

SCHEDULE "B"

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS OF PRACTICE COLLEGE OF OPTICIANS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

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INTRODUCTION

The College of Opticians has the responsibility to regulate the practice of opticianry in accordance with the *Health Professions Act* and the Regulation and Bylaws of the College, ensuring that registrants uphold a basic standard of ophthalmic care to protect the public.

This document is presented by the Board of the College of Opticians of British Columbia providing guidance to registrants on operational standards that must be fulfilled to maintain good standing. It is also anticipated that these standards and principles will nurture professionalism in opticianry.

PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF COLLEGE STANDARDS

The Standards of Practice serve the following purposes:

1. Provide the public with clear guidelines of the quality of care received from an Optician or Contact Lens Fitter.
2. Provide Opticians and Contact Lens Fitters with clear expectations for upholding the requirements of professional practice as set by the College.
3. Provide the College with benchmarks by which it may investigate complaints, and, if necessary, the criteria by which it will judge whether disciplinary action is required.

The College of Opticians of British Columbia is responsible for setting the standards of practice with respect to client management, records management, staff supervision, and business and dispensing practices, in relation to the protection of the public.

ONGOING REVIEW

The **Standards of Practice** constitute present policy for the conduct of professional practice. The Quality Assurance Committee and the Board maintain an ongoing review of these Standards of Practice and your comments are appreciated.

1. CLIENT MANAGEMENT

- a) Communication
 - i) Communicate product information so that the client is able to make a product choice based on all pertinent facts, including final costs.
 - ii) Communicate the intended use of the ophthalmic products, information for correct ongoing care of the products, health and safety factors, warranties, and clearly establish guidelines for liability when the client provides their own frame for insertion of new lenses only.
 - iii) iii) When fitting **contact lenses**, use a consistent protocol to instruct the client about;
 - warning signs of possible harm, and the necessity to report any problems.
 - the necessity for follow up to ensure health and safety.
 - all proper cleaning and caring procedures the necessity to comply with a specified wearing schedule.
- b) Complaints
 - i) Respond to client complaints in a timely manner.
 - ii) For **eyeglasses**, ensure that the product meets tolerances approved by the College.
 - iii) For **contact lenses**, establish whether there is a possible risk to eye health. If there is seen to be a risk, advise the client to seek a medical opinion.
- c) Responsibility
 - i) It is the duty of every registrant to manage relations with clients in a professional manner, in compliance with the Regulation of the Health Professions Act, and the Bylaws of the College.

2. RECORDS MANAGEMENT

- a) Client files
 - i) Establish and maintain a consistent system for recording and filing relevant client information.
 - ii) Use a consistent method of accepting, analyzing, verifying, and recording prescription information.
 - iii) Collect and record relevant client data.
 - iv) Keep an ongoing record of transactions in the client file.
- b) Records
 - i) Retain original and updated client files for a minimum of three years from the last date of entry for **eyeglasses** and **contact lens fittings**.
 - ii) Ensure the security of client records within the business premises by taking appropriate precautions against loss, theft, or destruction.
- c) Disposal of files upon termination or sale of a business
 - i) Upon termination of a business for any reason, the registrant of the business must advise the college of the new location where the client files are stored.
 - ii) Only contact lens fitters may receive contact lens files.
 - iii) Any registrant who receives client files must advise those clients through an economical broadcast means, that their files have been received.
 - iv) A registrant who receives client files must advise the college that the files have been received.

(No.2 RECORDS MANAGEMENT Cont.)

- d) Responsibility
 - i) In managing client records, registrants are obliged to comply with the Regulations of the Health Professions Act, with the Freedom of Information and Privacy Act, and with the Bylaws of the College.

3. BUSINESS PRACTICES

- a) Ensure the safety of clients by observing relevant government regulations for the business premises.
- b) Establish and maintain non-discriminatory business practices.
- c) Conduct all business transactions within professional and ethical standards, and in compliance with the *Health Professions Act*, and the Regulation and Bylaws of the College.

4. PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

- a) In all professional and business practices, registrants must ensure freedom from harassment and freedom from discrimination, in compliance with the Human Rights Act of British Columbia.
- b) Uphold the professional ethics, in compliance with the Health Professions Act and the Regulations and Bylaws of the College of Opticians of British Columbia.

5. REGISTERED OPTICIAN'S OR CONTACT LENS FITTER'S ABSENCE FROM PREMISES

"Supervision" means, if supervision is not governed in accordance with the *Optometrists Act* or the *Medical Practitioners Act*,

- a) **Dispensing Opticians**
in relation to the services described in section 5 (1) of the Regulations, that a prescriber or optician supervises at reasonable intervals and provides regular inspection of the services performed by a non-registrant, and
- b) **Contact Lens Fitters**
in relation to the services described in section 5 (3) of the Regulations, that
 - (i) a prescriber or contact lens fitter is normally on the premises, although he or she may be absent from time to time, not including holidays,
 - (ii) a prescriber supervises the fitting or dispensing of contact lenses by a person other than a prescriber or contact lens fitter, and
 - (iii) a contact lens fitter supervises the refilling of a prescription if contact lenses are dispensed by a person other than a contact lens fitter.
- c) **Identification**
All registrants must clearly identify themselves to the public as registrants of the college. An identification card displaying current registration must be worn at all times when serving the public. The identification is provided by the college and must be updated after renewal each year.

6. ACCEPTED PRACTICES FOR THE DISPENSING OF EYEGLASSES

- a) Supplying non-prescribed products need not be a supervised activity.
- b) Supplying a prescribed lens product is a supervised activity where an optician must verify the measurements necessary for the manufacture of the eyeglasses or lenses, and the power described in the prescription at or before the time of final dispensing.
- c) An optician must supervise at reasonable intervals and provide regular inspection of the services performed by a non-registrant at each optical outlet where dispensing is taking place.
- d) **Supervision of Non-Registrants**
 - i) An optician, designated to supervise the activities of non-registrants is held responsible and accountable for the supervised activities that take place at that optical outlet.
 - ii) The supervising optician must be clearly identified on the client file as having verified the work of the non-registrant.
 - iii) Every optical dispensary must record with the Registrar the name of the optician responsible for the supervised activities for that dispensary.
 - iv) An optician who is recorded as supervising non-registrants at one location cannot be designated as such at any other location simultaneously.
 - v) The optician who is recorded as being responsible for the supervised activities of all non-registrants is so responsible, whether or not that optician is present in the store.
- e) **Responsibility:**
 - i) All opticians are required to ensure that their staff or assistants have appropriate training for the tasks entrusted to them, and that recurrent training enables staff to handle new eyewear products.
 - ii) At the point of verification of the finished product, the supervising optician, regardless of whether he/she checks the finished eyeglasses him/herself, carries full responsibility for the verification.
- f) **Details To Include In Client Files When Dispensing Eyeglasses:**
 - i) The following information **must** be included in the file of a client who is being dispensed eyeglasses:
 - client's name
 - a copy of the prescription or note that the prescription is a duplication
 - pertinent anatomical measurements; e.g. PD's, segment heights, etc.
 - frame specifications
 - lens design and materials
 - the date of dispensing
 - a record that a client has been advised when a lens is dispensed that does not or cannot meet impact resistance standards
 - the identity of the optician(s) or supervising optician, involved in the dispensing of the eyeglasses
 - warranty information
 - financial details of the transaction

(No.6(f) Details To Include In Client Files When Dispensing Eyeglasses Cont.)

- ii) It is **desirable** that the following information also be included:
- client's address and phone number
 - client history pertinent to the service required
 - if the prescription is a duplication of an existing pair of glasses without a written prescription or is older than 2 years, it should be noted in the client's file, that the client was advised to return for a full eye examination

g) **Equipment for the Dispensing Eyeglasses:**

It is acknowledged that there are different methods of achieving the same result with respect to frame adjustments; thus the tools and equipment used will vary accordingly. However, an optician must achieve results to a professional standard whether by performing manually or by using equipment.

An optician must have the appropriate tools for dispensing eyeglasses and maintain them in good working and calibrated condition. These include, but are not limited to:

- adjustment and bench tools
- lensometer
- lensgauge
- frame heater
- millimeter ruler
- pupilometer and/or penlight
- frame and lens cleaning products
- thickness calipers
- vertex measuring device

The dispensary must have proper lighting facilities and mirrors to provide an appropriate environment for clients to choose eyeglasses.

h) **Tolerances for Dispensing of Eyeglasses**

VERTICAL SEGMENT LOCATION

- Per Lens - within .5 mm

LENS POWER TOLERANCE

- PL - 6.00 D +/- .12 D
- 6.12 D and above +/- 2%

CYLINDER AXIS TOLERANCE PER LENS

- 0.125D to 0.50D..... +/- 5 degrees
- 0.625D to 1.50D..... +/- 3 degrees
- 1.625D and above..... +/- 1 degree

(No.6 (h) Tolerances for Dispensing Eyeglasses Cont.)

VERTICAL IMBALANCE TOLERANCE ¹

- 1/4 prism dioptre per lens 1/2 prism dioptre total

UNWANTED HORIZONTAL PRISM TOLERANCE PER PAIR ¹

- 1/4 prism dioptre per lens 1/2 prism dioptre total

Note:

¹ Prescribed prism must be within tolerance at specified O.C. (per lens).

NEAR PD TOLERANCE

- +/- 2mm of specified

ADD POWER TOLERANCE PER LENS

- +/- .12 D

THICKNESS GUIDELINES

- the nominal thickness of any lens may be specified by the Optician or be the subject of agreement between the optician and the supplier
- when a thickness is specified, it shall be within +/- .2 mm of that specification

BASE CURVE

- should be within +/- 0.50 D from requested

IMPACT RESISTANCE

- before they are mounted in frames, all plastic and impact-resistance treated glass lenses shall be capable of withstanding an impact test using a 15.9mm (5/8 inch) steel ball, dropped 127cm(50 inches).
- the public must be informed when a lens is dispensed that does not or cannot meet that standard
- impact-resistant occupational lenses shall meet requirements of the CSA and that of that industry

WARPAGE

- the curves in the principal meridians of the mounted lens must be within a tolerance of +0.50D of the design specifications of the lens.

QUALITY

- no scratches, pitting, chips, water marks or blistering shall be acceptable
- no internal bubbles or stress lines shall be acceptable
- all lenses in any type of frame mounting or configuration shall fit securely with smooth edges

7. ACCEPTED PRACTICES FOR THE FITTING OF CONTACT LENSES

- a) No one other than a Contact Lens Fitter, or a Registered Student Contact Lens Fitter under direct supervision of a Contact Lens Fitter, with the contact lens fitter immediately present at all times, is allowed to fill a prescription and to fit and dispense contact lenses.
- b) A non-registrant may under supervision of a Contact Lens Fitter
 - i) refill a prescription by dispensing contact lenses
 - ii) instruct insertion and removal techniques, care systems and hygiene,**provided the non-registrant does not fit contact lenses.**
- c) A Contact Lens Fitter must inform the parent/guardian of an individual 16 years or younger that it is recommended that the present prescription be written within the year and the recommendation charted on the individual's client file.
- d) A complete pre-fit evaluation must be conducted on all new clients. Contact lens specifications from previous wear is to be recorded as patient history.
- e) The Contact Lens Fitter is required to:
 - i) take or review the client history
 - ii) assess the prescription for professional ability and client suitability
 - iii) conduct a pre-fit evaluation prior to undertaking a trial fitting
 - iv) do trial fittings of contact lenses and assess them, to determine the correct lens type, lens style, and lens parameters
 - v) order contact lenses, assess them on the client and determine that they are correct
 - vi) ensure the client has received instructions on follow-up requirements
 - vii) ensure the client has received adequate information and training on insertion and removal techniques, care systems, and hygiene
- f) Contact Lens Fitter must have and maintain in good working order, adequate tools and properly calibrated instruments for fitting and dispensing contact lenses.
- g) A Contact Lens Fitter must ensure hygienic and safe facilities and equipment.
- h) **Details To Include In Client Files When Fitting and Dispensing Contact Lenses**
The following information **must** be included in the client file:
 - i) client's name, address and telephone number
 - ii) copy of prescription
 - iii) the pre-fit evaluation must include, and is not limited to:
 - reason for contact lenses, previous wear and history, lifestyle and interests
 - medical history and medications
 - keratometry readings
 - slit lamp examination
 - location and size of anomalies and pathology
 - tear quality
 - horizontal visible iris diameter
 - pupil size (dim and bright light)
 - palpebral aperture size
 - lid assessment

(No.7(h) Details to Include in Client Files When Fitting Contact Lenses Cont.)

- iv) specifications of final lenses fitted
- v) the fitting date and the date dispensed
- vi) care system provided
- vii) recommended wearing schedule
- viii) a record of the follow-up care, including VA, corneal integrity, fit and condition of the contact lenses
- ix) a record of follow-up schedules and warranty of lenses
- x) fit and/or replacement policy
- xi) the identity of the Contact Lens Fitter involved in the fitting and dispensing of the contact lenses

i) **The Contact Lens Room**

Fitting areas must be able to be well lit and darkened for examination, and if necessary, furnished with chairs that adjust in height to accommodate the measuring equipment and the fitting procedures.

A sink equipped with hot and cold running water together with disinfectant soap must be readily accessible to the Contact Lens Fitter. Contact Lens Fitters must wash hands prior to contact with each client and before inserting contact lenses.

Equipment must be kept calibrated at all times.

Necessary equipment:

- slit lamp / biomicroscope, with test bar
- keratometer, with extended range and calibration equipment
- lensometer
- visual acuity chart for distance and near
- trial lens set (ophthalmoscopic lenses) for prescription verification
- measuring magnifier with scale
- diameter gauge

Recommended equipment: radiuscope
modification unit
shadow graph
thickness gauge
Burton Lamp

Necessary supplies:

- diagnostic contact lens trial sets
- tweezers
- fluorescein strips for soft and hard lenses
- crimper and caps
- rinsing and disinfectant solutions
- suction cups

(No. 7. ACCEPTED PRACTICES FOR THE FITTING OF CONTACT LENSES Cont.)

j) **Follow Up Care for Contact Lens Clients**

For clients wearing daily wear soft lenses including disposable lenses:

A new client should be seen after one week, one month, three months, six months and then at yearly intervals.

For clients wearing hard or rigid gas-permeable lenses:

A new client should be seen **within** one week, one month, three months, six months and then at yearly intervals.

For clients wearing extended wear lenses:

After the initial insertion the client should be seen within the first 24 hours. If there are no problems, the client should be seen after wearing lenses three days, one week, two weeks, one month, three months, and then maintain three to six month intervals thereafter.

Contact Lens Fitters should recommend that clients leave their lenses out overnight twice a week, but if this is not possible, at least once a week. *
Recommendations for overnight wear must be determined by the Contact Lens Fitter and based solely on the health of the client's eyes.

NOTE: The equipment and supplies identified within section i) above are mandatory for practicing Contact Lens Fitters only.

8. ACCEPTED PRACTICES FOR THE USE OF AUTOREFRACTORS/AUTOMATED SYSTEMS

- a) Registered Opticians/Contact Lens Fitters only, may collect sight testing data through the use of an autorefractor/automated system.
- b) A prescriber, a qualified medical practitioner who prepares a prescription, must produce a signed prescription using the collected sight testing data supplied.
- c) **Restrictions:**
 - i) Sight testing data can only be collected on adults between the ages of 19 and 65 years of age unless referred by a prescriber.
 - ii) Sight testing data cannot be collected from an individual, unless referred by a prescriber, who has
 - 1. an ongoing ocular disease
 - 2. present glasses containing prisms for diplopia
 - 3. refractive error over +8.00 D and -10.00 D spheres with cylinder written in minus form
 - 4. surgery to treat detached retina, cataracts, corneal transplants
 - 5. corrective treatment through orthokeratology
 - 6. keratoconus, glaucoma

(No. 8. (c) Restrictions Cont.)

- iii) The individual must have had a medical eye examination within the last five years.

d) Responsibility:

- i) All Registered Opticians/Contact Lens Fitters are required to ensure that they have appropriate training for the tasks entrusted to them.
- ii) All legislation must be adhered to and the Registered Optician/Contact Lens Fitter clearly identified in the client file.
- iii) To explain to the client the restrictions of a sight test.

e) Details To Include In Client File and the “Sight Test Patient Consent Form” When Collecting Data for Autorefractors/Automated Systems:

The following information **must** be included in the file of a client who is being sight tested:

- client’s name, address, and birth date
- identification of the prescriber
- visual acuity achieved using old correction
- visual acuity achieved using new correction
- the date of the sight testing
- the identity of the Registered Optician/Contact Lens Fitter performing the sight testing
- a signed disclaimer by the client authorizing the release of the gathered information to the identified prescriber

f) Equipment for Collecting Data for Autorefractors/Automated Systems:

Necessary equipment:

- computer driven sight testing system
- auto-refractor
- auto-phoropter
- printer
- monitor
- lensometer

Desirable equipment:

- electronic interfacing lensometer

The sight testing room must have proper lighting facilities and be of appropriate size to accommodate the proper use of the equipment.