

CHAPTER 2018-78

House Bill No. 7059

An act relating to optometry; amending s. 463.006, F.S.; requiring an applicant for licensure as an optometrist to submit proof to the Department of Health that she or he meets certain requirements; removing a requirement that the department examine an applicant who meets specified requirements for licensure and certification; requiring the Board of Optometry to approve a licensure examination that meets certain requirements; clarifying that the board may offer a practical examination in addition to a written examination under certain circumstances; providing that an applicant must pass the licensure examination within a specified timeframe as a condition of licensure as an optometrist and certification to administer and prescribe ocular pharmaceutical agents; amending s. 463.0057, F.S.; conforming a cross-reference; providing an effective date.

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

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

463.006 Licensure and certification by examination.—

(1) Any person desiring to be a licensed practitioner pursuant to this chapter ~~must shall~~ apply to the department and must submit proof to take the licensure and certification examinations. ~~the department that she or he shall examine each applicant who the board determines has:~~

(a) Has completed the application forms as required by the board, remitted an application fee for certification not to exceed \$250, remitted an examination fee for certification not to exceed \$250, and remitted an examination fee for licensure not to exceed \$325, all as set by the board.

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

~~1. Is at least 18 years of age.~~

~~(c)2. Has graduated from an accredited school or college of optometry approved by rule of the board.~~

~~(d)3. Is of good moral character.~~

~~(e)4. Has successfully completed at least 110 hours of transcript-quality coursework and clinical training in general and ocular pharmacology as determined by the board, at an institution that:~~

~~1.a. Has facilities for both didactic and clinical instructions in pharmacology; and~~

~~2.b.~~ Is accredited by a regional or professional accrediting organization that is recognized and approved by the Commission on Recognition of Postsecondary Accreditation or the United States Department of Education.

(f)5. Has completed at least 1 year of supervised experience in differential diagnosis of eye disease or disorders as part of the optometric training or in a clinical setting as part of the optometric experience.

(2) The board shall approve a licensure examination consisting shall consist of the appropriate subjects and, including applicable state laws and rules and general and ocular pharmacology with emphasis on the use and side effects of ocular pharmaceutical agents. The board may by rule substitute a national examination as part or all of the examination and, notwithstanding chapter 456, may by rule offer a practical examination in addition to a the written examination.

(3) Each applicant who submits proof satisfactory to the board that he or she has met the requirements of subsection (1), who successfully passes the licensure examination within 3 years before the date of application or after the submission of an application, and who otherwise meets the requirements of this chapter is entitled to be licensed as a practitioner and to be certified to administer and prescribe ocular pharmaceutical agents in the diagnosis and treatment of ocular conditions.

Section 2. Subsection (3) of section 463.0057, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

463.0057 Optometric faculty certificate.—

(3) The holder of a faculty certificate may engage in the practice of optometry as permitted by this section but may not administer or prescribe topical ocular pharmaceutical agents unless the certificateholder has satisfied the requirements of s. 463.006(1)(e) and (f) s. 463.006(1)(b)4. and 5. If a certificateholder wishes to administer or prescribe oral ocular pharmaceutical agents, the certificateholder must also satisfy the requirements of s. 463.0055(1)(b).

Section 3. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law.

Approved by the Governor March 21, 2018.

Filed in Office Secretary of State March 21, 2018.