



Registrant Survey Report

2022 Renewal Survey Results



COLLEGE OF OPTICIANS
OF ALBERTA



The Survey

The 2022 COA Registrant Survey is intended to assist the Council to better understand the perspectives of registrants in relation to the college and the opticianry profession in Alberta. An electronic questionnaire was developed based on the 2020 survey and updated to reflect the COA's transition to a single-mandate regulatory college with a focus on protection of the public and regulation of the profession.

Question Types



Registrant and Employment Information



The Practice Environment and Opticianry Profession



Registrant Perceptions of the COA as a Single-Mandate College

**1,352
Email
Invitations**

**24.33%
Response
Rate**

**66%
Completion
Rate**

**12 Min.
Completion
Time**

REGISTRANT HIGHLIGHTS



66% - REGISTERED OPTICIAN
32% - CONTACT LENS PRACTITIONER



43% - LICENSED > 15 YEARS
39% - LICENSED 5 - 15 YEARS



50% - 41 TO 60 YEARS
31% - 25 TO 40 YEARS



79% IDENTIFY AS FEMALE
18% IDENTIFY AS MALE
3% OTHER / NO RESPONSE



67% - DIPLOMA PROGRAM
92% - SATISFIED WITH EDUCATION

EMPLOYMENT HIGHLIGHTS



80% - EMPLOYED FULL TIME
13% - EMPLOYED PART TIME



12% - \$60 TO 69K / YR
10% - \$50 TO \$59K / YR
9% - \$80 TO \$89K / YR



13% - \$25 TO \$29 / HR
10% - \$30 TO \$34 / HR



85% - COVID-19 HAS NOT CHANGED
STATUS OF EMPLOYMENT

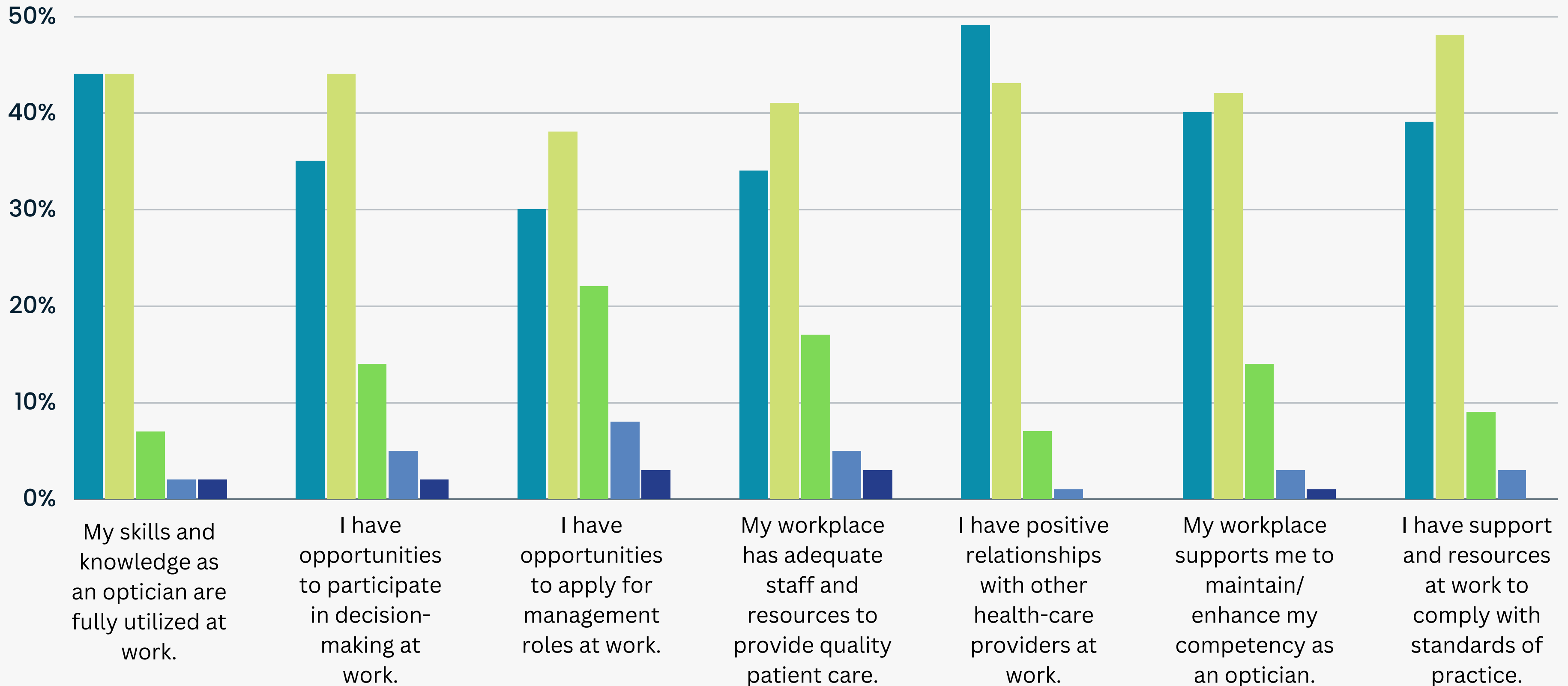


55% - SUPERVISING STUDENTS
52% - SUPERVISING UNREGULATED
STAFF (NON-RESTRICTED ACTIVITIES)

