

**Chapter 18.34 RCW  
DISPENSING OPTICIANS**

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*Health professions account—Fees credited—Requirements for biennial budget request—Unappropriated funds: RCW 43.70.320.*

*Homeless person vision services: RCW 43.20A.800 through 43.20A.845.*

**RCW 18.34.005 Regulation of health care professions—Criteria.**

See chapter 18.120 RCW.

**RCW 18.34.010 Licensing—Exemptions—Limitations.** Nothing in this chapter shall:

(1) Be construed to limit or restrict a duly licensed physician or optometrist or employees working under the personal supervision of a duly licensed physician or optometrist from the practices enumerated in this chapter, and each such licensed physician and optometrist shall have all the rights and privileges which may accrue under this chapter to dispensing opticians licensed hereunder;

(2) Be construed to prohibit or restrict practice by a regularly enrolled student in a prescribed course in opticianry in a college or university approved by the secretary whose performance of services is pursuant to a regular course of instruction or assignments from an instructor and under the supervision of a licensed dispensing optician, optometrist, or ophthalmologist: PROVIDED, That persons practicing under this section must be clearly identified as students;

(3) Be construed to prohibit an unlicensed person from performing mechanical work upon inert matter in an optical office, laboratory, or shop;

(4) Be construed to prohibit an unlicensed person from engaging in the sale of spectacles, eyeglasses, magnifying glasses, goggles, sunglasses, telescopes, binoculars, or any such articles which are completely preassembled and sold only as merchandise;

(5) Be construed to authorize or permit a licensee hereunder to hold himself or herself out as being able to, or to offer to, or to undertake to attempt, by any manner of means, to examine or exercise eyes, diagnose, treat, correct, relieve, operate, or prescribe for any

human ailment, deficiency, deformity, disease, or injury. [2011 c 336 § 479; 2010 c 16 § 1; 1957 c 43 § 1.]

**RCW 18.34.020 Definitions.** The term "secretary" wherever used in this chapter shall mean the secretary of health of the state of Washington. The term "apprentice" wherever used in this chapter shall mean a person who shall be designated an apprentice in the records of the secretary at the request of a physician, registered optometrist, or licensee hereunder, who shall thereafter be the primary supervisor of the apprentice. The apprentice may thereafter receive from a physician, registered optometrist, or licensee hereunder training and direct supervision in the work of a dispensing optician. [1995 c 178 § 1; 1991 c 3 § 74; 1979 c 158 § 37; 1957 c 43 § 2.]

**RCW 18.34.030 Apprentices.** No licensee hereunder may have more than two apprentices in training or under their direct supervision at any one time. However, the primary supervisor shall be responsible for the acts of his or her apprentices in the performance of their work in the apprenticeship program and provide the majority of the training and direct supervision received by the apprentice. Apprentices shall complete their apprenticeship in six years and shall not work longer as an apprentice unless the secretary determines, after a hearing, that the apprentice was prevented by causes beyond his or her control from completing his or her apprenticeship and becoming a licensee hereunder in six years. [1995 c 178 § 2; 1991 c 3 § 75; 1957 c 43 § 3.]

**RCW 18.34.050 Examining committee—Compensation and travel expenses.** The examining committee shall consist of three persons primarily engaged in the business of dispensing opticians and who currently hold a valid license under this chapter. Members of the committee shall be compensated in accordance with RCW 43.03.240 and shall be reimbursed for travel expenses in accordance with RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060. [1984 c 287 § 32; 1957 c 43 § 5.]

**Legislative findings—Severability—Effective date—1984 c 287:**  
See notes following RCW 43.03.220.

**RCW 18.34.060 Dispensing optician.** A dispensing optician is a person who prepares duplications of, or prepares and dispenses lenses, spectacles, eyeglasses and/or appurtenances thereto to the intended wearers thereof on written prescriptions from physicians or optometrists, and in accordance with such prescriptions, measures, adapts, adjusts and fabricates such lenses, spectacles, eyeglasses and/or appurtenances thereto to the human face for the aid or correction of visual or ocular anomalies of the human eye: PROVIDED, HOWEVER, That contact lenses may be fitted only upon a written prescription of a physician or optometrist. [1957 c 43 § 6.]

