

AGENDA

CONNECTICUT BOARD OF EXAMINERS FOR OPTICIANS

Monday, August 31, 2020, at 9:00 AM
Department of Public Health
410 Capitol Avenue, Hartford CT

CALL TO ORDER

- I. **Minutes**
Review and approval of the minutes from the June 1, 2020 meeting.
- II. **Examination Update**
- III. **Correspondence from Maryann Santos**

ADJOURN

THIS MEETING WILL BE HELD BY VIDEO CONFERENCE AT THE FOLLOWING LINK

[Board of Examiners for Opticians via Microsoft Teams](#)

[+1 860-840-2075](#) United States, Hartford (Toll)

Conference ID: 807 878 37#

The following minutes are draft minutes which are subject to revision and have not yet been adopted by the board.

A meeting of the **Connecticut Board of Examiners for Opticians** was held on **June 1, 2020** by video conference

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Daniel Denegre, LO
Alden Mead, JD, Public Member
Jenney Rivard, L.O.

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: None

ALSO PRESENT: Alfreda Gaither, Hearing Officer
Jeffrey Kardys, Board Liaison

The meeting was called to order at 9:34 a.m.

I. MINUTES

The minutes from the December 9, 2019 meeting were approved on a motion by Ms. Rivard, seconded by Mr. Mead.

II. Practical Examination

Deborah Brown, Health Program Associate Practitioner Licensing and Investigations Section reported that due to the COVID-19 pandemic there is no determination as to when the practical examination will be administered.

A review of the practical examination with licensing staff will not be scheduled at this time.

III. Adjourn

As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:40 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Daniel Denegre, LO
Connecticut Board of Examiners for Opticians

Kardys, Jeffrey

From: Dowdell, Celeste
Sent: Wednesday, July 15, 2020 12:00 PM
To: Kardys, Jeffrey
Subject: Fw: Opticians Board

Hi Jeff, please see below. Thanks

Celeste Dowdell
License and Applications Analyst
Dept. of Public Health
Practitioner Licensing & Investigations Section
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Let us know how we are doing: [Survey](#)

From: Maryann Santos <MSantos@goodwin.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, July 15, 2020 10:50 AM
To: Dowdell, Celeste <Celeste.Dowdell@ct.gov>
Subject: Opticians Board

Hi Celeste,
I hope you and yours are safe, well, and healthy. And that working from home is serving you well.

Due to the current COVID-19 epidemic, many Opticianry licensing boards are changing continuing education requirements to allow non-contact options. I attended a Massachusetts' opticians CEC in June. It was all day via Zoom, ran extremely well, and attendees were required to answer random poll questions during the lecture to certify their attendance. All attendees received credits from the American Board of Opticianry & National Contact Lens Examiners, Inc. (ABO-NCLE). I have linked additional [ABO-NCLE information supporting online continuing education for reference-reference](#).

As the Society of Connecticut Opticians executive director, I am very interested in this delivery method and will participate in an Opticians Association of America forum on:

- The Pros and Cons of Virtual Educational Seminars
- Educational Content
- Staffing
- Speakers
- Working With Your State Rules and Regs
- What to know about ABO-NCLE

Upon completion of this session I would appreciate the opportunity to share what has been learned with the Board of Examiners for Opticians (BOEOpt). What steps are necessary to allow me to address the board?

Finally, the pass rate on the current BOEOpt practical examination is unacceptably low considering candidates have graduated from an accredited AAS Opticianry program or completed a formal four-year, full-time

apprenticeship. This appears to indicate the current exam is not psychometrically sound. The ABO-NCLE has made presentations to the board regarding a viable exam option that is cost effective (for both the state and the candidates) and allows candidates to demonstrate the minimum competency necessary to protect the public health and safety. I strongly urge the board to adopt this examination.

I would appreciate it if you would please provide me some guidance with this matter on how to get these matters on the agenda for the Board's August meeting.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Maryann

Maryann Santos

Program Director, Vision Care Technology
School of Nursing and Health Professions

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“It is literally true that you can succeed best and quickest by helping others to succeed.”-Napoleon Hill

Kardys, Jeffrey

From: Maryann Santos <maryannsantos4@icloud.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 05, 2020 11:02 AM
To: Kardys, Jeffrey
Subject: CT OPTICIAN Board

Good morning Mr. Kardys,

A few weeks ago Celeste forwarded you an email from me. Today's email is an expansion of that one. However, this time I am sending this email from my personal email and not my Goodwin University as I am speaking not on the school or program's behalf, I am speaking on my behalf.

As you are aware, the ABO-NCLE has a virtual practical examination that has two parts ABO practical (optical, optics, eyewear) and NCLE (contact lens fitting and evaluation). On Monday, August 3, 2020, I took both of these examinations. I took them from the view point of an evaluator, coming from an optician and educator's perspective. These exams are thorough and cover what a new practicing optician should know to be starting out. As an example. if a candidate does not know how to calculate what we call prism in eyeglasses (which is critical) or how to measure corneas or identify an abnormality on the cornea, they would not pass this exam.

It is time for the Board of Examiners for Opticians to revisit and adopt this examination. The board has been an "inner circle" for years. I applied to fill a vacant seat recently but was not chosen. Was it because I am a registered Republican? Was it because my husband ran for congress in 2018 as a Republican? Was it because I am a pistol permit holder? All of these needed to be disclosed in the application process. Or was it because there are winks and nods? I will never know. my application was complete, and I had the background, education, and skills to be a board member. What I do know is that Jenney Rivard was chosen who is Mr. Skip Rivard's wife. Mr. Rivard has had influence in this process for years.

Are you aware that apprentices spend 4 years working towards their license and students spend their money and time attending university to earn an associates degree in optical to sit for these boards. The pass rates are abysmal.

Did you know that people retake the test many times? Is it because they aren't qualified? Perhaps a handful. From what I have witnessed, it is a flawed exam. I expressed my findings from when I last proctored. I witnessed a proctor staring at the cubical divider while the candidate was instilling fluorescein (a paper strip wet with saline that is used as a diagnostic tool) in another proctor's eye. This individual is the one who is vocal on how vital it is to have a

hands-on "contact lens" exam. The Board cannot seem to let go of "ruling" all that is optical. What I do know is that certain people have a need to be in control.

This virtual test can be administered now. There are graduates, re-takers, and apprentices that are ready. The exam cannot be done this year as it is all hands-on and it likely will not run. They are making less money per hour as unlicensed. I have a graduate that is an exceptional student but failed multiple times. This student moved out of state, across the country and flew back to re-take. And failed again. I have witnessed this candidate's skills; it is surprising that they failed.

Lastly, the Board assesses candidates on how to neutralize a hard contact lens on instruments that cannot even be purchased. Today, you can only purchase digital radiuscopes. They use ones from the 1970s that have the two prong plug instead of the three prong grounded one. That's how old they are.

When I started the program at Goodwin University, I had to get donated instruments because I could only find ones that were on eBay that were missing parts.

The test, as is, can be challenged.

If you can please let me know what I can do to help convince the Board to adopt the ABO-NCLE virtual practical examinations. I support, keeping the state statute exam, only if it is written and administered by the DPH, not the Board. The Board is not skilled on psychometrically sound examinations and assessments as evidenced by the exam, outcomes, subjective grading, and the abysmal pass rates.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Maryann Santos



Maryann Santos
(C) 203-214-4243