



## Working to Prevent the Spread of Coronavirus

March 5, 2020 - 12:00 pm.

The College of Opticians is monitoring the situation regarding the spread of Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) in Ontario. Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health advises that the risk remains low, however, the College has put together some information to assist opticians in their practice. These guidelines can be read in conjunction with the College's existing Standards of Practice.

We will continue to provide updates on social media as new information becomes available. Opticians can also refer to the [Ministry of Health website](#) for additional information.

### Infection Control

Under Standard 4 of the [Standards of Practice](#), opticians must take reasonable and appropriate measures to minimize the risk of contamination and subsequent transmission of infectious agents within their professional practices. Opticians must ensure that the practice site is equipped and maintained, and that procedures are in place, to ensure health and safety for both patients and staff. These measures include:

- Taking reasonable precautions at all times, such as hand washing and appropriate waste disposal
- Properly disinfecting equipment (such as pupilometer, slit lamp, keratometer, etc.) tools (PD ruler, pliers, screw drivers, etc.) and display frames after each use
- Asking staff or patients who are ill to stay home or delay their visit (see below)

### Continuity of Care

Under Standard 2 of the [Standards of Practice](#), opticians are required to be reasonably available to patients, or take reasonable steps to ensure continuity of care.

In most cases, it will not be unreasonable to request that patients who are considered "[persons under investigation](#)" by the Ministry of Health to avoid or delay visits to an optical store until sufficient time has passed.

It is important to note, however, that it would be considered **unreasonable** to refuse to treat a patient for a reason that would be considered a ground for discrimination under the Human Rights Code (for example, race, country of origin, ethnicity, etc.).

In addition, opticians can take steps to pre-screen patients over the phone, or post a sign in their store that advises patients who may be ill to delay their visit. An example of sign prepared by the Ministry of Health can be found on their website [here](#).

As a reminder, under recent updates to the [Practice Guidelines](#), opticians may use professional judgment to engage in remote practice, including, where appropriate:

- delivering prescription eyeglasses to a patient prior to fitting/adapting
- remote delivery of contact lens refills for established contact lens patients

Remote practices may include:

- Communicating via telephone, email, video conference, etc.
- Delivery of finished eyewear via mail/courier
- Arranging a pickup by someone other than the patient (e.g. family, friend)

Please review the [Practice Guidelines](#) for more information.

### **Additional Information**

For additional information, you can visit the [Ministry of Health website](#), which has published various guidance documents for health care workers.