



South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation
South Carolina Board of Examiners in Opticianry

110 Centerview Dr. • Columbia • SC • 29210

P.O. Box 11329 • Columbia • SC • 29211-1329

Phone: 803-896-4681 • Contact.Opticianry@llr.sc.gov • Fax: 803-896-4715

llr.sc.gov/opti

REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP INSTRUCTIONS AND GUIDELINES

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

The registered apprenticeship program is complete when all of the following requirements have been met:

- Submission of a completed application and payment of registration fee(s).
- Graduate from an accredited high school or GED completion.
- Submission of the required Apprentice Sponsor Agreement. Sponsors cannot train more than two (2) registered apprentices at a time.
- The apprenticeship training program must be continuous and under the direct supervision of at least one (1) South Carolina licensed optician, optometrist, or ophthalmologist. The Board may extend the apprenticeship for an additional year upon request of the apprentice for good cause shown, and payment of a fee as specified by the Board. The request must be accompanied by a statement signed by the apprentice's primary sponsor providing the proposed curriculum for the extended apprenticeship period, to be approved by the Board.
 - Continuous practice based upon employment:
 - Full time employment (minimum of thirty-two (32) hours per week) – two (2) continuous years of direct supervision.
 - Part time employment (minimum of twenty-one (21) hours per week) – three (3) continuous years of direct supervision.

Apprenticeship programs may change during the course of apprenticeship from two years to three years due to change in employment. Apprentices who begin the program as part-time employed apprentices, cannot change from three years to two years if full time employment is later acquired.

- Maintain active registration through annual renewal by October 1st. Failure to do so will require apprentices to submit a Reinstatement Application, proof of continuing education and payment of a \$50 reinstatement fee plus the renewal fee.
- Completion of a pre-approved formal optical education program. Apprentices are required to submit, within six (6) months after the date of the commencement of the apprenticeship, evidence of enrollment in a Board approved formal education program in opticianry.

Below is a current listing of pre-approved programs. Information must be submitted to the Board for pre-approval if the applicant seeks to enroll in a formal optical education program other than those listed below.

- **Career Progression Program:** A home study education program for opticians offered through the National Academy of Opticianry (NAO). For information concerning this program contact the NAO at 800-229-4828, or www.nao.org, or email sbonner@nao.org. Other educational materials may also be purchased through the NAO.
- **Penn Foster Career School:** This is an accredited school of independent study that offers a training program for opticians. For information contact an enrollment advisor at 800-275-4410 or visit their website at www.pennfoster.edu.
- **Durham Technical College Optical Apprentice Certificate:** An internet/classroom-based program offered through Durham Technical College located in Durham, North Carolina. For information concerning this program contact the school at 919-686-3333 or on-line at www.durhamtech.edu.
- **Northern Alberta Institute of Technology Optical Sciences Eyeglasses Diploma:** For information visit their website at www.NAIT.ca.

- Submission of evaluations beginning six (6) months after the commencement date and repeating every six (6) months until program completion. Approved apprenticeship program training is to include specific skills such as:
 - **Lab Training:** lensometry; lens types/materials/coatings; first and final inspections; finishing layout calculations; progressive identification; lens neutralization and verification; identification of lens materials, manufacturer and index of refraction; compensations or effective power for changes in lens vertex distance
 - **Frame Board Management:** importance of frame displays; inventory control; frame accountability; stocking of frame boards.
 - **Frame Selection:** patient wishes for size, shape versus prescription needs; recommending styles to customers; understanding customers intended use of glasses.
 - **Processing Orders:** lens options; material options; add-ons; interpreting prescriptions;
 - **Measurements and Repairs:** fitting/adjusting frames; frame repairs to include nose pads, scree replacement, groove string repair, and rimless replacement; making optical calculations; calculating effective power of a designated meridian of a compound lens;
 - **Dispensing Procedures:** adjustments; checking for reading ability; ADA accommodations
 - **Customer Care:** professionalism with all customers, explaining of frame and lens care, filing of insurance

PROGRAM COMPLETION

At the end of the two (2) or three (3) year program timeframe, apprentices will be notified of the upcoming program completion date. For full time employed apprentices, a maximum of three (3) years is allowed for program completion. For part time employed apprentices a maximum of four (4) years is allowed for the program completion. The Apprentice Completion Form and formal optical education official transcripts or diploma is due to the Board within sixty (60) days following the program completion date (SC Regulation 96-106(A)(3) and 96-106(A)(5)).

Registered apprentices will be eligible to apply for a South Carolina Optician's License upon completion of the Registered Apprenticeship Program and passage of the American Board of Opticianry (ABO) National Competency Examination. Passage of the ABO National Competency exam is not a requirement of the apprenticeship program.

Per Board regulations 96-106(F), apprentices who fail to submit a completed application for licensure in opticianry within three (3) years of the apprenticeship completion date may be required to recommence the apprenticeship program and meet all requirements as stated in 96-106(B).