

January 3, 2022

Dear Licensee,

DC Health is happy to announce that the renewal portal for the **Board of Optometry** is now **LIVE!**

DC Health is no longer utilizing paper renewal applications. Renewals must be completed online. Our new licensure portal has enhanced features such as the ability to upload your continuing education documents and to receive a digital copy of your license within minutes of completing your renewal if there are no issues. Licensees are also encouraged to have any and all supplemental documents (e.g. responses to screening questions, proof of continuing education (CE), etc.) scanned and ready for upload before starting the renewal process to avoid any delays.

You may begin the renewal process by using the below DC Health Renewal Licensing Portal Page link.

- <https://dohlicenseinfo.secure.force.com/dchealthrenewals/>

Please read all of the instructions on the DC Health Renewal Licensing Portal Page.

If this is your first renewal, you will need to **create a new username and password.**

If you are experiencing issues with your renewal that is not identified below, please submit a “case” to our Customer Support site: <https://dohlicenseinfo.secure.force.com/support/>. We are asking users to be patient as we respond to all inquiries and cases on a first come, first serve basis.

OPTOMETRIST FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

RENEWAL FEES

- ***How much does it cost to renew?***
 - \$348 (With Diagnostic Pharmacy Agent and Therapeutic Pharmacy Agent Authorities)
 - \$203 (No Authorities)
 - \$85 late fee after March 31, 2022 (This fee is in addition to the renewal fee)

CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK (CBC) FEE

- ***Do I need a Criminal Background Check?***

All licensees are required to pay a mandatory fee of \$50 for the CBC which is a name based search. Licensees are not required to get fingerprinted again at this time.

CONTINUING EDUCATION (CE)

- ***What are my CE requirements?***

CEs must be taken between April 1, 2020 and March 31, 2022.

Optometrist must complete thirty-eight (38) hours of approved CE to include:

- At least ten percent (10%) or four (4) hours of the 38 required CE hours shall be in the subjects related to public health: [Policy Statement on Identifying Public Health Issues for Continuing Education](#).
- Two (2) hours of the thirty-eight (38) required CE hours shall be in cultural competence and appropriate clinical treatment specifically for individuals who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, gender non-conforming, queer, or questioning their sexual orientation or gender identity and expression.
- Thirty-two (32) CE hours shall be directly related to the practice of optometry.

Please note, for this 2022 renewal period, continuing education requirements may be satisfied through approved online continuing education courses.

New CE Requirement:

On July 22, 2021, emergency rules were adopted requiring in addition to any other CE requirements, you must complete on or before September 30, 2021, Two (2) hours of continuing education on SARS-CoV-2 vaccines, including, but not limited to, SARS-CoV-2 vaccine safety, best practices for counseling patients about SARS-CoV-2 vaccines, and SARS-CoV-2 vaccine efficacy and effectiveness.

The new CE requirement may be counted as hours required for public health priorities training hours or optional training hours where applicable.

ALL First Time Renewal Applicants: If you are renewing for the first time, CE hours are not required.

- ***How come I am not able to upload my CE documents?***

Several users have stated they are unable to upload proof of having completed their CE. Our IT department has identified certain issues with document uploads on browsers **OTHER** than Google Chrome or Firefox. If you are not using the most up-to-date versions of Google Chrome or Firefox, first try uploading your CE document using these web browsers {Google Chrome/Firefox}. To submit your uploaded CE documents, you must **WRITE** something in the continuing education **DESCRIPTION BOX**. For example, you may write *"I have uploaded all my CE documents or CE documents are attached"*.

Finally, if you still have upload issues, you can submit your renewal application by selecting the ***"I will have completed my CE hours by March 31, 2022"*** option in the CE category of the renewal application. By selecting this, you can skip the document uploads and proceed with the rest of your application so you may renew your license on time.

INFORMATION ABOUT CONTINUING EDUCATION AUDITS

- ***Will I be audited?***

After the renewal you may be audited and required to submit continuing education (CE) documents to the Board. CEs must be taken between **April 1, 2020 and March 31, 2022**. The required continuing education units are listed above.

RENEWAL CONFIRMATION

- ***How can I get confirmation of my renewal?***

All licensees who submit a renewal application will receive a confirmation email that states your license has been approved, and include a digital copy of your new license, or your renewal application has been sent to staff for further review. **(Note: Licensees who place their license in Paid Inactive Status will not receive a digital license.)** DC Health is not currently issuing hard copies of the renewed license.

