

## Information for a General Certificate of Registration application for ACOE applicants

**Updated February 24, 2025**

If you wish to practise optometry in the Province of Ontario, you must be a member of the College of Optometrists of Ontario. To become a member of the College you must successfully complete the application process. There are several steps to the process. This package describes the application process and outlines the recommended sequence for completing the requirements for registration as an optometrist in Ontario.

### Labour Mobility

Under the *Ontario Labour Mobility Act*, applicants who are registered with an equivalent Certificate of Registration in another Canadian jurisdiction who apply for registration in Ontario will be asked to provide a notarized copy of their academic degree that formed the basis of their registration in that jurisdiction as part of the application package for administrative purposes only. They are required to successfully complete the Ontario Optometric Jurisprudence Exam and meet all of the administrative requirements for registration including providing a Certificate of Standing directly from the Canadian jurisdiction where they are currently registered.

An applicant using the labour mobility provisions in the *Ontario Labour Mobility Act* to obtain registration in Ontario, is to have practised the profession of optometry to the extent that would be permitted by a General Certificate of Registration at any time in the three years immediately before the date of that applicant's application. If the applicant is unable to do so, he/she must meet any further requirement to undertake, obtain or undergo material additional training, experience, examinations or assessments that may be specified by a panel of the Registration Committee.

In addition to a Certificate of Standing, the College will require evidence in the form of written attestation by a non-relative colleague registered in good standing with the Canadian jurisdiction where the applicant is currently registered, who can confirm that the applicant was practising at a certain named practice location. The following information will need to be included in the written attestation:

- The full name and registration certificate number of the practising member;
- The full address of the practice location;
- The dates/range of dates the applicant practised at the practice location; and
- The approximate number of patients the applicant saw.

As noted above, under the *Ontario Labour Mobility Act*, applicants who are registered with an equivalent Certificate of Registration in another Canadian jurisdiction who apply for registration in Ontario are required to provide a Certificate of Standing directly from the Canadian jurisdiction where they are currently registered.

In general, the application process is as follows:

### **Meet the Academic Requirement (Updated on February 24, 2017)**

As of January 1, 2017, new applicants for registration must be certified to prescribe therapeutic drugs (or TPA-certified) prior to making their application to the College. This includes those applying for registration in Ontario under labour mobility provisions.

Applicants must successfully complete a recognized/approved academic program. This includes the program at the University of Waterloo School of Optometry and Vision Science (UWOVS) and all programs accredited by the Accreditation Council on Optometric Education (ACOE). All of the ACOE accredited programs are in North America.

Applicants for registration in Ontario will be asked to provide a notarized copy of their Doctor of Optometry degree certificate as part of the application package.

Those applying under the labour mobility provisions need to refer to the Labour Mobility section above.

### **Submit an Application Form (Updated on February 24, 2025)**

Applications may only be submitted online. To complete your application form:

- visit the College website: <https://collegeoptom.on.ca/applicants/apply-online/>
- create an account, complete the application form, and select your preferred Jurisprudence Exam date
- complete the declaration and credit card payment of \$474.60 including 13% HST;
- provide the College with all the requested documents (at your own pace);

You will be informed via email that you are placed on the waitlist to sit the Ontario Jurisprudence Examination administered by the College. You may write the exam prior to submitting all your documents.

### **Write Your Examinations (Updated on March 7, 2025)**

The College has approved the following entry-to-practice exams:

- A) the Canadian Assessment of Competence in Optometry (CACO); or
- B) the Optometry Examining Board of Canada (OEBC) written exam and OSCE; or
- C) National Board of Examiners in Optometry (NBEO) Exam (Parts I, II, and III must have been successfully challenged after January 18, 2019, and at least one part has been registered for by March 7, 2025.)

The OEBC written exam and OSCE replaces the CACO as the Canadian standard assessment by which competence is verified.

Contact the Optometry Examining Board of Canada (OEBC) for an application to sit the OEBC written exam and OSCE:

Optometry Examining Board of Canada  
37 Sandiford Drive, Suite 403, Stouffville, ON L4A 3Z2  
Phone: (905) 642-1373  
Email: exams@oebc.ca

Detailed information about the format and content of the exam is available on the OEBC website: <http://www.oebc.ca>. After the exam, OEBC will send you one original report of your exam results. Either obtain a notarized copy of the original report or take a photocopy for your records and send the original report directly to the College of Optometrists of Ontario. It is your responsibility to submit this information to the College.

