

65-1505. Qualifications of practitioners; examinations; professional liability insurance; fees; reciprocal licensure; rules and regulations criteria for approval of schools or colleges; criminal history record check; criminal history and fingerprinting fund created. (a) Persons entitled to practice optometry in Kansas shall be those persons licensed in accordance with the provisions of the optometry law. A person shall be qualified to be licensed and to receive a license as an optometrist: (1) Who is of good moral character; and in determining the moral character of any such person, the board may take into consideration any felony conviction of such person, but such conviction shall not automatically operate as a bar to licensure; (2) who has graduated from a school or college of optometry approved by the board; and (3) who successfully meets and completes the requirements set by the board and passes an examination given by the board.

(b) All applicants for licensure, in addition to successfully completing all other requirements for licensure, shall submit evidence satisfactory to the board of professional liability insurance in an amount acceptable to the board.

(c) Any person applying for examination by the board shall fill out and swear to an application furnished by the board, accompanied by a fee fixed by the board by rules and regulations in an amount of not to exceed \$450, and file the same with the secretary of the board at least 30 days prior to the holding of the examination. At such examinations the board shall examine each applicant in subjects taught in schools or colleges of optometry approved by the board, as may be required by the board. If such person complies with the other qualifications for licensing and passes such examination, such person shall receive from the board, upon the payment of a fee fixed by the board by rules and regulations in an amount of not to exceed \$150, a license entitling such person to practice optometry. In the event of the failure on the part of the applicant to pass the first examination, such person may, with the consent of the board, within 18 months, by filing an application accompanied by a fee fixed by the board by rules and regulations in an amount of not to exceed \$150, take a second examination; for the third and each subsequent examination a fee fixed by the board by rules and regulations in an amount of not to exceed \$150. Any examination fee and license fee fixed by the board under this subsection which is in effect on the day preceding the effective date of this act shall continue in effect until the board adopts rules and regulations under this subsection fixing a different fee therefor.

(d) Any applicant for reciprocal licensure may in the board's discretion be licensed and issued a license without examination if the applicant has been in the active practice of optometry in another state for at least the three-year period immediately preceding the application for reciprocal licensure and the applicant:

(1) Presents a certified copy of a certificate of registration or license which has been issued to the applicant by another state where the requirements for licensure are deemed by the board to be equivalent to the requirements for licensure under this act, if such state accords a like privilege to holders of a license issued by the board;

(2) submits a sworn statement of the licensing authority of such other state that the applicant's license has never been limited, suspended or revoked and that the applicant has never been censured or had other disciplinary action taken;

(3) successfully passes an examination of Kansas law administered by the board and such clinical practice examination as the board deems necessary; and

(4) pays the reciprocal license fixed by the board by rules and regulations in an amount of not to exceed \$450. The reciprocal license fee fixed by the board under this subsection which is in effect on the day preceding the effective date of this act shall continue in effect until the board adopts rules and regulations under this subsection fixing a different fee therefor.

(e) The board shall adopt rules and regulations establishing the criteria which a school or college of optometry shall satisfy in meeting the requirement of approval by the board established under subsection (a). The board may send a questionnaire developed by the board to any school or college of optometry for which the board does not have sufficient information to determine whether the school or college meets the requirements for approval and rules and regulations adopted under this act. The questionnaire providing the necessary information shall be completed and returned to the board in order for the school or college to be considered for approval. The board may contract with investigative agencies, commissions or consultants to assist the board in obtaining information about schools or colleges. In entering such contracts the authority to approve schools or colleges shall remain solely with the board.

(f) (1) The board may require an applicant for licensure or a licensee in connection with an investigation of the licensee to be fingerprinted and submit to a state and national criminal history record check. The fingerprints shall be used to identify the licensee or applicant for licensure and to determine whether the licensee or applicant for licensure has a record of criminal arrests and convictions in this state or other jurisdictions. The board is authorized to submit the fingerprints to the Kansas bureau of investigation, the federal bureau of investigation or any other law enforcement or criminal justice agency for a state and national criminal history record check. The board may use the information obtained through the criminal history record check for the purposes of verifying the identification of the licensee or applicant for licensure and in the official character and fitness determination of the licensee or applicant for licensure to practice optometry in this state.

(2) Local and state law enforcement officers and agencies shall assist the board in taking and processing fingerprints of licensees and applicants for licensure and shall release to the board all records of adult convictions, arrests and nonconvictions in this state and all records of adult convictions, arrests and nonconvictions of any other state or country. The board may enter into agreements with the Kansas bureau of investigation, the federal bureau of investigation or any other law enforcement or criminal justice agency as necessary to carry out the duties of the board under this act.

(3) The fingerprints and all information obtained from the criminal history record check shall be confidential and shall not be disclosed except to members of the board and agents and employees of the board as necessary to verify the identification of any licensee or applicant for licensure and in the official character and fitness determination of the licensee or applicant for licensure to practice optometry in this state. Any other disclosure of such confidential information shall constitute a class A misdemeanor and shall constitute grounds for removal from office, termination of employment or denial, revocation or suspension of any license issued under this act.

(4) (A) The board shall fix a fee for fingerprinting applicants or licensees in an amount necessary to reimburse the board for the cost of the fingerprinting. Fees collected under this subsection shall be deposited in the criminal history and fingerprinting fund.

(B) There is hereby created in the state treasury the criminal history and fingerprinting fund. All moneys credited to the fund shall be used to pay all costs and fees associated with processing of fingerprints and criminal history checks for the board of examiners in optometry. The fund shall be administered by the board. All expenditures from the fund shall be made in accordance with appropriation acts upon warrants of the director of accounts and reports issued pursuant to vouchers approved by the president of the board or a person designated by the president.

History: L. 1923, ch. 220, § 9; R.S. 1923, 65-1505; L. 1939, ch. 240, § 2; L. 1951, ch. 360, § 1; L. 1975, ch. 318, § 3; L. 1979, ch. 192, § 1; L. 1987, ch. 235, § 3; L. 1988, ch. 243, § 6; L. 1990, ch. 223, § 3; L. 1996, ch. 95, § 3; L. 1999, ch. 23, § 3; L. 2003, ch. 46, § 1; L. 2005, ch. 93, § 1; L. 2012, ch. 8, § 3; July 1.