

Introduced by

Senators Oban, Davison, Meyer

Representatives P. Anderson, C. Johnson, Vetter

1 A BILL for an Act to amend and reenact sections 43-13-19, 43-13-20, 43-13-21.1, 43-13-22, and
2 43-13-26.1 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to optometry licenses; and to repeal
3 section 43-13-23, 43-13-24, 43-13-25, 43-13-26, and 43-13-32 of the North Dakota Century
4 Code, relating to the state board of optometry.

5 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:**

6 **SECTION 1. AMENDMENT.** Section 43-13-19 of the North Dakota Century Code is
7 amended and reenacted as follows:

8 **43-13-19. License - When issued - Fee ~~-Failure to pass examination - Re-examination.~~**

9 Every applicant for a license to practice optometry in this state who meets the standards
10 required for licensure, including successfully passes~~passing~~ the required examination shall
11 ~~receive a license and~~ must be licensed upon payment to the secretary of the board of a
12 reasonable sum fixed by the board. ~~If the applicant fails to pass the first examination, within~~
13 ~~fourteen months thereafter the applicant may have another examination upon the payment of~~
14 ~~fifty percent of the current application fee. The examination must be given at such time and~~
15 ~~place as may be designated by the board.~~

16 **SECTION 2. AMENDMENT.** Section 43-13-20 of the North Dakota Century Code is
17 amended and reenacted as follows:

18 **43-13-20. Term of license - Renewal - Annual license fee - Continuing educational**
19 **requirements.**

20 A license to practice optometry in the state may be issued for one year only, ~~but may be~~ A
21 license may be renewed by ~~paying~~ submitting to the secretary of the board, during the month of
22 December of each year, the license fee for the following year, ~~by submitting~~ and satisfactory
23 proof to the board that ~~within the preceding three-year period the applicant~~ licensee has
24 ~~attended optometric educational programs as required~~ met all continuing education conditions.

1 ~~set~~ by the board. The board shall grant an applicant an additional year in which to attend the
2 education programs if an applicant furnishes the board with sufficient proof that the applicant
3 has been unable to attend the education programs during a year, which proof must include a
4 physician's certificate stating that the applicant was ill and that it would have been hazardous to
5 the applicant's health to attend the educational programs. The license fee for each year must be
6 determined annually by the North Dakota state board of optometry and be a reasonable sum
7 fixed by the board. The board shall adopt reasonable rules that must state the type of
8 optometric educational programs which are approved. The board also shall designate the
9 number of classroom hours which must be attended, which must be a reasonable amount for
10 each three-year period. Any person who does not meet these requirements by January first of
11 the year in which the license fee becomes due and payable is in default and may be reinstated
12 by the board upon the payment of an additional sum reasonably fixed by the board, and upon
13 the acceptance by the board of satisfactory evidence that the person has sufficiently attended
14 approved optometric educational programs, and upon the compliance with other reasonable
15 conditions the board may impose. This section does not require an applicant to become a
16 member of the North Dakota optometric association or any other association of optometrists.

17 **SECTION 3. AMENDMENT.** Section 43-13-21.1 of the North Dakota Century Code is
18 amended and reenacted as follows:

19 **43-13-21.1. Disciplinary powers of the board.**

- 20 1. The board may conduct investigations for the purpose of determining whether
21 violations of this chapter or grounds for disciplining licensees exist. The board may
22 establish an investigative panel to conduct an investigation under this section and may
23 subpoena records.
- 24 2. A complaint, response, and any record received by the board during the course of the
25 board's investigation into a complaint are exempt records, as defined in section
26 44-04-17.1, until the board concludes whether to pursue disciplinary action.
- 27 3. In addition to any other disciplinary actions available to the board, the board may take
28 one or more of the following actions against an optometrist who violates the provisions
29 of this chapter or the board's rules:
- 30 a. Letters of concern.
- 31 b. Letters of censure.

- 1 c. Reprimands.
- 2 d. Fines, including costs and attorney's fees.
- 3 e. Stipulations, limitations, and conditions relating to practice such as additional
- 4 education and counseling.
- 5 f. Probation.
- 6 g. Suspension of the license.
- 7 h. Revocation of the license.
- 8 ~~2.4.~~ The board may require a licensee to be examined on optometric knowledge and skills,
- 9 if the board has just cause to believe the licensee may be so deficient in knowledge
- 10 and skills as to jeopardize the health, welfare, and safety of the citizens of this state.
- 11 ~~3.5.~~ The board may require a physical or mental evaluation as provided in section
- 12 43-13-26.1 if it has reason to believe the licensee's physical or mental condition may
- 13 adversely affect the public welfare.
- 14 6. Disciplinary action must occur through an administrative hearing conducted in
- 15 accordance with chapter 28-32.

