

FINAL BILL REPORT

SSB 5226

C 142 L 03
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Concerning optometric care and practice.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Health & Long-Term Care (originally sponsored by Senators Hale, Deccio, Thibaudeau, Keiser, Oke and Franklin).

Senate Committee on Health & Long-Term Care
House Committee on Health Care

Background: The practice of optometry involves the examination of the human eye and the human vision system. Optometrists may test patients' visual acuity, prescribe eyeglasses and contact lenses, prescribe visual therapy, and adapt prosthetic eyes.

Upon meeting additional requirements, optometrists may also use or prescribe topically applied drugs for diagnostic or therapeutic purposes. They may apply topical drugs for diagnostic purposes upon completing 60 hours of didactic and clinical instruction in general and ocular pharmacology and receiving certification from an accredited institute of higher education. Optometrists may prescribe topical drugs for therapeutic purposes upon completing the requirements for diagnostic drugs plus an additional 75 hours of instruction.

Optometrists are licensed by the Optometry Board. Optometrists are also regulated by the Optometry Board under the Uniform Disciplinary Act. The board is responsible for the issuance and denial of provider licenses, the investigation of acts of unprofessional conduct, and the discipline of licensees. The board has also adopted a drug formulary of topically applied diagnostic and therapeutic drugs that optometrists may use upon meeting the additional training requirements.

Summary: The range of drugs that an optometrist may use or prescribe is expanded beyond topical drugs to include some oral drugs for diagnostic or therapeutic purposes, as well as injectable epinephrine for treatment of anaphylactic shock.

To use or prescribe oral drugs, an optometrists must meet the existing requirements for topically applied drugs, complete an additional 16 hours of didactic and eight hours of supervised clinical instruction, and receive certification from an accredited institute of higher education.

To use injectable epinephrine, an optometrist must meet the existing requirements for topically applied drugs, complete an additional four hours of didactic and supervised clinical instruction, and receive certification from an accredited institute of higher education.

The Optometry Board must consult with and have the approval of the Board of Pharmacy to create a list of Schedule III through V controlled substances that optometrists may prescribe or administer. The Optometry Board must also consult with and have the approval of the

Board of Pharmacy to establish rules to specify the proper dosages and forms of the drugs that optometrists may prescribe or administer.

Optometrists may not prescribe a controlled substance for more than seven days to any patient for treating a single episode or condition or for pain. If treatment exceeding seven days is indicated, the patient must be referred to a licensed physician.

Optometrists may only prescribe or administer drugs that treat diseases or conditions of the eye that are within an optometrist's scope of practice.

Optometrists may not perform ophthalmic surgery nor prescribe oral corticosteroids.

Technical corrections are made to other statutory sections to reflect these changes.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	48 0
House	95 0

Effective: July 27, 2003