

## **WHAT IS ABO AND NCLE?**

The American Board of Opticianry and the National Contact Lens Examiners, Inc. (ABO-NCLE) is a national, not-for-profit organization which administers voluntary competency certification examinations for dispensing Opticians and Contact Lens Technicians.

## **ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK**

This handbook provides important information about the ABO-NCLE policies, processes, and procedures for those interested in taking an ABO-NCLE certification examination and an overview of information on renewing certification.

More detailed ABO-NCLE testing and renewal information, including information related to specific exams—such as test content outline, references, and other important information — can be obtained at ABO-NCLE's website at [www.abo-ncle.org](http://www.abo-ncle.org) or by calling 1.703.719.5800.

## **NAMES OF EXAMS**

The American Board of Opticianry exam is called the National Opticianry Competency Exam (NOCE) and it is for Opticians. The National Contact Lens Examiners exam is called the Contact Lens Registry Exam (CLRE), which is for Contact Lens Technicians. When registering for an exam, candidates need to use care in making sure that they register for the correct exam.

## **WHAT IS CERTIFICATION?**

Certification is the process by which a nongovernmental agency or an association grants recognition to an individual who has met certain predetermined qualifications. Certification can be used for entry into practice, validation of competence, recognition of excellence, and/or for regulation. It can be mandatory or voluntary. Certification validates an individual's knowledge and skills in a defined role and clinical area of practice, based on predetermined standards.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of the American Board of Opticianry & National Contact Lens Examiners, Inc., is to promote excellence in the professions of Opticianry and Contact Lens Technicians through credentialing programs. ABO-NCLE's internationally renowned credentialing programs certify and recognize individual Opticians and Contact Lens Technicians. It also offers approval of educational courses and materials in order to assure the continuing education of Opticians and Contact Lens Technicians. ABO-NCLE's Certification Program enables Opticians and Contact Lens Technicians to demonstrate their expertise and validate their knowledge to employers and patients. Through targeted exams that incorporate the latest practice standards, ABO-NCLE certification process identifies qualified ophthalmic dispensers at various levels of proficiency for the consumer and for the ophthalmic community by (1) certifying those who pass the professionally developed examination(s) as "certified Opticians" and/or "certified Contact Lens Technicians" and (2) requiring approved continuing education for recertification.

## **NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

ABO-NCLE endorses and adheres to the principles of equal opportunity. ABO-NCLE does not discriminate against any individual because of age, disability, gender, national origin, race, religion, sexual orientation or veteran status.

## ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible to take the NOCE and/or CLRE, a candidate must (1) be at least 18 years old, and (2) have a high school diploma or GED. If the state licensing board where the candidate works has regulations that are different than ABO-NCLE's, the state requirement supersedes those of ABO-NCLE.

Certification, through administration of the NOCE and/or CLRE is an assessment of each candidate's knowledge base relative to the job functions and responsibilities of a typical optician and/or contact lens fitter/technician. Please note that considerations related to each candidate's background including but not limited to criminal history, are deferred to prospective employers and, where applicable, state licensing boards for individual determination. Candidates may request reconsideration of eligibility determinations. Candidates must request this reconsideration in writing, via e-mail to [mail@abo-ncle.org](mailto:mail@abo-ncle.org), or by facsimile to 703.719.9144. All requests for verification must be made within three (3) months of the date of denial of eligibility.

## HOW ARE EXAMS DEVELOPED?

The ABO-NCLE certification examinations are developed consistent with the technical guidelines recommended by the American Educational Research Association, the American Psychological Association, and the National Council on Measurement in Education (AERA, APA, NCME; 1999). Each examination is developed by ABO-NCLE in cooperation with a Content Expert Panel (CEP) composed of carefully selected Subject Matter Experts (SME) in the field. CEPs analyze the professional skills and abilities from job task analyses, which provide the evidence for the test content outline (also called the test blueprint).

Test questions or "items" are written by Certified Opticians and Contact Lens Fitters/Technicians in their discipline who have received training by ABO & NCLE staff and Alpine Testing Solutions in writing items. The items are then reviewed by the CEP with Alpine Testing Solutions and pilot-tested to ensure validity and psychometric quality before being used as scored items on the actual examinations. ABO-NCLE adheres to a variety of guidelines during the development of items to ensure that the items are appropriate for the certification. This includes editing and coding items, referencing items to the approved test content outlines and reference books, and screening items for bias and stereotypes. Items for the examinations are selected that reflect the test content outline and item distributions. The validity and reliability of the exams are monitored by ABO-NCLE staff. Certification examinations are updated approximately every three years.

