

Board Policy Statement Regarding the Use of the Term “Board Certified” in Certain Credentialing Contexts

This Board has had a rule (OAC 4725-5-13) requiring that its licensees not advertise that they are “certified” solely by virtue of being licensed by the Board. That policy was established to prevent optometrists in this state from attempting to artificially distinguish themselves from other optometrists who hold an identical license issued by this Board. **That policy remains in full force and effect.**

Because of certain developments in the profession, the Ohio State Board of Optometry hereby clarifies its position on the use of “board certification” in a different and limited context: for purposes of responding to certain credentialing inquiries by governmental agencies, third party payor or managed care organizations, and hospitals and other health care facilities, for example.

Because there are no recognized specialties in optometry as there are in medicine (optometry is considered by most to be a specialty profession), there is no “board certification” for an Ohio licensed optometrist from the State Board—a distinction that may not be fully appreciated by many credentialing organizations.

Accordingly, any Ohio licensed optometrist who is asked whether he or she is “board certified” for the purposes of credentialing by any government agency, third party payor or managed care organization, hospital, or other health care facility relating to the provision of services rendered by optometrists within Ohio may respond “yes” to such question without violating the Board’s Rule regarding the use of the term “Certified.” By answering “yes,” the Board understands that the doctor is licensed to practice to the fullest extent of their statutory authority and scope of practice.