



KENTUCKY BOARD OF OPTOMETRIC EXAMINERS

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COVID-19 ADVISORY FOR KENTUCKY LICENSED OPTOMETRISTS

The Commonwealth of Kentucky takes very serious the threat posed by the novel coronavirus outbreak in state and across the globe. In response the Kentucky Board of Optometric Examiners (“Board”) advised of the [Governor’s Order dated March 17, 2020](#) limiting the practice of Optometry. Now the Board advises that the Governor has announced the gradual reopening of our Phase 1 health care services and facilities, including Optometry. See [Governor’s April 23, 2020 announcement](#). Responding to the Governor’s request that professional associations and trade organizations submit plans for responsible reopening, the Kentucky Optometric Association worked with this Board, and submitted guidelines to the Governor and the Kentucky Department of Public Health. Beginning, April 27, 2020, Optometrists may recommence practicing optometry according to [guidelines published on April 25, 2020](#) and the following clarifications pertaining to PPE, as well as information regarding in-office procedures:

PPE Clarification:

This clarification addresses an inconsistency, which was created by the timing of when the Optometry Reopening Guidelines were submitted (April 23rd) and when Governor Beshear issued his comprehensive Order for all healthcare facilities in Phase 1 (April 27th).

Specifically, the use of protective eye wear and gloves when “interacting with patients” is interpreted as “direct person-person contact with patients.” Please note that masks should be worn during all interactions with patients, consistent with Governor Beshear’s Order.

This change in the attached Guidelines can be found in [Personal Protective Equipment & Protective Measures \(Page 5\)](#):

- *All doctors and staff members should wear masks, protective eyewear, and gloves when interacting with patients.*
 - *The use of protective eyewear and gloves when “interacting with patients” is interpreted as “direct person-person contact with patients.” This clarification is consistent with Governor Beshear’s Healthcare Facilities Phase 1 Reopening, see Order [HERE](#).*

In-Office Procedures:

The KOA has received the following direction from the KY Board of Optometric Examiners (BOE) pertaining to in-office procedures.

- All in-office procedures may resume. This includes in-office laser procedures (YAG, ALT, SLT, LPI), medicine injections, and the removal of ‘lumps and bumps’ around the eyes. Offices should utilize their normal patient screening process. There is no requirement for a negative COVID-19 test by the patient for these in-office procedures. Procedures taking place in hospitals and surgical centers may require a negative COVID-19 test.

Reminders:

The CDC has provided the following resource for health care facilities in light of reduced access to PPE: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/ppe-strategy/>. Every effort should be made to conserve PPE. The Kentucky Optometric Association and AOA will continue to provide information and resources on available PPE to optometrists.

Notices:

Offices should post all mandated signs by the Kentucky Department of Public Health. This includes the “Do Not Enter If Sick” notice:

- <https://chfs.ky.gov/agencies/dph/covid19/donotentersign.pdf>

Offices should consider posting other available materials, such as the CDC notice here:

- https://www.cdc.gov/flu/pdf/protect/cdc_cough.pdf

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Resources:

State of Kentucky COVID-19 Resources:

<https://govstatus.egov.com/kycovid19>

CDC Guidelines for Social Distancing:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/social-distancing.html>

CDC Guidelines for Infection Control:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/infection-control-recommendations.html>

CDC Guidelines for COVID-19 Symptoms:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>

CDC Guidelines for Disinfection Methods:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>

CMS Recommendations for Re-Opening Healthcare Facilities:

<https://www.cms.gov/files/document/covid-flexibility-reopen-essential-non-covid-services.pdf>

FDA masks guidelines

<https://www.fda.gov/medical-devices/personal-protective-equipment-infection-control/n95-respirators-and-surgical-masks-face-masks>

Kentucky Optometric Association COVID-19 Resource Page:

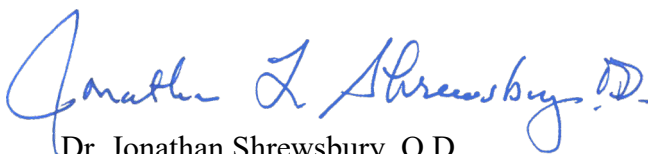
<https://kyeyes.org/covid-19/>

American Optometric Association COVID-19 Resource Page:

<https://www.aoa.org/coronavirus>

Thank you for your patience and professionalism during these unprecedented circumstances.

Sincerely yours,



Dr. Jonathan Shrewsbury, O.D.

President, Kentucky Board of Optometric Examiners