

# Practice Management Standards

Opticians must understand the ethical and legal requirements of managing an opticianry practice to ensure patient and staff safety and quality of professional services.

## Patient Expectations

The **patient**<sup>1</sup> can expect that opticians manage their practice ethically and in accordance with legal obligations to promote the health and safety of patients and staff.

## Regulated Member<sup>2</sup> Requirements

1. An optician is accountable and responsible for abiding by the ethical, clinical, and legal requirements of professional practice.

An optician must:

- 1.1. be registered with the College of Opticians of Alberta (COA) in accordance with the regulations and have access to appropriate equipment to provide **opticianry services**;
- 1.2. adhere to the occupational health and safety legislation and requirements;
- 1.3. adhere to and have policies in place that comply with all privacy legislation;
- 1.4. delegate tasks to regulated or unregulated staff who are appropriately skilled and competent, and supervise as required; and
- 1.5. put the best interest of the patient ahead of their own best interests.

2. An optician is responsible and accountable for implementing and following infection prevention and control (IPC) interventions.

An optician must:

- 2.1. understand the **chain of transmission** and their role in breaking that chain;
- 2.2. have access to hot and cold running water, or an appropriate alternative for hand hygiene in the dispensing facility (such as alcohol-based hand rub);
- 2.3. incorporate and perform IPC best practices; and
- 2.4. take reasonable and appropriate measures to minimize the risk of contamination and subsequent transmission of infectious agents in all areas of practice.

3. An optician is responsible and accountable for understanding and adhering to all billing and third-party agreements.

An optician must:

- 3.1. ensure all fees are explained to patients and they have highlighted where insurance plans do not cover costs; and
- 3.2. sign insurance forms or submit insurance claims, on behalf of the patient, using medical benefits ethically and in accordance with the law.

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<sup>1</sup> Words in bold font are listed in the glossary.

<sup>2</sup> The term “regulated member” and “registrant” may be used interchangeably

4. An optician working in a dispensing facility must have access to ophthalmic instruments appropriate to the professional services being offered at the facility.

An optician must:

- 4.1. be responsible for ensuring that all equipment is in good working condition and is used, disinfected, and maintained according to the manufacturer's instructions.

## Glossary Terms:

**Chain of transmission:** how microorganisms are transmitted from one person or place to another

**Patient:** a person, or caregiver of a person, receiving professional services from a regulated member of the College

**Opticianry service:** a service that comes within the practice of the regulated opticianry profession. In their practice, opticians do one or more of the following:

- based on an optical prescription, design, supply, prepare, adjust, and dispense optical appliances and prostheses, including corrective lenses;
- promote eye health and the correct use of optical appliances and prostheses through education of consumers and regulated members;
- perform refractions and identify the need for corrective lenses;
- conduct or collaborate in optical related research;
- when providing opticianry services referred to in this section, conduct assessments and make referrals where appropriate;
- provide restricted activities authorized by the regulations.

*(Opticians Profession Regulation, 2011)*

**Regulated member:** an optician registered as a member of the College of Opticians of Alberta under section 33(1)(a) of the HPA (2000).

## Related Documents:

College of Opticians of Alberta Professionalism Standards (2024)

Health Information and Management Standards (2025)

*Health Professions Act* (2000)

*Occupational Health and Safety Act* (2020)

*Occupational Health and Safety Code* (2023)

*Occupational Health and Safety Regulation* (2021)

*Opticians Profession Regulation* (2011)

## References:

Healthcare infection prevention and control guidelines. (2004). Retrieved from:  
<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/infectious-diseases/nosocomial-occupational-infections.html>

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