

House Bill 241 (AS PASSED HOUSE AND SENATE)

By: Representatives Chambers of the 81st, Cooper of the 41st, Drenner of the 86th, and Forster of the 3rd

To amend Code Section 43-29-7 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to license requirements for dispensing opticians, qualifications of applicants, subjects to be tested on examination, and issuance and display of license, so as to specify certain requirements for practical training and experience for an applicant to obtain licensure through an apprenticeship program; to provide for credit for practical training and experience already obtained if certain conditions are met; to provide for alternative means of obtaining the required education, training, and experience for licensure; to provide for related matters; to provide an effective date; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

SECTION 1.

Code Section 43-29-7 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to license requirements for dispensing opticians, qualifications of applicants, subjects to be tested on examination, and issuance and display of license, is amended as follows:

"43-29-7.

(a) Any person wishing to obtain the right to practice the trade or occupation of dispensing optician, as defined in this chapter, shall, before it shall be lawful for him or her to do so in this state, make application to the board, upon such form and in such manner as shall be adopted and prescribed by the board, and obtain a license from the board. Unless such person shall have obtained a license as provided in this subsection, it shall be unlawful for him or her to practice the trade or occupation of dispensing optician in this state; and he or she shall be subject to the penalties prescribed in Code Section 43-29-21.

(b) The board shall admit to examination any candidate who pays the fee provided for in this chapter and submits evidence satisfactory to the board, verified on oath, that:

(1) The applicant is over 18 years of age;

(2) The applicant has completed a high school education or its equivalent, as defined by the State Board of Education;

(3) The applicant is of good moral character; and

(4) The applicant has satisfactorily completed one school year of not less than an 850 hour course of study in a recognized school of optical dispensing or has had practical training and experience of a grade and character satisfactory to the board for not less than two years under the supervision of a licensed dispensing optician, a licensed physician, or a licensed optometrist, provided that any time spent in a recognized school shall be considered as part of the apprenticeship period. The practical training and experience required under this paragraph for an apprenticeship shall include, at a minimum, 3,000 hours of experience engaged in apprenticeship functions and shall include instruction in ophthalmic optics, optical laboratory materials and techniques, eye

anatomy and physiology, related laws and regulations, ophthalmic dispensing theory and application, and basic contact lens theory. Prior to beginning an apprenticeship, the applicant shall register with the board. The registration shall identify the supervising licensed physician, licensed optometrist, or licensed dispensing optician and the mailing address and telephone number of the primary location where the apprenticeship training shall occur; provided, however, that in addition to the primary location, such training may be furnished at other locations under proper supervision. The board shall develop a list of textbooks and instructional materials to guide the apprentice and supervisors in providing the appropriate apprenticeship instruction. Upon completion by the applicant, such training and experience shall be certified by the supervising licensed dispensing optician, licensed physician or licensed optometrist to the board.

(c) Applicants who have received practical training and experience in the trade or occupation of dispensing optician prior to July 1, 2008, shall receive credit toward the practical training and experience requirements of paragraph (4) of subsection (b) of this Code section if they register with the board in accordance with the provisions of said paragraph no later than August 31, 2008.

(d) Applicants may also meet the educational requirements of this Code section by receiving a certificate from recognized schools of opticianry with the Georgia Department of Technical and Adult Education or formal home study programs through the Career Progression Program with the National Academy of Opticianry or other programs approved by the board.

~~(c)~~(e) Applicants for examination may be examined by the board upon matters pertaining to mathematics and physics, ophthalmic materials and laboratory technique, ophthalmic optics, ophthalmic dispensing, and

practical subjects. When any applicant passes the necessary examination and meets the qualifications set out, the board shall issue a license to such person to practice the trade or occupation of dispensing optician.

~~(d)~~(f) Such license shall be conspicuously displayed in the office or place of business of the dispensing optician; and it shall not be necessary to remove the same so long as such dispensing optician continues to practice his or her trade or occupation in ~~the~~ this state and so long as the license is not revoked or suspended by the board."

SECTION 2.

This Act shall become effective on July 1, 2008.

SECTION 3.

All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.