

We would like to hear from you.

The College's Board of Directors will be meeting in June to determine the registration fees for 2024 to 2028. At its March 6, 2023 meeting, the Board approved a draft proposal for an updated Fees By-law. The Board is inviting registrants to review this proposal and provide comments for its consideration before it makes a final decision at its next meeting in June.

What is the College's Board of Directors proposing?

The College's Board is proposing that a 2.5% yearly fee increase be applied from 2024 to 2028. This fee increase would apply to registrants in all classes of registration.

Click [here](#) to view the detailed Fees Table being proposed by the Board.

Please read on for additional information about the Board's rationale for this proposal, including the considerations that were taken into account from a public interest and diversity, equity and inclusion perspective.

Background:

To ensure a stable level of funding to maintain operations as well as realizing the College's strategic plan, the College has typically set a five-year fee table outlining the various registration and renewal fees that forms most of the College's annual revenue. The College is now setting the 2024-2028 Fees Schedule. Historically there has been a 2.5% yearly increase to ensure the College is able to maintain a positive budget.

Current Proposal:

The Board considered several factors when reviewing potential fee scenarios including ensuring that the College had adequate reserves to support temporary fee decreases in the event of situations such as the recent pandemic and adequate budget to ensure the College can cover its fixed costs. Consideration was given to ensuring the College has the resources available to respond to public and registrant needs and funds to support strategic initiatives such as a focus on illegal dispensing. Allowances have been made for projected staffing, investigator and legal costs tied to a focus on Unauthorized Practice.

Costs savings from running most of the College's Board and Committee meetings virtually has been factored into the projections and while there remains an additional 5 years on the College premises lease, the College is actively looking at cost saving measures including space sharing.

While the Board has used best efforts to project expenses and revenue based on historical trends, there remains several variables outside of the control of the College including government initiatives and announcements with short implementation windows.

The Board reviewed the impact of applying fee increases, from 0% to 3%, on the net operating budget. To maintain a positive budget each year for the next five years, the Board is recommending maintaining the 2.5% yearly adjustment to the optician registration fees.

Public Interest Considerations:

The Board's role is to regulate the practice of opticianry in the public interest. As such, whenever the Board makes a decision, it is asked to identify the public interest considerations that are relevant to the decision that they are making.

With respect to the proposed fees schedule, the Board identified the fact that it is charged with ensuring that the College is adequately funded to carry out its statutory mandate. As registrant fees are the College's primary source of revenue, they ought to allow for the college to perform all statutory functions, including registration, quality assurance, investigations, and discipline. The Board is also responsible for ensuring that adequate funds are available to achieve the initiatives identified in the strategic plan, which were also developed with a public interest focus.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Considerations:

The Board also strives to apply a diversity, equity and inclusion lens to all decisions that it makes.

To that end, the Board noted that it is responsible for ensuring that the College is adequately funded to implement strategic initiatives that are aimed ensuring equitable, inclusive and culturally safe care for Ontario patients, including training, resource development, and stakeholder engagement.

Additional Information

This package contains the [proposed Fees Bylaw](#) reflecting a 2.5% yearly fee increase as well as [results of an environmental scan](#) the College undertook to survey most of the other regulatory colleges, including their registration fees as well as the ratio of staff in comparison to the size of the registrant base. As you will see, the COO fees are within the median range and the College operates with a relatively small staffing complement in comparison to other regulators. For a detailed view of the materials provided at the March 6, 2023 Board meeting, please click [here](#).

Feedback on the proposed fees schedule will be sought for a period of 60 days which will be reviewed by the Finance Committee shortly after and final recommendations will be presented to the Board at the next meeting to finalize the fees table.

Provide your comments/feedback by May 23, 2023

Click [here](#) to provide feedback on the proposed Fees Schedule. Comments will be accepted until May 23, 2023.



College of
Opticians
of Ontario