

Chapter Opt 8

CONTINUING EDUCATION

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Note: Chapter Opt 8 was created as an emergency rule effective November 8, 2006.

Opt 8.01 Definitions. As used in this chapter:

- (1) “Biennium” means a 2-year period beginning December 16 of odd-numbered years.
- (2) “COPE” means the council on optometric practitioner education.
- (3) “Hardship” means serious illness, as determined by a licensed health care provider, or some other personal adversity, as determined by the board.
- (4) “Hour” means a minimum of 50 minutes of lecture.

Note: Sub. (4) is created eff. 12-15-19 by CR 18-021.

History: CR 06-116: cr. Register May 2007 No. 617, eff. 6-1-07; CR 18-021: cr. (4) Register August 2019 No. 764, eff. 12-15-19.

Opt 8.02 Continuing education requirements. (1) A licensee shall complete 30 hours of approved continuing education in each biennial registration period. A minimum of 20 of the 30 hours shall relate to ocular health, conditions, or disease management.

Note: Opt 8.02 (title) and (1) are shown as amended eff. 12-15-19 by CR 18-021. Prior to 12-15-19 they read:

Opt 8.02 Continuing education. (1) A licensee shall complete 30 hours of approved continuing education in each biennial registration period. A minimum of 7 of the 30 hours shall be approved glaucoma education.

(1m) During the biennial registration period commencing December 15, 2019 and ending December 14, 2021, unless granted a hardship waiver in accordance with sub. (3m), the 30 required hours of continuing education shall include 2 hours on the topic of responsible prescribing of controlled substances.

Note: Sub. (1m) is created eff. 12-15-19 by CR 18-021.

(2) A minimum of 20 of the 30 hours of approved continuing education hours, as specified in sub. (1), required for optometrists who are allowed to use diagnostic and therapeutic pharmaceutical agents shall relate to ocular health, conditions, or disease management, or the removal of superficial foreign bodies from an eye or from an appendage to the eye.

Note: Sub. (2) is shown as amended eff. 12-15-19 by CR 18-021. Prior to 12-15-19 it reads:

(2) Except as provided in sub. (4), approved continuing education hours required for optometrists who are allowed to use diagnostic and therapeutic pharmaceutical agents shall relate to the diagnosis and management of eye disease or the removal of superficial foreign bodies from an eye or from an appendage to the eye.

(3) A minimum of 20 of the 30 hours of approved continuing education hours, as specified in sub. (1), required for optometrists who are not allowed to use diagnostic and therapeutic pharmaceutical agents shall relate to ocular health, conditions, or disease management.

Note: Sub. (3) is shown as amended eff. 12-15-19 by CR 18-021. Prior to 12-15-19 it reads:

(3) Except as provided in sub. (4), approved continuing education hours required for optometrists who are not allowed to use diagnostic and therapeutic pharmaceutical agents shall relate to the diagnosis and management of eye disease.

(3e) At least 20 of the 30 hours of approved continuing education required under sub. (1) shall be completed by attending programs in person. Any programs not completed in person shall be COPE or Joint Accreditation for Interprofessional Continuing Education approved programs, in accordance with s. Opt 8.03 (1) (a), or programs approved under s. Opt 8.03 (2).

Note: Sub. (3e) is created eff. 12-15-19 by CR 18-021.

(3m) In cases of hardship, a licensee may apply to the board for any of the following:

- (a) Approval of less than the 20 hours of in person continuing education required under sub. (3e).
- (b) Approval of a continuing education program under s. Opt 8.03 (2).

Note: Sub. (3m) is created eff. 12-15-19 by CR 18-021.

(3s) An optometrist who by the renewal date has been licensed for one year or less from the date issued shall not be required to report continuing education for the first renewal of the license. An optometrist who by the renewal date holds a license for more than one year and less than 2 years shall be required to report 15 hours of approved continuing education for the first renewal of the license.

Note: Sub. (3s) is created eff. 12-15-19 by CR 18-021.

(4) No more than a combined total of 6 hours of continuing education per biennium may be claimed for course work that relates to one or more of the following subject matter:

- (a) Contact lens.
- (b) Functional vision.
- (c) General optometry.
- (d) Low vision.
- (e) Jurisprudence.
- (f) Practice management.

Note: Sub. (4) is repealed eff. 12-15-19 by CR 18-021.

(5) Except for purposes of obtaining continuing education in order to satisfy the requirements for late renewal under s. Opt 7.05, continuing education hours may be applied only to the biennial registration period in which the continuing education hours are acquired.

(6) To obtain credit for completion of continuing education hours, an optometrist shall, at the time of each renewal of registration, sign a statement certifying that the course work has been completed. If audited, an optometrist shall submit certificates of attendance issued by each course provider or other evidence of attendance satisfactory to the board.

(7) An optometrist who fails to meet the continuing education requirements by the renewal date may not engage in the practice of optometry until his or her registration is renewed under s. Opt 7.05.

(8) Optometrists initially licensed within a biennium shall complete one hour of board approved continuing education per month or partial month of licensure reported on or before December 15 of the second year of the biennium. A minimum of one-quarter of the continuing education hours shall be in the diagnosis and management of glaucoma.

Note: Sub. (8) is repealed eff. 12-15-19 by CR 18-021.

