



Your Vision, Our Focus

ALBERTA COLLEGE  
AND ASSOCIATION  
OF OPTICIANS

# Annual Report

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2019

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### About the Report

The 2018 annual report covers highlights of the College/Association's initiatives for the fiscal year from January 1, 2018 to December 31, 2018.

### About the ACAO

The Alberta College and Association of Opticians is the regulatory body established to govern the practice of Opticianry in Alberta. The ACAO exists to regulate and improve the practice of Opticianry by ensuring that Opticians provide quality professional care in eye health.

The Alberta College and Association of Opticians was established in 1961. The ACAO ensures Opticians are providing competent and effective care to their patients. The main function of the ACAO is to protect the public.

### The ACAO is Responsible to:

- Assessment, registration and licensing of all Opticians and Contact Lens Practitioners in Alberta
- Interpretation of the Health Professions Act, the Opticians Regulation and the Bylaws
- Public and registrant complaints and inquiries
- Establishment of standards of practice and guidelines
- Monitor the competence of Opticians through continuing education
- Protect the public from unsafe or unethical Opticianry practice
- Protect the use of regulated title designation and initials, RO and RCLP
- Review the professional conduct of members based on complaints

Provide continuing competency to Opticians that will promote ethical practice and provide tools and resources for our Opticians to continue to enhance their knowledge and skills.

# Message from the President



## Executive Director Change at the ACAO

2019 at the Alberta College and Association of Opticians (ACAO) saw some big changes with the announcement that Maureen Hussey, the Executive Director and the face of the ACAO for the past twenty plus years, would be retiring. Maureen will be missed but not forgotten. Maureen's knowledge lives on in the backgrounder documents left behind to help future Executive Directors and Council members. The ACAO is also blessed with the retention of our extremely knowledgeable and dedicated staff members that have stayed on during the Executive Director transition. I would also like to introduce our new Executive Director of the ACAO, Jennifer Bertrand. Jennifer brings with her a wealth of information and skillsets that will help to take the ACAO to the next level of operation.

## Scope of Practice Increase

We continue to pursue our request for an increase in our scope of practice with the Government of Alberta. This is a natural progression and will benefit Albertans living in remote communities who currently must travel to major centers for their eyecare needs. In addition, removing the requirement for redundant tests performed by multiple eyecare professionals will reduce patient expense, while still protecting patients through referral to an Optometrist or Ophthalmologist depending on the level of care required. With these changes, we will have a collaborative eyecare system second to none in Canada.

## Quality Assurance Program

The Quality Assurance Program was set to be rolled out in May 2020 at the ACAO's

Annual General Meeting, but due to the COVID-19 pandemic this launch was delayed and the deadline for continuing competence was extended to September 30, 2020, in recognition of the challenges members are facing during the crisis. The new competency-based program will still launch on July 1, 2020, for members who are ready to begin their next continuing competence cycle.

As part of the new Quality Assurance Program, all registered opticians will complete a self-assessment to determine areas of improvement, which will allow opticians the ability to enhance and build upon their existing skills. Once the program has been rolled-out we will begin to implement specialization pathways in other areas, including low vision and dry eye syndrome.

## SAIT Vision Care Sciences Program

The Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (SAIT) has been working

on the implementation of a Vision Care Sciences Program with input from the ACAO. This will offer students another avenue to become a licensed optician in Alberta. As of September 2020, the province will have two post-secondary optical programs at SAIT and the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT), where prospective opticians can explore a career and employment in the optical industry.

The ACAO looks forward to continuing our collaborative relationships with NAIT and SAIT, and to helping with the promotion of the optical industry and reducing the provincial shortage of licensed opticians in Alberta. The ACAO will also work with NAIT and SAIT should the scope of practice increase be approved in 2020.

## Internal Separation of the ACAO

In the past year, with renewed vigor and enthusiasm, the ACAO has embarked

on a project to explore the internal separation of regulatory college and association duties and responsibilities. By internally separating, we believe we will be more efficient at performing our respective duties, including our primary mandate to protect the public and our objectives to promote the advancement of opticians and provide effective support to ACAO members. The internal separation will also provide better clarity of roles and responsibilities and improve our efficiency in meeting the needs of our key stakeholders.

It is our goal to have a clear and defined separation between the College and Association as soon as possible. One step we are working on is to have defined separation within our Council committee structure. With a new structure in place, our Council members will serve as Committee Chairs for either College or Association committees with explicit mandates related either to regulatory obligations or association initiatives. These committees will bring forward key matters for review and ratification by the

governing Council.

In 2019 and continuing into 2020, the ACAO Council has also renewed our dedication to effective governance and succession planning. We aim to provide the current Council and the Council members of tomorrow the necessary education and role clarity for improved productivity and professional development.

As my term as President of the ACAO draws to a close, I would like to encourage my fellow Council members to keep the vision moving forward and to support opticians that have not yet served on Council to participate in the leadership of the organization and the important work of protecting the public and advancing the optical profession in Alberta.

*Respectfully Submitted,  
Dean Thompson, RO, RCLP  
ACAO President*

# Executive Director and Registrar



I joined the Alberta College and Association of Opticians (ACAO) in March 2020, two weeks prior to initiating our pandemic influenza business contingency plan in response to COVID-19. The flexibility and preparedness of the ACAO Council, staff, and infrastructure allowed us to rapidly transition to a remote work model while continuing to offer full service to members and the public. The level of professionalism, dedication, and adaptability demonstrated by the ACAO and its members continues to inspire me as we now return to work in a new context.

Although this annual report addresses our activities in 2019, I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank the ACAO Council, staff, and members for their ongoing commitment to public safety and service, as well as the program staff at NAIT and SAIT and our fellow provincial and national regulatory colleges and associations for their collaboration and

support, including Alberta's Optometrists and Ophthalmologists.

I would also like to thank and acknowledge Chief Medical Officer Dr. Deena Hinshaw for her continued guidance, and all of the government departments and officials who have helped us to navigate the COVID-19 crisis, with special mention to Assistant Deputy Minister Leann Wagner, Health Workforce Planning and Accountability, and Andrew Douglas, Director, Health Professional Regulation.