**RCW 18.34.070 Applicants—Eligibility for examination—Fee.** Any applicant for a license shall be examined if he or she pays an

examination fee determined by the secretary as provided in RCW 43.70.250 and certifies under oath that he or she:

- (1) Is eighteen years or more of age; and
- (2) Has graduated from an accredited high school; and
- (3) Is of good moral character; and
- (4) Has either:
  - (a) Had at least three years of apprenticeship training; or
  - (b) Successfully completed a prescribed course in opticianry in a college or university approved by the secretary; or
  - (c) Been principally engaged in practicing as a dispensing optician not in the state of Washington for five years. [2004 c 262 § 5; 1991 c 3 § 76; 1985 c 7 § 29; 1975 1st ex.s. c 30 § 34; 1971 ex.s. c 292 § 22; 1957 c 43 § 7.]

**Findings—2004 c 262:** See note following RCW 18.06.050.

**Severability—1971 ex.s. c 292:** See note following RCW 26.28.010.

**RCW 18.34.080 Examination—Issuance and display of license.** The examination shall determine whether the applicant has a thorough knowledge of the principles governing the practice of a dispensing optician which is hereby declared necessary for the protection of the public health. The examining committee may approve an examination prepared or administered by a private testing agency or association of licensing authorities. The secretary shall license successful examinees and the license shall be conspicuously displayed in the place of business of the licensee. [1995 c 198 § 3; 1991 c 3 § 77; 1957 c 43 § 8.]

**RCW 18.34.110 Existing practitioner—Fee.** The secretary shall issue a license without examination to any person who makes application therefor within six months after June 12, 1957, pays a fee of fifty dollars and certifies under oath that he or she is of good moral character and has been actually and principally engaged in the practice of a dispensing optician in the state of Washington for a period of not less than six months immediately preceding June 12, 1957. [1991 c 3 § 78; 1957 c 43 § 11.]

**RCW 18.34.115 Credentialing by endorsement.** An applicant holding a credential in another state may be credentialed to practice in this state without examination if the secretary determines that the other state's credentialing standards are substantially equivalent to the standards in this state. [1991 c 332 § 33.]

**Application to scope of practice—Captions not law—1991 c 332:** See notes following RCW 18.130.010.

**RCW 18.34.120 Renewal registration fee—Continuing education.** Each licensee hereunder shall pay a renewal registration fee determined by the secretary as provided in RCW 43.70.250 and 43.70.280. The secretary may adopt rules establishing mandatory continuing education requirements to be met by persons applying for

license renewal. [1996 c 191 § 18; 1991 c 3 § 79; 1984 c 279 § 52; 1975 1st ex.s. c 30 § 35; 1957 c 43 § 12.]

**Severability—1984 c 279:** See RCW 18.130.901.

**RCW 18.34.136 Application of uniform disciplinary act.** The uniform disciplinary act, chapter 18.130 RCW, governs unlicensed practice, the issuance and denial of licenses, and the discipline of licensees under this chapter. [1987 c 150 § 19; 1986 c 259 § 45.]

**Severability—1987 c 150:** See RCW 18.122.901.

**Severability—1986 c 259:** See note following RCW 18.130.010.

**RCW 18.34.141 License required.** No person may practice or represent himself or herself as a dispensing optician without first having a valid license to do so. [1987 c 150 § 20.]

**Severability—1987 c 150:** See RCW 18.122.901.

**RCW 18.34.151 Licensing requirements—Military training or experience.** An applicant with military training or experience satisfies the training or experience requirements of this chapter unless the secretary determines that the military training or experience is not substantially equivalent to the standards of this state. [2011 c 32 § 2.]