## QUICK OVERVIEW OF THE NOCE AND CLRE

### General Information

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Eligibility                                   | Candidates must be 18 years of age or older and high school degree or GED   |
| Target group                                  | Opticians and Contact Lens Technicians who work in any type of practice site in the U.S.                                  |
| Test sites                                    | More than 300 PSI Test Centers  |
| Number of times per year that exam is offered | Quarterly, in February, May, August and November  |
| Deadline to change exam time or location      | 24 business hours   |
| Exam Format                                   | Secure computer-based exam  |
| Number of questions                           | 125 multiple-choice questions. A portion of these questions may not be scored, and are pretested for use on future exams. |

|                |         |
|----------------|---------|
| Length of exam | 2 hours |
|----------------|---------|

### Quality Assurance

|   |                      |
|---|----------------------|
| Exam based on practice analysis   | YES – conducted 2013 |
| Advice/oversight by panel of experts  | YES                  |
| Committed to following Standards of Education and Psychological Testing published by the American Educational Research Association, American Psychological Association and the National Council on Measurement in Education | YES                  |
| Exam items approved by panel with wide range of experience in the field   | YES                  |
| All exam items pretested  | YES                  |
| Complete item analysis conducted for all exams  | YES                  |

### Exam Security

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Eligibility verified at time of exam   | Pre-registration required; approved government issues photo identification must be shown at test center.   |
| Procedure for rotating and retiring items  | YES  |
| Procedure for equating multiple versions of the exam to assure that they present equal challenge to candidates | YES  |
| Proctors trained to follow procedures and to handle emergency situations                                       | YES  |
| Stringent computer encryption programming  | YES  |
| Exams sent to site before the day of the exam  | No; the exam, sent in a secure, encrypted format is downloaded at the center only after the candidate checks in and the identification is verified |
| Extra printed exams must be accounted for and destroyed if not used.   | No, this is not necessary because the exam is computer-generated only.   |

### Services for Candidates and Others

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Candidates with disabilities accommodated in compliance with ADA | YES  |
| Website for exam information                                     | <a href="http://www.abo-ncle.org">www.abo-ncle.org</a> |
| Exam results reported to candidates                              | 4-6 weeks via email                                    |
| Exam registration/cancellation                                   | Only the candidate can register and/or cancel exam     |

## THE EXAMINATIONS

The two-hour multiple-choice examinations are written by groups of certified Opticians and contact lens fitters/technicians with assistance from the testing service, Alpine. The purposes of the NOCE and CLRE are to evaluate the knowledge and skills associated with the performance of tasks required for the professional practice of Opticianry and/or contact lens fitting.

The examinations are developed for Opticians and Contact Lens Technicians from all practice settings in the United States. They are based on hands-on knowledge from many different optical situations.

There is nothing tricky about the examination. Questions are created to test the ability of a candidate to recall knowledge and to apply that knowledge to specific dispensing functions. Exam questions fall into three general types: 1) those that require immediate recognition of the correct response from the four choices; 2) those that require understanding and application of the information presented to answer the question; and 3) those that require candidates to understand and reorganize material presented to make the correct choice.

## EXAM REGISTRATION

- A. **Completion of the registration form.** The NOCE and CLRE are offered at over 300 testing centers quarterly – in February, May, August, and November. Candidates must register on the ABO-NCLE website (<http://abo-ncle.org>.) The locations of the centers can be found on <http://candidate.psiexams.com>. It is best to make appointments for the day and time promptly as test centers fill quickly and seating is on a first-come, first-served basis.
- B. **Information Required.** Candidates must give their full legal name, address, telephone numbers, e-mail address and demographic information. Candidates should also indicate whether they qualify for special accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act. **Giving an accurate e-mail address and telephone number are mandatory.**
- C. **Payment.** The exams cost \$225 each and are payable by credit card at the time the candidate registers online. There is also a late fee of \$75 per exam that must be paid if the registration is not completed by the registration deadline, but is completed by the late deadline date.
- D. **Cancellation of Scheduled Exams. Notification by Candidate.** Candidates who are unable to take the exams at the scheduled appointment time must notify PSI and ABO-NCLE at least 24 business hours in advance of that appointment to avoid penalties. There are NO refunds, but candidates can pay a transfer fee of \$50 and the registration will be moved to the next testing session. If an exam appointment is NOT cancelled in time, the exam registration fee will be forfeited. Cancellation notices will only be accepted from the candidate. Employers, family members or other individuals may not request a cancellation on behalf of candidates.
- E. **Cancellation by PSI.** Testing centers may close without notice in the case of inclement weather, a state of emergency or other unforeseen events. In this case, the candidate will be allowed to reschedule at a convenient time and location with the exam fee credited to the future exam appointment. Candidates should verify that the center is open by calling directly before the appointment time.
- F. **Special Testing Accommodations**

