

Maryland BOARD OF EXAMINERS IN OPTOMETRY



Revised Minutes

General Session Meeting

Wednesday, November 13, 2024, 9:30 A.M. – 11:00 AM.

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A. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 9:35 a.m. by Francisco Burgos, O.D.

Virtual Attendance Roll Call: Francisco Burgos, O.D., Tracey Boss, O.D., Catherine Carter Consumer Member. **Absent:** Margaret Hubbard, Consumer Member.

B. Welcome New Board Members and staff:

The Board welcomed three new members and one new staff: Dominic L. Brown, O.D., Adel Ebraheem, O.D., and Aidin Dean Gogerdchi, O.D.

Staff present: Gwendolyn A. Joyner, Executive Director, Andrea Russell-Tate, Licensing Coordinator, Nyah Smith, Intern

New Staff: Latasha Washington, Data Entry Clerk.

Guest in Attendance: Carl Waxman, O.D. Jennifer Cohen, Executive Director, Maryland Optometric Association.

Dr. Burgos read the Board's opening statement into the record as well as the Board's Mission Statement and notice about public attendance. The Board of Examiners in Optometry was created in 1914. The Board is composed of five Optometrist: Francisco Burgos, O.D., Tracey Boss, O.D., Dominic L. Brown, O.D., Adel Ebraheem, O.D. and Aidin Gogerdchi, O.D. Two consumer members: Margaret Hubbard and

Catherine Carter. All members are appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Secretary of Health.

Board staff: Gwendolyn A. Joyner, Executive Director; Licensing Coordinator, Andrea Russell-Tate, Latasha Washington, Data Entry Clerk. Intern: Nyah Smith.

Board Counsel: Rhonda Edwards, AAG, Deputy/Board Counsel

Maryland Board of Examiners in Optometry Mission Statement

The Board is mandated to regulate the practice of optometry in Maryland and protect the public health and welfare of its citizens by ensuring the delivery of vision services by qualified optometrists. It is the responsibility of the Board to:

*Credential and license applicants

*Certify optometrists to use-diagnostic pharmaceutical agents and therapeutic pharmaceutical agents in the practice of optometry

*Promulgate and adopt regulations to govern the practice of optometry in Maryland

*Monitor continuing education programs and continuing education compliance

*Investigate complaints against licensees concerning alleged violations of the law

*Conduct hearings concerning these violations

*Discipline licensees found to be in violation of the law

COMAR 10.01 14.02 Public Attendance

The Public may attend and observe an open session of a public body within or established by the Maryland Department of Health. Except in instances when a public body expressly invites public testimony, questions, comments, or other forms of public participation, or when the public participation is otherwise authorized by law, a member of the public attending an open session may not participate in the session.

C. Additions/Corrections November 13, 2024, Agenda

- ACOE Call for Comments
- A motion was made by Dr. Gogerdchi, O.D. and seconded by Ms. Carer to approve the additions to the November 13, 2025 agenda.

D. Review and Approval of General Session Minutes - September 25, 2024.

- A motion was made by Ms. Carter and seconded by Dr. Gogerdchi, to approve the September 25, 2024 General Session Agenda.

E. Lillian Reese, Legislative and Regulations Coordinator

- Two regulation proposals have been sent to the Secretary's office awaiting signature: for clarifying and updating continuing education requirements.
- For adding a criminal history records check to licensing procedures the following passed legislation in 2024. Amend examination requirements, remove obsolete language, add license requirements to regulations (currently absent).
- After sign-off, should be moved to AELR Committee for review, then MD Register or a 30-day public comment period.
- Sign offs for proposals are currently backlogged and delayed, but two Board proposals are flagged as priority.

F. Committee Reports

- **President's Report - Francisco Burgos, O.D.**
 - ACOE Call for Comments
 - Document proposed amendments and corrections to standards for colleges of optometry plus accreditation of residency programs - (Streamline process of regulations, fifty-six page document).
 - No comments to be issued at this time for ACOE
 - Letter from Margaret Whelan, Executive Director of Arizona Board of Optometry, and Lisa Fennell, Executive Director for ARBO.
 - The Kentucky Board is considering an amendment to allow all new licensees to use the written portion of the Optometry Examining Board of Canada (OEBC) Exam in lieu of the NBEO Part I Exam.
 - As the scope of Maryland Board of Examiners in Optometry does not extend commentary to other states licensing/regulations, the Board will not comment at this time.
 - **CE Committee -Francisco Burgos, O.D.**
12/3/2024: Maryland Optometric Association - "Utilizing Technology and Management of Ocular Diseases" CE approved for 1 hour.

