

ABO/NCLE

The American Board of Opticianry (ABO) and the National Contact Lens Examiners (NCLE) are the largest and most prestigious Opticians' certification organizations in the world, recognizing individuals whose Opticianry skills and knowledge meet predetermined standards of excellence. More than 96,000 certifications have been awarded since 1976, and more than 40,000 certifications are currently in force.

ABO, the American Board of Opticianry, certifies opticians – those who dispense and work with spectacles.

NCLE, the National Contact Lens Examiners, certifies those ophthalmic dispensers who fit and work with contact lenses.

ABO-NCLE's rigorous and extensive test development process is administered by Professional Examination Service (PES), an industry-leading credentialing, technology, and delivery solutions company. This systematic process produces certification examinations that are psychometrically sound and legally defensible. ABO-NCLE staff guides the entire process that involves:

- Creating Content Expert Panels composed of a representative sampling of highly qualified, currently practicing, certified opticians
- Conducting job analyses to determine the professional skills and abilities required to fulfill the role
- Developing test content outlines with the Content Expert Panels
- Training groups of volunteer expert opticians to write test items
- Pilot-testing the examination questions to ensure validity and psychometric adequacy

Our certification exams are continually refined and updated to reflect current practices and to ensure that they are fair and accurate measures of professional competency. ABO-NCLE meets ANSI Standard 1100 for professional certifying organizations. As a result, ABO-NCLE certification is highly regarded nationally and internationally, earning recognition from state licensing boards, the U.S. military, and public and private corporations.

What is certification?

You can't buy it; you have to earn it. Certification is professional distinction – official and public recognition of your achievement that you have met a national set of standards as a qualified and competent optician or contact lens technician. Certification is official assurance to the public that you will handle their eye wear needs competently and carefully; certification is recognized by employers as a standard of competence.

Both exams are offered twice a year, in May and November, in numerous cities across the country. The next available exam will be November 18, 2012. That application will be available for download come mid-Summer 2012. The cost to sit for the exams is \$225 for the ABO and \$225 for the NCLE. **We will reimburse you for the first test.** Each exam consists of up to 125 multiple choice questions; candidates have up to two and a half hours to complete the exam. You may request a registration packet from the staff office by calling 1-(703) 719-5800 or email us at mail@abo-ncle.org. Along with the application, you will receive several brochures from organizations that offer various study materials to help you prepare for the exams. **We also have self-study materials available from Central Supply.**

Eligibility: Everyone who is at least 18 years of age and has a high school diploma or GED is eligible to sit for the exams. (In states with conflicting regulations, the state licensing board regulations are followed.) While no experience is required, candidates with two to three years hands-on experience or completion of an optical school program are more successful in passing the exams. **Marion eye center employees that become certified will receive a .50 per hour pay increase.**

RECERTIFICATION

All ABO and NCLE certifications are for three (3) years. Continuing education credits (CECs) must be earned within the three year certification period and may not be accumulated and carried over from one period to another. All CECs and renewal fees are due on or before your expiration date. **We will reimburse your renewal fee's for recertification.** If you fail to complete the requirements on time, you have a 4th year to complete them. During that year, your certification is suspended. This suspension year is not an extension, but will overlap into your next certification period. Renewing in the suspension year requires the payment of an additional \$50 late penalty. **The jumpstart Cd's series provides FREE ABO CE's.**

Continuing Education Renewal Requirements:

- **ABO Certified:** Send in 12 ABO approved CECs (up to 3 may be NCLE approved) and the \$85 fee.
- **NCLE Certified:** Send in 18 NCLE approved CECs (up to 6 may be ABO approved) and the \$85 fee.
- **ABO and NCLE Certified:** Send in 21 CECs (9 ABO approved and 12 NCLE approved) plus the \$170 fee.

If you have any questions please give John or Deb a call.