

MARYLAND BOARD OF BOARD OF EXAMINERS IN OPTOMETRY



REVISED AGENDA

General Session (Public) Meeting

Wednesday, March 26, 2025 – 9:30 A.M. – 11:00 A.M.

Join Google Meet

meet.google.com/fmq-tdnj-jvj

[Join by phone](#)

(US) +1 413-561-4563 PIN: 754 179 078#

- A. Call to Order**
Virtual Roll Call
- B. Approval/Corrections to Agenda (March 26, 2025)**
- C. Review and Approval of General Session Minutes: January 29, 2025**
- D. Legislative Session Bills – Lillian Reese, Legislative and Regulations Coordinator**
 - COMAR 10.28.02 Continuing Education Requirements – Notice of Proposed Action. 30 Day Comment Period March 21 -2025 -April 21, 2025.
 - Implicit Bias and Structural Racism Training HB/783
- E. Committee Reports**
 - **President's Report - Francisco Burgos, O.D.**
 - Accreditation Council on Optometric Education (ACOE) due by May 5, 2025
 - Financial Disclosure Due by April 30, 2025
 - AD Hoc Committee for Fee Increase Discussion

- **Continuing Education - Adel Ebraheem, O.D./Aidin Gogerdchi, O.D.**
 - Maryland Optometric Association – “Mes and MIGS: Medical, Laser, & Minimally Invasive Glaucoma Surgical Treatments” 2 Hours
 - Maryland Optometric Association – “Glaucoma and Dry Eye” – 2 Hours
 - Maryland Optometric Association – (in person) “Amniotic Membrane Technology in Practice: Enhancing Outcomes in Ocular Surface Disease” 1 Hour
 - Johns Hopkins - “Wilmer Optometry Grand Rounds” “Follow the Keratoconic Road” 1 Hour
 - Maryland Optometric Association (in-person)”Advanced Refractive Excellence: Live EVO ICL Surgery for Optometric Continuing Education” 2 Hours
 - Maryland Optometric Association – (in-person) “Pediatric Head Scratchers – How to Manage and When to Refer” 1 Hour
 - Maryland Optometric Association –(in-person) “Low Vision for the Primary Optometrist” 1 Hour
 - Clinical Observation for Alexandra Alvarez, O.D. – Washington Eye Surgery Center.
 - Wilmer Optometry – Grand Rounds, April 9, 2025
- **Treasurer’s Report** – Catherine Carter, Consumer Member

F. Old Business

- **Nothing to Report**

G. Executive Director’s Report – Gwendolyn Joyner

- Legislative Audit – September 2019-July 2023
- Board Vacancy as of May 31, 2025
- ARBO Annual Conference Meeting June 22-24, 2025
- 2025 Renewal

H. New Business - Francisco Burgos, O.D. President

- New President Vote – effective June 1, 2025
- New Licensees – Francisco Burgos, O.D.

I. Catherine Carter - Discussion

- Number of Medicaid Providers and what aspects of an eye exam is Medicaid covering? (10 to 15 minutes)
- Next Board meeting will be May 28, 2025, at 9:30 A.M. 4201 Patterson Avenue, Baltimore, Maryland 21215

J. Adjournment

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A. **Call to Order** – Francisco Burgos, O.D. 9:30 A.M.

Board Members in Attendance – Francisco Burgos, O.D., Tracey Boss, O.D., Dominic Brown, O.D., Adel Ebraheem, O.D., Aidin Gogerdchi, O.D.,
Consumer Members: Margaret Hubbard and Catherine Carter.

Staff Members: Gwendolyn Joyner – Executive Director; Andrea Russell-Tate, Licensing Coordinator; Nyah Smith, Intern; Lillian Reese, Legislative and Regulations Coordinator.

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

Guests: Jennifer Cohen, Executive Director, Maryland Optometric Association; Zakiyyah Holmes; Administrator, Health Boards and Commissions of Maryland Department of Health, Office of the Secretary

Dr. Burgos read the Board's opening statement into the record as well as the Board's Mission Statement and noted public attendance.