ABO-NCLE and its testing vendor make every effort to reasonably accommodate candidates with documented disabilities as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). If you have a disability as defined under the ADA, you must notify ABO-NCLE by submitting a report regarding your request from your physician or a qualified healthcare professional. The information must be on the physician's or other qualified healthcare professional's letterhead, typed, dated, and signed by the healthcare professional.

The report must document the following information in order to be considered:

- ▶▶ A specific diagnosis and date of your diagnosis
  
- ▶▶ Specific and current findings that support your diagnosis (relevant medical history, tests administered, date of the most current evaluation, within the last 3 years)

▶▶ A description of your substantial day-to-day functional limitations resulting from your stated disabilities

▶▶ Specific recommendations for your testing accommodation(s) including a detailed explanation of why the accommodation is needed. If the accommodation includes extra time, please indicate the amount of time requested.

*Important Note: Additional information may be requested after a review of your information.*

## NOCE CONTENT OUTLINE AND TEST SPECIFICATIONS

|      |   |     |
|------|---|-----|
| I.   | <u>Ophthalmic Optics</u><br>Terminology<br>Prescriptions<br>Lens Characteristics<br>Lens Powers and Formulas<br>Multifocals<br>Lens Materials<br>Prism  | 34% |
| II.  | <u>Ocular Anatomy, Physiology and Pathology</u><br>Structure of the Eye and Function<br>Refractive Errors   | 7%  |
| III. | <u>Ophthalmic Products</u><br>Frames<br>Lenses<br>Applying Product Knowledge<br>Recognizing Specific Product Applicability with Regard to Patients' Needs and Wants<br>Verifying Frame and Lens Parameters and Other Physical Characteristics | 23% |
| IV.  | <u>Instrumentation</u><br>Use of Lens Power Measuring Devices<br>Select Ophthalmic Tools, Instruments and Equipment<br>Use and Maintain Ophthalmic Tools, Instruments and Equipment   | 16% |
| V.   | <u>Dispensing Procedures</u><br>Visual Needs for Lifestyle and Occupational Activities<br>Fitting, Adjusting, Measuring and Verification<br>Patient Interaction   | 15% |
| VI.  | <u>Laws, Regulations and Standards</u>  | 5%  |

## CLRE CONTENT OUTLINE AND TEST SPECIFICATIONS

- I. Ocular, Anatomy, Physiology and Pathology 10%  
Adnexa, Anterior, Posterior Segments  
Drugs and Diseases/Viruses Affecting Contact Lens Wear  
Contact Lens Related Conditions and Pathology
- II. Refractive Errors 8%  
Ametropias and Optical Conditions Related to Contact Lenses  
Terminology and Principles of Optics Related to Contact Lenses
- III. Instrumentation for Measurement and Observation 16%  
Selecting and Using Appropriate Instruments and Tests for Evaluation and Modification Procedures  
Interpreting Data Collected Through Use of Instruments, Tests, and Evaluation Procedures
- IV. Prefitting 14%  
Collecting and Analyzing the Data Obtained by Using Instrumentation and Diagnostic Aids  
Converting Spectacle Data into Contact Lens Data including Vertex Compensation and Spherical Equivalent  
Evaluating the Relationship Between the Corneal Readings and the Refractive Error to Identify the Possible Need to Specialty Materials/Designs
- V. Diagnostic Fitting 18%  
Identifying Defects of Contact Lens Material or Design  
Inserting, Removing, Manipulating and Caring for Diagnostic Contact Lens  
Identifying the Fitting Characteristics and Visual Performance of the Contact Lens and Refining Lens Parameters to Obtain an Optimal Fit  
Selecting Initial Diagnostic Lenses
- VI. Dispensing 10%  
Wearing Schedules  
Care Systems  
Patient Handling
- VII. Follow-Up 19%  
Subjective Findings  
Objective Findings  
Assessment: Assessing or Verifying Patients' Subjective Responses and Objective Findings to Determine if Desired Results Have Been Attained  
Plan: Establishing Follow-Up Protocol  
Identifying Normal and Abnormal Symptoms  
Maintaining Patient Records

|                         |    |
|-------------------------|----|
| VIII. <u>Regulatory</u> | 5% |
| Administrative          |    |
| Standards               |    |
| Legal                   |    |

