

Ohio Optical Dispensers Board News

House Bill 258 Changes Scope of Practice for Spectacle Licensed Opticians. How Does It Affect You?

By Nancy Manns, Executive Director

HB 258 was signed into law by Governor John Kasich on December 19, 2014. This new law changes the scope of practice for licensed Spectacle opticians in Ohio. The law does not have any impact on licensed Spectacle-Contact lens licensees or those who are Contact lens licensed only.

There are three (3) main changes to the law regulating spectacle opticians.

ONE

Beginning **JANUARY 1, 2016**, Spectacle licensed opticians will be permitted to dispense pre-packaged soft contact lenses *if the only action necessary is to match the description of the contact lenses that is on the packaging to a written prescription* (Section 4725.411 Ohio Revised Code).

Spectacle licensed opticians will not be able to dispense prepackaged soft contact lenses based on a box/package of a previous refill. The Spectacle licensed optician can only dispense the prepackaged soft contact lenses based on a written prescription that is either in a paper form handed to the optician or the prescription received at the place where the dispensing occurs and stored in the patient's record.

It is important to note that until **January 1, 2016** Spectacle licensed opticians may not dispense the prepackaged soft contact lenses. Any Spectacle licensed optician engaged in dispensing contact lenses prior to January 1, 2016 will be subject to discipline by the Optical Dispensers Board including, and up to, revocation of their license.

TWO

In 2015, Spectacle licensed opticians will be required to complete an additional two (2) hours of continuing education related to the dispensing of prepackaged contact lenses prior to each renewal beginning with the renewal of the 2016 license for a total of six (6) hours of continuing education. Spectacle licensed opticians will be required to complete the six hours of continuing education thereafter for each renewal period:

- 4 hours of study related to spectacle dispensing (current requirement); and,
- 2 hours of study in the form of contact lens dispensing related to prepackaged soft contact lenses (new requirement).

THREE

ALL Spectacle dispensing opticians will be required to complete the **6 hours of continuing education** for renewal regardless of the date of initial licensure; there is no longer an exemption from continuing education for the first renewal. This means that if an individual receives his/her initial Spectacle license even as late as November or December, prior to renewal for the following year, those individuals will be required to

show proof of completing the required 6 hours of continuing education in order to renew that license for the following year.

The continuing education is **required for all Spectacle licensed opticians**, even if they do not wish to dispense soft prepackaged contact lenses.

APPRENTICES

Supervisors of Spectacle apprentices will be required to add, after January 1, 2016, an educational component regarding the dispensing of soft prepackaged contact lenses to the list of tasks/procedures being taught to the registered apprentice. Apprentices perform dispensing tasks only after the registered supervisor has determined that the apprentice has had the appropriate education, and the apprentice has demonstrated competency to perform the task/procedure. Supervisors are required to document all educational components of the apprenticeship and the competency of the apprentice to perform those tasks/procedures.

Summary

The first thing to do is to plan to complete the 6 hours of continuing education in 2015 as described above. For information about continuing education providers, please go to www.optical.ohio.gov and click on the "Continuing Education" link. Qualified providers of continuing education are in the process of developing courses that will meet the requirements for the 2 hours of continuing education related to the dispensing of prepackaged soft contact lenses competently and responsibly.

Beginning January 1, 2016, Spectacle licensed opticians will be permitted to dispense prepackaged soft contact lenses. After January 1, 2016, supervisors of registered apprentices will be required to add competencies for dispensing prepackaged soft contact lenses to the educational process of each Spectacle apprentice.

Every year thereafter, Spectacle licensed opticians will be required to complete the 6 hours of continuing education as described above for licensure renewal.

Questions?

Contact:

Nancy Manns, Executive Director
Optical Dispensers Board
614-466-9707
nmanns@odb.ohio.gov

Nancy Manns