

Refracting Standards

Opticians who perform **refractions**¹ for the intent of generating a prescription for a patient is knowledgeable, skilled, and competent and has authorization from the College of Opticians of Alberta (COA) to perform refractions.

Patient Expectations

The patient can expect that opticians who perform refractions have the skills, training, and knowledge, are authorized to do so by the College, and perform them in accordance with the standards.

Regulated Member² Requirements

1. An optician who performs refractions must apply to the registrar to be authorized by the COA to perform them and do so in accordance with the standards.

An optician who performs refractions must:

- 1.1. be knowledgeable, skilled, and competent to perform refractions;
- 1.2. obtain refracting authorization from the COA, through the process established by the College;
- 1.3. ensure they have the appropriate equipment to perform refractions;
- 1.4. obtain informed consent that educates the patient that a refraction is not a comprehensive eye examination;
- 1.5. use their professional judgement to assess the appropriateness of the need for refraction for the patient;
- 1.6. use their professional judgement to assess any indication or complication that arises during a refraction for referral to another regulated health professional and make that referral appropriately;
- 1.7. ensure all prescriptions generated for use in preparing eyeglasses, contact lenses or subnormal vision devices are signed by an authorized prescriber and made available to the patient;
 - 1.7.1. if no dispensing occurs at the time of refraction, the resultant prescription must be signed and stored on the patient record.
- 1.8. include all refraction and prescription information appropriate to the service being provided on the patient record; and
- 1.9. only perform appropriate **opticianry services** within their scope of practice and level of competence.

Glossary Terms:

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

¹ Words in bold font are listed in the glossary.

² The term “regulated member” and “registrant” may be used interchangeably

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- 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.

(HPA, 2000, *Opticians Profession Regulation*, 2011)

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

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 *Practice Management Standards*

College of Opticians of Alberta *Professionalism Standards*

Opticians Profession Regulation (2011)

References:

American Academy of Ophthalmology. (2019). *Refracting 101: go forth and refract*. Retrieved from: <https://www.aao.org/young-ophthalmologists/yo-info/article/refraction-101-go-forth-and-refract#:~:text=Refraction%20is%20the%20measurement%20of,to%20measure%20a%20patient's%20refraction.>

Health Professions Act, RSA 2000, c H-7

Health Professions Restricted Activities Regulations, Alta Reg 22/2023, s 60

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