Maryland Board of Examiners in Optometry's Mission Statement

The Board of Examiners in Optometry was created in 1914 The Board of Examiners in Optometry is composed of five optometrist members in our case Francisco Burgos, O.D. Tracey Boss, O.D., Dominic Brown, O.D. Aidin Dean Gogerdchi, O.D., Adel Ebraheem,

O.D. and 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. The board staff include Gwendolyn Joyner, Executive Director, Andrea Russell-Tate, Licensing Coordinator, Nyah Smith Intern, Lillian Reese, Legislative and Regulations Coordinator. Board Counsel: Rhonda Edwards, Deputy Counsel. 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 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 public participation is otherwise authorized by law a member of the public attending an open session may not participate in the session.

B. Approval/Corrections to Agenda: March 26, 2025

- Ms. Joyner stated that April Kongmanichanh was originally licensed and not certified. Dr. Kongmanichanh sent an email to request that her license be changed from no certification to TA 3051.
- A motion was made by Dr. Boss and seconded by Ms. Hubbard to approve the March 26, 2025, agenda with corrections.

C. Review and Approval of General Session Minutes: January 29, 2025

- Ms. Joyner will add Andrea Russell-Tate, Licensing Coordinator to the Minutes
- Lillian Reese will be changed from Guest to staff
- A motion was made by Dr. Boss and seconded by Ms. Carter to approve the January 29, 2025, minutes with corrections.

D. Legislative Session Bills – Lillian Reese, Legislative and Regulations Coordinator

- **Notice of Proposed Action** – Proposals in promulgation process 30 Day Comment Period March 21, 2025 – April 21, 2025. COMAR 10.28.02 Continuing Education
- Clean up regulations 10.28.03. 05.07.08.11.12
- Added Criminal History Background Checks to regulations
- Has been signed by the Acting Secretary and will be printed in the Maryland Register on April 4, 2025. Comment period begins April 4 - May 5 2025.
- **Update Legislative Session**
- Legislative Session ends April 7, 2025
- Board took positions on two Bills: HB783 there was a Senate version of that Bill which was SB458, the Senate Bill did not pass. HB783 did pass because Implicit Bias language was added (Implicit Bias and Structural Racism Training)
- Several Boards have written amendments with support to this Bill. Boards want clarity on this Bill.
- IHB482 (Criminal History Predetermination) passed with one amendment
 - The Bill was heard in the Senate Finance Committee on March 19, 2025 but was not voted on yet. The Optometry Board joined other Boards with a letter of concern.
 - Optometry Board is not going to be affected by the amended Budget Bill.

E. Committee Reports

- **President's Report – Francisco Burgos, O.D.**
 - Accreditation Council on Optometric Education (ACO) due by May 5, 2025
 - Changes made to Policies and Procedures
 - No Board Action
 - Financial Disclosures are due by April 30, 2025
 - AD Hoc Committee for Fee Increase Discussion.
 - There is currently one person on the Fee Committee, -Tracey Boss, O.D.
 - The Board will need to propose fee increases, propose future budgets, consider future budget shortages, budget for an investigator/investigations (could consider sharing an investigator with another Board), consider rent increases.
 - There have been no fee increases in approximately 22 years.
 - Ms. Hubbard and Dr. Brown and Dr. Ebraheem, will join the AD Hoc Committee for fee increase discussion, meeting date and time to be determined.
 - A motion was made by Dr. Boss and seconded by Dr. Brown to increase fees.
 - Results to be shared at the next Board meeting May 28, 2025.

- **Continuing Education – Adel Ebraheem, O.D./Aidin Dean Gogerdchi, O.D.**

- Maryland Optometric Association – “Mes and MIGS: Medical, Laser, and Minimally Invasive Glaucoma Surgical Treatments” 2 Hours
- Maryland Optometric Association – “Glaucoma and Dry Eye” – 2 Hours
- Maryland Optometric Association – (in person) “Amniotic Membrane Technology in Practice: Enhancing Outcomes in Ocular Surface Disease” 1 Hour
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- Maryland Optometric Association – (in – person) “Low Vision for the Primary Optometrist” 1 Hour
- Clinical Observation for Alexandra Alavarez, O.D. – Washington Eye Surgery Center
- Wilmer Optometry – Grand Rounds, April 9, 2025
- Maryland Optometric Association, April 3, 2025 “Beyond the Diagnosis”

