

NC STATE BOARD OF OPTICIANS

Issued April 22, 2020

Extension of Transcript Submission Deadline

Executive Summary

On April 22, 2020, the North Carolina State Board of Opticians (the "Board") met and evaluated Board-promulgated rules that may be waived to ease regulatory burden during the COVID-19 pandemic. As such, **the Board resolved that it will extend the deadline for the submission of a certified high school transcript, pursuant to G.S. 90-237 and 21 NCAC 40 .0104(a)(3), until twelve months of the Board's receipt of an (In-State) Application for Admission to Examination in Ophthalmic Dispensing; Application for License to Practice Ophthalmic Dispensing Pursuant to G.S. 90-241(a) – Waiver of Written Exam; or Application for Admission to Examination in Ophthalmic Dispensing Pursuant to G.S. 90-241(b).** If the transcript is not included with the Application, the Board will notify the applicant of the omission, the date the Application was received by the Board, and the transcript's due date.

Discussion

Emergency situations created by natural disasters, or public-health-related circumstances may necessitate State or local governments to issue Shelter-in-Place or Stay-at-Home Orders; seasonal storms (ice/snow, and violent rainstorms, or hurricanes) or the COVID-19 pandemic are examples of situations that could occur.

During these times, the Board staff monitors communications from the Office of the Governor, State Human Resources, State Department of Health and Human Services, and various other State entities, to balance the economic well-being of North Carolinians with the need to regulate the practice of opticianry for the protection of consumer's health, safety and welfare. In balancing these interests, the Board may waive temporarily, by use of its discretionary authority via 21 NCAC 40 .0113 *Waiver*, Board-promulgated rules to ease regulatory burdens.

The Board understands that, during the current COVID-19 pandemic, applicants for licensure and licensure examination may be unable – through no fault of their own - to obtain all the paperwork required for these applications, while complying with social distancing and State/local Orders regarding business operations.