

By Senator Latvala

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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to optometrists; amending s. 463.006,
3 F.S.; revising the requirements that applicants must
4 meet in order to qualify to take optometric licensure
5 and certification examinations; clarifying
6 interpretation of the authority of the Board of
7 Optometry to offer a practical examination in addition
8 to a written examination; specifying that applicants
9 must graduate from an accredited school or college of
10 optometry in order to obtain a license and practice as
11 optometrists; providing an effective date.

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13 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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15 Section 1. Section 463.006, Florida Statutes, is amended to
16 read:

17 463.006 Licensure and certification by examination.—

18 (1) Any person desiring to be a licensed practitioner
19 pursuant to this chapter must ~~shall~~ apply to the department to
20 take the licensure and certification examinations. The
21 department shall examine each applicant who the board determines
22 has:

23 (a) Completed the application forms as required by the
24 board, remitted an application fee for certification not to
25 exceed \$250, remitted an examination fee for certification not
26 to exceed \$250, and remitted an examination fee for licensure
27 not to exceed \$325, all as set by the board.

28 (b) Submitted proof satisfactory to the department that she
29 or he:

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30 1. Is at least 18 years of age.

31 2. Has graduated from an accredited school or college of
32 optometry approved by rule of the board, or is attending such a
33 school or college and expects to graduate within 24 months
34 following the date of application.

35 3. Is of good moral character.

36 4. Has successfully completed at least 110 hours of
37 transcript-quality coursework and clinical training in general
38 and ocular pharmacology as determined by the board, at an
39 institution that:

40 a. Has facilities for both didactic and clinical
41 instructions in pharmacology; and

42 b. Is accredited by a regional or professional accrediting
43 organization that is recognized and approved by the Commission
44 on Recognition of Postsecondary Accreditation or the United
45 States Department of Education.

46 5. Has completed at least 1 year of supervised experience
47 in differential diagnosis of eye disease or disorders as part of
48 the optometric training or in a clinical setting as part of the
49 optometric experience.

50 (2) The examination shall consist of the appropriate
51 subjects and include, ~~including~~ applicable state laws and rules
52 and general and ocular pharmacology with emphasis on the use and
53 side effects of ocular pharmaceutical agents. The board may by
54 rule substitute a national examination as part or all of the
55 examination and, notwithstanding any provision of chapter 456 to
56 the contrary, may by rule offer a practical examination in
57 addition to a ~~the~~ written examination.

58 (3) Each applicant who successfully passes the examination

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59 and otherwise meets the requirements of this chapter, provided
60 that such applicant has graduated from an accredited school or
61 college of optometry approved by rule of the board, is entitled
62 to be licensed as a practitioner and to be certified to
63 administer and prescribe ocular pharmaceutical agents in the
64 diagnosis and treatment of ocular conditions.

65 Section 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law.