## **COMPUTER-BASED EXAMINATION DETAILS**

**The exams are offered in computer-based format. Key points concerning computer-based examinations are as follows:**

Extensive familiarity with computers is not required, but use of a computer keyboard and mouse should be within the experience of all candidates.

On the exam day there will be a brief orientation/tutorial prior to starting the exam, allowing candidates to familiarize themselves with the exam process.

The proctors at the exam sites are not expected to provide detailed assistance to candidates. It is not their responsibility to provide assistance on things such as navigating through the exam or resolving any misjudgments made by the candidate.

Candidates need to carefully read the on-screen messages in order to respond correctly.

Computer-based testing options include the ability to navigate forward and backward through the exam, mark items for further review and then review answered, unanswered and marked items.

Items must be reviewed or changed prior to the expiration time. Once an exam is ended, candidates cannot return to the questions. The examination screen contains a timer showing the time remaining for the current exam.

A listing of completed questions, incomplete questions, and marked items can be accessed by clicking the “Review” button.

From the Review screen, candidates are able to:

Click the button “Review All” which returns to question one, click the button “Review Incomplete” which returns to the first incomplete (unanswered) question, click the button “Review Marked” which returns to the first questions you marked for review, or double-click on any of the numbered questions listed which returns you to that specific question.

Candidates may end the exam by clicking “End.” Once “End” is clicked, the candidate will not be able to return to any part of the exam. Note: there is a pop-up box to confirm that the candidate truly wishes to end the exam. Clicking “No” will return the candidate to the review screen for further review.

Questions left unanswered will be considered incorrect. When there are unanswered items additional time will not be allowed for completion, nor will there be any refund of fees or credit toward future fees.

## **THE DAY OF THE EXAM**

What to Bring

When you arrive at the test center, you must present one form of acceptable identification from the list below:

- ▶▶ Driver's license issued by the Department of Motor Vehicles in one of the 50 states in the United States, the District of Columbia, or one of the U.S. territories
- ▶▶ State identification issued by the Department of Motor Vehicles in one of the 50 states in the United States, the District of Columbia, or one of the U.S. territories
- ▶▶ Passport
- ▶▶ U.S. military identification

Your identification must be valid (unexpired) and contain both your signature and a recent (no more than 10 years old) photograph. All identification must be in English and signed in English. If you are currently serving in the U.S. military and are testing outside the United States, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. territories, then you are required to provide valid U.S. military identification. If your valid military identification does not have both your signature and a recent photograph, you will need to provide additional identification that meets the aforementioned requirements. The only identification acceptable in test centers outside of the United States, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. territories is a valid passport for candidates who cannot provide valid U.S. military identification.

If you do not bring acceptable ID, you will not be admitted to the test and your eligibility window will end. You will be required to submit additional documentation and fees in order to schedule a new testing date. Please contact ABO-NCLE for details.

It is not necessary for you to bring the ABO-NCLE Authorization to Test Notice to the test center, and it will not be counted as an acceptable form of identification.

Candidates should report promptly to the assigned center at least 30 minutes prior to their appointed time. This allows time for completing the registration process which includes verifying ID. Candidates who arrive 15 minutes or more after their appointment time will be considered tardy and will not be permitted to test and there will be no refund or credit toward future fees.

In the online examination process, the candidate will be asked to attest to having read the Candidate Handbook, including the full Agreement at the end of this booklet, and to agree to be bound by the conditions listed.

During the exam, candidates must comply with directions/instructions of the test proctors. Those who do not follow the instructions may be subjected to dismissal from the center and/or having his/her examination invalidated.

Personal items, such as cell phones, any PDAs, or any other electronic devices, pagers, writing instruments or paper, purses, hats, bags, books are not allowed in the testing room and we strongly encourage candidates to leave them at home or in their cars. Sweaters and jackets must be worn if taken into the exam room.