The ACAO had a busy year in 2019. The following summarizes key activities carried out by the ACAO Council and staff:

- **Scope of Practice:** The ACAO continued to work with the Government of Alberta on the request for an expanded scope of practice to allow qualified opticians to perform

the restricted activity of prescribing corrective lenses for the purpose of dispensing prescription eyeglasses and contact lenses. This work culminated in the submission of a finalized proposal in March 2020 and initiation of the legislative consultation process. The consultation continued despite the pandemic crisis with an extended deadline for stakeholder response. Should the request proceed for approval, we anticipate royal assent and proclamation in Fall 2020.

- **Bill 21:** The ACAO completed implementation of changes associated with Bill 21 and the new requirements for sexual abuse and sexual misconduct complaints under the Health

Professions Act, including updates to the ACAO's complaint review and hearing processes. The Alberta Federation of Regulated Health Professions developed and launched training on Trauma Informed Care, and the ACAO developed additional optician-specific training, which is now available to all members as complimentary continuing education.

- **Standards of Practice:** The ACAO continued to work on revisions to the Standards of Practice, including consultation with the Government of Alberta and key stakeholders. Additional revisions were developed based on consultation with the Optometrists and Ophthalmologists to update the guidelines related to contact lens dispensing. These additional changes were distributed to

contact lens practitioners in May 2020 and we anticipate final approval and distribution of the revised Standards of Practice in June 2020.

- **Governance:** The ACAO began a comprehensive project to evaluate the organization's governance structure and began recruitment of a new Executive Director and Registrar. The ACAO has continued this governance work in 2020, including a review of organizational structure to ensure alignment with the Health Professions Act, Opticians Regulation, and ACAO Bylaws, as well as review and revision of associated policies and procedures. The ACAO Council also began updating its Strategic Plan, which will be finalized in June 2020.

- **Financial Management:** The ACAO developed a plan to build a long-term operating fund for the association. Although the ACAO has secure assets due to ownership of the fully paid office condominium, the Council aims to build a liquid operating reserve for additional security. Based on the 2019 audit and financial statements, the ACAO is on track to build this reserve.

- **Quality Assurance and Jurisprudence:** The ACAO continued work on the new competency-based quality assurance program that will replace the current credit-based continuing competence program. This new program is on target to launch in 2020. The ACAO also began planning for the new jurisprudence examination and work continues

# Executive Director and Registrar continued

# Provincial Council

2019

on this project in 2020.

- Separation of College and Association: The ACAO continued to monitor regulatory trends, including the report from Harry Cayton, CBE, FFHP, regarding the separation of regulatory colleges and associations in a health care context. Although the ACAO has not received a mandate of this nature from the Government of Alberta, the ACAO is analyzing its organizational structure in this context, with further work on this project continuing in 2020.
- National Initiatives: The ACAO continued to work with the National Association of Canadian Optician Regulators and the Opticians Council of Canada on various initiatives, including the Licensed Optician public awareness campaign, development of new national

competencies, and changes to the Case-Based Interview process for Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition.

- Records Management: Following the ransomware attack that occurred in 2018, the ACAO took the necessary steps to secure data and IT infrastructure, as well as to implement a new records management taxonomy for the management of key files.
- Criminal Record Check: To align with amendments to the Health Professions Act, the ACAO integrated the requirement for a criminal record check into the application process for registration.
- Annual Certificates: Based on consultation, the ACAO updated the permit process to include a permanent certificate obtained

upon registration and an annual online practice permit available at the time of renewal.

I look forward to serving the ACAO in 2020 and supporting both new initiatives and the completion of the great work already in progress.

*Respectfully Submitted,  
Jennifer Bertrand, CAE*



Dean Thompson,  
President



Margaret Cayenne,  
Vice-President



Gene Kerns,  
Regulatory Chair



Erin Clarke,  
Association Chair



Janet Sochatsky,  
Finance & Audit Chair



Sana Manzar,  
Director



Ted Murdoch,  
Director



Udo Hanebaum,  
Director



Christina Logee,  
Quality Assurance Chair



Shaffin Kherani,  
Public Member



Lana Bentley,  
Public Member



Judy Todd  
Public Member

# Public Members

*Focusing on 2020*



The Alberta College and Association of Opticians (ACAO) is required under the *Health Professions Act (HPA)* to have three public members on its Council of Directors. The role of a public member is to bring new and different perspectives and expertise to Council discussions and to ensure the ACAO Council acts in the best interest of the public and meets the requirements of the *HPA*. The appointments for the current public members, Judy Todd and Shaffin Kherani, run to October 24, 2020. Our newest public member Lana Bentley's term runs until 2022. Lana came in after Jennifer Wheaton had to resign from her position as Public Member in May 2019 and we wish Jennifer the best of luck in her future endeavours.

The Council as a whole focused on the development of a stronger Council and stronger governance processes in 2019. As public members we participated in two strategic planning weekends focusing on this area. We also participate as members of the various ACAO committees throughout the year.

One significant task for the Council in 2019 was the recruitment and hiring of a new Executive Director. This was a fairly lengthy process requiring many hours of work by various Council members. We were all very sad to see Maureen Hussey leave her ACAO duties as the previous Executive Director, and as public members wish her well in her retirement. Jennifer Bertrand began her duties as the ACAO Executive Director on March 2, 2020. She and the other office staff have been doing a great job of keeping abreast of all that is happening around the COVID-19 Pandemic and sending out information to the ACAO members as it becomes available to assist them in their practice during these interesting times. The Council and Jennifer have worked closely during these past few months to ensure that all government requirements are known, understood, and relayed to ACAO members in order to keep members, their patients, and the public safe and well.

Lana Bentley is ACAO's newest public member. She is a registered social worker and member of the ACSW Clinical Registry. Lana completed both of her degrees at the University of Calgary. She currently works as the Director of Program Strategy at YW Calgary. In addition, Lana works as part-time faculty at Mount Royal University teaching nursing, social work, and child and youth work students. Lana's professional interests include: 1) supervision, 2) group intervention, and 3) introducing evidence-based interventions into clinical settings. Lana worked with Alberta Health Services for a number of years in the areas of eating disorders and personality disorders, and in her final role, she managed an inpatient psychiatric unit and children's psychiatric emergency department. She is a board member with the S.H.A.R.P. Foundation and has volunteered with the Canadian Women's Foundation as well as the Harry G. Schaeffer Mentorship Program. In her spare time Lana can be found on the ski hill or at the boxing studio.

