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Board of Optometry

Agency Profile 1

<https://mn.gov/boards/optometry/>

AT A GLANCE

Credentialing Services

- 2501 renewed licenses
- 160 new licenses

Education Services

- 2501 reviews of reported continuing education
- 100% auditing of reported continuing education
- 68 continuing education program approvals

Complaint Resolution

- Received 8 licensee complaints, 28 non-jurisdictional (insurance, billing or non-licensee staff) complaints and 3 public complaints.

For two-year period ended 06/30/2026

PURPOSE

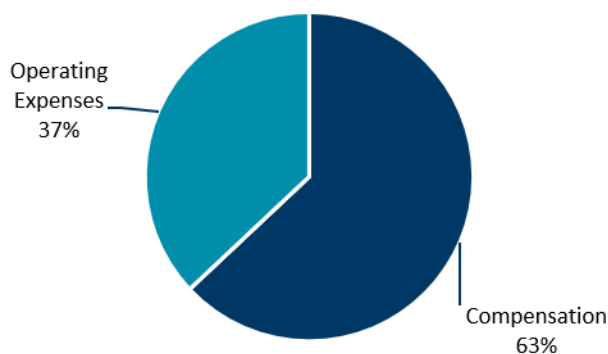
The Minnesota Board of Optometry is responsible for protection of the public through the regulation of the Doctor of Optometry (ODs) in the state of Minnesota. The Board was established in 1901 under the authority of Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 148, and was the first optometry board in the nation, celebrating 125 of licensure in 2026. Regulation is accomplished through licensure examination, annual license renewal, continuing education requirements, as well as providing neutral investigations and resolution of complaints against licensees. Approximately 75% of Minnesotans use some type of vision correction with Optometrists serving as first point of contact for many Minnesotans.

The Board's mission is to:

- Protect the public through effective licensure and enforcement of the statutes and rules governing the practice of optometry.
- Ensure a standard of competent and ethical care.
- Provide timely and neutral resolution of complaints.

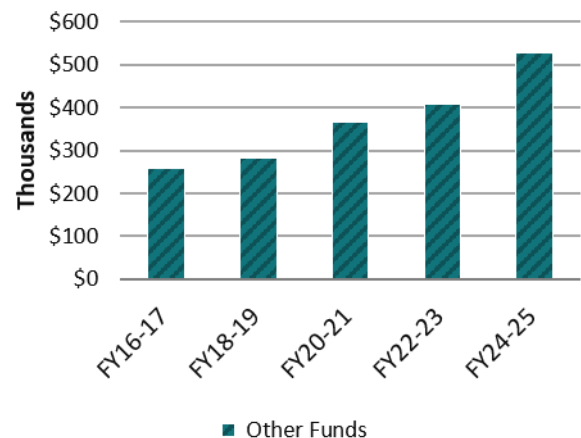
BUDGET

**Spending by Category
FY 2025 Actual**



Source: Budget Planning & Analysis System (BPAS)

Historical Spending



Source: Consolidated Fund Statement

The Board is funded entirely by licensure fees and receives no general fund dollars. Minnesota Statute 214.06, subd. 1(a) requires the Board to collect adequate fees in the amount sufficient to cover direct and indirect expenditures. Funds are deposited as non-dedicated revenue into the state government special revenue fund. From this fund, the Board receives a direct appropriation to pay for agency expenses such as salaries, rent, costs associated with disciplinary/contested cases, and operating expenditures. It also pays statewide indirect costs through an open appropriation.

In addition to Board operations, licensure fees fund activities that support multiple boards and/or other agencies. Some of these are: Minnesota IT services – technology, Small Agency Resource Team, Minnesota Management & Budget-Administrative Operations support, Health Professionals Services Program, Prescription Monitoring Program, Office of the Attorney General for legal services, and the Criminal Background Check Program.

Board members communicate openly with licensees to ensure fees are used prudently. The national optometry board, the Association of Regulatory Boards for Optometry (ARBO), completes an annual survey of all fees charged to the nation's ODs for licensing activities. Minnesota Board of Optometry fees are in the bottom third in the nation for both initial licensure costs and the annual renewal rate.

STRATEGIES

The Board of Optometry regulates the profession by:

- Setting educational standards for initial licensure.
- Reviewing applicants' education and training to determine compliance with the board's licensure requirements.
- Reasonably ensuring that only applicants who meet licensure requirements are granted a license.
- Issuing initial and renew licensure for qualified professionals.
- Setting continuing education requirements for maintenance of licensure.
- Setting standards of practice and taking disciplinary or corrective action against misconduct for licensees.
- Responding to public and agency inquiries, complaints, and reports regarding licensure and conduct of applicants and licensees and completing those reviews in a timely and neutral manner.
- Providing information about licensure requirements and standards of practice to citizens and other interested people or agencies.

As of August 2026, the board provides services to 1,302 licensed optometrists in Minnesota and collaborates with continuing education and provider associations.

Quarterly board meetings are driven by seven governor-appointed board members with other stakeholders in attendance. Complaints are actively reviewed by two ODs and one public member to assure the blending of both perspectives in seeking a timely and neutral review of the concerns presented. The board agenda reflects quality improvement activities with key statistics tracked and shared with the attendees. Board discussion leads to action steps and directives for staff which are listed in the minutes of each board meeting. Minutes are posted on the website.

RESULTS

Part A: Performance Data

Measure	Measure type	Measure data source	Historical trend	Most recent data
Complaints/inquiry	Quality	Complaints received	Complaints received and closed, without formal investigation, have continued to increase with early intervention.	No open or unresolved matters after committee meetings (FY 2025 and 2026)
License renewals	Quantity	Online software	Annual renewals are completed online.	100% (2025 and 2026)
Audit of Licensee Continuing Education Reporting	Quantity	Online database and national software	Licensees report attendance, staff confirmed at end of biannual reporting period.	100% (December 2025)

Part B: Evidence of Effectiveness

The Board delivers services that have not yet been evaluated using randomized controlled trials or quasi-experimental methods. While the public protection functions of professional licensing boards are not typically subject to randomized controlled trials, substantial evidence supports the underlying theory that regulatory oversight reduces the risk of harm by establishing minimum qualifications, requiring continuing education, investigating complaints, and imposing corrective action when practitioners fail to meet professional standards.

The statutory authority for the Minnesota Board of Optometry was updated in 2025 and is located in Chapter 148: <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes?id=148.52>

The rules were updated in July 2018 and are located in MN Rules Chapter 6500. <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/rules?id=6500>

Additional statutes pertaining to all health licensing boards are found in Chapters 13, 16, and 214.