

REGISTRANT AND STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

PROPOSED PRACTICUM POLICY

The College of Opticians is seeking stakeholder feedback on a proposed policy that will set out practicum requirements for new applicants to the College. The Board of Directors will be meeting in June 2023 to review the feedback and make a final decision on the contents of the policy.

Why is the College creating a Practicum Policy?

The College of Opticians is currently seeking amendments to the Registration Regulation. The proposed amendments were submitted to the Ministry of Health in June 2017 and are currently awaiting final approval.

One of the changes that will happen when the amendments to the Registration Regulation are approved is that applicants will need to successfully complete a practicum approved by the Registration Committee in order to become registered as an optician.

The College is therefore creating a policy that outlines the practicum requirements for applicants seeking registration to the College.

Applicants to the College are already required to demonstrate that they have gained practical experience before they can become registered to practice as an optician in Ontario. These detailed requirements are set out in the current Registration Regulation. When the amendments to the Registration Regulation are approved by the Ontario Government the new proposed Practicum Policy will set out the requirements instead of the Regulation. This will give the College more flexibility to update or amend the policy when necessary.

To read more about the proposed amendments to the Registration Regulation, click [here](#).

What is a practicum?

A practicum is a program for gaining practical, hands-on experience in a person's field of study. Practicums are particularly important in professions such as health care where professionals will be working directly with patients once they become registered.

What will the proposed practicum include?

The Registration Committee is proposing that, for the time being, the practicum will include the following elements:

- 1000 verified dispensing hours
- 250 eyeglass fittings (100 multifocal and 25 myopic or hyperopic)
- 20 contact lens fittings (including at least 5 rigid gas permeable)

Why is the Registration Committee proposed this practicum?

The College is taking steps to ensure that a Practicum Policy is ready by August 31, 2023, which is when the Ontario Government is planning to implement other amendments to the Registration Regulation that will create an emergency class of registration.

For that reason, the Registration Committee is proposing a practicum that is identical to the existing entry-to-practice requirements under the current Registration Regulation. All accredited opticianry education programs in Canada already include these elements in their curriculum. This way, the College can ensure that there is a policy ready by August 31, 2023.

The Registration Committee will continue to explore updating the practicum at a later date, and will engage in further stakeholder consultations at that time.

When will the Practicum Policy come into effect?

The Practicum Policy will come into effect when the Ontario Government approves the amendments to the Registration Regulation.

Links to Details of the Proposed Changes

A draft of the proposed Practicum Policy can be viewed [here](#).

Click [here](#) to provide your comments or feedback by **May 14, 2023**.