Judy Todd is a retired registered Social Worker. She worked for 35 years with Child and Family Services in numerous roles and has been and continues to be an active member of the Alberta Association of Social Workers as a member and on occasion chairperson of their Hearing Tribunals and Hearing Review Committees. She also completes complaint investigations on behalf of the ACSW. As a retired person she has lots of time to pursue her passion for music volunteering for the Calgary Folk Music Festival, Festival Hall, and attending concerts. She has

also taken up the Ukulele resulting in her becoming a member of a large and welcoming community of Uke players.

Shaffin Kherani's professional background includes diverse experience in finance, stakeholder relations, policy and operations management with the University of Alberta, Government of Alberta, various private sector industries and now with the City of Edmonton. His post-secondary education consists of two Master's Degrees including an MBA. In addition to the ACAO, he currently serves as a Public Member for the Edmonton and Northern Alberta Mental Health Appeal Board and as an Attendance Board Member with the Ministry of Education.

As Public Members of the ACAO Council we continue to be impressed with the caliber of the staff in the ACAO office and the knowledge and dedication of the 12 Council members to the profession of Opticians. The board has taken concrete, progressive steps to improve its functioning and value to its members. We look forward to continuing our work with the Council over the next year.

*Respectfully Submitted,  
Lana Bentley, Shaffin Kherani and Judy Todd  
Public Members*

# Regulatory Functions



## Continuing Competence Program

### Overview

The Alberta College and Association of Opticians is responsible for monitoring Opticians' performance and assuring the public that it meets required standards. The Alberta College and Association of Opticians have committed to ensuring quality improvement for Opticians by mandating our Continuing Competency Program (CCP).

### Change to Continuing Competency Program

July 1, 2017 saw the beginning of the last cycle in the traditional model of continuing education which ends June of 2020. The majority of optical regulators in Canada are undertaking this change. By working together, we greatly reduce expenditures of time and money. July 1, 2020 will launch a new program of quality assurance. This program strives to be more adaptive to each member's educational goals. With the new quality assurance program, opticians will be able to identify and correct their individual deficiencies to better strengthen their competence. We have done a series of informative sessions around the province to get the word out and will continue to reach out to members.

## Quality Assurance Committee

### Update

In 2019, the Alberta College and Association of Opticians (ACAO) Quality Assurance (QA) Committee continued development of our new Continuing Competency Program (CCP). The new CCP is set to launch in July 2020. This is an evidence-based program. Members will have the opportunity to complete an online assessment of their competencies based on NACOR's national competencies for opticians.

From that information, members will be required to set a minimum of six SMART learning goals for each three year cycle. This new program empowers members to take ownership of their own professional development in a new and exciting way. Our focus is to elevate the high standards that we as opticians hold ourselves to.

All licensed opticians in all licensing categories must participate in the CCP, including registrants who are registered as non-practicing.

We have extended the deadline from June 30, 2020 to September 30, 2020 to allow for additional time to complete the required credits

The next continuing education cycle will begin on July 1, 2020 and conclude June 30, 2023. We appreciate the opportunity to give members more time to address their continuing competency as needed during this difficult period.

This will allow our members to continue earning credits for the 2017-2020 cycle or start the 2020-2023 cycle between July 1 and September 30, 2020.

*Respectfully Submitted,  
Christina Logee, RO  
Chair*

# Highlights from 2019

## Standards of Practice

In accordance with section 133 of the *Health Professions Act (HPA)*, the Alberta College and Association of Opticians (ACAO) is responsible for the development, establishment, and maintenance of the standards of opticianry in Alberta to assure the quality of practice of the profession. Opticians are expected to know, understand, and comply with the Standards of Practice (the "Standards").

The Standards are the minimum requirements for the profession and are designed to:

- Provide guidance and performance expectations for how opticians will conduct themselves in their practice.
- Act as a reference for the public and the profession for the expectation of quality of care.
- Act as a reference to benchmark

opticians' conduct during the review of professional conduct issues.

The Standards should be used in conjunction with the ACAO Code of Ethics and Bylaws, Opticians Profession Regulation, *HPA*, and other applicable legislation to provide assistive, safe, and ethical services to the public.

In February 2019, the ACAO submitted revised Standards of Practice to the Minister of Health to meet the requirements of *HPA* section 133.1 and include standards related to Bill 21, An Act to Protect Patients. On March 15, 2019, the Minister approved the addition of Standard 8 – Patient Boundaries.

In March 2019, the ACAO submitted revised Standards of Practice to the Minister of Health for consultation. This submission included revisions throughout the standards and the addition of guidelines for each standard to help

opticians and the public interpret the Standards of Practice. The Minister forwarded the submission to external stakeholders for further consultation. The ACAO received consultation feedback from the Minister in November 2019. The ACAO is currently working to finalize the Standards of Practice. The ACAO Council will approve the final standards in 2020.

## REGULATIONS

### Bill 21: An Act to Protect Patients

Bill 21: An Act to Protect Patients received royal assent in November 2018 and most changes came into effect on April 1, 2019. The Bill ensures Albertans are safe when accessing healthcare services. It establishes mandatory penalties for sexual abuse and misconduct by all health professionals regulated under the

*Health Professions Act (HPA)*. The ACAO supported the revisions to the *HPA* intended to protect patients from sexual abuse and sexual misconduct. To meet the requirements related to Bill 21, the ACAO has implemented:

- Mandatory criminal record checks and disclosure of any past or ongoing conduct investigations for new applicants.
- Permanent cancellation of a regulated member's practice permit if a hearing tribunal finds a regulated member's actions constitute sexual abuse.
- Suspension of a regulated member's practice permit if a hearing tribunal finds a regulated member's actions constitute sexual misconduct.
- Mandatory publication of all disciplinary actions related to complaints involving sexual abuse or misconduct.
- Additional reporting of

complaints related to sexual abuse and misconduct.