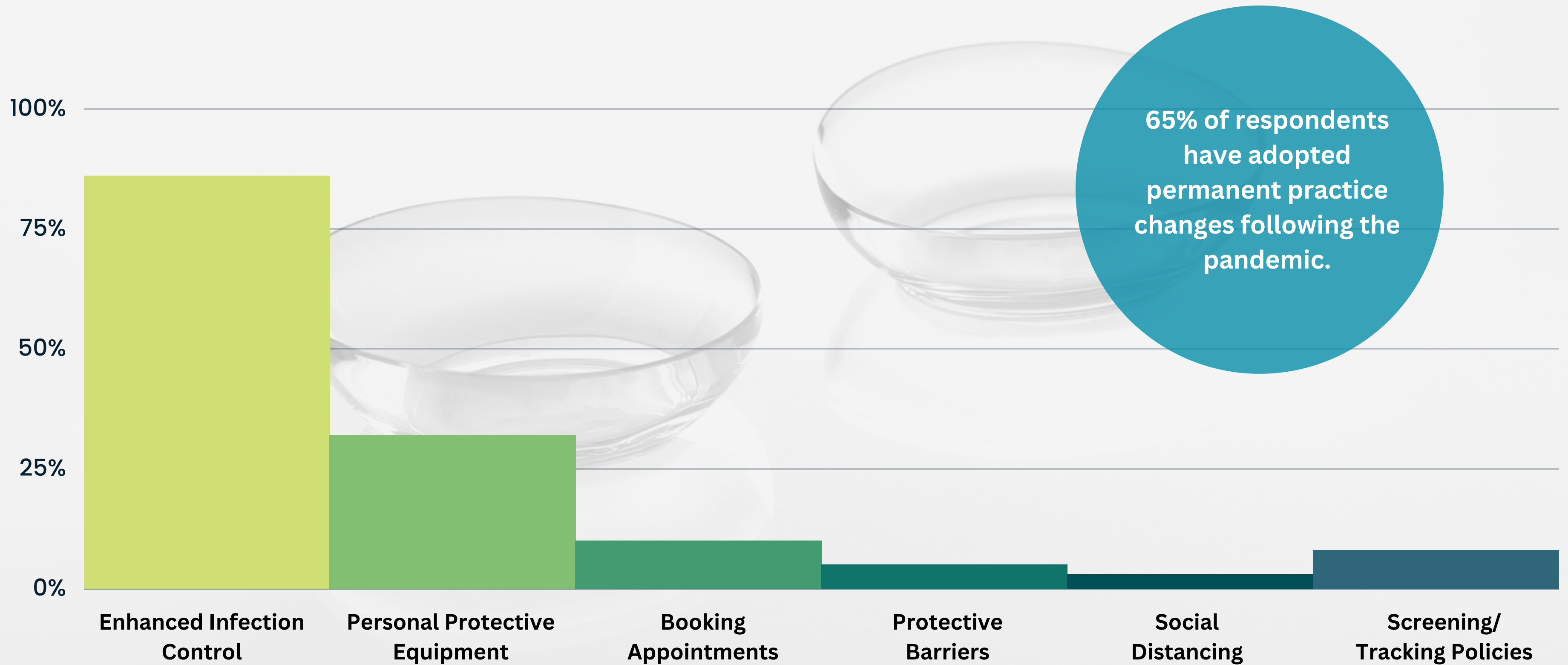


Optical Practice Environment

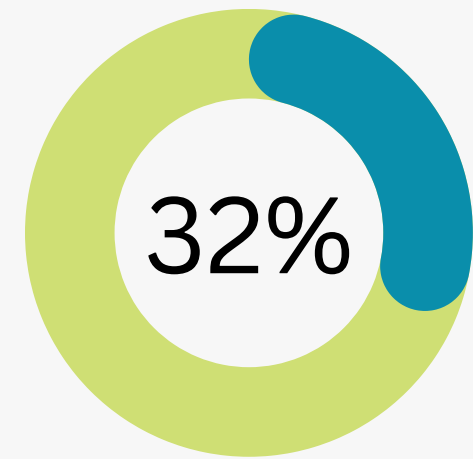
Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree



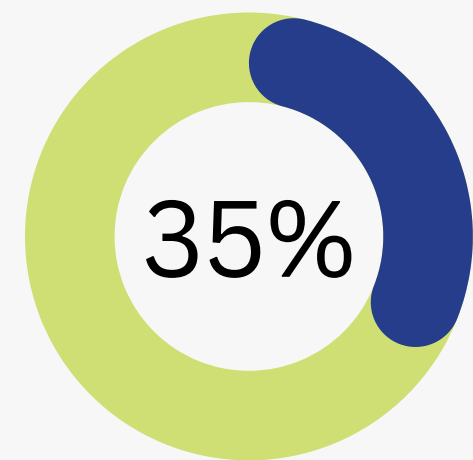
Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic



Upgrading Qualifications



Registered Opticians interested in upgrading to Registered Contact Lens Practitioners



Registered Opticians interested in upgrading to perform Refraction

Challenges of Upgrading

25% - Higher fees for additional licensure

33% - Limited opportunities for practicum supervision

25% - No perceived value in upgrading

31% - Lack of employer support for upgrading

19% - Not enough job opportunities

22% - High cost of education programs

24% - Lack of time to complete additional education

Retirement from the Profession



60% of respondents aren't yet nearing retirement age; 4% are planning to retire in the next two years.