Candidates are prohibited from communicating with other candidates by any means, verbal or written, for any purpose.

Candidates must conduct themselves in a civil manner at all times when on the premises of the testing center. Exhibiting abusive behavior towards other candidates or staff members may result in criminal prosecution.

Persons not scheduled to take a test are not permitted to wait in the test center.

Candidates will not be permitted to continue testing if they violate any of the provisions or rules established by ABO-NCLE or the test centers.

Occasionally, problems occur during the administration that may impede the examination process. Weather problems, mechanical failures, hardware and software problems, and human errors have the potential of interfering with all or part of the exam process. When such problems occur, ABO-NCLE will review all information at its disposal. An opportunity for re-examination may be offered at the discretion of ABO-NCLE. A re-examination shall be the candidate's sole remedy.

ABO-NCLE shall not be liable for inconvenience, expense or other damage caused by any problems in the administration or scoring of an examination, including the need for retesting or delays in score reporting. In no circumstance will ABO-NCLE reduce its standards as a means of correcting a problem in the examination administration.

Candidates who experience incidents or irregularities during the testing must immediately inform the on-site proctors and call PSI directly at 800-367-1565 ext. 6811. If it is determined that an incident or irregularity had the potential of influencing a candidate's performance, the candidate will have two options: (1) to be retested during the next exam administration; or, (2) to have the examination scored.

## **RULES FOR TAKING THE ABO or NCLE EXAMS**

- ▶▶ Sufficient time has been provided for you to respond to all questions. You are advised not to spend an inordinate amount of time on individual questions until you have had an opportunity to respond to every question. Time is not intended to be a factor in the examination.
- ▶▶ There is no penalty for guessing; you are encouraged to respond to every examination question. Computer-based exams DO allow you to mark questions you are unsure about and go back to them later.
- ▶▶ All instructions given by the proctor must be followed in order to ensure proper processing of your examination results.
- ▶▶ All candidates will be checked-in at the test site prior to being admitted to the examination room. You are required to place all personal possessions in a designated area.
- ▶▶ All ABO-NCLE exams are "closed book." Books, paper, calculators, PDAs, cell phones, or electronic or other devices or resources are not allowed. Failure to follow these instructions can result in your scores being revoked and may prohibit you from retesting or taking other ABO-NCLE certification examinations.
- ▶▶ No test materials, documents, or memoranda of any sort may be removed from the examination room or retained. You may not copy any test questions or make any notes regarding the content of the examination. If you attempt to do so, your results will be invalidated and you may be prohibited from retesting or taking any other ABO-NCLE certification.

- ▶▶ No food or drink, including water, may be taken into the testing room. You may leave the testing room to use the restroom or get a drink of water, but you will need to sign out according to the instructions that will be explained at the test site. Your testing time will not be increased to accommodate a break. If you have a medical condition and cannot comply with this rule, you must apply for special testing accommodations.
- ▶▶ Please verify that you have been given the correct examination that you are eligible to take.
- ▶▶ You may not ask questions concerning content of the examination during the examination period.
- ▶▶ During the examination, you must not give help to or receive help from others. Proctors are required to report any incident in which there is evidence of irregular behavior. Any such reports could result in the invalidation of your test scores and/or other sanctions.

## **HOW ARE EXAMS SCORED?**

ABO-NCLE reports its examinees' test score results as pass or fail. If an examinee fails, the score report includes diagnostic feedback for each of the major content areas covered on the examination. ABO-NCLE examinations are criterion-referenced tests, which means that an examinee's performance on the examination is not compared to that of other examinees in determining the examinee's pass/fail status. In a criterion-referenced test, an examinee must achieve a score equal to or greater than the minimum passing score for the examination. The minimum passing score represents the absolute minimum standards that the examinee must achieve to demonstrate the ability to practice the profession safely and competently. With the guidance of a measurement expert (e.g., a psychometrician), a panel of Subject Matter Experts in the field of Opticianry and Contact Lens Fitting set the minimum passing score for each ABO-NCLE examination. In setting the minimum passing score, ABO-NCLE uses the Modified Angoff Method, which is well-recognized within the measurement field.

Each exam contains at least 85-100 scored test items plus a number of pilot test items that do not count towards the final score. For specific information on the number of items each exam contains, please refer to the test content outline associated with that exam.