- Access to funding for treatment and counselling for complainants.
- Training on trauma-informed care for ACAO staff, hearing tribunal, complaint review committee, and Council members.
- Training on patient boundaries for all regulated members.

## Scope of Practice

In June 2019, the Alberta College and Association of Opticians (ACAO) met with the Minister of Health and his Chief of Staff to discuss a proposal to amend the Opticians Profession Regulation to expand opticians' scope of practice. The proposal requests permission that opticians with advanced training may prescribe corrective lenses for the purpose of dispensing prescription eyeglasses and contact lenses.

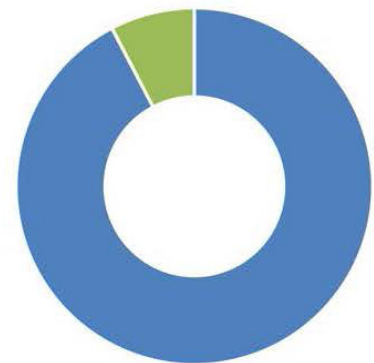
In October 2019, the ACAO continued

to work with the Ministry of Health to complete the policy work that would be needed to make the required amendments to the regulations. This work continued at meetings held early in 2020. In March 2020, following submission of a completed proposal by the ACAO, Alberta Health sent the completed proposal and related documents to key stakeholders for consultation. The consultation process concluded in May 2020 and the ACAO is communicating with Alberta Health regarding the next steps in the process.



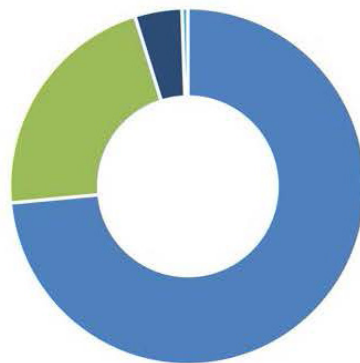
# Registration Overview 2019

■ Practicing 990 ■ Non Practicing 82



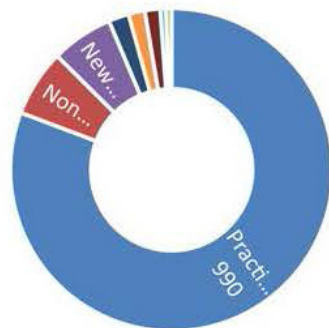
**REGULATED MEMBERS**  
The total number of active members

■ Female 824 ■ Male 243 ■ Gender Not Specified 6 ■ Age 65 Plus 48



**DEMOGRAPHICS**  
Those that identified in the categories

■ Practicing 990 ■ Non-Practicing 82 ■ Reinstated 7  
■ New Members 76 ■ PLAR 7 ■ Suspended 20



**REGISTRATION**  
Summary for the 2019 registration year

## Regulatory Committee Update

### Update

As Chair of the Regulatory Committee of the Alberta College and Association of Opticians (ACAO), I appreciate the opportunity to provide this annual report on the activities of the Committee in 2019. This has been an interesting and challenging year for the ACAO. Notwithstanding the task of searching for and hiring a new Executive Director and Registrar, the ACAO Council also needed to step up and face head-on the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020, which still gives us a daunting set of new challenges as we return to business.

Throughout the years, the ACAO has always sought cooperative and collaborative relationships with Optometry and Ophthalmology, particularly with the fitting of contact lenses. The Regulatory Committee continued to work on revisions to the ACAO Standards of Practice in 2019, including the Clinical Practice Guidelines for contact lens dispensing, with the desired outcome to increase patient access to regulated health professionals versus unregulated suppliers and increase patient choice in regulated health professionals.

This work continued in 2020, with additional member consultation, and the Regulatory Committee has now recommended the revised Standards of Practice for approval by the ACAO Council in June 2020. These revised standards reflect the minimum guidelines registered members of the ACAO must adhere to while continuing to protect patients. The ACAO will be launching a comprehensive communication and public awareness plan in 2020 to support members with understanding the changes and promote the importance of licensed professionals in opticianry.

The Regulatory Committee is looking forward to the implementation of the revised standards as well as any new regulatory challenges to be addressed in 2020.

*Respectfully Submitted,  
Gene Kerns, RO, RCLP  
Chair*

## Overview of Regulated Members

The Alberta College and Association of Opticians developed and launched a series of videos on Becoming an Optician. These videos were created in partnership with our national regulator groups. You may view these videos at [www.acao.ca/becoming-an-optician](http://www.acao.ca/becoming-an-optician).

Provisional Opticians are those who have completed the education and are awaiting the National licensing Examinations. This group practice under supervision. Students (associates) are not a regulated category of member. We monitor their supervision while they are training through a cooperative program with NAIT called Field Supervision.

The final numbers for our registration for 2019 totalled 1,073 members.

### Mission /

Our mission is to protect the public by keeping them informed and by pro-actively regulating and educating our members.

### Vision /

Our vision is to be dedicated to providing quality service by competent and educated health practitioners. We strive to achieve our vision by being progressive, accountable and accessible to the public and our member

### Values /

Accountability, Ethicality, Fairness, Effectiveness, Openness, Transparency



*In 2019 eight complaints were received  
five of which were closed*

## Professional Conduct

The Health Professions Act (HPA) mandates the Alberta College and Association of Opticians (ACAO) to manage complaints, investigations, and the discipline process in an effective and timely manner. To ensure easy access and transparency, our website includes a dedicated area for anyone to navigate through the ACAO complaint process. This information can be found at: [acao.ca/public/complaints-and-disciplines](http://acao.ca/public/complaints-and-disciplines).

### Inquiries

When an inquiry does not meet the requirements of a formal complaint, the ACAO still endeavors to respond to and resolve the issues brought up by members of the public, registrants, and other health care practitioners. The ACAO receives several inquiries throughout the year, and most of them are handled by answering questions, clarifying regulations or legislation, or contacting the registrant involved to mediate a solution to the situation. In 2019 the ACAO handled 13 inquiries which did not meet the requirements of a formal complaint.