### Ontario Optometric Jurisprudence Examination

The College will send you study material via email for the Ontario Optometric Jurisprudence Examination upon completion of the online jurisprudence seminar. The exam is administered six times annually.

When the College receives your application form, you will be automatically placed on the waitlist for the next administration of the jurisprudence exam or your chosen administration. All jurisprudence exam and seminar dates are posted on the home page of our website (<https://collegeoptom.on.ca/applicants/jurisprudence-seminar-and-exam/>). Please note that even though your application for registration may be open for a maximum of 24 months, **the Ontario Optometric Jurisprudence Examination must be successfully completed within 12 months of your application being received by the College.** Please refer to study material available on the College's website under the Resources tab.

### **Submit Additional Documents**

#### CPIC Vulnerable Sector (VS) Check (Updated February 18, 2016)

One of the requirements of registration as an optometrist in Ontario is that the applicant must not have been found guilty in relation to a criminal offence in any jurisdiction, or an offence under the *Criminal Code* (Canada), the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act* (Canada) and the *Food and Drugs Act* (Canada).

To provide evidence that an applicant has met this requirement, each applicant must provide a CPIC Vulnerable Sector (VS) check as part of the registration process from the respective

jurisdiction in Canada in addition to the jurisdiction(s) in which they practised in the past. This process verifies whether an individual has a criminal record, as well as any record suspensions for sexual offences and local police records for information relevant to the VS check. The information that can be legally disclosed is provided to the applicant. The results of a CPIC VS check must be dated within six months of the applicant becoming registered. If the applicant does not become registered within six months of the date the CPIC VS check results were issued by the police, the applicant will be required to submit an updated CPIC VS check.

#### Citizenship/Permanent Resident Status/authorization to practise

If you are a Canadian citizen, have a photocopy of one of the following pieces of identification notarized and submit it with your application form: Birth Certificate, Canadian Passport or Citizenship Identification Card. If you have Permanent Resident Status or authorization to practise optometry under the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*, have a photocopy of your Permanent Resident Status or authorization notarized and submit it with your application form. This document must be valid in order for your Certificate of Registration to be issued and activated.

#### Certificate or Letter of Standing

If you have ever been licensed or registered to practise optometry or any other regulated health profession anywhere outside Ontario, arrange for the licensing body where you practised to complete a Certificate (or Letter) of Standing outlining your current status in that jurisdiction. A Certificate of Standing form is available from the College or on the College website (under Resources/Forms). The Certificate of Standing must be dated no more than six months before your Certificate of Registration is issued.

### **Pay the Membership Fee**

The membership year runs from January 1 through December 31. New registrants pay a pro-rated fee for the year in which they become registered.

### **The Registration Decision and Appeals**

Initially, the Registrar considers each application for registration. The applicant is issued a Certificate of Registration if the Registrar is satisfied that all of the registration requirements have been met. If the Registrar has doubts about whether or not the applicant meets the requirements for registration, or if the Registrar intends to refuse the application or to attach terms, conditions or limitations to the Certificate of Registration, the application is referred to the Registration Committee. The applicant has the right to submit a written submission for the Committee's consideration with respect to their application.

If the applicant is not satisfied with the Registration Committee's decision, he or she may request an appeal of the decision before the Health Professions Appeal and Review Board in the form of either an oral hearing or a document review. The Board's decision may be further appealed to the Divisional Court.

### **Application Timelines (Updated on March 7, 2025)**

It is a policy of the College that an application for registration may remain open at the College for a maximum of 24 months.

Although applicants have up to 24 months to complete their application, the following timelines must be adhered to when submitting documents to the College:

CPIC Vulnerable Sector (VS) Check	Dated a maximum of six months before Certificate of Registration is issued.
Certificate of Standing (if required)	Dated a maximum of six months before Certificate of Registration is issued.
If not a Canadian citizen: permanent residency or authorization under the <i>Immigration Act</i> to engage in the practice of optometry	Valid at the time the Certificate of Registration is issued.
Ontario Optometric Jurisprudence Exam	Successfully completed within one year of applying for registration. Please note: the Ontario Optometric Jurisprudence Exam is administered only by the College of Optometrists of Ontario.
Canadian Assessment of Competence in Optometry (CACO)/ OEBC written exam and OSCE/National Board of Examiners in Optometry (NBEO) Exam (Parts I, II, and III all to be successfully challenged between January 18, 2019, and March 7, 2025.)	Successfully completed within three years of applying for registration (otherwise additional requirements must be met)

If an application is still incomplete twenty-one months after the form was initially received by the College, the applicant will be sent a letter via email reminding them that they have three months to complete the application before it expires.