- Discussion
- Discussion on automating CE applications through IT
- Discussion on adding “non-profit organizations” to the Board’s website as an option for CE opportunities through IT.
 - Board Counsel expressed some potential legal issues for posting nonprofits and endorsing specific businesses on the public - facing website.
 - Board Counsel advised that the Board should ensure current application processes are aligned with the new pending regulations which come into effect April/May 2025.
- Discussion on ensuring form accessibility
- Gwendolyn will explorer with IT as appropriate

Treasurer’s Report – TREASURER’S REPORT

As of March 24, 2025

March 26, 2025 (Board Meeting)

FY Summary as of March 26, 2025

\$333,605.00 Total Revenue Collected in FY24

\$56,785.00 Total Revenue Collected as of March 21, 2025

\$300,880.67 Expenditures FY2024

\$192,871.95 Expenditures FY2025

\$148,191.4 FY Special Fund Carry Over

\$12,104.48 **Current Available Fund Balance as of March 21, 2025**

Proposed Budget for FY 26 \$352,966

- FY 25 Budget is \$345,868.00
- FY25: July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025
- FY26: Starts July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026

F. Old Business

- **Nothing to Report**

G. Executive Director's Report

- Legislative Audit (September 2019 FY 2020 – July 2023 FY 2024) went well but Board staff was unable to request applicants/licensees to complete their criminal history records check, due to not receiving the Federal ORI number.
- As of May 31, 2025, there will be an OD vacancy on the Board, Dr. Burgos's eight-year term will end. The Board will need to vote in a new President to be effective June 1, 2025.
- Governor's Office of Appointments has several names to be considered for the OD vacancy. Ms. Joyner emailed GOA staff during the legislative session. GOA staff will work on filling the vacancy after the legislative session ends.
- ARBO Annual Conference Meeting will be held June 22-24, 2025. Ms. Joyner, Dr. Boss and Board Counsel (Rhonda Edwards, AAG) will attend the ARBO Conference.
- 2025 Renewal will begin April 30, 2025, Letters M-Z
 - Approximately 498 are due to renew
 - (Approximately 6 are applying for Inactive Status)

H. New Business – Francisco Burgos, O.D.

- **New Licensees: (Total 9)**

Thomas Chwe	TA	3068
Sarah Salman	TA	3067
Kirstyn Elizabeth Horsley	TA	3066
Preyaben Patel	TA	3065
Marie Greene	TA	3064

Tharanie Amarawardana	TA	3063
Michael Spuller	TA	3062
Alexandria McKeen	TA	3061
April Kongmanichanh	TA	3051

- An email was received from Wilson Hebron regarding request for options for mobile/in-home eye exams
 - Board will reply with some potential options(s)
- New President Vote – Effective June 1, 2025
A motion was made to Ms. Carter and seconded by Dr. Ebraheem to accept Dr. Gogerdchi as the new Board President

- **Catherine Carter - Discussion**

- Number of Medicaid Providers and what aspects of an eye exam is Medicaid covering?
- Essilor is no longer giving out vouchers for children in need of vision exams due to high demand.
- Lions Club is limited on funds
- Discussion on need for vision exams for children
- Catherine is currently working with local, federally qualified health centers
- Catherine proposed inquiring which elements of an eye exam is Medicaid covering, and which doctors accept Medicaid
- Rationales: (1) to help constituents locate Medicaid resources, (2) to educate on the lack of providers in the state who accept Medicaid (per school nurses)
- Dr. Gogerdchi
 - There are two types of Medicaid plans – Medicaid (offers better reimbursement) or only routine (offers lesser reimbursement)
 - Board Counsel there should be a list of publicly available providers
 - Dr. Gogerdchi routed to:
<https://health.maryland.gov/mmcp/Pages/provider-finder.aspx>
 - Board Counsel will explore this further

I. Adjournment

- A motion was made by Ms. Carter and seconded by Dr. Boss to adjourn the meeting at 11:13 A.M.
- The next Board meeting will be May 28, 2025 at 4201 Patterson Avenue, Baltimore, Maryland 21215.

Respectfully submitted by:

Dominic Brown, O.D., Secretary