

History of the Texas Optometry Board

1921

The Texas State Board of Examiners in Optometry is created by the Thirty-Seventh Legislature. All persons currently practicing optometry were given 120 days after appointment of the first board by the governor to file a declaration with the Board to continue practicing and their "intention and purpose to take such examination in optometry as the Board may prescribe."

The Optometry Act defines the practice of optometry and requires passing an examination and registration with the Board and each county in which the licensee practices.

One of the First Licenses Issued by the Board



1925

The Optometry Act is amended to specifically define terms used in original law including the scope of practice of optometry. The legislature determines that "[i]n the interest of public health, welfare, safety and comfort . . .," a personal eye examination is required before an ophthalmic prescription may be issued. License renewal fee is set at \$5.00.

1931

1943 Account Ledger (\$5.00 Renewal Fee)

No.	Name	Am. St. Bond	to the coll. of	from
1	J. H. J. J.	400	200	200
2	W. H. J.	400	200	200
3	J. H. J.	400	200	200
4	J. H. J.	400	200	200
5	J. H. J.	400	200	200
6	J. H. J.	400	200	200
7	J. H. J.	400	200	200
8	J. H. J.	400	200	200
9	J. H. J.	400	200	200
10	J. H. J.	400	200	200
11	J. H. J.	400	200	200
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18	J. H. J.	400	200	200
19	J. H. J.	400	200	200
20	J. H. J.	400	200	200
21	J. H. J.	400	200	200
22	J. H. J.	400	200	200
23	J. H. J.	400	200	200
24	J. H. J.	400	200	200
25	J. H. J.	400	200	200
26	J. H. J.	400	200	200
27	J. H. J.	400	200	200
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43	J. H. J.	400	200	200
44	J. H. J.	400	200	200
45	J. H. J.	400	200	200
46	J. H. J.	400	200	200
47	J. H. J.	400	200	200
48	J. H. J.	400	200	200
49	J. H. J.	400	200	200
50	J. H. J.	400	200	200

Board membership is increased from five members to six members, each member serving a six year term.

1939

Specific actions which authorize the Board to cancel, revoke or suspend a license are added to the law, including "unfit or incompetent by reason of negligence;" fraud, deceit or misrepresentation in the practice of optometry;" "licensee is an habitual drunkard or is addicted to the use of morphine, cocaine or other drugs having similar effect;" and "wilfully or repeatedly violat[ing] any of the provisions of this act." Many of these provisions survive intact in the current Optometry Act. The Act requires license applicants to pass an examination, and either graduate from a board approved optometry school or complete four consecutive years of study in an optometrist's office in Texas. Reciprocity provisions in the Act are repealed. Practicing optometry from house to house is prohibited.

1991

Amendments to Act substantially expand the scope of optometry to include the practice of therapeutic optometry. Licensees may now examine or diagnose visual defects, abnormal conditions and diseases of the eye and adnexa, and administer drugs. Optometrists already licensed were required to take additional education and pass national test prior to making application for therapeutic optometrist license. All new licensees receive a therapeutic license.

Envelope Containing Attorney General Opinion Holding Therapeutic Drug Rule 280.5 Valid and Constitutional: DM-152



1993

Agency undergoes Sunset Review. House Bill 1479 amends statute to include additional conduct which subjects licensee to disciplinary action, to allow Board to impose administrative penalties, to require disciplinary hearings to be heard by the State Office of Administrative Hearings, to require tonometry in the initial eye examination, and to require training for Board Members. The amendments add provisional and limited clinical licenses and add an inactive license status. Licensure by endorsement is repealed and the continuing education requirement is increased to 16 hours.

1995

Board offices moved to current location in downtown Austin at Guadalupe and Third Street.



1996

CLINICAL EXAMINATION	Station Points	Time
Written Clinical	100	2 30 min.
Interview & Consent Form Review	100	15 min.
Visual Acuity Station	50	5 min.
Data Analysis #1	50	5 min.
Data Analysis #2	50	5 min.
Station #1 - Refraction	75	5 min.
Station #2 - Subjective Finding	100	15 min.
Station #3 - Field Defect Interpretation	50	5 min.
Station #4 - Optokinematics	100	5 min.
Station #5 - Ocular/Visual Base Test	75	5 min.
Station #6 - Ophthalmology	40	5 min.
Station #7 - Otolithology	50	5 min.
Station #8 - Ocular System Pathology	40	5 min.
Station #9 - Ocular Nerves	50	5 min.
Station #10 - Assessment of a Contact Lens	50	5 min.
Station #11 - Contact Lens Specifications	75	5 min.
Station #12 - Ocular/Visual System	50	5 min.
Station #13 - Multifocal Identification	75	5 min.
Station #14 - Lens Type Identification	50	5 min.
Station #15 - Refraction	50	15 min.
Total	2,000	2 30 - 15 min.

Board accepts all examinations conducted by National Board of Examiners in Optometry. State clinical examination is no longer offered. All applicants must take Parts I, II, and III, and the TMOD exam given by the NBEO. The Board continues to prepare the Jurisprudence Examination.

1998

Number of licensed optometrists exceeds 3,000.

Score Sheet for Last Board Clinical Exam

1999

Amendments to act add a new license: Optometric Glaucoma Specialist. These licensees may treat glaucoma with the co-management of ophthalmologists, and prescribe some oral prescription medications as well as anti-glaucoma topical medications. Applicants for license must be therapeutic optometrists who have completed a Board approved course and examination as well as other requirements. The Optometry Act is reorganized as Chapter 351 of the Texas Occupations Code.

Board Staff Issues First Optometric Glaucoma Specialist License



2001



Amendments to Optometry Act remove association membership restrictions for Board Members. Executive Director Lois Ewald retires after 28 years with the Board.

18 Past & Present Board Members at Retirement Dinner for Ms. Ewald

2005

Board completes Sunset Advisory Commission review for third time. House Bill 1025 makes some amendments to Optometry Act, primarily related to enforcement matters. Next Sunset Review is scheduled to begin in 2016.

2010

Board signs contract with provider to begin the operation of a Peer Assistance Program to provide assistance to licensees and optometry school students with chemical or mental health issues that would affect the practice of optometry.

2013

The agency licenses the first graduates of the Rosenberg School of Optometry at the University of the Incarnate Word in San Antonio.

2017

Board completes Sunset Advisory Commission review for fourth time. Senate Bill 314 makes some amendments to Optometry Act, including updating out-of-date language. Requirements to fingerprint all licensees included as well as requirement that a national disciplinary databank be consulted before a license may be renewed.