G. Old Business

- Nothing to Report

H. Treasurer's Report – Gwendolyn A. Joyner

- Ms. Joyner stated Hillary Fasciano is the new Fiscal Officer; Note: Currently there is not a Fiscal Report available due to the new Fiscal Officer (Learning Process)

I. Executive Director's Report -Gwendolyn Joyner

- **Criminal History Records Check, (CHRC)**
There are delays in Criminal History Originating Agency Identifier (ORI) number submission. No new applicants are able to complete their FBI background checks as of 10/01/2024, both state/FBI background checks are mandatory, and it is currently uncertain when the ORI number will be assigned to the Board.
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- Only applicants who applied for certification on or after 10/01/2024 are impacted by this (currently there are 5 applicants). The Licensing Coordinator is keeping a record to circle back on who will need to complete a background check.
Specific individuals will be notified to complete a State and FBI background check once the ORI number is received by Board staff. A statement has been prepared and is available on the Maryland Board of Examiners in Optometry's website regarding the delay in the criminal background checks, due to awaiting the issuance of the FBI OR number.
- A motion was made by Tracey Boss, O.D. and seconded by Ms. Carter to send an email to applicants who applied for certification as of 10/01/2024 to inform them of the administrative issues that are beyond Board staff's control.
- **ARBO ED Meeting - FYI**
Board Members discussed:
 - Telemedicine – ARBO is starting a telehealth Task Force for a model telehealth policies/resources
 - Scope expansion - proposals are being made in Utah, Wisconsin and California.
 - Mobile units - questions arouse on mobile unit permissibility and path to mobile registration.
 - Discussed that telehealth practitioner shall be held to the same standards of practice and documentation as those applicable for in - person healthcare settings.
 - Discuss that the Board may not establish a second standard of care for relationship through synchronous telehealth interaction provided by the healthcare practitioner who is complying with the health care practitioner's standard of care.

- Discussed there is no definition or “Comprehensive Eye Exam” in the current statute.
- Discussed considering inspection authority or individual licensed optometrists.
- Suggested motions to redefine “ Comprehensive Eye Exam” update to Maryland 2024 scope of practice and to form a task force to define mobile/virtual optometry, (both retracted due to new appointments to Legislation/Regulations Committee) No motions were made.

Continuation of Executive Director’s Report

- There is a new armed security team onboard.
- The rent has increased

J. New Business - Francisco Burgos, O.D.

- New Licensees - A motion was made by Tracey Boss, O.D. and seconded by Aidin Gogerdchi, O.D. to approve the following licensees:

1. Garmsiri, Behard	TA3044
2. Naik, Jodi McKittrick	TA3045
3. Jandwani, Ashmita	TA3046
4. Nassehi, Ramtin	TA3047
5. Bohling, Kimberly	TA3048
6. Adamich, Andrew Ray	TA3049
7. Wolfe, Gregory	TA3050

- **Committee Volunteers needed:**
 - Legislative/Regulations Committee - Adel Ebraheem, O.D. and Catherine Carter, Consumer Member, Tracey Boss, O.D., (Tentatively)
 - Disciplinary Review Committee - Dominic Brown, O.D., Margaret Hubbard, Consumer Member and Tracey Boss, O.D.
 - Treasurer - Catherine Carter (unopposed self-nomination)
 - Secretary - Dominic Brown, O.D., (A motion was made by Dr. Burgos and seconded by Ms. Carter to approve Dr. Brown as the new Board Secretary.
- **Officers:** Ratification - Francisco Burgos, O.D. to remain as President until May 31, 2025: a motion was made by Tracey Boss, O.D. and seconded by Catherine Carter.

K. Adjournment

- A motion was made by Tracey Boss, O.D. and seconded by Catherine Carter to adjourn the meeting at 11:32. A.M.

- The next Board meeting will be held virtually, Wednesday, January 29, 2025.

Respectfully submitted by:

Dominic Brown, O.D., Board Secretary