



Health Careers In Alaska

www.HealthCareersInAlaska.Info

Optician

Dispensing opticians, also known as opticians, make and fit eye glasses and lenses prescribed by ophthalmologists (eye surgeons) or optometric physicians. Dispensing opticians measure facial contours and assist in frame and lens selection. Although optical laboratories usually produce the actual lens, some opticians grind lenses according to the prescription

and patient's measurements. The dispensing optician adjusts the eye glasses to the customer.

Dispensing opticians can also dispense contact lenses from the prescription provided by an ophthalmologist or optometric physician. Opticians often teach about the use and care of contact lenses.

Optician Facts:

Where do opticians work in Alaska?

Opticians often have their own businesses or work with large retail optical chains. In rural Alaska, most opticians work in regional hospital eye clinics. They generally work closely with the optometric physician or ophthalmologist.

Educational Requirements

Dispensing opticians can receive training through college and technical school-based programs, or through an apprenticeship.

- High school diploma or GED and an aptitude for science, manual dexterity, and the ability to work with people.
- Completion of at least 1,800 hours of training as an apprentice or graduation from an associate degree program in a recognized school or college of opticianry.
- Registration as an apprentice is required by the State of Alaska. Apprentices must spend a minimum of 1800 hours working under a licensed optician.
- Successful completion of the Career Progression Program for Opticians through the National Academy of Opticianry.
- Pass the National Certification exam by the American Board of Opticianry and/or the National Contact Lens Examiners.
- Alaska requires a license to be a dispensing optician. A license in Alaska is issued for 1) dispensing contact lenses, 2) dispensing other lenses, eyeglasses, spectacles, artificial eyes, and their appurtenances, or 3) both.

Hourly Wage Range:

\$12.65-\$27.05 (Mean \$18.37)
**based on Alaska DOL data*

Years in School:

2 years or more years (after high school graduation).

Academic Programs in Alaska

There are no opticianry schools in Alaska. The closest is at the Seattle Central Community College which has a two-year program that offers an associate of applied science degree in Opticianry and is nationally accredited by the Commission on Opticianry Accreditation.

The School of Opticianry

Seattle Central Community College

Phone: (206) 344-4347

Web site: <http://seattlecentral.edu/programs/opticianry/>

State Contacts:

Opticians Association of America

Opticians Association of Alaska (OAAK)

Web site: <http://www.oaak.org/>

Div of Occup Licensing, Board of Dispensing Opticians

Web site: <http://www.dced.state.ak.us/occ/pdop.htm>

National Contacts:

Opticians Association of America

Phone: (901) 388-2423

Web site: <http://www.oaa.org/>

National Academy of Opticianry

Web site: <http://www.nao.org/>