**TOP 5 ISSUES
FOR THE
OPTICIANRY
PROFESSION**

1

**ONLINE DISPENSING OF
CORRECTIVE LENSES – 77%**

2

**UNREGULATED DISPENSING OF
CORRECTIVE LENSES – 51%**

3

**SHORTAGE OF REGISTERED
OPTICIANS – 39%**

4

**OPTICIAN BURNOUT AND
RELATED HEALTH FACTORS –
31%**

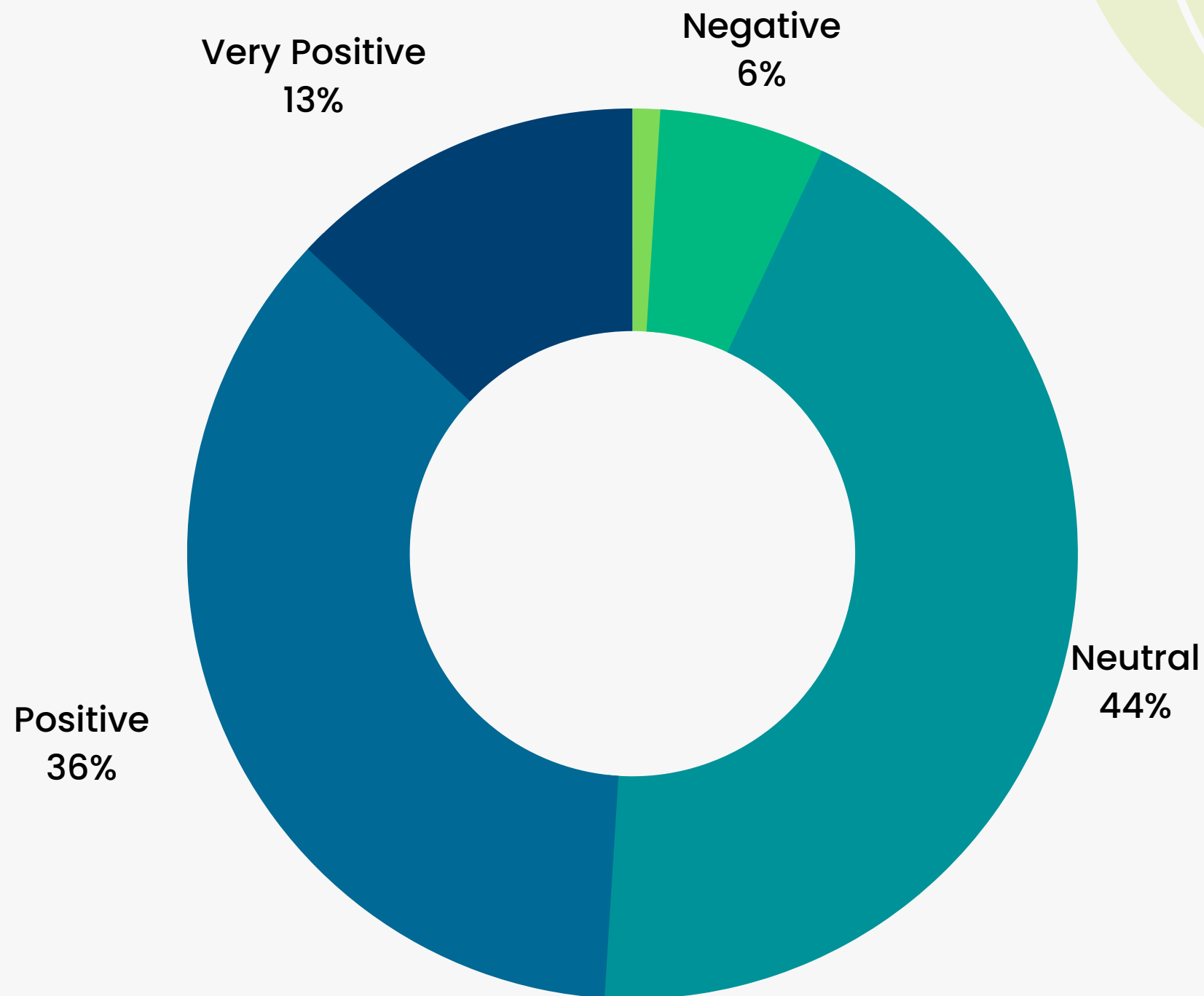
5

**INSURANCE PROVIDERS ACCEPTING
SERVICES FROM UNREGISTERED
PROFESSIONALS – 27%**



Registrants Impressions

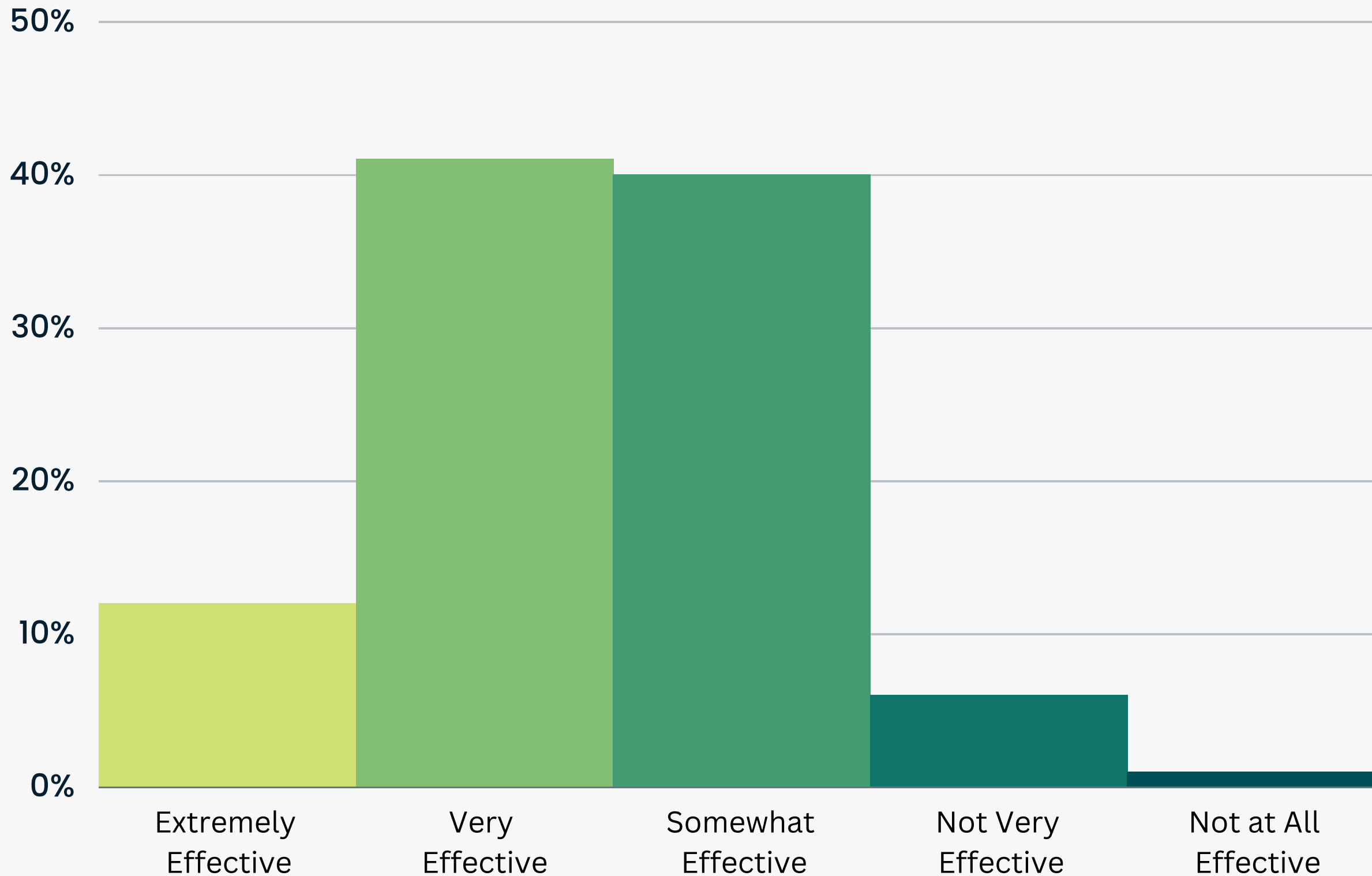
In 2022, we separated our college and association as required by *Bill 46: The Health Statutes Amendment Act*. We asked our registrants about their impressions of the relaunched College of Opticians of Alberta (COA).



