

Registered Dispensing Opticians

BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONS CODE

SECTION 2550-2559

2550. Individuals, corporations, and firms engaged in the business of filling prescriptions of physicians and surgeons licensed by the Division of Licensing of the Medical Board of California or optometrists licensed by the State Board of Optometry for prescription lenses and kindred products, and, as incidental to the filling of those prescriptions, doing any or all of the following acts, either singly or in combination with others, taking facial measurements, fitting and adjusting those lenses and fitting and adjusting spectacle frames, shall be known as dispensing opticians and shall not engage in that business unless registered with the Division of Licensing of the Medical Board of California.

2550.1. All references in this chapter to the board or the Board of Medical Examiners or division shall mean the Medical Board of California.

2551. Individuals, corporations, and firms shall make application for registration and shall not engage in that business prior to being issued a certificate of registration. Application for that registration shall be on forms prescribed by the board, shall bear the signature of the individual, or general partners if a partnership, or the president or secretary if a corporation, and shall contain the name under which he or she, they or it proposes to do business and the business address. Separate applications shall be made for each place of business and each application must be accompanied by the application fee prescribed by Section 2565.

2552. Each application shall be verified under oath by the person required to sign the application and shall designate the name, address, and business telephone number of the applicant's employee who will be responsible for handling customer inquiries and complaints with respect to the business address for which registration is applied.

The applicant shall furnish such additional information or proof, oral or written, which the division may request, including information and proof relating to the provisions of Division 1.5 (commencing with Section 475).

The division shall promptly notify any applicant if, as of the 30th day following the submission of an application under this chapter, the application and supporting documentation are not substantially complete and in proper form. The notification shall be in writing, shall state specifically what documents or other

information are to be supplied by the applicant to the board, and shall be sent to the applicant by certified or registered mail. Within 30 days of the applicant's submission of the requested documents or information to the board, the board shall notify the applicant by certified or registered mail if the board requires additional documents or information.

This section shall become operative on January 1, 1988.

2553. If the board, after investigation, approves the application, it shall register the applicant and issue to the applicant a certificate of dispensing optician. A separate certificate of registration shall be required for each address where the business is to be conducted.

A certificate authorizes the applicant, its agents and employees acting therefor to engage in the business defined in Section 2550 provided that the fitting and adjusting of spectacle lenses is performed in compliance with Article 1.5 (commencing with Section 2559.1) and the fitting and adjusting of contact lenses is performed in compliance with Article 2 (commencing with Section 2560).

Each certificate shall be at all times displayed in a conspicuous place at the certified place of business. The certificate shall not be transferable, but on application to the division there may be registered a change of address of the certificate.

This section shall become operative on January 1, 1988.

2553.5. (a) A registered dispensing optician may fit and adjust spectacle lenses and frames or take facial measurements in any of the following locations:

(1) A health facility as defined in Section 1250 of the Health and Safety Code for a person admitted to that facility or an employee of that facility.

(2) A business location as defined in subdivision (f) for an employee or independent contractor of the person operating the business at that location.

(3) Any certified place of business pursuant to Section 2553.

(b) A registered dispensing optician who fits and adjusts spectacle lenses at a health facility or business location shall provide to the patient written information disclosing the registrant's regular business address, certificate of registration number, phone number, and the name and phone number of the person designated by the licensee to receive complaints and inquiries, as specified in Section 2554.

(c) Nothing in this section shall be deemed to permit a registered dispensing optician or registered contact lens dispenser to fit or adjust contact lenses at a health facility or at a business location, as defined in subdivision (f).

(d) A registered spectacle lens dispenser may fit and adjust spectacle lenses at a health facility or at a business location, as defined in subdivision (f), only if he or she is in personal attendance at a certified place of business pursuant to Section 2553 at least 40 percent of his or her regular working hours each week.

(e) A registered spectacle lens dispenser who fits and adjusts spectacle lenses at a health facility or at a business location, as

defined in subdivision (f), other than on a temporary basis, shall maintain an emergency patient response system. This system shall consist of a telephone answering machine or service or a telephone paging device and the registered spectacle lens dispenser shall respond to patient inquiries received through the emergency system within 24 hours excluding weekends and holidays.

(f) "Business location" means the place at which any business employs more than 25 persons at any single business address, but shall not include a health facility, as defined in Section 1250 of the Health and Safety Code, or a certified place of business as specified in Section 2553.

(g) This section shall not affect the requirements regarding fitting and adjusting as set forth in Sections 2559.1 and 2560.

2553.6. The board shall deny any application for registration under this chapter if any person licensed under Chapter 5 (commencing with Section 2000) of this division, for whom the applicant, in accordance with Section 2550, proposes to fill any prescription, has any proprietary interest, or has designated or arranged for any other person to have any proprietary interest in or with the applicant.

The board may, in accordance with Section 2555, suspend, revoke, or refuse to renew the certificate of any individual or firm under this chapter, if such individual or firm, after the effective date of this section, fills, or has filled, while holding a certificate issued pursuant to this chapter, any prescription issued by any person licensed under Chapter 5 (commencing with Section 2000) of this division who has any proprietary interest, or has designated or arranged for any other person to have any proprietary interest, in or with such individual or firm.

