



New Registration Requirements for Optometry Graduates Effective Immediately: Canadian Board Exam Now Mandatory for All Jurisdictions

March 24, 2025 – Stouffville, ON - The Optometry Examining Board of Canada (OEBC) is pleased to announce that, effective immediately, all jurisdictions in Canada will only accept the Canadian Board Exam for registration. "This change is part of our ongoing commitment to maintaining the highest standards of optometric practice nationwide. We look forward to continuing our work with our Members in the public interest," said OEBC Chair Dr. Justin Boulay.

The College of Optometrists of Ontario ([News](#)) and the College of Health and Care Professionals of British Columbia ([News](#)) have provisions for students who have registered to challenge the American Board Exam and intend to practice in their jurisdiction. All other Canadian jurisdictions require candidates to pass the OEBC exam.

The Rationale for the Change

The OEBC and its members are committed to offering all candidates a Canadian entry-to-practice exam at a reasonable cost. Four provinces require a French Board exam. We aim to ensure a consistent and fair evaluation process for all optometry graduates by standardizing the board exam across all jurisdictions. In addition, it ensures that all new registrants pay their fair share to have the Canadian Board Exam available. This reduces the board exam expense for all candidates and eliminates subsidization by the OEBC Members.

"Over the past three years, OEBC members have contributed \$630,000, and OEBC had to draw down its reserves by about \$600,000 to give some candidates choices for their English board exams. This is no longer sustainable.", continued Boulay.

This new requirement is a significant step towards one standard in Canada: the quality of optometric care. It supports the provincial regulatory authorities' mission to protect the public by ensuring that all practicing optometrists meet the same high standards of competence and professionalism. The safety and well-being of Canadians are at the heart of this change.

About the OEBC

The Optometry Examining Board of Canada (OEBC) is the national body responsible for assessing and certifying optometrists in Canada. The OEBC works closely with the provincial optometry regulatory authorities — its members — to ensure that all optometrists meet the required standards of knowledge, skills, and professionalism to practice safely and effectively. The OEBC's role is to set the standards for the Canadian Board Exam, ensure its validity, and oversee its administration. The provincial regulatory authorities are responsible for enforcing these standards and granting licenses to practice. For more information, please contact: exams@oebc.ca