The two-year application period automatically ends when an applicant has successfully completed the requirements for registration. In other words, if an applicant completed all the requirements for registration in only 8 months, they may not wait 16 months (for a total of two years) to register. The two-year timeline is provided only to give applicants adequate time to complete the registration requirements, not to allow successful applicants to delay the date they register.

A complete application is immediately forwarded to the Registrar. If the Registrar proposes to issue a certificate of registration, the applicant will be notified that his or her application has been successful and that their registration must be activated within 30 days by paying a pro-rated fee for the registration year or the applicant risks having his or her application terminated. An applicant who wishes to pursue registration with the College but whose original application has been terminated for non-activation must submit a new application for registration.

At the time of your registration, you will be asked to submit information about your practice location(s) and to provide proof of professional liability insurance. If you do not intend to practice immediately, you may become registered but you will not be able to begin practising until you have submitted proof of professional liability insurance coverage and provided the information about your practice location(s) to the Registrar with a **Starting Date** which is the date that you will officially be allowed to practise at that location as long as the College has received confirmation of your valid liability insurance coverage and has notified you accordingly.

## **Application Checklist (Updated on February 24, 2025)**

This checklist identifies a number of documents that must be notarized before they are submitted to the College with an application. **A notarized copy of a document is one that has been reviewed by a Notary Public who has stamped the copy with his/her seal and then signed and dated it.**

- Provide the College with contact information for the location to which you would like all of your mail to be sent. If your address changes, the College must be informed. The College is not responsible for any failure to communicate with you as a result of an unreported address change.
- Have a passport photo (taken within the last six months) notarized.
- Have all the photocopies of your degrees, certificates and fellowships notarized.
- If you are a Canadian citizen, have a photocopy of one of the following pieces of identification notarized and submit it with your application form: Birth Certificate, Canadian Passport or Citizenship Identification Card.
- If you have Permanent Resident Status or authorization to practice optometry under the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*, have a photocopy of your Permanent Resident Status or authorization notarized. This document must be valid in order for your Certificate of Registration to be issued and activated.
- If you have already successfully completed the CACO/OEBC written exam and OSCE/NBEO Exam but did not apply to Ontario at that time, have a photocopy of your CACO/OEBC written exam and OSCE/NBEO Exam results notarized.
- If you have ever been licensed or registered to practise optometry or any other regulated health profession, arrange for the licensing body where you practised to send the College a Certificate of Standing outlining your current status in that jurisdiction. A Certificate of Standing form is available from the College or on the College website (under Resources/Forms). The Certificate of Standing must be dated no more than six months before your Certificate of Registration is issued.
- Arrange to have a current CPIC Vulnerable Sector (VS) check submitted to the College. If you do not become registered within six months of the date the CPIC Vulnerable Sector (VS) check results were issued by the police, you will be required to submit an updated CPIC Vulnerable Sector (VS) check.
- Fill out your application form completely and accurately. If you provide the College with false or misleading information on your application, you will be deemed not to have satisfied the requirements for registration.

## **Registration Requirements for a General Certificate of Registration**

Please refer to the consolidated *Registration Regulation* (O.Reg. 237/93) as amended.

[http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/regs/english/elaws\\_regs\\_930837\\_e.htm](http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/regs/english/elaws_regs_930837_e.htm)

## Submitting Documents Required for Registration (Updated March 7, 2025)

It is a policy of the Registration Committee that an application for registration may remain open at the College for a maximum of 24 months as long as the Ontario Optometric Jurisprudence Exam is successfully completed within one year of applying for registration with the College. No applicant may have more than one valid application for registration open with the College at any one time.

