



**Andy Beshear**  
GOVERNOR

**COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY  
BOARD OF OPTOMETRIC  
EXAMINERS**

100 Consumer Lane  
Frankfort, Kentucky 40601  
(502) 234-2114

**Christi LeMay**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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**Board Statement Regarding Kentucky License Requirements**

During the COVID-19 state of emergency, the Kentucky Board of Optometric Examiners (KBOE) temporarily waived the requirement that prospective licensees pass Part III of the National Board exam, which mandated completion of an in-person test at an out-of-state location. The KBOE utilized their statutory authority to determine alternative testing measures for licensure. The former board did not, however, execute the correct regulatory process for the waiver and alternative testing measures. In October 2025, the Attorney General of Kentucky directed the KBOE to “review the licensure of those optometrists who were licensed under the waiver and alternative testing measures”.

The KBOE feels strongly that all licensees should possess the skills and knowledge to be granted a license. Therefore, the following requirements must be met by all licensees for license renewal in 2027: Passage of NBEO Part I or OEBC written exam, NBEO Part II and TMOD, and NBEO Part III or Kentucky Clinical Competency Exam.

Today the KBOE filed an emergency regulation to implement these requirements, in compliance with the Attorney General's directive. The duty of the Kentucky Board of Optometric Examiners is to license qualified optometrists as well as protect the public, and the current board members are committed to executing this responsibility.

All affected licensees will be notified by January 15, 2026. The emergency regulation will be available on the Legislative Research Commission (LRC) web site next week.