### Complaint Trends

In 2019 we received 8 new complaints. 5 were dismissed for insufficient evidence of unprofessional conduct and 3 were carried forward into the next year. Complaints included accusations of incorrect third-party billing procedures,

unprofessional patient interactions not related to sexual abuse or sexual misconduct, breach of privacy, registrants practicing outside their scope, and practitioner incompetence.

### Facilitated Resolution

For some complaints, it may be appropriate for the Complaints Director to facilitate a resolution instead of sending the complaint to a hearing. Handling certain complaints in this way can be faster and more cost effective for everyone involved, however a facilitated resolution is only used when the Complaints Director deems it appropriate and when the complainant and registrant both agree to the allegations and sanctions. In 2019, the ACAO did not complete any facilitated resolution agreements. A facilitated resolution agreement is never used when the complaint involves sexual abuse and/or sexual misconduct.

### Sexual Abuse and Sexual Misconduct

In 2019, there were no complaints involving sexual abuse and/or sexual misconduct.

### HPA Section 118 (Incapacity)

In 2019, there were no complaints involving incapacity under section 118 of the HPA.

### Hearings

There were no hearings held during this reporting period.

Complaints and Disciplines	2019
Number of complaints received	8
Number of complaints carried over from previous year (2018)	0
Number of complaints closed	5
Number of complaints still open	3
Number of complaints dismissed, redirected or resolved informally	5
Number of complaints referred to alternative complaints resolution	0
Number of complaints referred to investigation	6
Number of complaints referred to hearing	0
Number of hearings held	0
Number of hearings closed to the public	0
Number of appeals	0
Number of complaints involving sexual abuse/sexual misconduct	0
Number of members dealt with under s.118	0



# Association Functions

## Association Committee

### Update

The Association Committee was hard at work in 2019 with a focus on strengthening our relationship with opticians. The ACAO Council hosted several appetizer nights throughout the province in Grande Prairie, Sherwood Park, Edmonton, Calgary, and Lethbridge. These social events were well attended, with a vast range of topics discussed. The committee is in the planning stages of hosting virtual appetizer nights in 2020.

Other initiatives explored included setting up an insurance program for opticians in Alberta to provide opticians additional Errors and Omissions coverage should they require it. Research is still ongoing, and we anticipate this will be an option for our members in 2021.

SAIT will be launching an optical program in 2020. We believe that having both the SAIT program and the NAIT

Optical Sciences program will provide additional options to students and will benefit the entire profession. The ACAO values the importance of both programs in Alberta and we look forward to collaborating with both institutions.

In closing, discussions have begun on implementing a volunteer recognition program for our opticians. While we have been good at recruiting to assist us in our delivery of some programs, utilizing them and giving proper recognition requires further work from the committee and will be one of the initiatives we will undertake in 2020.

*Respectfully Submitted,  
Erin Clarke, RO, RCLP  
Chair*

## Negotiations

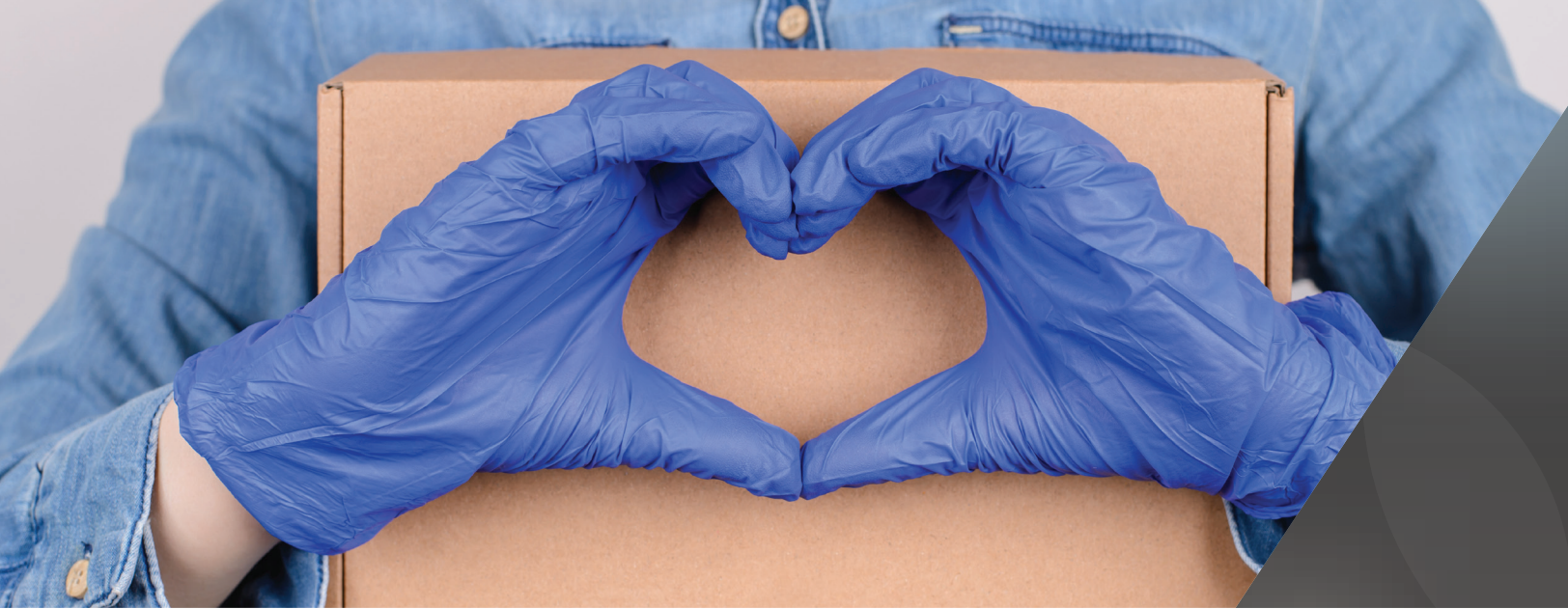
The Negotiations Committee is an armslength committee of the Alberta College and Association of Opticians.