Such penalties shall be in addition to, and not to the exclusion of, any other remedies or penalties provided by law.

"Proprietary interest," for the purposes of this section, means any membership, coownership, stock ownership, legal or beneficial interest, any other proprietary interest, or profit-sharing arrangement, designated or arranged or held, directly or indirectly in any form, in or with any individual or firm applying for registration or registered under this chapter, except stock ownership in a corporation which is listed on a stock exchange regulated by the Securities and Exchange Commission if the stock is acquired in a transaction conducted through such stock exchange.

This section shall apply only to a dispensing optician required to be registered pursuant to Chapter 5.5 (commencing with Section 2550) of Division 2 of this code, and shall not be construed to modify Section 2557, or to affect the fitting of prescription lenses by a technician pursuant to Section 2544.

2554. Each registrant shall conspicuously and prominently display at each registered location the name of the registrant's employee who is currently designated to handle customer inquiries and complaints and the telephone number where he or she may be reached during business hours.

This section shall become operative on January 1, 1988.

2555. Certificates issued hereunder may in the discretion of the division be suspended or revoked or subjected to terms and conditions of probation for violating or attempting to violate this chapter, Chapter 5.4 (commencing with Section 2540) or any regulation adopted under this chapter or, Chapter 5.4 (commencing with Section 2540), or Section 651, 654, or 655, or for incompetence, gross negligence, or repeated similar negligent acts performed by the registrant or by an employee of the registrant. The proceedings shall be conducted in accordance with Chapter 5 (commencing with Section 11500) of Part 1 of Division 3 of Title 2 of the Government Code, and the division shall have all the powers granted therein.

2555.1. In the discretion of the Division of Licensing, a certificate issued hereunder may be suspended or revoked if an individual certificate holder or persons having any proprietary interest who will engage in dispensing operations, have been convicted of a crime substantially related to the qualifications, functions and duties of a dispensing optician. The record of conviction or a certified copy thereof shall be conclusive evidence of the conviction.

A plea or verdict of guilty or a conviction following a plea of nolo contendere made to a charge substantially related to the qualifications, functions and duties of a dispensing optician is deemed to be a conviction within the meaning of this article. The board may order the certificate suspended or revoked, or may decline to issue a certificate, when the time for appeal has elapsed, or the judgment of conviction has been affirmed on appeal or when an order granting probation is made suspending the imposition of sentence, irrespective of a subsequent order under the provisions of Section 1203.4 of the Penal Code allowing such person to withdraw his or her plea of guilty and to enter a plea of not guilty, or setting aside the verdict of guilty, or dismissing the accusation, information or indictment.

The proceeding under this section shall be conducted in accordance with Chapter 5 (commencing with Section 11500) of Part 1 of Division 3 of Title 2 of the Government Code, and the board shall have all the powers granted therein.

This section shall become operative on January 1, 1988.

2556. It is unlawful to do any of the following: to advertise the furnishing of, or to furnish, the services of a refractionist, an optometrist, or a physician and surgeon; to directly or indirectly employ or maintain on or near the premises used for optical dispensing, a refractionist, an optometrist, a physician and surgeon, or a practitioner of any other profession for the purpose of any examination or treatment of the eyes; or to duplicate or change lenses without a prescription or order from a person duly licensed to issue the same.

2556.5. Any person who holds himself out as a "dispensing optician" or "registered dispensing optician" or who uses any other term or letters indicating or implying that he is registered and holds a certificate under the terms of this law without having at the time of so doing a valid, unrevoked certificate, as provided in this chapter, is guilty of a misdemeanor.

2557. This chapter shall not affect any person licensed as an optometrist under Chapter 7 of Division II of this code, or any physician and surgeon licensed under Chapter 5 of Division II of this code. Such exemption shall not apply to any optometrist or physician and surgeon exclusively engaged in the business of filling prescriptions for physicians and surgeons. This chapter does not prohibit the sale of goggles, sun glasses, colored glasses, or occupational protective eye devices if they do not have refractive values nor do the provisions of this chapter prohibit the sale of complete ready-to-wear eyeglasses as merchandise.

2558. Any person who violates any of the provisions of this chapter is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, shall be punished by imprisonment in the county jail not less than 10 days nor more than one year, or by a fine of not less than two hundred dollars (\$200) nor more than one thousand dollars (\$1,000) or by both such fine and imprisonment.

The Division of Licensing of the Medical Board of California may adopt, amend, or repeal, in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act, any regulations as are reasonably necessary to carry out this chapter.

2559. Whenever any person has engaged, or is about to engage, in any acts or practices which constitute, or will constitute, a violation of any provision of this chapter, or Chapter 5.4 (commencing with Section 2540), the superior court in and for the county wherein the acts or practices take place, or are about to take place, may issue an injunction, or other appropriate order, restraining such conduct on application of the Division of Licensing of the Medical Board of California, the Attorney General or the district attorney of the county.

The proceedings under this section shall be governed by Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 525) of Title 7 of Part 2 of the Code of Civil Procedure.