

Refracting Guidelines

Performing **refractions**¹ are part of the scope of practice of opticians in Alberta. Opticians who perform refractions must be knowledgeable, skilled, and competent to perform them and must be authorized to do so by the College of Opticians of Alberta (COA). The COA *Refracting Standards* outline the minimum requirements for opticians when performing refractions to **patients**.

Refracting Equipment

The COA *Refraction Standards* identify that opticians must have the appropriate equipment available to perform refractions. Refracting equipment should include, but is not limited to:

- Phoropter
- Trial lenses
- Retinoscope
- Visual acuity charts
- Automated refraction equipment

Referrals

Opticians must determine whether a stand-alone refraction is appropriate based on the patient's history and any additional indications that arise during the refraction. Opticians use their professional judgement or can refer to the *Canadian Ophthalmological Society* for patients and suggested timelines for referrals.

Documentation

Refractions are considered part of the opticianry service provided by the optician. Refraction services should be appropriately documented in the patient's health record and should include all relevant information. The COA *Health Information and Privacy Management Standards* and *Record Keeping and Documentation Guidelines* provide more direction on documentation.

Glossary Terms

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

Refractions: the measurement of the focusing of the eye and the determination of a prescription

Related Documents

College of Opticians of Alberta *Health Information and Privacy Management Standards*

College of Opticians of Alberta *Record Keeping and Documentation Guidelines*

College of Opticians of Alberta *Refraction Standards*

References

¹ Words in bold font are listed in the glossary.

Canadian Ophthalmological Society. (n.d.) When should you see an ophthalmologist? Retrieved from:
<https://www.cos-sco.ca/when-should-you-see-an-ophthalmologist/>

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