

45:12-9.1 et seq.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY CHECKLIST

NJSA 45:12-9.1 et seq.

Laws of 1975 Chapter 24

Bill No. S 1003

Sponsor(s) Horn

Date Introduced March 25

Committee: Assembly Commerce, Industry, & Professions

Senate Labor, Industry & Professions

Amended during passage Yes

Amendments during passage denoted by asterisks

Date of passage: Assembly Jan. 20, 1975

Senate May 13, 1974

Date of approval March 5, 1975

Following statements are attached if available:

Sponsor statement Yes

Committee Statement: Assembly  No

Senate  No

Fiscal Note  No

Veto message  No

Message on signing  No

Following were printed:

Reports  No

Hearings  No

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SENATE, No. 1003

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

INTRODUCED MARCH 25, 1974

By Senator HORN

Referred to Committee on Labor, Industry and Professions

AN ACT to insure the maintenance of proficiency by requiring continuing education for registered optometrists in order to qualify for renewal certificates of registration of optometrists and supplementing chapter 12 of Title 45 of the Revised Statutes.

1 BE IT ENACTED *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*  
2 *of New Jersey:*

1 1. It is hereby declared in the interest of the citizens of this  
2 State, to encourage the maintenance of continuing proficiency for  
3 registered active optometrists to the end that the utilization and  
4 application of new techniques, scientific and clinical advances and  
5 the achievement of research will **\*[assure comprehensive eye care**  
6 **to the public]\*** *\*be in the public interest\*.*

1 2. All registered active optometrists now or hereafter licensed in  
2 the State of New Jersey shall be required to take courses of study  
3 relating to the practice of the profession of optometry or to  
4 maintain proficiency in some other alternative manner to be pre-  
5 scribed and established by the New Jersey State Board of Optome-  
6 trists; except that any practitioner who has been granted his license  
7 by examination during the preceding year shall be exempt from  
8 this requirement for the succeeding year. *\*\*The board shall approve*  
9 *only such continuing educational programs as are available to all*  
10 *persons practicing optometry in the State on a reasonable*  
11 *nondiscriminatory basis. The board may approve programs to be*  
12 *held within or without the State of New Jersey. The board shall*  
13 *approve such programs that enable optometrists in all sections of*  
14 *the State to attend such programs. In no event shall the board*  
15 *approve a program offered by any professional association that*  
16 *discriminates against any licensed optometrist in the State.\*\**

EXPLANATION—Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

1 3. Fifty credits of continuing professional optometric education  
2 shall be required biennially of each New Jersey optometrist holding  
3 an active license during the period preceding the established license  
4 renewal date. Each credit shall represent or be equivalent to one  
5 hour of actual course attendance or in the case of those electing  
6 an alternative method of satisfying the requirements of this act  
7 shall be approved by the board and certified to the board on forms to  
8 be provided for that purpose.

1 4. In order to reactivate a license which has been inactive, the  
2 applicant shall give evidence satisfactory to the board of having  
3 maintained proficiency by attaining credits in an amount at least  
4 equal to that required for the renewal of an active licensee applicant  
5 at that time.

1 5. The board may waive any of the requirements of this act in  
2 cases of certified illness or undue hardship to be determined on  
3 an individual basis.

1 6. The board is authorized to treat funds allocated for the pur-  
2 pose of continuing proficiency as State Funds for the purpose of  
3 accepting any funds made available under Federal Law for the  
4 promulgation and maintenance of programs of continuing pro-  
5 ficiency.

1 \*7. *Nothing in this act shall be construed to permit the practice*  
2 *of medicine and surgery as defined in R. S. 45:9-5.1.\**

1 \***[7.]**\* \*8.\* This act shall take effect immediately.

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SENATE

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#### STATEMENT

The purpose of this bill is to make mandatory, in the interest of the public, continuing education for all active licensed New Jersey optometrists thereby encouraging the maintenance of continuing proficiency. It is the considered opinion of the sponsors that the need for some form of mandatory continuing education for all professionals has been well documented. Optometry leads the professions in the mandatory application of this principle with some 31 states having already enacted some formal requirements. Precedence has already been established within New Jersey with the enactment of mandatory continuing education requirements for licensed pharmacists.

Improved eye care of the patient is the ultimate aim of this legislation. Continuing education should make it possible for each doctor of optometry to use available modern optometric knowledge in his practice. Participation of each optometrist in suitable programs of continuing education insures adequate profession growth.