The Committee has had some new developments. Firstly, by now you all should have received a fax from express scripts regarding NHIB billing. They are the new carrier that is handling contract payment for NHIB, you will still fax the usual form for approval as you have in the past only now you need to set up with express to receive payment. For more details you can go to their website here: <https://provider.express-scripts.ca/medical-supplies-and-equipment/provider-information> If you have any questions don't hesitate to contact me.

The committee has started negotiations with AHS in regards to our contract with them which is expiring in July 2020 so far it looks like it will be a renewal as is, so no increases, but no decreases either.

## Approvals Under Section 27

Approval received from the Government for the running of this arm's length committee set up to deal with the negotiation of fees for contracts for Opticians. Opticians have the right to opt out of the contract but may not pick and choose areas where they will opt in or out. It is either honour the agreement in full or do not participate. This position was filled by acclamation.



# Council and Committees

## Council of Directors

### Council

The board of directors governs the ACAO. Because we are a self-regulating body for opticians in Alberta, we rely on members to fill most of those positions. Elected council members are Registered Opticians in good standing; these are your peers in the field, chosen by you, and dedicated to serving you.

The council works together with the Government of Alberta, other provincial regulatory bodies, and post-secondary institutions. We rely on them to collaborate with registrants and other health professionals in similar fields. Through collaboration, the council can ensure that registered opticians are able to adapt to changes in practice environments, and advances in technology.

### Council Responsibilities

The council is responsible for making sure that the ACAO meets its objectives. With the help of the public members, the board of directors forecasts the long-term needs of the public. In this way, we can determine educational priorities and practice standards for opticians in Alberta. Basically, the ACAO relies on the council to decide how to keep up to date on emerging technology and practices, so that we can better serve the public.

Opticians in Alberta can transition to work almost anywhere in Canada because of the relationships we have with other provinces. We are trusted as licensed health professionals because of the council's cooperation with government regulators. Finally, opticians can be sure that their accredited education and continuing education provide them with all of the skills and knowledge they need, thanks to the council's work on education standards.

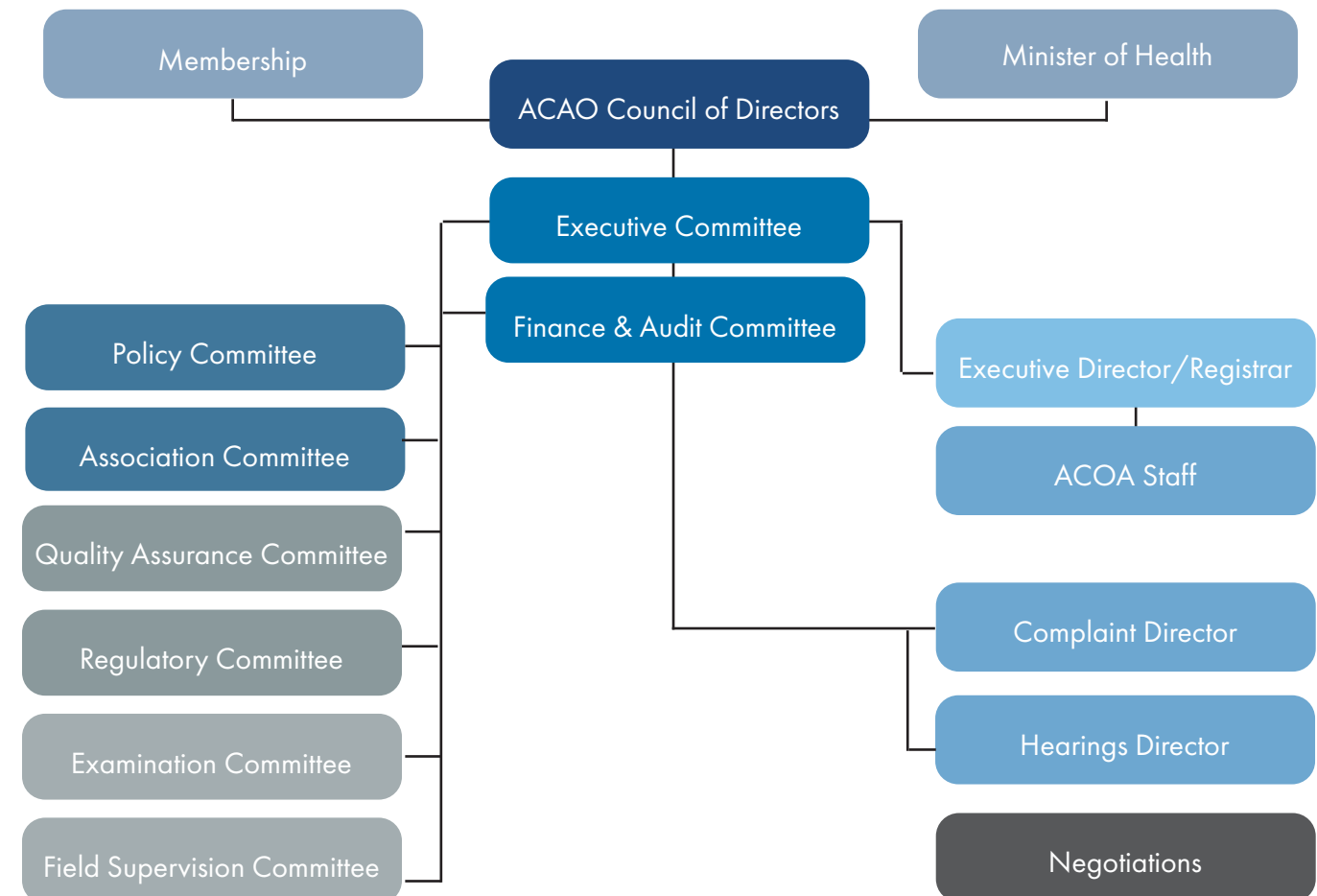
### Elections

Each year in May, the ACAO holds an Annual General Meeting (AGM). During the AGM, we have an election for council. Once elected, each council member serves a three-year term. As long as they are in good standing, any Alberta optician can be nominated for the board of directors.

