

GEORGIA STATE BOARD OF OPTOMETRY
Conference Call - September 13, 2005

A conference call meeting of the Georgia State Board of Optometry was held on Tuesday, September 13, 2005 at 8:00 a.m. in Room 310, Professional Licensing Boards, 237 Coliseum Drive, Macon, Georgia

The following Board members were present:

Kay Royal, President

H. Kemp Jones

R. Whitman Lord, Vice President

William Sharpton

Dudley Christie

Patricia Donnelly

Others Present:

Brig Zimmerman, Executive Director, Yvonne LeSane, Board Secretary, Wylencia Monroe, Board Attorney

President Royal established that a quorum was present and called the meeting to order at 8:05 a.m.

Policy: Emergency Provisional License:

The Board discussed the necessary components of an emergency provisional license, in concert with the Assistant Attorney General, Wylencia Monroe. It was determined that there are statutory authorizations with passing a rule; however the Board may develop a policy with regard to reciprocity requirements.

The Board discussed waiving the application fee to which Ms. Monroe advised the fee cannot be completely waived but may be reduced. The Board decided to reduce the application fee for emergency licensure to \$10.00. It was also determined that the Board may not lawfully issue a "temporary" license/permit and that the emergency provisional license will expire in conjunction with all other Optometry licenses, thereby giving the licensee a full license as required by law.

There would be four (4) key requirements for licensure:

- 1) Qualified to use pharmaceutical agents;
- 2) Proof of CPR certification;
- 3) \$1 million malpractice insurance, and
- 4) reciprocity/comity.

Mr. Zimmerman will compose a draft policy for Board review and approval. Upon Board approval the policy will become effective immediately.

Due to Hurricane Katrina, the Board is aware of two (2) displaced optometrists in Georgia awaiting employment. Upon licensure, Dr. Dudley is prepared to offer employment to two (2) evacuees with room and board.

Dr. Jones moved and Dr. Christie seconded and the Board voted institute a policy for emergency Optometry licensure. Upon finalization and full Board approval the policy shall become effective immediately.

Dr. Jones moved and Dr. Lord seconded and the Board voted to reduce the application fee for emergency licensure to \$10.00.

Dr. Jones moved and Dr. Christie seconded and the Board voted to designate Louisiana, Alabama and Mississippi as disaster/emergency states for purposes of this policy adoption:

Category: Licensure

Policy: ■

**Title: Processing Exceptions Due to Natural Disasters for Applications
For Licensure as an Optometrist by Endorsement**

Procedure: □

Statutory Basis: OCGA § 43-30 -7

Each applicant must complete an application for licensure by endorsement as an Optometrist. All applications can be obtained via verbal request (478-207-2440) or by downloading the forms from our website – www.sos.state.ga.us/plb/optometry. The Georgia State Board of Optometry (“Board”) may identify states affected by natural disaster or emergencies for which exceptions may be made and for the length of time the exceptions may be allowed.

This policy addresses the special circumstances of applicants for licensure by endorsement whose home state is identified by the Board as being in emergency or disaster status. Applicants from such states may not be able to provide required picture identification or original and current licensure verification as part of the application process.

The intention of the Board is to expedite the application processing and licensure of applicants by endorsement from states that are experiencing an emergency or natural disaster. To comply with the provisions of OCGA § 43-30-7, the Board may accept one or more of the following as part of an application by endorsement for licensure:

- Copies of employer records verifying employment as an Optometrist
- Copies of an active, unencumbered Optometrist pocket cards from another jurisdiction
- State or Federal Department of Labor records verifying employment as an Optometrist
- Documentation from a national certification organization or body for Optometry
- FEMA-GEMA information
- Any other information or documentation deemed acceptable by the Board.

In addition, pursuant to the law, Applicants must provide the following verifications for issuance of licensure by endorsement as an Optometrist to practice in Georgia:

- **Any evidence of completion of pharmacological training and certification from an accredited institution of higher learning or an equivalent thereof or evidence of**

passage of an examination approved by the Board which tests the applicant's knowledge of pharmacology

- **Any proof of certification in coronary pulmonary resuscitation**
- **Proof of maintenance of \$1 million dollars in malpractice insurance coverage**

Upon completion of the endorsement application to the Board's satisfaction, the applicant may be issued a license to practice Optometry in Georgia.

The Board has the authority to refuse to license an applicant as well as to revoke, sanction or discipline a licensee for providing to the Board any false information for the purposes of obtaining licensure as an Optometrist in Georgia. The findings of the Board regarding false information may also be reported to other appropriate state or federal agencies for investigation and prosecution.

Blue Cross/Blue Shield:

Stephen Rothbloom: In order for me to get paid for Blue Cross/Blue Shield insurance products, I have been requested to submit a letter from the State Board advising that optometrists in Georgia can perform the procedures listed. Could you please provide a letter?

Codes:

92100	65222
Serial Tonometry	Foreign Body Corneal
92020	65435
Gonioscopy	Corneal Debridement
76514	92070
Pachymetry	Fit CL\Treatment of Disease
92081	76519
92082	A Scan w\IOL Calculation
92083	66984-55
Visual Fields	Cataract Post-Op Care
92225	67820
Retinal evaluation	Epilation
92250	68761-50
Ocular Photography\Retinal	Ins\Supply 2 Punctal Plugs
92265	
Ocular Photography\External	
65205	
Foreign Body Conj. Superficial	
65210	
Foreign Body Conj. Embedded	

Ms. Monroe reviewed the request submitted and cautioned the Board that such a request is out of the Boards jurisdiction and may fall prey to civil action. Ms. Monroe advised that there are other options to be taken. The Federal law provides information/help with health benefit plans.

Dr. Jones stated that similar action has been taken by the Board in the previously.

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Dr. Jones moved and Dr. Lord seconded and the Board voted to forward Dr. Jones' response excluding the reimbursement portion. The letter is to be used in direct response to Dr. Rothblooms' request only.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 8:50 a.m.

Minutes recorded by: Yvonne LeSane, Board Secretary
Minutes reviewed and edited by: Brig Zimmerman, Executive Director

Kay F. Royal, President

Mollie L. Fleeman, Division Director