We strive to build strong and collaborative relationships with our stakeholders.

49% of respondents rated their impression of the COA as very positive or positive and 44% as neutral. Those who selected negative (6%) or very negative (1%) expressed concerns with licensure fees in comparison to optician wages, the format of the Continuing Competence Program, and the lack of perceived value following the separation of college and association.

Performance as a Regulatory Body



53% of respondents rated the COA as extremely effective or very effective; 44% rated the COA as somewhat effective.

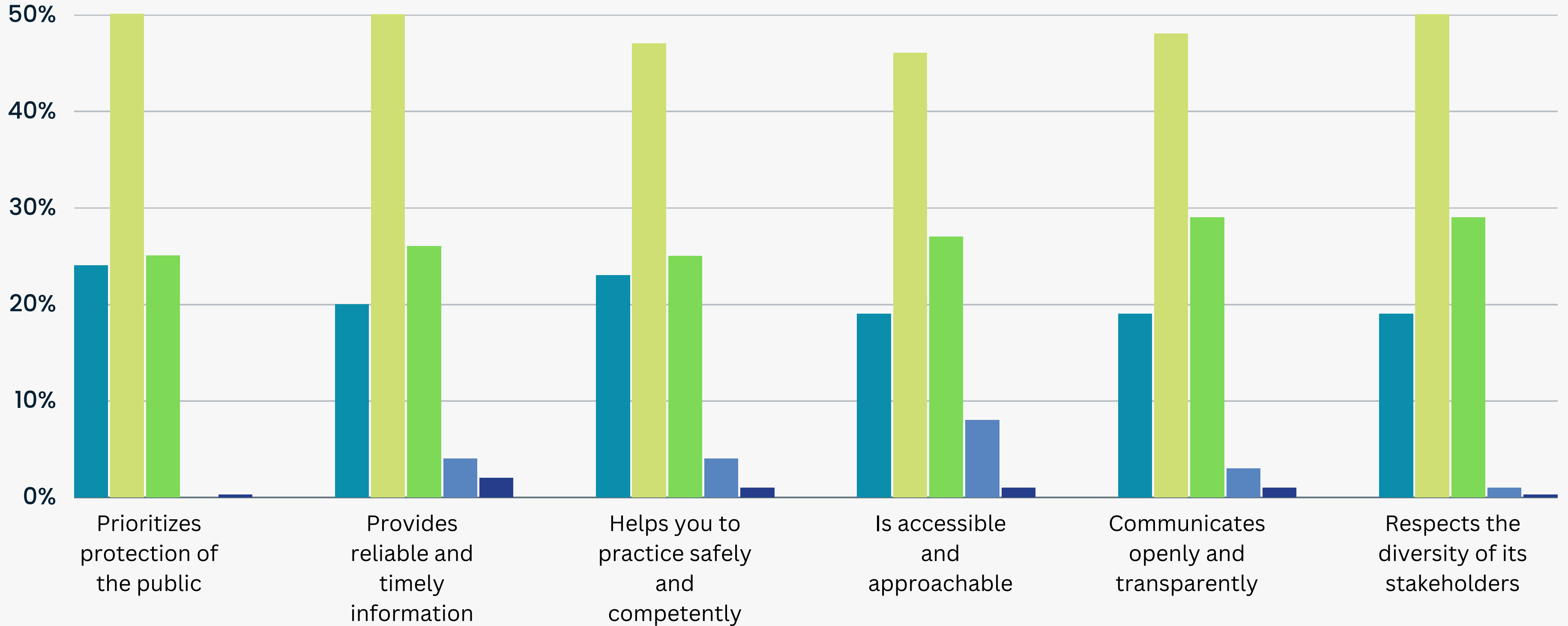
Key Concerns:

- Unregulated Practice
- Online Dispensing
- Lack of Public Awareness

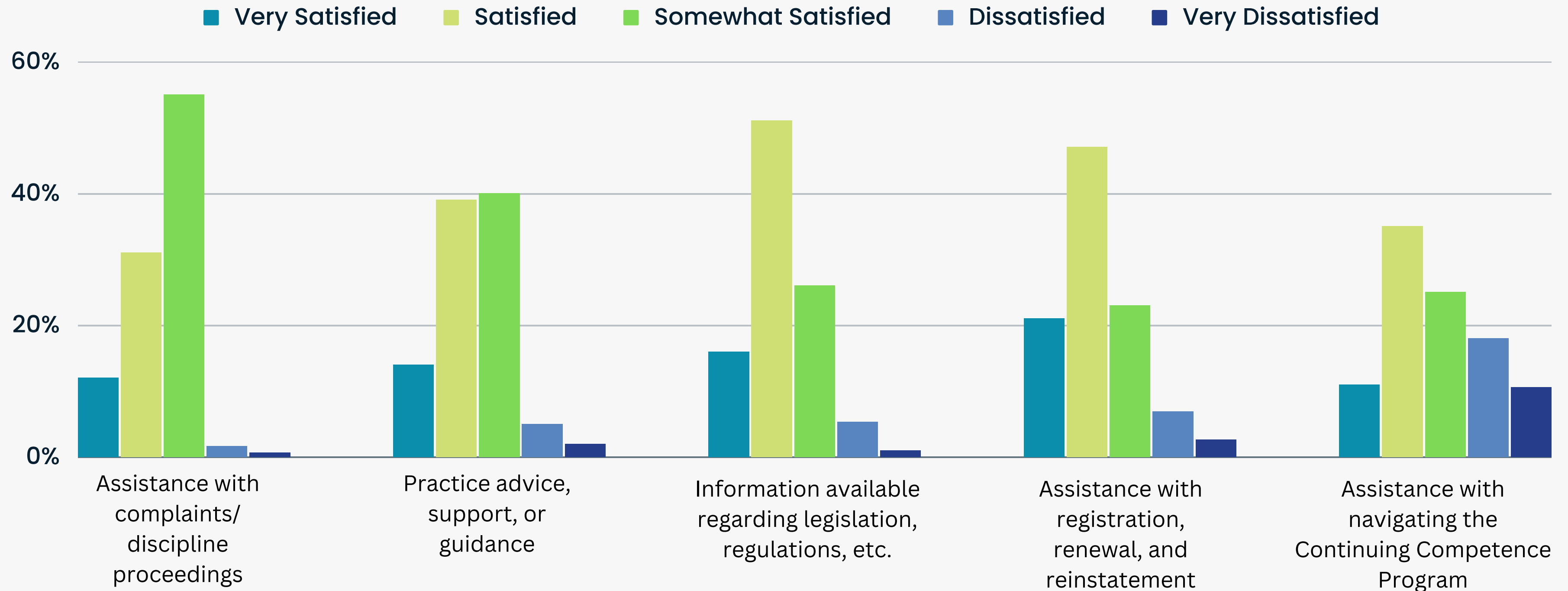
COA Mission and Values



Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree



Satisfaction with Regulatory Programs



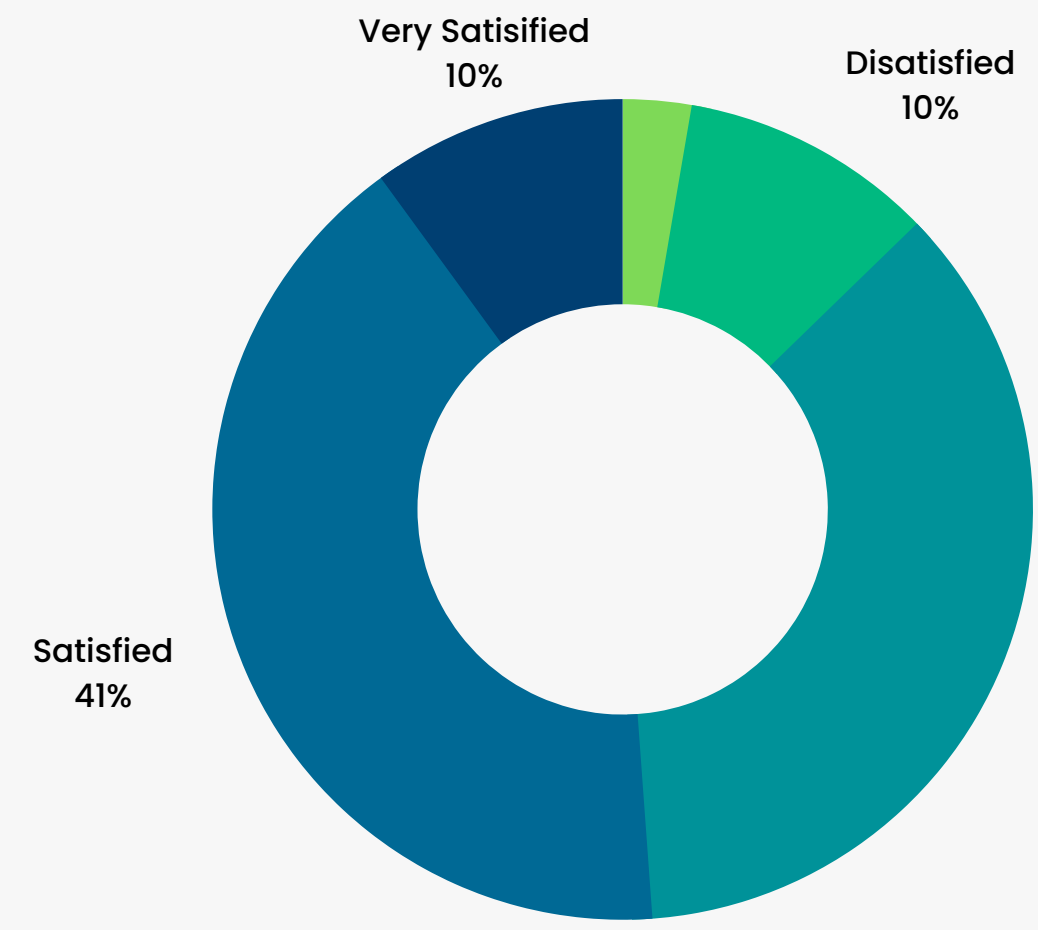
Respondents noted a number of concerns with the structure and requirements of the Continuing Competence Program (CCP), including the complexity of the program; confusion in relation to goal setting and overall program requirements; and the time required to log information in the CCP platform. This feedback was compiled for review by the Registration and Competence Committee; adjustments have been made to streamline the program design in the new database.