## **EXAMINATION RESULTS**

You will get a pass or fail notification. There are no numeric scores given. If you fail, your score report will include diagnostic information for each content area of the test. It takes approximately four to six weeks from the last available test date for candidates to receive their exam results via email. State licensing boards will receive rosters of passing and failing candidates having sat for the exam in their state. If candidates want their results sent to another licensing board, they need to ask ABO-NCLE to do that. A certificate suitable for framing will be mailed to those candidates who pass the exam using the name given when they registered.

The diagnostic feedback categories are:

**LOW:** The score you obtained for this content area is below an acceptable level. Substantial study of this content area is recommended prior to retaking the examination.

**MEDIUM:** The score you obtained for this content area is marginally acceptable; however, further study of this content area is recommended.

**HIGH:** The score you obtained for this content area is well above average; however, a review of this content area may be helpful to you prior to retaking the examination.

The diagnostic feedback is intended to identify content areas that contributed to a failing score. The purpose of the diagnostic feedback is to help failing candidates tailor their study for a future examination.

The pass/fail status is determined based on whether the candidate has correctly responded to the required number of items.

## **RECORDS MANAGEMENT AND RETENTION**

ABO-NCLE Record Retention Policy is to collect and maintain all records necessary to fulfill the legal requirements for record retention and disposition. This includes all information submitted in support of initial certification and certification renewal. The names of candidates for a test or names of individuals failing a test or individual test scores are not released.

Certificant and Candidate information and certification test results are maintained indefinitely in the ABO-NCLE Certification database. The records are password protected and accessible only to staff involved with the certification process. Applications for examination are all done electronically, and securely stored in an electronic format. In the unlikely event of any hard copy applications or supporting documents are received, information is manually entered into the ABO-NCLE Certification database and the hard copies are maintained for a minimum of five years, and are subsequently destroyed in a secure fashion. In addition, ABO-NCLE maintains electronic records of all customer activity and online applications within its database system.

## **MAINTAINING YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION**

### **Change of Address**

It is critical that you inform ABO-NCLE of any modification to your e-mail address, since that is the official method of communication with Certificants.

If you have attained Certification with ABO-NCLE, and need to change to any of your contact information, please log into to your account at [www.abo-ncle.org](http://www.abo-ncle.org). If you are an exam candidate, please log into your exam log-in, through the appropriate link, and make any necessary modifications in that database.

### **Change of Legal Name**

Requests for legal name change due to marriage, divorce, or a court-approved legal name change must be sent in writing with a copy of the marriage certificate, divorce decree, or court-approved legal name change document. For Opticians or Contact Lens Fitters/Technicians who have applied in the past under one name and are currently applying under a different name, please note that ABO-NCLE requires copies of legal name change documents before proceeding with the application process.

Send a request for legal name change, by mail, with accompanying documentation to:

ABO-NCLE Certification  
ATTN: Name Change  
6506 Loisdale Road, Suite 209

If you are currently certified and have already been issued a wall certificate but wish to order a duplicate wall certificate with your new legal name, please contact ABO-NCLE at 703.719.5800 in order to obtain a new certificate.

## **RETESTING**

The examination's regularly-administered examination periods are February, May, August, and November. ABO-NCLE believes that it is important for candidates who fail an examination to have adequate time to properly review the study materials and prepare themselves for the examination. In order to assure both the security of the examination itself, and to assure adequate preparation time for the candidates, if a candidate fails an examination during one of the regular examination periods, or at a special event occurring between one of those periods, he or she may not retest at the next regularly-administered examination period.

## **RENEWING YOUR CERTIFICATION**

As an ABO and/or NCLE Board Certified Optician and/or Contact Lens Technician, you must meet specified requirements in order to maintain and renew your certification every 3 years. The purpose of certification renewal is to provide evidence that you have continued to expand your professional knowledge to demonstrate evidence of continual competence in your certification specialty. It also allows you to continue to use your ABO-NCLE credentials.

The current renewal requirements are available at [www.abo-ncle.org](http://www.abo-ncle.org).

Helpful Hints:

- ▶ Visit the ABO-NCLE website on a regular basis to download the most current renewal requirements. Certification renewal criteria can change to reflect changes in practice or regulatory requirements.
- ▶ Develop a plan to show evidence of continual competence requirements for certification renewal.
- ▶ Provide ABO-NCLE with any changes to your contact information including a preferred email address.

