

Tennessee Board of Optometry



Newsletter



2013

A Regulatory Agency of the State of Tennessee

Fall

227 French Landing, Suite 300, Heritage Place MetroCenter, Nashville, TN 37243 <http://tennessee.gov/health> (615) 532-5100 or 1-800-778-4123 extension 5325100 • Office Hours: Monday – Friday 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Central Time (except state and federal holidays) Fax: (615) 532-5369

In conjunction with the purpose and goals of the Department of Health, the Mission of the Bureau of Health Licensure and Regulation is to: Monitor, access and enforce health care laws and regulations; Protect, promote and enhance quality health care for all citizens; Continuously strive to meet the needs of our customers in a respectful and caring manner; Provide quality work-life necessary to attract and retain competent, caring employees; Empower our employees to become entrepreneurs in their jobs; Increase awareness and public confidence in our services; and, Utilize our resources efficiently and cost effectively.

Health Related Boards' Offices Moving

The Department of Health's Division of Health Licensure and Regulation, Office of Health Related Boards will be transitioning from leased space at Heritage Place Metro Center to a newly renovated state-owned space. Our new address will be **665 Mainstream Drive, Nashville, TN 37243**. Our move is currently scheduled for the last week of October 2013.

All individual employee phone numbers and e-mail addresses will remain the same. You are encouraged to stay in contact with our office by using existing phone numbers and email addresses. However, if you plan to write the Health Related Boards after October 25, 2013, please write us at our new address at:

Tennessee Department of Health
Division of Health, Licensure and Regulation
Office of Health Related Boards
665 Mainstream Dr.
Nashville, Tenn. 37243
615-532-5100
1-800-778-4123

While the department has prepared diligently to minimize downtime, maintain accessibility and sustain productivity throughout this relatively complex move, we do appreciate your understanding and patience as personnel and material move into our new space. We look forward to working with you and providing outstanding customer service from our new location.

Board of Optometry

You may download a copy of the rules, applications and forms, board member list, board meeting schedule, policy statements, and other pertinent information at the board's web site:

<http://health.state.tn.us/Boards/Optometry/index.htm>

2014 Board Meeting Dates



February 26, 2014
9 a.m., Poplar Room

June 11, 2014
9 a.m., Poplar Room

August 27, 2014
9 a.m., Poplar Room

All board meetings will be held at 665 Mainstream Drive, Nashville TN, unless otherwise noted.

Change of Address

Must be reported in writing or by e-mail to the board's office within 30 days! Please include the following:

- your name and license number;
- your profession;
- your old address and phone number;
- your new address and phone number, e-mail address, and/or your fax number;
- your signature!

Keeping the board's administrative staff up to date on your location facilitates the timely notification to you of important information such as your application for licensure renewal and important statutory and rule changes.

You may fax your change to the board's administrative office at (615) 532-5369 or by mail at: 227 French Landing, Heritage Place MetroCenter, Suite 300, Nashville, TN 37243.

You may e-mail the Board at: TN.Health@tn.gov, call the Board at 615/532-5157, or visit the website at: <http://health.state.tn.us/Boards/Optometry/index.htm>

Continuing Education Requirements

As a prerequisite to maintaining licensure, an Optometrist must complete thirty (30) hours of Board approved continuing education during the two (2) calendar years (January 1 -December 31) that precede the licensure renewal year.

For those who are therapeutically certified, a minimum of twenty (20) of the thirty (30) hours of continuing education is required in courses pertaining to ocular disease and related systemic disease, as described in subparagraph (2)(c). At least one (1) of these twenty (20) hours shall be a course designed specifically to address prescribing practices.

For those therapeutically certified optometrists who have received approval to use pharmaceutical agents by injection pursuant to subparagraph 1045-02-.07(3)(d), current certification in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) is required.

Except for grand clinical rounds and courses provided by the Tennessee Academy of Optometry, and except for the one (1) hour course designed specifically to address prescribing practices, all continuing education courses shall be approved by the Association of Regulatory Boards of Optometry's Council on Optometric Practitioner Education (COPE).

Policy Statements

Continuing Education

The rules of the Tennessee Board of Optometry require each licensee to complete thirty (30) hours of approved continuing education (CE) during the two (2) calendar years (January 1 – December 31) that precede the licensure renewal year.

If a licensee is found to be deficient in the number or type of required CE hours for a reporting period, the Board will issue a Letter of Warning. The licensee has ninety (90) days from the date of the letter to make up the deficient hours.

If the licensee fails to make up the deficient hours within ninety (90) days, the Board will assess a civil penalty in the amount of One Hundred Dollars (\$100.00) and require the licensee to make up the deficient hours, along with six (6) additional hours, all within ninety (90) days.

The civil penalty may be assessed by an Agreed Citation. The assessment of a civil penalty is considered formal discipline. As a result, the discipline will be reported on the Board's website and reported to the National Healthcare Integrity and Protection Databank.

Amended by the Board of Optometry on the 10th day of December, 2010.

Lapsed License

The Tennessee Board of Optometry recognizes that a licensee may unintentionally allow his or her license to expire. State statute prohibits a licensee from working as an Optometrist unless he or she has an active license. Thus, the Board has adopted the following procedures for reinstatement of an expired license:

1. Upon recognition that his or her license has expired, the licensee must stop practicing immediately and contact the Board's administrative office and request a reinstatement application.
2. The licensee must complete the reinstatement in its entirety along with a detailed work history from the date the license expired. The application must be signed, notarized, and returned to the Board's administrative office along with the applicable fee and proof of documentation of continuing education requirements taken within the previous twelve (12) months.
3. Once the completed reinstatement application and all required documentation is received, the board administrator may immediately reinstate the license only if the license has been in an expired status for a period of three (3) months or less.
4. If the reinstatement application received indicates in the work history that the individual has worked more than three (3) months on an expired license, the license

will not be issued until the licensee has paid a penalty in the amount of \$100.00 for each month worked in excess of the three (3) months from the expiration date of the license.