(9) Except as provided in sub. (10), no more than a combined total of 6 hours of continuing education per biennium may be claimed for course work obtained through alternative delivery methods such as home-study courses, self-study packages, computer courses, televideo conferencing, or other delivery methods approved by the board under s. Opt 8.03 (4).

Note: Sub. (9) is repealed eff. 12-15-19 by CR 18-021.

(10) The board may permit a certificate holder to claim more than 6 hours of continuing education per biennium for course work obtained through alternative delivery methods such as

home–study courses, self–study packages, computer courses, televideo conferencing, or other delivery methods approved by the board, if the credential holder submits evidence satisfactory to the board of hardship.

Note: Sub. (10) is repealed eff. 12–15–19 by CR 18–021.

History: CR 06–116: cr. Register May 2007 No. 617, eff. 6–1–07; correction in (9) made under s. 13.93 (2m) (b) 7., Stats., Register December 2007 No. 624; CR 18–021: am. (title), (1), cr. (1m), am. (2), (3), cr. (3e), (3m), (3s), r. (4), (8) to (10) Register August 2019 No. 764, eff. 12–15–19.

Opt 8.03 Continuing education approval. (1) The board shall accept the following in satisfaction of continuing education for each biennium:

(a) Any continuing education program approved by COPE or Joint Accreditation for Interprofessional Continuing Education.

(b) Any in–person continuing education program relevant to the practice of optometry provided by one of the following organizations:

1. Wisconsin Optometric Association.
2. American Optometric Association.
3. American Academy of Optometry.
4. Optometric Extension Program Foundation.
5. Neuro–Optometric Rehabilitation Association.
6. College of Optometrists in Vision Development.
7. A school or college of optometry accredited by the Accreditation Council on Optometric Education.

(2) The board may approve a continuing education program not accepted under sub. (1). To apply for approval of a continuing education program, a provider shall submit to the board an application on forms provided by the department at least 30 days prior to the program. An application filed under this subsection or s. Opt 8.02 (3e) or (3m) (b) shall include all of the following:

- (a) Title of the program.
- (b) Date of the program.
- (c) General description and timed outline of the program.
- (d) Name and qualifications of the instructor.
- (e) Sponsoring organization of the program.
- (f) Category of the program relevant to the practice of optometry.
- (g) Approved number of continuing education program hours requested.
- (h) Delivery method of the program.

(3) The provider of the continuing education program under sub. (1) (b) or (2) agrees to monitor the attendance and furnish a certificate of attendance to each participant. The certificate of attendance shall certify successful completion of the program.

(4) In cases of hardship under s. Opt 8.02 (3m), the board may waive any requirement under this section or s. Opt 8.02 (3e) as deemed appropriate by the board.

Note: Application forms for continuing education program approval are available on the department’s website at dsps.wi.gov, or by request from the Department of Safety and Professional Services, P.O. Box 8366, Madison, Wisconsin 53708, or call (608) 266–2112.

Note: This section is repealed and recreated eff. 12–15–19 by CR 18–021. Prior to 12–15–19 it reads:

Opt 8.03 Approval of continuing education courses. (1) Except as provided in sub. (5), to apply for approval of a continuing education course, a course provider shall submit to the board office an application on forms provided by the department and shall include the title, general description and an outline of the course, the dates, the location, the name and qualifications of the instructor of the course, and the sponsor of the course.

Note: An application for continuing education course approval may be obtained from the board office at the Department of Safety and Professional Services, Office of Education and Examinations, P.O. Box 8366, Madison, Wisconsin, 53708, or from the department’s website at: <http://dsps.wi.gov>.

(2) A continuing education course must meet all of the following criteria to be approved as a continuing education course:

- (a) The subject matter of the course pertains to the practice of optometry.
- (b) The provider of the continuing education course agrees to monitor the attendance and furnish a certificate of attendance to each participant. The certificate of attendance shall certify successful completion of the course.
- (c) The provider of the course is approved by the board.
- (d) The course content and instructional methodologies are approved by the board.

(3) Except as provided in sub. (5), a separate application shall be submitted for each continuing education course approval request.

(4) The board may approve alternate delivery method continuing education courses such as home–study courses, self–study packages, computer courses, televideo conferencing and other methods.

(5) A continuing education course approved by COPE, or sponsored by a state optometric association, the American Optometric Association, the American Academy of Optometry, or an accredited school or college of optometry, which satisfies the criteria established under sub. (2), shall be approved by the board without receipt of a course approval application from the course provider.

Note: The Council on Optometric Practitioner Education (COPE), which is a committee of the Association of Regulatory Boards of Optometry (ARBO), may be contacted at 1750 South Brentwood Boulevard, Suite 503, St. Louis, Missouri 63144, (314) 785–6000. The American Optometric Association may be contacted at 243 N. Lindbergh Blvd., 1st Floor, St. Louis, MO 63141, (800) 365–2219. The American Academy of Optometry may be contacted at 6110 Executive Blvd., Suite 506, Rockville, MD 20852, (301) 984–1441.

History: CR 06–116: cr. Register May 2007 No. 617, eff. 6–1–07; CR 18–021: r. and recr. Register August 2019 No. 764, eff. 12–15–19; correction in (1) (b) (intro.) made under s. 35.17, Stats., Register August 2019 No. 764.