**Warning: There is no grace period and no backdating. Certification renewal applications received after the certification expiration date will have a renewal period beginning with the date of approval and will therefore incur a gap in the certification dates. When there is a gap in certification dates, ABO-NCLE cannot backdate a certification renewal to meet regulatory, reimbursement, or other requirements for practice. You will need to check with your state licensing board, your employer, and/or the agency that is reimbursing your services to determine if you can continue to practice and/or receive reimbursement for services while you are in the process of reactivating your certification. If your employer or state licensing board requires certification in order for you to practice and your certification lapses, then the employer or state licensing board may no longer allow you to practice. Please submit the complete application when you renew—submitting a partial or incomplete renewal package will only delay approval of your certification renewal, resulting in a longer gap in the certification dates. All missing information will need to be reviewed and evaluated before a final decision is made.**



## **CERTIFICATION REINSTATEMENT**

A lapsed or expired ABO-NCLE Certification may be reactivated. There is no “grace period.” The procedure to reactivate your ABO-NCLE Certification depends upon the state in which you reside, the status of any state board licensing, whether the state licensing board requires continuing education, and whether you have maintained continuing education throughout the time period of your expiration. Information explaining the reinstatement policies and procedures as set forth on the Website at [www.abo-ncle.org](http://www.abo-ncle.org), under the "reinstatement" tab. If you are eligible for reinstatement, you will need to pay the appropriate fees set forth in the policies and procedures. Applications received without the correct fees and supporting documentation are considered incomplete and will delay the reactivation process.

## **APPEALS**

Candidates receiving a failing score may request that the examination score be verified. Candidates must request this score verification in writing, via e-mail to [mail@abo-ncle.org](mailto:mail@abo-ncle.org), or by facsimile to 703.719.9144. All requests for verification must be made within three (3) months of publication of the examination score.

## **DENIAL, SUSPENSION, AND REVOCATION OF CERTIFICATION**

Certification can be denied, suspended, or revoked for cause, including but not limited to the following:

- ▶▶ Failing to complete or provide evidence of completion of the requirements for initial certification, certification renewal, or reactivation of certification
- ▶▶ Failure to maintain the required continuing education
- ▶▶ Determination that initial certification or certification renewal was improperly granted or that certification was improperly reactivated
- ▶▶ Falsification or misstatement of information on any Certification-related document
- ▶▶ Providing false or misleading information
- ▶▶ Misrepresentation
- ▶▶ Cheating or assisting others to cheat
- ▶▶ Causing, creating, or participating in an examination irregularity
- ▶▶ Assisting others to wrongfully obtain initial Certification or to renew or reactivate Certification
- ▶▶ Failure to comply with the scope and standards of practice in an area in which ABO-NCLE Certification is held
- ▶▶ Conduct unbecoming of the Opticianry and Contact Lens Technician professions

## **REPORTING REVOCATION**

- ▶▶ To Licensing Authorities: Suspension and revocation of certification is reported to licensing authorities.
- ▶▶ To Others: ABO-NCLE may report suspension or revocation of certification to employers, legal authorities, and other third parties, including but not limited to, law enforcement officers or agencies.

## **MISREPRESENTATION OF THE ABO-NCLE CREDENTIAL**

If an individual is identified or recognized as misrepresenting themselves as certified when in fact they are not, the Board has an obligation to take appropriate steps to protect the credential and will undertake all appropriate measures to assure such misrepresentation is dealt with promptly.

## **CANDIDATE AGREEMENT**

**By taking this examination, I hereby acknowledge that I understand the following:**

- 1. That these examinations are the exclusive property of the American Board of Opticianry and National Contact Lens Examiners, Inc.**
- 2. That these examinations and items contained therein are protected by federal copyright law. No part of these examinations may be copied, reproduced in part or whole by any means whatsoever, including memorization.**
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- 4. That my participation in any irregularity occurring during this examination, such as giving or obtaining authorized information or aid, as evidenced by observation or subsequent statistical analysis, may be sufficient cause to terminate my participation, invalidate the results of my examination or take other appropriate action.**

*Candidate agrees that by registering for the ABO or NCLE Examinations, the Candidate acknowledges receipt and review of this Examination Handbook and agrees to be bound by its terms as of the date of registration and as of the date of examination.*