

Spring 2011 Newsletter

Ohio State Board of Optometry
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Board Members

Our current Board members are:

Dennis Roark O.D., Board President
Karen Riccio, O.D., Board Secretary
Larry Barger, O.D.
Patricia Scharf
Stanley Warn, O.D.

Continuing Education

Board members have **proposed** the following changes to the current continuing education rules:

- Ohio optometrists would be permitted to include a maximum of two hours of continuing education in the area of “practice management (PM) and/or ethics jurisprudence (EJ).” This would be two out of the total of twenty-five hours.
- “Webinars” would be permitted in the area of “electronic media.” These hours would be a part of the maximum of ten hours in the category of written home study or electronic media.
- Previously, optometrists were permitted up to eight hours of grand rounds or surgery observation in any one year with no more than four hours credit in any one day. Now, there is no limitation on how the maximum of eight hours are accumulated.

These rules, if approved by the Joint Committee on Agency Rule Review (JCARR), **would not go into effect until OCTOBER 1, 2011.**

Patient Dilation

The Board has received several inquiries recently concerning charging for patient dilation. The current rule states:

“(C) In conducting a standard eye examination the use of dilating agents or topical ocular pharmaceutical agents will be included in the usual and customary fee and not identified as a separate or additional cost. This in no way limits or prohibits the charge of an additional fee to a patient for extended tests or procedures which require the use of these agents and are deemed necessary as a result of the standard eye examination. The use of dilating agents or topical ocular pharmaceutical agents in conducting an eye examination will be at the professional judgment of the examining optometrist.”

The complete rule, 4725-5-17, can be viewed at the Board's website.

Fee Increase

During the October 20, 2010 meeting the Board was provided with an update of the upcoming biennial budget. In short, the Board's current annual appropriation is greater than the annual revenue. There has been an intentional effort to "spend down" the current reserve in the regulatory fund to cover the deficit between the appropriation level and the annual revenue. However, with the current state budget deficit projected at anywhere from 4 to 8 billion, the Board has been informed any current reserve in the Board's fund will be taken and applied to the deficit. We will now be required to ensure we generate enough revenue to cover any appropriation. A review of previous fee increases indicated the Board has not increased any licensure fees since 1995. Based on the current annual revenue projection of approximately \$297,500 and an average appropriation of approximately \$352,000 for the next biennium, the following fee increases were deemed appropriate by the Board:

- Increase the initial application or renewal of a certificate of optometric licensure from \$110 to \$130.
- Increase the topical ocular or therapeutic agents certificate from \$25 to \$45.
- Increase the fees for late C.E. completion, late C.E. submission and/or late licensure renewal from \$75 to \$125.

Board Certification

The Board continues to receive inquiries on Board Certification and its relationship to licensing. The Board has previously stated that both Board Certification and/or maintenance of certification are independent of established license and regulatory boards and does not confer any legal qualification, privilege or license to practice optometry. However, while the process of certification is not currently tied to licensure, the Board is interested in the perspective of our licensed optometrists. Please review the following questions and consider voluntarily responding to the Board either through regular mail at 77 S. High St., 16th Floor, Columbus, OH 43215 or e-mail at optometry.board@exchange.state.oh.us no later than May 11, 2011.

- Are you in favor of voluntary Board Certification? (Add any comments)
- Do you believe that continued competence of optometrists should be a part of licensure? How do you think this should be accomplished?
- Do you believe that the current system for maintenance of licensure (C.E.) is adequate in reassuring the public an optometrist is maintaining competence? Are there any additional requirements you would recommend?

These questions are part of a national survey of regulatory boards and should not be construed or interpreted as any effort by this Board to require certification as a part of licensure. The Board is sincerely interested in the licensee's perspective of this contemporary issue. Responses can be anonymous