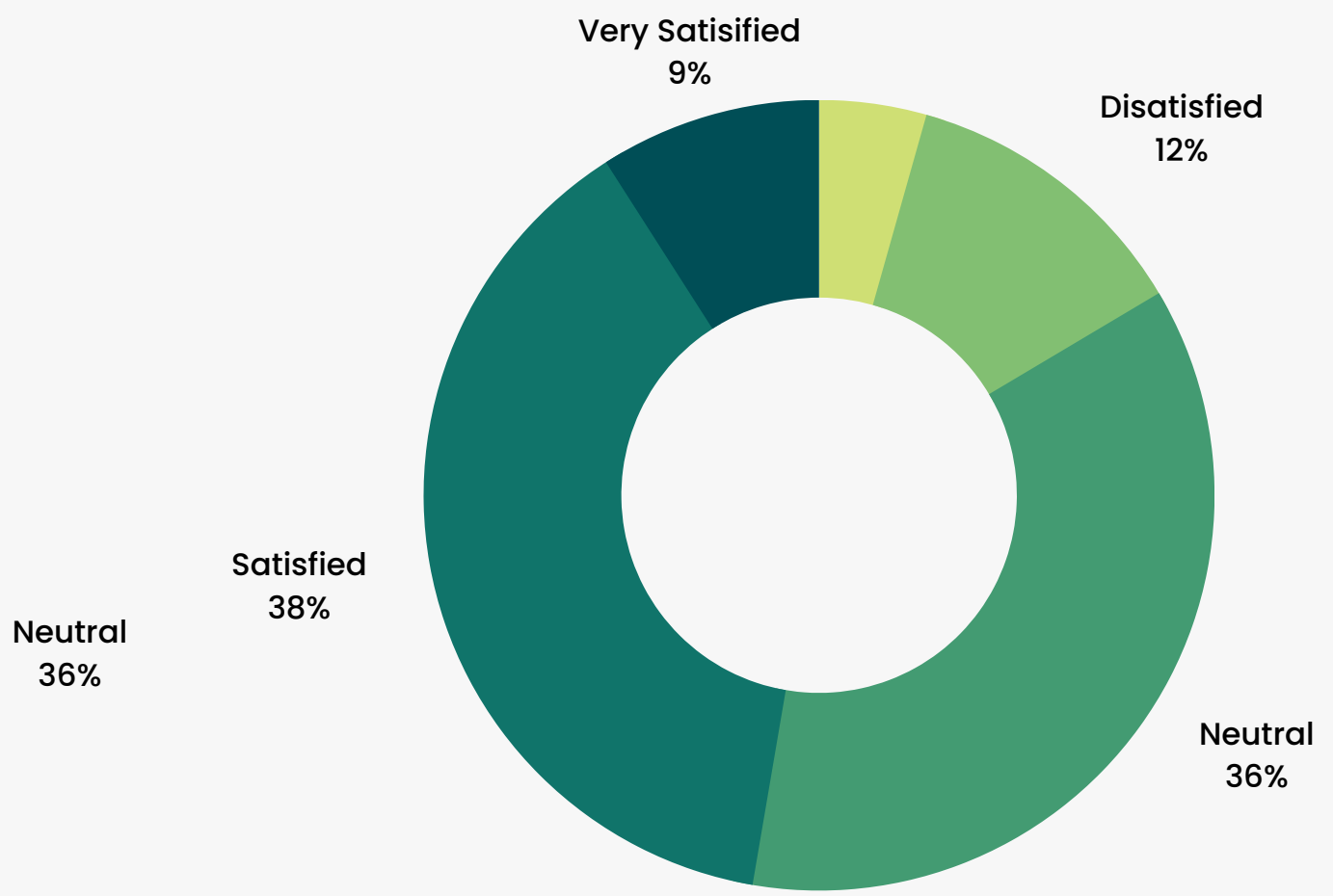
Technology Platforms



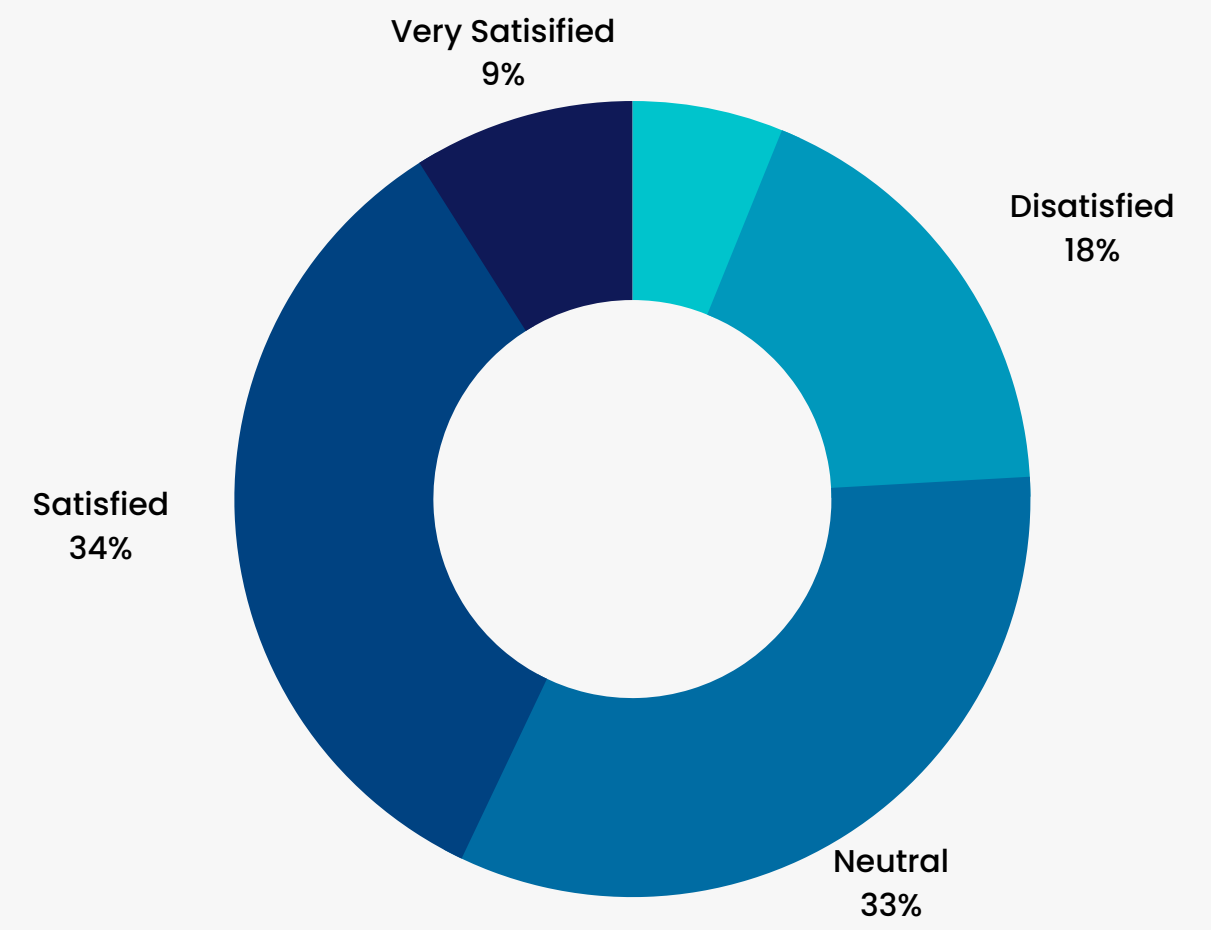
Website



Database



Moodle



In 2020, the COA conducted a business continuity and infrastructure upgrading assessment and subsequently began implementation of a new college website and database. Registrants were asked to rate their satisfaction with the COA's technology platforms. Key concerns noted by respondents were dual database log-ins for renewal and continuing competence, and the format of the Continuing Competence