replaced)

 December 24, 2004 - Section 4, filing 2003-474

 April 19, 2010 – filing 2010-146

 February 9, 2020 – filing 2020-021