



## Policy

<b>Type:</b>	Quality Assurance Program		
<b>Name:</b>	Practising Members with Insufficient Practice Hours		
<b>Status:</b>	Approved (Council)	<b>Version:</b>	1
<b>Date Approved:</b>	April 6, 2017	<b>Date Revised:</b>	

### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish a fair process for practising members who fail to provide at least 750 hours of direct optometric care to patients in Canada in every three-year period, 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

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 following the year in which the member is first registered (Registration Regulation, s. 7). If a member holds an appointment at the University of Waterloo School of Optometry and Vision Science 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.

If a member does not meet the practice hour requirement and has not been exempted from it, the Registrar must 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 and up-to-date in their ability to practice the profession safely and competently. The College recognizes

the importance to establish a process to follow when a practising member does not meet the practice hour requirement.

### **Policy**

If a practising member fails to meet the practice hour requirement, the member will be referred to the Quality Assurance Committee for a practice assessment or practice evaluation, depending on the number of practice hours the member provided in the last three-year period.

Specifically:

1. If the member has provided less than 750 hours of direct optometric care to patients in Canada in the last three years the member will be required to successfully complete a practice assessment at their own cost.
2. If the member has not provided any hours of direct optometric care to patients in Canada in the last three years or is unable to complete a practice assessment, the member will be required to successfully complete a practice evaluation at their own cost and comply with any orders of the Quality Assurance Committee.
3. If the member has provided less than 750 hours or has not provided any hours of direct optometric care to patients in Canada in the last 3 years, the member may request to change their status to non-practising in accordance with the Non-Practising Status Policy.

The College strives to fulfill its duty to protect the public interest and to ensure consistency among all members (both practising and non-practising).

### **References to Relevant Legislation**

Registration Regulation, O. Reg. 837/93 under the Optometry Act, 1991, S.O. 1991, c. 35: section 7  
General Regulation, O. Reg. 119/94 under the Optometry Act, 1991, S.O. 1991, c. 35: sections 23-34