For licensees who've not received a confirmation email, you should log back into the system and check to ensure you entered the correct email address as any typos will result in the confirmation email not being sent to you correctly. Licensees should also check their spam filters to ensure the confirmation email did not accidentally go to their spam junk or trash folders.

If you've checked all of the above, but still have not received either a confirmation email or a copy of your license, you should submit a "case" to our Customer Support site: <https://dohlicenseinfo.secure.force.com/support/>. Our IT department will review any and all reported errors, and we will update our licensees as more information becomes available.

PAYMENT ISSUE

- ***Why isn't my credit card being accepted?***

The renewal system will only accept **Visa or MasterCard credit cards for payment**. Please ensure you entered the correct information for your payment. Once the payment has been received, a receipt will be sent to your email of record.

If you are using a Visa or MasterCard, but are still having issues, you should submit a "case" to our Customer Support site: <https://dohlicenseinfo.secure.force.com/support/>. Our IT department is reviewing any and all reported errors, and we will update our licensees as more information becomes available.

Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP)

Mandatory PDMP registration and Mandatory PDMP query are now law in the District of Columbia. The passage of [The Health Care Reporting Amendment Act of 2020](#) requires you to register for the program. ***If you are not registered for the program, you will not be able to renew your professional license.***

If you are registered with the DC PDMP, no further action is required.

To register for the DC PDMP, please visit our website at: <https://districtofcolumbia.pmpaware.net/login>. Once there, click, "Create an Account" to begin the registration process. Those without a DEA number may register as a "Prescriber without DEA".

The passage of the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program Query and Omnibus Health Amendments Act of 2020 requires you to query the PDMP:

- Prior to prescribing or dispensing an opioid or benzodiazepine for more than seven (7) consecutive days and
- Every ninety (90) days thereafter while the course of treatment or therapy continues, or
- Prior to dispensing another refill after ninety days

For more registration information, refer to the [User Support Manual](#) available on the DC PDMP website. If you have any questions or concerns about navigating the system, please contact APPRISS technical support directly at (855) 932-4767 for 24/7 technical assistance.

If you would like to review the DC PDMP laws and regulations, user guides, and frequently asked questions (FAQs), please visit the DC PDMP website at <https://dchealth.dc.gov/pdmp>.

If you have questions about the program, please submit them in writing to doh.pdmp@dc.gov.

Vaccination Attestation

On August 27, 2021, regulations were issued requiring the following individuals receive the first dose of a COVID-19 mRNA vaccine (i.e., Moderna or Pfizer) or a single dose of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine no later than September 30, 2021:

- Health professionals who are licensed, registered, or certified by the Department of Health, and
- Unlicensed personnel in a Healthcare setting.

Failure to meet this requirement can result in disciplinary action including suspension and revocation of a health professional's license.

For unlicensed personnel, no Healthcare facility, after October 1, 2021, regardless of the date of hire, shall employ, contract, or grant privileges to a person who is not fully vaccinated.

Please follow the below instructions for requesting an exemption.

- For religious exemptions, individuals will need to upload a letter, stating that their vaccination against COVID-19 would violate a sincerely held religious belief and the vaccination would in fact violate a sincerely held religious belief of the person.
- For medical exemption requests, individuals will need to provide the name and license number of the healthcare provider who issued the medical exemption, and then upload a written letter from that licensed healthcare provider stating that being vaccinated against COVID-19 is medically inadvisable due to the person's medical condition and it is in fact medically inadvisable for the person to receive a COVID-19 vaccine.
- For the World Health Organization (W.H.O.) exemption, individuals will need to upload proof of vaccination of a W.H.O. approved vaccine and provide dates of vaccination.
- All exemptions must be reviewed and approved by DC Health. Please allow 45 - 60 days for the review and approval process.

Please use the following link to report your vaccination status or request an exemption:

<https://doh.force.com/ver/s/vaccinereporting>

HELPFUL TIPS TO REMEMBER

- The deadline for renewal is **March 31, 2022**.
- CAREFULLY read all renewal screening questions.
- Do not answer "yes" to paid-inactive question unless you intend to be inactive.
- If you respond "yes" to a screening question(s) you MUST provide complete documentation before your license will be renewed.
- If you are not registered for the DC PDMP, you will not be able to renew your professional license.
- Failure to meet the vaccination requirement can result in disciplinary action including suspension and revocation of your license.

Refer to the below Board's webpage link for additional information.

[Board of Optometry](#)

DC Health greatly appreciates your patience during this time and look forward to your feedback.

Sincerely,
DC Board of Optometry