16 **SECTION 4. AMENDMENT.** Section 43-13-22 of the North Dakota Century Code is
17 amended and reenacted as follows:

18 **43-13-22. License - When revoked.**

19 The

- 20 1. After an administrative hearing conducted in accordance with chapter 28-32, the board
- 21 may restrict, revoke, or suspend any license granted by it under the provisions of this
- 22 chapter when it appears to the satisfaction of the majority of the members that the
- 23 board determines the holder of the license:
 - 24 ~~1.~~ a. Has violated any provisions of this chapter, the rules and regulations of the
 - 25 board, or committed an offense determined by the board to have a direct bearing
 - 26 upon a holder's ability to serve the public as an optometrist, or when the board
 - 27 determines, following conviction of a holder for any other offense, that the holder
 - 28 is not sufficiently rehabilitated under section 12.1-33-02.1;
 - 29 ~~2.~~ b. Has sold or distributed any drug legally classified as a controlled substance or as
 - 30 an addictive or dangerous drug;

- 1 3. c. Has been addicted to the excessive use of intoxicating liquor or a controlled
2 substance for at least six months immediately prior to the filing of the charges;
- 3 4. d. Is afflicted with any contagious or infectious disease;
- 4 5. e. Is grossly incompetent to discharge the holder's duties in connection with the
5 practice of optometry;
- 6 6. f. Has employed fraud, deceit, misrepresentation, or fraudulent advertising in the
7 practice of optometry; or
- 8 7. g. Is engaged in the practice of optometry by being directly or indirectly employed
9 by any person other than a licensed optometrist, a physician licensed under
10 chapter 43-17, a hospital, or a clinic operated by licensed optometrists or by
11 licensed physicians.
- 12 2. Any person whose license has been revoked or suspended may have the same
13 reinstated upon satisfactory proof that the disqualification has ceased or that the
14 disability has been removed and upon such conditions as established by the board.

15 **SECTION 5. AMENDMENT.** Section 43-13-26.1 of the North Dakota Century Code is
16 amended and reenacted as follows:

17 **43-13-26.1. Impaired optometrists.**

18 ~~The~~After a hearing conducted pursuant to chapter 28-32, the board may restrict, suspend,
19 or revoke the license of any licensed optometrist whose mental or physical ability to practice
20 optometry with reasonable skill and safety is impaired.

- 21 1. For the purpose of this section, "impairment" means the inability of a licensee to
22 practice optometry with reasonable skill and safety by reason of:
 - 23 a. Mental illness; or
 - 24 b. Physical illness, including physical deterioration that adversely affects cognitive,
25 motor, or perceptive skills.
- 26 2. The board may, upon probable cause, require a licensee or applicant to submit to a
27 mental or physical examination by appropriate health care providers designated by the
28 board. The results of the examination are admissible in any hearing ~~before the board,~~
29 despite any claim of privilege under any contrary rule or statute. Every person who
30 receives a license to practice optometry or who files an application for a license to
31 practice optometry is deemed to have given consent to submit to the admissibility of

- 1 the results in any hearing ~~before the board~~. If a licensee or applicant fails to submit to
2 an examination when properly directed to do so by the board, unless the failure was
3 due to circumstances deemed to be beyond the licensee's control, the board may
4 enter a final disciplinary order upon proper notice, hearing, and proof of such refusal.
- 5 3. If the board finds, after examination and administrative hearing, that a licensee is
6 impaired, it may take one or more of the following actions:
- 7 a. Direct the licensee to submit to care, counseling, or treatment acceptable to the
8 board; and
- 9 b. Suspend, limit, or restrict the optometrist's license for the duration of the
10 impairment.
- 11 4. Any licensee or applicant who is prohibited from practicing optometry under this
12 section must be afforded an opportunity, at reasonable intervals, to demonstrate to the
13 satisfaction of the board that the licensee or applicant can resume or begin the
14 practice of optometry with reasonable skill and safety. Licensure ~~will~~may not be
15 reinstated without the payment of ~~fifty percent~~ of the current license fee and may be
16 subject to such reasonable restrictions as may be imposed by the board.

17 **SECTION 6. REPEAL.** Sections 43-13-23, 43-13-24, 43-13-25, 43-13-26, and 43-13-32 of
18 the North Dakota Century Code are repealed.