COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRISTS OF ONTARIO

65 St. Clair Avenue East
Suite 900
Toronto, ON M4T 2Y3
T: 416.479.9295
TF: 1.833.402.4819
F: 647. 577. 4271
collegeoptom.on.ca

Policy

Type:	Registration Committee		
Name:	Non-Practising Status		
Status:	Approved (Council)	**Version:**	1
Date Approved:	January 20, 2016	**Date Revised:**	September 19, 2025

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish a fair process for members who are not practising in Ontario, but wish to maintain their registration with the College, while ensuring the delivery of the highest quality of eye care in the public interest.

Scope

This policy applies to all members of the College of Optometrists of Ontario (the "College").

Background

There are four classes of membership with the College: (1) general, (2) academic, (3) inactive and (4) emergency.

It is a condition of registration for both the general and academic classes of membership that a member must provide at least 750 hours of direct optometric care to patients in Canada in every three-year period (Registration Regulation, s. 7). If a member holds an appointment at the School of Optometry of the University of Waterloo or other optometric educational facility in Ontario approved by the Council, the member may apply to the Registration Committee for an exemption from the practice hour requirement on the basis that the member's academic duties prevented the member from meeting the requirement. The Registration Regulation does not provide for any other exceptions to the practice hour requirement.

If a member in the general or academic class does not meet the practice hour requirement and has not been exempted from it, the Registrar may refer the member to the Quality Assurance Committee for a practice assessment (in accordance with the Registration and General Regulations). A practice assessment may include the inspection and assessment of records, an inspection of the member's office and a practice questionnaire. If the Quality Assurance Committee finds deficiencies in the member's

practice, the Committee can make recommendations, require the member to complete continuing education activities or require the member to undergo a clinical evaluation. Following a clinical evaluation, the Quality Assurance Committee may require the member to complete a more comprehensive remedial program or impose terms, conditions and limitations on the member's certificate of registration (General Regulation, ss. 27-29).

The purpose of the practice hour requirement is to ensure that practising optometrists remain current in their ability to practise the profession safely and competently. For members who need or want to stop practising for whatever reason, they may request to transfer from the general or academic class of registration to the inactive class. The College has developed this policy to establish the process to be followed for members transferring to the inactive class.

Policy

What does an Inactive class of registration mean?

The inactive class allows individuals to remain a member of the College when they wish to cease practising temporarily rather than having to resign their certificate of registration. Members in the inactive class are not permitted to practise optometry in Ontario. The member's entry on the College's public Register will state "Member Non-Practising".

Requesting a transfer to Inactive Class (Non-Practising)

A member may change their status from the general or academic class to the inactive class (non-practising) by signing and delivering an application to transfer to the inactive class and an acknowledgment and undertaking to the College in the form attached as Appendix A. Members in the inactive class of registration are subject to the following conditions:

1. They shall not provide optometric care to patients in Ontario;
2. They shall not supervise the provision of optometric care to patients in Ontario; and
3. They shall use the qualification of "(non-practising)" or "(membre inactif)" after the term, title or designation "optometrist", "optométriste", "doctor of optometry" or "docteur en optométrie" referred to in paragraph 19 of section 1 of Ontario Regulation 119/94 (General) made under the Act.

Upon receipt of the application to transfer to the inactive class and signed acknowledgment and undertaking, the College will change the member's registration class to inactive and update the public Register.

As members of the College, Inactive members must still provide information to the College upon request, renew their certificate annually and pay all fees required under the *Optometry Act*, the Regulations and the College's by-laws.

Returning to the General or Academic Class from Inactive Class

A member who holds an inactive certificate of registration, may apply to the College to return to the class of membership they held before going inactive and that class of membership will be re-issued if the member satisfies the following:

1. They complete the application to transfer their class;
2. They pay any fee, penalty or other amount owed to the College;
3. They provide the College with any information that is required by the Registrar, including: a declaration of hours of practice in the current year, a statement of good standing, proof of liability insurance, and a completed Practice Location/Change of Information Form; and
4. They demonstrate to a panel of the Registration Committee that they possess the current knowledge, skill and judgment relating to the practice of the profession that would be expected of a member holding an active general or academic certificate of registration by complying with the Quality Assurance Committee's Policy - *Direct Optometric Care Hours Requirements.* Note that depending on the number of practice hours they have completed in Canada, members may be required to complete a practice assessment or practice evaluation at their expense in order to meet this requirement.

Note that for members who have anything less that 750 practice hours in Canada in the three years preceding their application to transfer to an active class, their application will be referred to the Quality Assurance Committee for their consideration of the member's practice hours. Where members have 750 practice hours or more in Canada in the three years preceding their application, provided they meet the other requirements, their general or academic class registration will be re-issued.

Summary of Steps for Return to Practice in the General or Academic Class of Registration

For members who practised 750 hours or more in past three years	**For members who practised between 1 and 750 hours in past three years**	**For member who has not practised in past three years**
1. Complete Application to transfer class of registration	1. Complete Application to transfer class of registration	1. Complete Application to transfer class of registration
2. Pay fees, and any penalties or amounts owed to College	2. Pay fees, and any penalties or amounts owed to College	2. Pay fees, and any penalties or amounts owed to College
3. Provide the following: • declaration of hours of practice • statement of good standing • proof of liability insurance, and • completed Practice Location/Change of Information Form	3. Provide the following: • declaration of hours of practice, • statement of good standing • proof of liability insurance, and • completed Practice Location/Change of Information Form	3. Provide the following: • declaration of hours of practice • statement of good standing • proof of liability insurance, and • completed Practice Location/Change of Information Form
4.Await confirmation from Registrar of active status prior to resuming practice	4. Application referred to Quality Assurance Committee and member will be required to successfully complete practice assessment at	4. Application referred to Quality Assurance Committee and member will be required to successfully complete practice evaluation at

	their expense before transfer to active status will be granted	their expense before transfer to active status will be granted
	5. Await confirmation from Registrar of active status prior to resuming practice	5.Await confirmation from Registrar of active status prior to resuming practice

The College strives to process Return to Practise applications in a timely manner. However, the College urges members to consult with the College prior to making any practice arrangements.

