



Board for Hearing Aid Specialists and Opticians

PROPOSED Guidance Document:

Approved Related Instruction Curricula For Optician Apprenticeships

I. Background

In 2014, the Board for Hearing Aid Specialists and Opticians began a review of the three year, 6,000 hour optician apprenticeship to ensure that it accurately represented the skills and experience necessary to become minimally competent in the profession of opticianry. The Board spent several years engaging various stakeholders, including education providers, curriculum developers, apprenticeship sponsors, optical shop owners, Board members, and the public, and determined that portions of the apprenticeship training no longer reflected industry practices. The Board and various stakeholders worked together to reduce the apprenticeship length and work processes to a length of two years. The Board also amended its regulations to reflect the two year apprenticeship, which took effect on April 1, 2019.

II. Issue

All registered apprenticeships under the Department of Labor and Industry require at least 144 hours of theory instruction, known as Related Technical Instruction ("RTI"), each year to go along with the required on-the-job training requirements. Under the previous three year apprenticeship, there were many approved curriculum for RTI. As part of the apprenticeship change, the Board determined the need to approve related technical instruction curriculum that would be used during the revised two year apprenticeship. The Board's Committee on Optician Apprenticeship reviewed several RTI curricula and recommended them for use as RTI in the Optician Apprenticeship. During the apprenticeship review over the past several years, these curricula were brought before the Board, which approved them as the sole approved curricula once the

two year apprenticeship took effect.

III. Board Guidance

On April 10, 2019, the Board approved guidance for registered optician apprentices that there are two Related Technical Instruction curricula that are approved for the optician apprenticeship: the National Academy of Opticianry's *Ophthalmic Career Progression Program* and Reynolds Community College's *Opticians Apprenticeship Career Studies*.

The Virginia Board for Hearing Aid Specialists and Opticians will be taking public comment on this proposed guidance document regarding approved related technical instruction curricula for the optician apprenticeship. A 30-day comment period will begin on May 13, 2019.

If you wish to comment on the proposed guidance document, you may do so via the Town Hall website or you may submit written comments so that they are received no later than June 13, 2019 to:

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