You are reminded that, although you have a maximum of 24 months to complete your application, additional timelines related to submitting your application documents to the College are as follows:

No.	Registration Document	Submitting the Document
1	Application Form and Fee	Complete online application form and declaration, and pay fee to the College.
2	Diploma(s)/Degree(s)	Upload <u>notarized copies</u> of your diploma(s) / degree(s) as soon as they are available.
3	Ontario Optometric Jurisprudence Exam Results	Only the College of Optometrists of Ontario administers the Ontario Optometric Jurisprudence Exam. Following the Jurisprudence Exam sitting, the College will notify you of your results on a 'pass' or 'fail' basis and put a copy with your application for registration. You must successfully complete this exam within one year of applying for registration otherwise you will be required to submit a new application form and application fee.
4	Canadian Assessment of Competence in Optometry (CACO)/ Optometry Examining Board of Canada (OEBC) written exam and OSCE/National Board of Examiners in Optometry (NBEO) Exam (Parts I, II, and III all to be successfully challenged between January 18, 2019, and March 7, 2025.)	Following the CACO/OEBC written exam and OSCE/NBEO Exam sitting, exam results are sent directly to each applicant. It is your responsibility to submit an official copy to the College. If you have successfully completed the CACO/OEBC written exam and OSCE/NBEO Exam before applying for registration in Ontario, you must submit a <u>notarized copy</u> of your results.
5	CPIC Vulnerable Sector (VS) Check	An official CPIC Vulnerable Sector (VS) check must be sent to the College and must be dated no more than six months before your Certificate of Registration is issued and activated.
6	Certificate of Standing (if required)	A Certificate of Standing must be sent to the College directly from the issuing body and must be dated no more than six months before your Certificate of Registration is issued and activated. A Certificate of Standing form is available from the College or on the College website (under Resources/Forms).



7	<p>If the applicant <b>is</b> a Canadian citizen, proof of Canadian residency in the form of a notarized copy of the applicant's birth certificate or the applicant's passport page containing the applicant's identification information</p> <p>If the applicant <b>is not</b> a Canadian citizen: permanent residency or authorization under the Immigration Act to engage in the practice of optometry</p>	<p>Submit a <u>notarized copy</u> of your document. In order for your Certificate of Registration to be issued and activated, this document must be valid.</p>
---	---	--

## Acceptable Variations in Documents Required for Registration

(Updated on March 7, 2025)

No.	Registration Document	Acceptable Variations
1	Application Form and Fee	Regarding the notarization of photos, applicants are able to submit a separate page if the notary public is unable to notarize the actual photo of the applicant. The separate page is required to reference the applicant's photo and contain a copy of it, and be signed and sealed by a notary public.
2	Diploma(s)/Degree(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One acceptable variation exists for applicants who had submitted notarized copies of their diploma(s)/degree(s) to the College in the past. For these applicants, the College may be able to retrieve notarized copies of their degree certificates from their old application files <u>if</u> they are available.</li> <li>• Subject to the College's satisfaction, should applicants not be able to present a notarized copy of their degree(s) to the College due to extenuating circumstances, the College may be able to accept an official transcript directly from the educational institution.</li> </ul>
3	Ontario Optometric Jurisprudence Exam Results	None
4	Entry-to-Practice Exam	Canadian Assessment of Competence in Optometry (CACO)/ Optometry Examining Board of Canada (OEBC) written exam and OSCE/National Board of Examiners in Optometry (NBEO) Exam (Parts I, II, and III all to be successfully challenged between January 18, 2019, and March 7, 2025.)
5	CPIC Vulnerable Sector (VS) Check	Contact us if you cannot obtain a VSC

6	Certificate of Standing (if required)	For applicants not applying under the labour mobility provisions, the equivalent optometric regulatory body in the jurisdictions they previously practised in, e.g. in the U.S., U.K., or Australia, can send the College a standard letter of good standing. However, all the questions that the College requires answers for contained in the College's Certificate of Standing form, must be addressed in the standard letter.
7	<p>If the applicant <b>is</b> a Canadian citizen, proof of Canadian residency in the form of a notarized copy of the applicant's birth certificate or the applicant's passport page containing the applicant's identification information</p> <p>If the applicant <b>is not</b> a Canadian citizen: permanent residency or authorization under the Immigration Act to engage in the practice of optometry</p>	The applicant has to provide the relevant proof at any time prior to registration with the College, as long as it is provided within 24 months of the application date.