Program (CCP). Dual log-ins were a temporary requirement of the database implementation and will be eliminated in 2023. Feedback on the CCP has also been used to streamline the competence module in the new database, which launches July 2023.

Preferred Communication Channels

22% - Telephoning the Office

50% - Email Newsletters

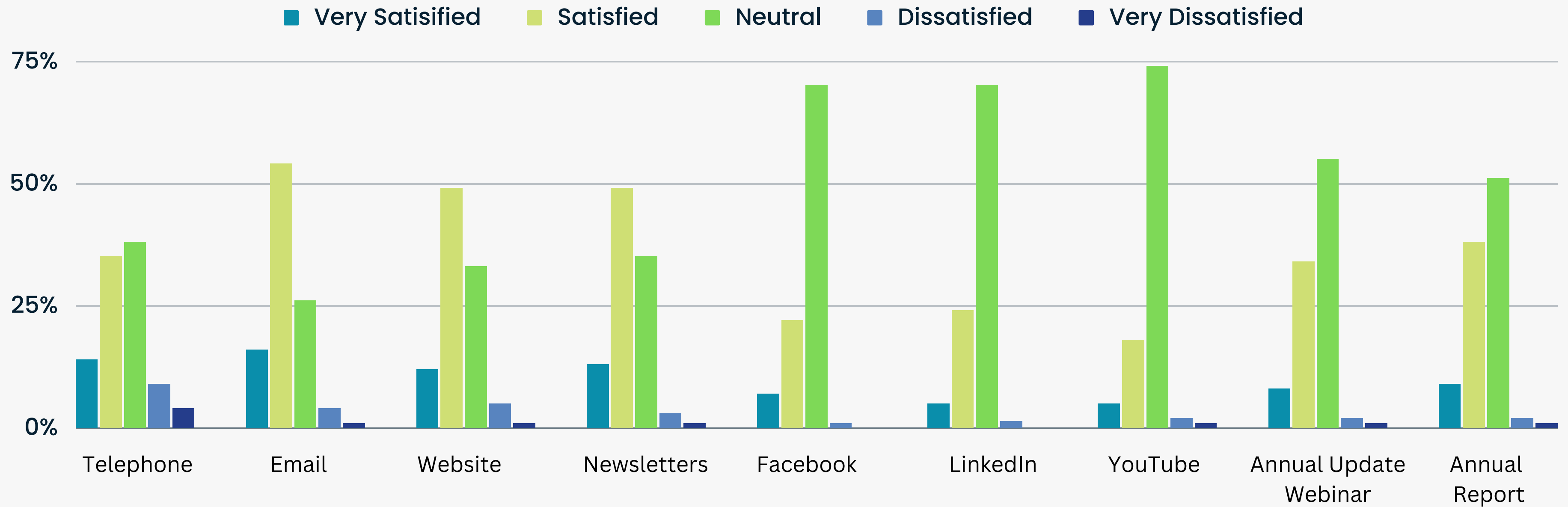
79% - Emails from the COA

17% - COA Social Media Pages

32% COA Website

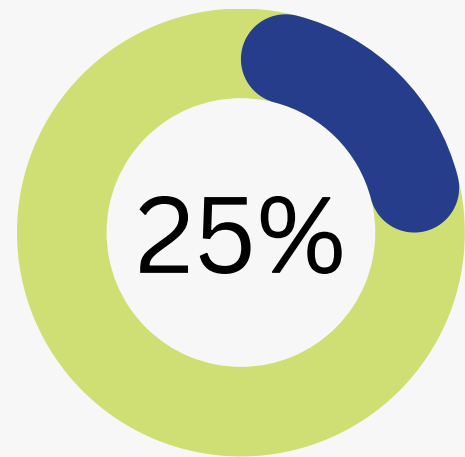
23% - COA Annual Update Webinar/Annual Report