The assessment of a civil penalty is considered formal discipline that is reportable on the Tennessee Department of Health's website.

Discipline for lapsed licenses will now be reportable to the national databanks as well as the Department's Disciplinary Action report and will be noted on the practitioner's licensure profile.

Professional Occupations Tax

Tenn Code Ann. §67-4-1701, et seq., requires the payment of an annual professional privilege (occupation) tax. Failure to pay your professional privilege tax constitutes grounds for suspension of your license to practice in Tennessee. If you fail to pay your professional privilege tax, the Department of Health will file formal charges against you seeking the suspension of your license pursuant to Tenn Code Ann. §67-4-1704 and Tenn Code Ann. §63-9-101, et seq. Avoid the possible suspension of your privilege to practice in Tennessee by remitting your tax to the Department of Revenue in a timely fashion. For more information please go to:

<http://tennessee.gov/revenue/tntaxes/proftax.htm>

Note: The Board of Optometry does not assess this tax; however, the Board's Administrative Office has recently mailed letters to licensees who have failed to pay their professional occupations tax. Practitioners who remain delinquent are being processed for suspension of their license.

Renew Your License Online

Practitioners may access the online service at Tennessee.gov/health to renew their licenses up to 120 days prior to the expiration date.

Click the "Licensing Renewal" link where you can renew your license and update your professional license information. Licensees are responsible for renewing their licenses on time and keeping the Board apprised of current information. It is a violation of the law and of the Board's rules to practice on an expired license.

-Step 1: Login - Select our board and your profession and enter your license number.

-Step 2: Update your Information - Change your home and/or office address.

-Step 3: Enter your renewal information - Answer all necessary questions, as if you were completing your hard-copy form.

-Step 4: Payment - Enter your credit card information through the secure site and choose "submit".

If you have met all of the criteria necessary, your renewal certificate will be mailed to you in approximately one week. Updated license information will be available on the department's web site within two business days

Retirement of License

If you are not practicing in Tennessee and do not wish to renew your license, it is suggested you retire your license rather than have it fall into failed to renew status. A retirement form may be obtained at our website at:

<http://health.state.tn.us/Downloads/g6010110.pdf>

If you do not have access to the internet, you may request a retirement form be mailed to you.

Legislative Updates

Public Chapter 41

Extends the Board of Optometry until June 30, 2017.

Public Chapter 122

EXPEDITED LICENSURE

Present law requires the health related boards to establish a procedure to expedite the issuance of a license, certification or permit to perform services regulated by each board to any person who is the spouse of a military service member who is licensed to perform professional services in another state and who left employment to accompany the person's spouse to Tennessee. The procedure includes:

(1) Issuing the person a license, certificate or permit, if, in the opinion of the board, the requirements for certification or licensure of such other state are substantially equivalent to that required in Tennessee; or
(2) Developing a method to authorize the person to perform professional services regulated by the board in Tennessee by issuing the person a temporary permit for a limited period of time.

This bill adds any military service member who is licensed to perform substantially similar professional services in another state and who applies for licensure in Tennessee within 180 days of retiring from the military, receiving an honorable discharge, or being released from active duty into the reserves, to the persons who are eligible to participate in the expedited licensure procedures.

MILITARY EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE

This bill requires the health related boards to accept military education, training or experience completed by a

person who applies for licensure in Tennessee within 180 days of retiring from the military, receiving an honorable discharge, or being released from active duty into the reserves toward the qualifications to receive the license or certification if the military education, training or experience is determined to be substantially equivalent to the state's standards.

TEMPORARY RENEWALS FOR ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY

This bill requires that the health related boards keep in good standing the license or certification of any person who is called to active military duty and who, at the time of such activation, was duly licensed or certified to perform a profession or occupation in Tennessee. A license that is kept in good standing pursuant to this bill will be temporarily renewed without payment of renewal fees, compliance with continuing education requirements, or performing any other act typically required for renewal; provided, that the continuing education requirements will only be waived in circumstances where the person's military duty prevents obtaining the credits or the person performs the licensed or certified profession or occupation as part of the person's military duties. The continuance or renewal of a license or certificate pursuant to this bill will continue until no later than six months from the person's release from active duty.

**To Contact This Board Call:
(615) 532-5100 local or (800) 778-4123
extension 5325100 nationwide or write to:**

**Tennessee Board of Optometry
227 French Landing, Suite 300
Heritage Place – MetroCenter
Nashville, TN 37243**

After October 31, 2013:

**Tennessee Board of Optometry
665 Mainstream Drive
Nashville, TN 37243**

TENNESSEE BOARD OF OPTOMETRY

BOARD MEMBERS

Jeff Foster, O.D.
Chair

David Talley, O.D.
Vice Chair

Dennis Matthews, O.D.
Secretary

Richard Orgain, O.D.

Scott Gentry, O.D.

Kimberly Button
Citizen Member

BOARD STAFF

Sheri Patterson
Board Administrator

LaRinda Pratt
Licensing Technician

Theodora (Teddy) Wilkins
Administrative Director