References to Relevant Legislation

Registration Regulation, O. Reg. 837/93 under the *Optometry Act, 1991*, S.O. 1991, c. 35: sections 6.1 and 7

General Regulation, O. Reg. 119/94 under the *Optometry Act, 1991*, S.O. 1991, c. 35: sections 23-34

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ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND UNDERTAKING

TO TRANSFER TO INACTIVE (NON-PRACTISING) CERTIFICATE OF REGISTRATION

College of Optometrists of Ontario

Updated September 15, 2025

1. I, (Name of Optometrist) _____ am a member of the College of Optometrists of Ontario (the "College").

2. I hold/I am applying for (as an applicant):

   A general certificate of registration # _____ with the College.
   OR
   An academic certificate of registration # _____ with the College.

3. I am requesting an inactive (non-practising) certificate of registration with the College effective: immediately OR as of _____ / _____ / _____
   [day/month/year]

4. I am voluntarily providing this acknowledgment and undertaking in order to transfer my active certificate of registration to an inactive certificate of registration.

5. I acknowledge that my inactive certificate of registration is subject to the following conditions with which I will comply:
   a. I shall not provide optometric care to patients in Ontario;
   b. I shall not supervise the provision of optometric care to patients in Ontario; and
   c. I shall use the qualification of "(non-practising)" or "(membre inactif)" after the term, title or designation "optometrist", "optométriste", "doctor of optometry" or "docteur en optométrie" referred to in paragraph 19 of section 1 of Ontario Regulation 119/94 (General) made under the Act.

6. I acknowledge that a breach of any of the conditions on my certificate of registration constitutes professional misconduct and that the College may take action against me for any such breach.

7. I further undertake as follows:
   a. I will renew my certificate of registration annually;
   b. I will pay all fees required of me under the Optometry Act, the Regulations and the College's By-laws;
   c. I will submit a completed member report annually in accordance with the College's By-laws;

d. If the College requests information of me, I will respond to the College in a timely manner and provide the requested information; and

e. I will notify the Registrar in writing of any change to information that I have previously provided to the College.

LOCATION OF PATIENT RECORDS

The College regularly receives calls from patients seeking assistance in locating their health record from members who are no longer in practice. When a member of the College ceases to practice, for whatever reason, the member's patients must continue to have access to the health information contained in their patient record.

If patient records have been relocated, patients must be notified of the location of their records and the procedure to follow to request access to or transfer of their records to another practitioner.

To assist us when contacted, please fill out the information below. My patient records have been transferred to - Name of Optometrist: _____ Phone Number: _____

Address: _____City: _____ Province: ONTARIO Postal Code: _____

How have patients been notified of the location of their health records and how to access them?

_____

_____

_____

8. I acknowledge that my inactive status and the details of this undertaking will be posted on the College's public Register.

9. I undertake that I will not resume practising optometry in Ontario until I have been notified in writing by the Registrar of my authorization to do so.

10. I acknowledge that the Registrar will authorize my return to practice provided I comply with the following:

    a. I submit an application to transfer from inactive to an active class of registration;

    b. I pay any fee, penalty or other amount owed to the College;

    c. I provide the College with any information that is required by the Registrar, including: a declaration of hours of practice in the current year, a statement of good standing, proof of liability insurance, and a completed Practice Location/Change of Information Form; and

d. I demonstrate to a panel of the Registration Committee that I possess the current knowledge, skill and judgment relating to the practice of the profession that would be expected of a member holding an active general or academic certificate of registration by complying with the Quality Assurance Committee's Policy - Direct Optometric Care Hours Requirement which provides as follows:

   i. Depending on the number of practice hours I have completed in Canada, I may be required to complete a practice assessment or practice evaluation at my expense in order to meet this requirement;

   ii. If I have anything less that 750 practice hours in Canada in the three years preceding my application to transfer to an active class, my application will be referred to the Quality Assurance Committee for their consideration of my practice hours; and

   iii. If I have 750 practice hours or more in Canada in the three years preceding my application, provided I meet the other requirements, my general or academic class registration will be re-issued.

11. If I am dissatisfied with any decision of the Registrar made under this Acknowledgement and Undertaking, I may request, in writing, that a panel of the Registration Committee review that decision.

12. I have read this Acknowledgement and Undertaking and understand my obligations under it. I have had an opportunity to seek independent legal advice and have either done so or decided not to seek such advice. I am signing this Acknowledgement and Undertaking voluntarily.

Signed at _____ [City], this ____ [Date] day of _____ [Month], _____ [Year]

_____ _____

Signature of Member Signature of Witness

_____ _____

Printed Name of Member Printed Name of Witness

Date Received at College:

FOR COLLEGE USE ONLY:
Info for the file – ICRC:
Info for the file - QA:
REGISTRATION STAFF: