

VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY -- 1996 SESSION

CHAPTER 436

An Act to amend and reenact §§ 54.1-3200, 54.1-3211 and 54.1-3220 of the Code of Virginia, relating to the practice of optometry.

[H 1035]

Approved March 31, 1996

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That §§ 54.1-3200, 54.1-3211 and 54.1-3220 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 54.1-3200. Definitions.

As used in this chapter, unless the context requires a different meaning:

"Board" means the Board of Optometry.

"Optometrist" means any person practicing the profession of optometry as defined in this chapter and the regulations of the Board.

"Practice of optometry" means the examination of the human eye to ascertain the presence of defects or abnormal conditions which may be corrected or relieved by the use of lenses, prisms or ocular exercises, visual training or orthoptics; the employment of any subjective or objective mechanism to determine the accommodative or refractive states of the human eye or range or power of vision of the human eye; the use of testing appliances for the purpose of the measurement of the powers of vision; the examination, diagnosis, and optometric treatment in accordance with this chapter, of conditions and visual or muscular anomalies of the human eye; *the use of diagnostic pharmaceutical agents set forth in § 54.1-3221*; and the prescribing or adapting of lenses, prisms or ocular exercises, visual training or orthoptics for the correction, relief, remediation or prevention of such conditions. An optometrist may treat certain diseases or abnormal conditions of the human eye and its adnexa with certain therapeutic pharmaceutical agents only as permitted under Chapter 29 (§ 54.1-2900 et seq.) of this title.

The foregoing shall not restrict the authority of any optometrist licensed or certified under this chapter from delegating to personnel in his personal employ and supervised by him, such activities or functions as are nondiscretionary and do not require the exercise of professional judgment for their performance and which are usually or customarily delegated to such persons by optometrists, if such activities or functions are authorized by and performed for such optometrists and responsibility for such activities or functions is assumed by such optometrists.

§ 54.1-3211. Examination.

The Board ~~shall provide for the examination of applicants for licensure to practice optometry, and~~ shall set the necessary standards to be attained in the examinations to entitle the candidate to receive a license to practice optometry.

The examination shall be given at least semiannually if there are any candidates who have applied to the Board for examination at least thirty days before the date for the examination.

The examination shall include anatomy; physiology; pathology; *general and ocular pharmacology designed to test knowledge of the proper use, characteristics, pharmacological effects, indications, contraindications, and emergency care associated with the use of diagnostic pharmaceutical agents*; and the use of the appropriate instruments.

The Board may determine a score which it considers satisfactory on any written examination of the National Board of Examiners in Optometry. The Board may waive its examination for a person who achieves a satisfactory score on the examination of the National Board of Examiners in Optometry.

Those persons licensed on or before June 30, 1997, to practice optometry in this state but not certified to administer diagnostic pharmaceutical agents may continue to practice optometry but may not administer diagnostic pharmaceutical agents without satisfying the requirements of this section. Those persons licensed after June 30, 1997, shall be considered as certified to administer diagnostic pharmaceutical agents.

§ 54.1-3220. Certification for administration of diagnostic pharmaceutical agents.

In order to become certified to administer diagnostic pharmaceutical agents for the purpose of examining and determining abnormal or diseased conditions of the human eye or related structures, an optometrist shall:

1. Complete successfully a Board-approved course in general and ocular pharmacology as it relates to the practice of optometry which shall consist of at least fifty-five classroom hours including a minimum of fifteen classroom hours in general pharmacology, twenty classroom hours in ocular pharmacology and twenty classroom hours of clinical laboratory presented by a college or university accredited by a regional or professional accreditation organization which is recognized or approved by the Council on Post Secondary Accreditation or by the United States Department of Education.

2. Pass a Board ~~administered~~ *approved*, performance-based examination on general and ocular pharmacology designed to test knowledge of the proper use, characteristics, pharmacological effects, indications, contraindications, and emergency care associated with the use of diagnostic pharmaceutical agents as defined in this article.