### Public Members

The Government of Alberta appoints public members, who are not opticians, to sit on the council. By including public members, we can gain insight and provide better service to the public. The public members are there to help us connect, but also to make sure that we are accountable to the public. Because their insight is so valuable to us, there are 3 spots out of 12 for public members.

## Organizational Structure



# Financials

Alberta College and Association of Opticians  
Financial Statements  
Year Ended December 31, 2019



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## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

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To the Members of  
Alberta College and Association of Opticians

### *Opinion*

We have audited the financial statements of Alberta College and Association of Opticians (the College), which comprise the statement of financial position as at December 31, 2019, and the statements of operations, changes in net assets and cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the College as at December 31, 2019, and its results of operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

### *Basis for Opinion*

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of our report. We are independent of the College in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Canada, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

## *Other Information*

Management is responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon, in the Annual Report. The Annual Report is expected to be made available to us after the date of this auditor's report.

Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information identified above when it becomes available and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

When we read the Annual Report, if we conclude that there is a material misstatement therein, we are required to communicate the matter to those charged with governance.

## *Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements*

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Alberta College and Association of Opticians *(continued)*

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the College's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters relating to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the College or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the College's financial reporting process.

## *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements*

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements. As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the College's internal control.

- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the College's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the College's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the College to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Edmonton, Alberta  
March 13, 2020

Chartered Professional Accountants

# Statement of Financial Position

	2019	2018
<b>ASSETS</b>		
<b>CURRENT</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 1,125,300	\$ 930,735
Accounts receivable	34,577	2,889
Prepaid expenses	22,004	11,532
	<u>1,181,881</u>	<u>945,156</u>
CAPITAL ASSETS (Note 4)	389,744	386,889
TRADEMARK (Note 5)	720	886
	<u>\$ 1,572,345</u>	<u>\$ 1,332,931</u>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
<b>CURRENT</b>		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 38,212	\$ 41,601
Goods and services tax payable	40,049	37,420
Deferred membership fee revenue	850,780	787,428
	<u>929,041</u>	<u>866,449</u>
<b>NET ASSETS (LIABILITIES)</b>		
Unrestricted	52,840	(207,050)
Invested in capital assets	390,464	387,775
Discipline contingency fund (Note 6)	200,000	235,757
Change project fund (Note 7)	-	50,000
	<u>643,304</u>	<u>466,482</u>
	<u>\$ 1,572,345</u>	<u>\$ 1,332,931</u>

# Statement of Operations

	2019	2018
<b>REVENUES</b>		
Advertising	\$ 3,508	\$ 4,150
Application fees	20,886	15,791
Continuing education programs	-	6,750
Convention	6,919	21,697
Discipline (Note 6)	30,212	22,883
Examination	45,162	41,737
Field supervision	14,200	16,000
Insurance recovery	25,000	-
Membership fees	843,823	813,439
Sundry	-	700
	<u>989,710</u>	<u>943,147</u>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Advertising	-	2,093
Amortization	47,889	43,681
Committees	20,956	5,000
Council expenses	11,167	25,020
Education awards	700	700
Equipment lease	5,611	8,070
Examination expenses	17,888	17,039
Field supervision expenses	10,709	11,825
Insurance	10,490	6,494
Interest and bank charges	27,134	25,540
Laddering project	15,372	10,270
Meetings and convention	59,813	40,495
Membership fees	16,543	28,638
Office	71,578	131,971
Professional conduct matters	21,036	24,986
Professional fees	15,000	14,180
Salaries and benefits	394,822	413,555
Sub-contracts	43,250	40,500
Telephone	8,802	7,414
Utilities and property taxes	14,128	14,888
	<u>812,888</u>	<u>872,359</u>
<b>EXCESS OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES</b>	<u>\$ 176,822</u>	<u>\$ 70,788</u>

# Statement of Changes in Net Assets

	2018 Balance	Excess of revenues over (under) expenses	Invested in capital assets	Transfers	2019 Balance
Unrestricted net assets (liabilities)	\$ (207,050)	\$ 224,713	\$ (50,580)	\$ 85,757	\$ 52,840
Invested in capital assets	387,775	(47,891)	50,580	-	390,464
Discipline contingency fund (Note 6)	235,757	-	-	(35,757)	200,000
Change project fund (Note 7)	50,000	-	-	(50,000)	-
	<u>\$ 466,482</u>	<u>\$ 176,822</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 643,304</u>

	2017 Balance	Excess of revenues over (under) expenses	Invested in capital assets	Transfers	2018 Balance
Unrestricted net liabilities	\$ (276,911)	\$ 91,586	\$ (21,725)	\$ -	\$ (207,050)
Invested in capital assets	409,731	(43,681)	21,725	-	387,775
Discipline contingency fund (Note 6)	212,874	22,883	-	-	235,757
Change project fund (Note 7)	50,000	-	-	-	50,000
	<u>\$ 395,694</u>	<u>\$ 70,788</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 466,482</u>

# Statement of Cash Flows

	2019	2018
<b>OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Cash receipts membership fees and other revenue	\$ 950,907	\$ 894,720
Cash receipts from courses, exams and training fees	70,464	85,125
Cash paid to suppliers and employees	<u>(776,226)</u>	<u>(830,784)</u>
Cash flow from operating activities	<u>245,145</u>	<u>149,061</u>
<b>INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Purchase of equipment	(56,580)	(24,580)
Proceeds on disposal of equipment	<u>6,000</u>	<u>2,855</u>
Cash flow used by investing activities	<u>(50,580)</u>	<u>(21,725)</u>
<b>INCREASE IN CASH FLOW</b>	<u>194,565</u>	<u>127,336</u>
Cash and cash equivalents - beginning of year	<u>930,735</u>	<u>803,399</u>
<b>CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS - END OF YEAR</b>	<u>\$ 1,125,300</u>	<u>\$ 930,735</u>



## 1. PURPOSE OF ORGANIZATION

The Alberta College and Association of Opticians (the "College") is a self-governing professional organization established pursuant to the Opticians Act of Alberta. On March 23, 2011, the Opticians Act of Alberta was repealed and transitioned to the Health Professions Act of Alberta. As a result, the College is now governed under this Act which also resulted in a name change for the organization. The proclamation of Bill 14: Health Professional Amendment Act (2016) on May 27, 2016 resulted in another name change for the organization. The College is a not-for-profit organization, as described in Section 149(1)(l) of the Income Tax Act, and therefore is not subject to income taxes.