Satisfaction with Communication Channels

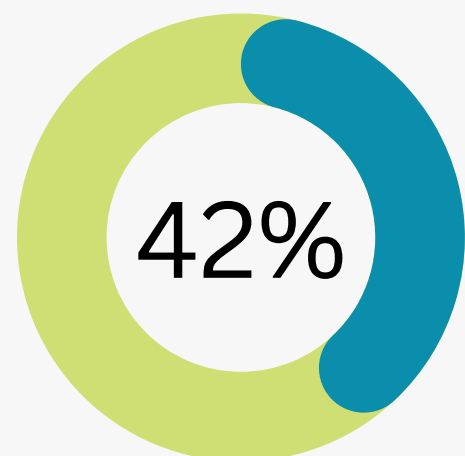


Feedback from registrants regarding telephoning the COA office indicated a concern with leaving voicemails. The COA has a small staff team and does not have a full-time receptionist. During renewal, call volume increases more than 1,000% per month (e.g., average of 40 calls per month to 624 calls per month during renewal). The COA implemented a phone tree in 2021 to assist with directing registrants to specific staff members. The COA's standard response time is 1 to 3 business days for phone calls and emails (and 3 to 5 business days during renewal).

Interest in Volunteering



Respondents who said they were very likely or likely to consider volunteering for the College



Respondents who said they were unlikely or very unlikely to consider volunteering for the College

Challenges to Volunteering

Unable to take time away from work

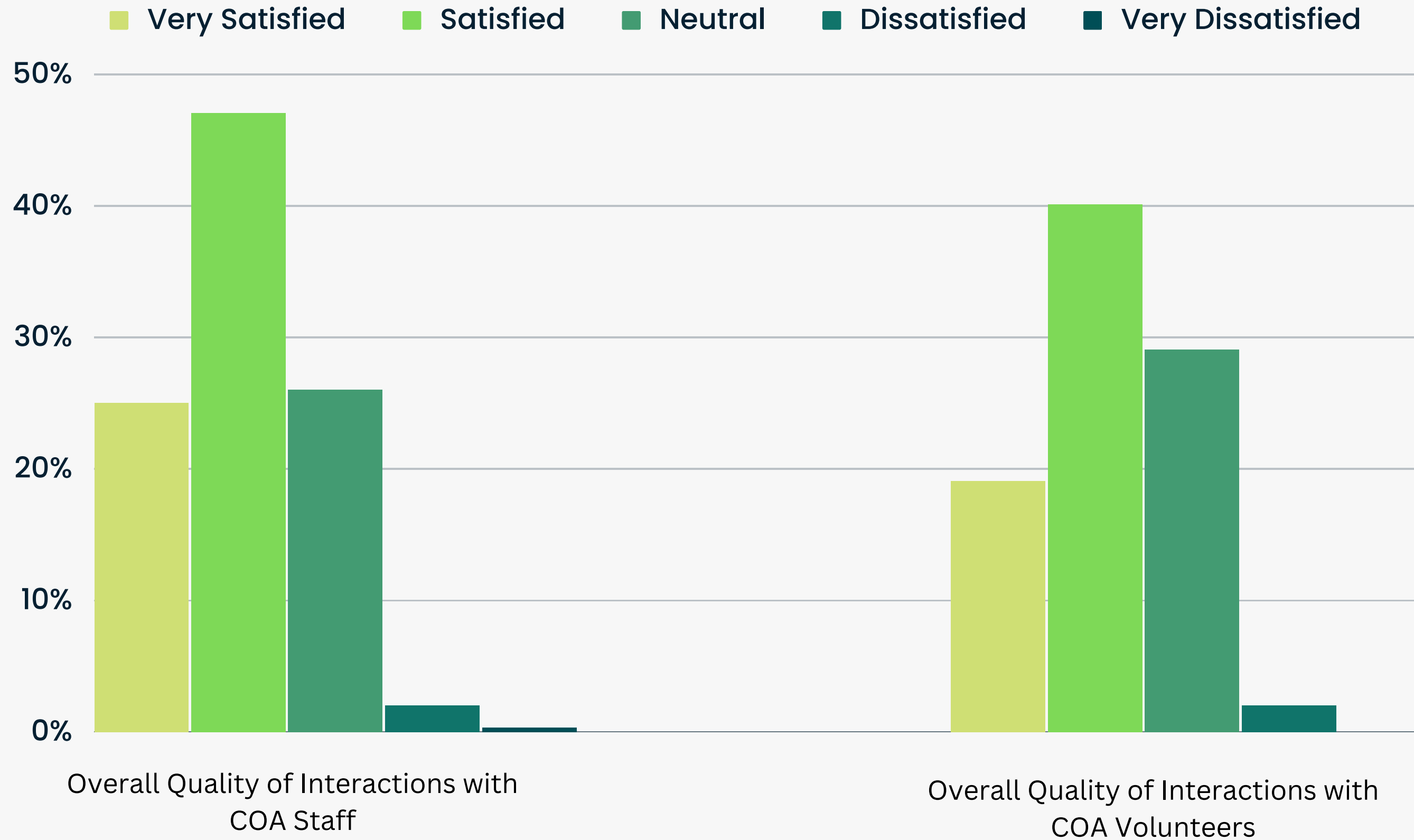
Family or community obligations

Lack of opportunities outside of Calgary/Edmonton

Feedback provided by respondents indicated that registrants may not be aware that the COA provides volunteers with a per diem payment for time contributed and travel expenses, as well as offering a number of virtual volunteering options.

The COA revised its volunteer application and materials in 2023 and has launched a new recruitment campaign to raise awareness about available positions and associated benefits.

Satisfaction with Staff and Volunteers





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Contact Us



[1-800-263-6026](tel:1-800-263-6026)



info@albertaopticians.ca



albertaopticians.ca