

Over the years, more and more states are requiring optometrists to hold an optometry license at the highest level. In fact, effective January 2010, optometrists in the state of Oregon must be licensed at the highest level to even practice optometry. The chart below is a survey of states showing the movement among states to require licensees meet the highest educational requirements.

Initial and Renewal License Requirements to Seek/Maintain Highest Level

Last Revised January, 2010

STATE:	Can an applicant for initial licensure (could be a new grad or someone coming from another state) apply for a license other than one at the highest level of prescriptive authority authorized in your state?	Can a licensee within your state holding an active license drop "down" to a lower level license at renewal or other time (i.e., they hold a TPA license, but now only want a basic or DPA-only license)?
Alabama	NO	YES Technically, yes. We hope to tighten up the wording of our law so that this cannot happen. We have had one instance of this with a licensee who was about to retire. He asked to lower his licensure status to non-therapeutic for the few months he planned to practice. We could find nothing in our law that prevented this. He saved \$110!
Alaska	YES 2010 Legislation is aimed at changing this to No.	YES 2010 Legislation is aimed at changing this to No.
Arizona	NO	NO
Arkansas	NO	Yes, under health reasons and maybe has retired, but still wants to keep their basic licenses. The cost difference is \$50
California		
Colorado	NO	NO
Connecticut		
Delaware	NO	NO
D.C.		
Florida	NO	NO
Georgia	NO	NO
Hawaii		
Idaho	NO	NO
Illinois	NO All licensees had to upgrade to the highest level by 2007	NO

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Indiana	YES Our applicants apply for an optometry license and if they are going to be prescribing, administering, or dispensing legend drugs then they can obtain an optometric legend drug certificate. It is not mandatory to obtain the legend drug certificate.	YES
Iowa	NO	NO We have no definite rule but would probably be denied.
Kansas	NO As of May 31, 2010, everyone must come in at the highest level.	NO As of May 31, 2010, everyone must be at the highest level.
Kentucky		
Louisiana	NO	NO Must be TPA to practice in the state.
Maine	NO	NO
Maryland		
Massachusetts	NO	NO
Michigan		
Minnesota		
Mississippi	NO	NO
Missouri	NO	NO
Montana		
Nebraska	NO	NO
Nevada	YES All new licensees come in at a DPA level. Subsequent to licensure, they can apply for TPA certification after they have completed the statutorily required 40 hour preceptorship with an ophthalmologist. They can elect to stay DPA. Most of those who are only DPA are not practicing in the state.	NO
New Hampshire	NO	NO
New Jersey		
New Mexico		
New York		
North Carolina	NO AND YES Beginning with the graduating classes of 2008 from the accredited schools and colleges of optometry applicants will come in at the highest level (includes injectables). Current licensees do not have to move up to the highest level with injectables.	NO
North Dakota	NO As of 2001	NO
Ohio	NO	The Ohio law does not specifically address this issue one way or another. The law does provide that they MAY renew each certificate of licensure and agents certificate. If

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		someone only wanted to renew there license and not a certificate they would drop down to just an optometric license but would not be able to drop from a TPA to a DPA. There have not been any licensees who have dropped to a lower level in the past 5 years. The cost for a TPA or DPA certificate is \$25 above the annual renewal cost of \$110 for just licensure.
Oklahoma	NO	NO
Oregon	NO As of January 2010 applicants must be at highest level, except for injectables authority which will remain optional. NOTE: Over the last five years they have had 159 applicants who have not sought licensure at the highest level.	NO As of January 2010.
Pennsylvania	NO & YES New grads automatically get the highest level of licensure. Older grads coming in from another state may apply for a lower level license, but it is infrequent. The cost is the same.	NO They are not given that option.
Rhode Island		
South Carolina	NO	NO
South Dakota	NO	NO
Tennessee		
Texas	NO & YES An applicant from another state can only come in as a therapeutic OD or higher.	NO
Utah		
Vermont		
Virginia		
Washington	NO	NO
West Virginia	NO	NO
Wisconsin	NO Could until Aug 2006.	NO Could until Aug 2006.
Wyoming	NO	NO

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