



The College is seeking your feedback on the Refraction [Standard of Practice](#) (Standard 8).

Refraction, sometimes referred to as a vision test, is a test which determines whether corrective lenses are required and what the power of these lenses should be, if needed. Refraction is not a controlled act under the *Regulated Health Professions Act (RHPA)*.

By contrast, a prescription is the end result of an eye examination consisting of a refraction and an eye health examination (to detect any conditions or diseases) performed by an authorized prescriber, an optometrist or medical doctor. Prescribing and communicating diagnosis is a controlled act.

The current Refraction Standard was first approved in 2008 and aims to separate the performance of the public domain of refraction from the controlled act of prescribing. This standard allows certified opticians to refract while restricting their performance of prescribing.

The practice environment has changed substantially in the last decade. Amendments to the College of Optometrist's Professional Misconduct regulation now allow optometrist to work in shared practice environments with opticians. This has created interprofessional collaborative opportunities where opticians can have an optometrist work in their practice as an independent contractor as well as allowing for optometrists to hire opticians in their place of practice.

These changes to the practice environment have meant that it is more common for opticians to be asked to perform refractions under the delegation or assignment of a prescriber. This process is commonly called "pre-testing" and would typically take place as part of a comprehensive eye examination performed by a prescriber.

In 2020, the College made updates to the [Standards of Practice](#) to introduce Standard 10, which addresses the giving and receiving of delegation by opticians. Standard 10 addresses the performance of refraction by opticians under the delegation or assignment of a prescriber.

Refraction that is performed outside of this context by certified refracting opticians remains subject to Standard 8 (Refraction). This practice can also be referred to as "standalone refraction". Only opticians who have been issued a refraction designation by the College are permitted to refract under this standard.

To summarize, therefore, refraction is now addressed under two standards of the Standards of Practice:

- Standard 8: Refraction – This standard addresses *Standalone Refraction* (i.e. refraction that is performed by a certified refracting opticians on a standalone basis, as opposed to as part of pre-testing on the assignment or delegation of an authorized prescriber)
- Standard 10: Delegation – This standard addresses refractions performed by an opticians (with or without a refraction designation) under the delegation or assignment of an authorized prescriber, as part of pre-testing.



Standard 8 last underwent formal review in 2016. The College is now seeking feedback in order to review and assess the continued relevance and effectiveness of Standard 8 (Refraction), in particular since the introduction of Standard 10 (Delegation).