

## **THE COMPREHENSIVE EYE-HEALTH EXAMINATION**

During an initial visit for a prescription, optometrists are required by law to perform ten specific tests to assure that the eyes are free from disease or other disorder and are functioning visually. These tests include testing for glaucoma, visual acuity, refraction of the eye, muscle function, and other procedures which assess the condition of the eyes.

Three of the 10 tests must be personally made by a licensed optometrist. The remaining seven findings may be performed by a technician under the supervision of the optometrist.

## **PRESCRIPTIONS**

The Texas Optometry Act and a Federal Trade Commission Rule require optometrists to furnish a copy of the spectacle prescription upon completion of the comprehensive eye examination.

The Contact Lens Prescription Act and a Federal Trade Commission Rule require optometrists to furnish a copy of the contact lens prescription upon completion of the eye examination, which may include an additional visit to verify the proper fitting of the contact lens. There are exceptions in the law which must be fully explained to the patient and documented in the patient's file.

## **FILING A COMPLAINT**

A complaint may be submitted in writing to the Texas Optometry Board - preferably on the Board's Complaint Form. All facts should be included. Additionally, complainants are asked to sign a HIPPA waiver allowing access to medical records.

The Texas Optometry Board does not have statutory authority to resolve certain complaints such as fee disputes.

To obtain a complaint form, contact the Board at:

**TEXAS OPTOMETRY BOARD  
1801 CONGRESS AVE, STE 9.300  
AUSTIN TX 78701-1319**

**Phone: 512/305-8500**

**[www.tob.state.tx.us](http://www.tob.state.tx.us)** (a complaint form is available on the website)

**Or**

Call the Health Professions Council Complaint System at **1-800-821-3205** and request a complaint form by leaving your name and address.

# **OPTOMETRY**

## **CONSUMER INFORMATION**



Presented by

**TEXAS OPTOMETRY  
BOARD**

**[www.tob.texas.gov](http://www.tob.texas.gov)**

## Texas Optometry Board

The mission of the Texas Optometry Board (TOB) is to promote, preserve, and protect the health, safety and welfare needs of the people of Texas by fostering the providing of quality optometric care to the citizens of Texas through the regulation of the practice of optometry.

The Board is comprised of nine members, six licensed optometrists and three public members. The duties of the Board include issuing and renewing licenses, monitoring professional practice through inspections, answering questions, and receiving and processing complaints from the public.

This brochure contains information for consumers about optometry in the State of Texas and is made available by the TOB. Additional information can be obtained by writing or calling:

**TEXAS OPTOMETRY BOARD**  
**1801 CONGRESS AVE, STE 9.300**  
**AUSTIN, TEXAS 78701-1319**

**Telephone: 512/305-8500**  
**[www.tob.texas.gov](http://www.tob.texas.gov)**

*Esta publicación se puede pedir en español. (This pamphlet is available in the Spanish language upon request.)*

## Frequently Asked Questions About Optometry

### What is the difference between an optometrist, ophthalmologist, and optician?

An **OPTOMETRIST**, licensed by the Texas Optometry Board, is a health care practitioner trained to diagnose signs of ocular, neurological and systemic health problems and treat vision disorders. A therapeutic optometrist may also treat eye diseases and injuries, prescribe medicine and perform other procedures such as eye foreign body removal. An optometric glaucoma specialist may also treat glaucoma as authorized by the Texas Optometry Act and prescribe oral prescription drugs listed in the Optometry Act.

An **OPHTHALMOLOGIST**, licensed by the Texas Medical Board, is a physician trained in eye surgery and eye disease. Ophthalmologists prescribe glasses, contact lenses, and medicine, and perform major eye surgery such as cataract surgery.

An **OPTICIAN** is an eye wear provider trained to select, manufacture and dispense spectacles and sell or deliver contact lenses upon a prescription written by an optometrist or ophthalmologist. An optician is not licensed as an optometrist or ophthalmologist.

### What is the education and training of an optometrist?

The academic credentials of students entering a college of optometry are the same as those entering other health professions and the optometry college curriculum is a minimum of four years. Prior to licensure in Texas, optometrists must take and pass a four-part national examination which test the optometrist on the science of the eye structures, abnormality and disease, treatment and management of disease, and clinical skills. Additionally, applicants must pass a Texas state jurisprudence exam covering the laws and rules of the Texas Optometry Board.

### How is the competency of the optometrist continually evaluated?

Optometrists, by law, must complete 32 hours of continuing education each biennial renewal cycle. Twenty-four of the hours must be in diagnostic and therapeutic education and techniques.

### Am I entitled to a copy of my patient records?

The Texas Optometry Act states that the optometrist owns the patient record, but the patient is entitled to a copy of the record when a signed written request is made to the optometrist. The optometrist may charge a reasonable fee. A "patient record" has been defined by Board rule as the patient chart, historical record, or working document during the course of examination and patient care between the doctor and patient (but should not be considered a prescription).