

Changes to Optometry Examining Board Rules Effective February 1, 2006

by

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In light of the recently published changes to the Optometry Administrative Codes, the Optometry Examining Board (OEB) would like to inform all Wisconsin licensed optometrists what these changes mean. All of the changes can be found in Opt 5 and Opt 6 of the [Wisconsin Administrative Code](#).

1. There is now a definition for "Limited eye screening" which allows for optometrists to provide screenings at events without requiring them to provide a "minimum eye examination". At these screenings no spectacle lens, contact lens or treatment/management plan is generated for the person being screened. Previously there was some question as to whether or not it was "unprofessional conduct" for optometrists to provide services for these screenings without doing a "minimum eye examination."
2. To comply with federal law, it is no longer necessary for a patient to request a contact lens prescription. All optometrists must release the patient's contact lens prescription to them at the completion of their fitting and initial follow-up care.
3. A definition is provided for "hardship" which relates to obtaining continuing education credits.
4. To retain a TPA certificate, all optometrists must still complete 30 hours of approved continuing education. However, the confusing 2-hour "Category III" course requirement has been eliminated, and up to 6 hours of CE related to contact lenses, functional vision, general optometry, low vision, jurisprudence or practice management may be taken. The remainder of the 24 hours must be in therapeutics, eye disease and treatment, with a minimum of 7 hours in glaucoma taken.
5. Up to 6 hours of CE may be taken through home-study, computer, televideo and internet courses that have been approved by the OEB.
6. More than 6 hours of CE may be taken through home-study, computer, televideo and internet courses that have been approved by the OEB, in cases of hardship.
7. Courses that have received COPE approval must be covered under the COPE Categories listed in the rule to be automatically approved. Therefore courses taken at any CE seminar throughout the country that are COPE approved do not have to be specifically approved by the OEB. All other courses will still need OEB approval.

As before, it will be up to the individual optometrist to keep track of their CE for the biennium and make sure the appropriate number of hours in each category has been taken. Please remember that only 6 hours of course work in contact lenses, functional vision, general optometry, low vision, jurisprudence or practice management may be taken. If audited by the Department of Regulation and Licensing, the optometrist must submit proof of completion of all CE requirements.

If you have any further questions regarding the new rule changes, please contact the Department of Regulation and Licensing, Optometry Examining Board, P.O. Box 8935, Madison, WI 53708-8935.