## 2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

### Basis of accounting

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

### Measurement uncertainty

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amount of assets and liabilities, disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the period. Such estimates are periodically reviewed and any adjustments necessary are reported in earnings in the period in which they become known. Actual results could differ from these estimates.

### Financial instruments

#### Measurement

The College initially measures its financial assets and liabilities at fair value, except for certain non-arm's length transactions. The College subsequently measures all its financial assets and financial liabilities at amortized cost. Financial assets measured at amortized cost include cash and cash equivalents and accounts receivable. Financial liabilities measured at amortized cost include accounts payable and accrued liabilities.

#### Impairment

Financial assets measured at cost are tested for impairment when there are indicators of impairment. The amount of the write-down is recognized in net income. The previously recognized impairment loss may be reversed to the extent of the improvement, directly or by adjusting the allowance account, provided it is no greater than the amount that would have been reported at the date of the reversal had the impairment not been recognized previously. The amount of the reversal is recognized in net income.

#### Transaction costs

Financial instruments that will not be subsequently measured at fair value are adjusted by the transaction costs that are directly attributable to their origination, issuance or assumption.

### Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents consists of balances with banks and short-term investments that are cashable or with maturities of three months or less.

## 2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

### Capital assets

Capital assets are stated at cost less accumulated amortization. Capital assets are amortized over their estimated useful lives at the following rates and methods:

Building	25 years	straight-line method
Computer equipment	30%	declining balance method
Computer software	30%	declining balance method
Examination equipment	20%	declining balance method
Office equipment	20%	declining balance method

### Trademark

Costs incurred to develop and secure the College's logo and slogan are capitalized and amortized using the straight-line method over 10 years.

### Long-lived assets

Long-lived assets consist of capital assets and trademarks. Long-lived assets held for use are measured and amortized as described in the above accounting policies.

The College performs impairment testing on long-lived assets held for use whenever events or changes in circumstances indicate that the carrying value of an asset, or group of assets may not be recoverable. Impairment losses are recognized when undiscounted cash flows from use and disposal are less than an asset's carrying value. Any impairment is included in income for the year.

### Revenue recognition

The College follows the deferral method of accounting for membership fees and other unrestricted revenue. Restricted revenue is recognized in the year in which the related expenses are incurred. Revenue is only recognized when received or receivable and collection is reasonably assured.

Membership fees are recognized as revenue in the fiscal year to which they apply. Deferred membership fee revenue consists of membership registration fees collected for the following year.

Revenues from convention, discipline courses, examinations, field supervision, insurance recoveries and other sources are recorded when it is earned and collection is reasonably assured.

### Contributed goods and services

The College records the fair market value of contributed goods and services only in the circumstances when the fair market value is determinable and when the goods and services would otherwise be purchased by the College.

3. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

The College is exposed to various risks through its financial instruments. The following analysis provides information about the College's risk exposure and concentration as of December 31, 2019.

Credit risk

Credit risk arises from the potential that a counter party will fail to perform its obligations. The College is exposed to credit risk from advertisers and educational institutions. This is minimized through the College providing services to well-established advertisers and education institutions. The College performs continuous evaluation of its accounts and records an allowance for doubtful accounts when necessary.

Liquidity risk

Liquidity risk is the risk that the College will encounter difficulty in meeting obligations associated with financial liabilities. The College enters into transactions to purchase goods and services on credit, borrow funds from financial institutions and leases office equipment from various creditors for which repayment is required at various maturity dates. Liquidity risk is measured by reviewing the College's future net cash flows for the possibility of a negative net cash flow. The College manages the liquidity risk resulting from the accounts payable and operating leases through the preparation and monitoring of budgets and maintaining cash on hand.

4. CAPITAL ASSETS

	Cost	Accumulated amortization	2019 Net book value
Building	\$ 513,352	\$ 211,728	\$ 301,624
Computer equipment	189,287	158,834	30,453
Computer software	136,586	83,011	53,575
Examination equipment	5,719	5,400	319
Office equipment	64,473	60,700	3,773
	<u>\$ 909,417</u>	<u>\$ 519,673</u>	<u>\$ 389,744</u>
	Cost	Accumulated amortization	2018 Net book value
Building	\$ 507,372	\$ 191,194	\$ 316,178
Computer equipment	185,962	146,306	39,656
Computer software	91,256	69,764	21,492
Examination equipment	15,519	9,174	6,345
Office equipment	62,529	59,311	3,218
	<u>\$ 862,638</u>	<u>\$ 475,749</u>	<u>\$ 386,889</u>

5. TRADEMARK

	2019	2018
Trademark - cost	\$ 2,485	\$ 2,485
Accumulated amortization	(1,765)	(1,599)
	<u>\$ 720</u>	<u>\$ 886</u>

6. DISCIPLINE CONTINGENCY FUND

A discipline contingency fund has been established to fund unforeseen expenses associated with discipline activities. Council has approved the annual contribution to the discipline contingency fund be equivalent to the revenues received from discipline online courses and fines and cost recoveries associated with member discipline. In 2019, Council voted to put a maximum on the discipline contingency fund of \$200,000. Everything in excess was transferred to the unrestricted fund during the year.

7. CHANGE PROJECT FUND

A change project fund has been established to fund expenses associated with bringing awareness to the College and the optician profession. Annual contributions to this fund will be determined by the Council. In 2019, Council voted to eliminate the change project fund and the balance was transferred to the unrestricted fund during the year.

# ALBERTA COLLEGE AND ASSOCIATION OF OPTICIANS

201, 2528 ELLWOOD DR, SW  
EDMONTON, AB T6X 0A9

Phone: 780-429-294

Fax: 780-426-5576

Email: [general@acao.ca](mailto:general@acao.ca)

Website: [www.acao.ca](http://www.acao.ca)