

CHAPTER I, ARTICLE IV – Licensure by Endorsement, Military Personnel

A. Licensure by Endorsement

Section 1 –

Any person from another state desiring to engage in the practice of optometry in this state may be issued a licensure by endorsement at the sole discretion of the State Board of Optometry upon satisfactory proof that he or she:

1. Is qualified under this chapter;
2. Has been issued a certificate or license to practice optometry by a state, territory, the District of Columbia, or Canada having standards of proficiency at least equal to the standards of Arkansas;
3. Has engaged in the lawful practice of optometry for a period of three years of the past four years in the other state, territory, the District of Columbia, or Canada and has complied with the requirements of the Arkansas licensure law at the time of application; and
4. Has passed an Arkansas jurisprudence examination as approved by the Board.

Section 2 –

The applicant shall pay a fee to the State Board of Optometry of \$400.00 (equal to the fee of a new applicant) to cover the administrative costs of the application process.

Section 3 -

An application for licensure by endorsement shall be accompanied by:

1. The fee described in Section 2
2. Certification from all states or territories in which the applicant has practiced;
3. A certificate of good standing from each authority which issued the license, setting forth the applicant's history with the authority, professional ability, continuing education compliance, and other information or data as the State Board of Optometry may deem necessary or expedient;
4. A copy of the therapeutic license held by the applicant and current photo.
5. A copy of the cardiopulmonary resuscitation certification held by the applicant;
6. Transcripts from all colleges or universities attended by the applicant; and an accredited school or college of optometry;

7. Proof of completion of all parts of the National Board of Examiners in Optometry examination required at the time of graduation for initial licensure sent directly to the State Board of Optometry;
8. Information on past medical malpractice claims and any disciplinary actions;
9. Application to the Identification Bureau of the Department for Arkansas State Police for a state and national criminal background check, to be conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation with the \$38.50 fee for processing; and
10. Appear in person before the State Board of Optometry for an interview.

Section 4 –

Upon furnishing satisfactory proof of fitness, the State Board of Optometry in its discretion may issue a license to practice optometry to the applicant without further cost except as otherwise provided in the Rules and Regulations for the renewal of licenses.

B. Licensure for Uniformed Service Members

1. Definitions:

- a. As used in this section, “uniformed service veteran” means a former member of the United States Uniformed Services discharged under circumstances other than dishonorable.

2. Licensure:

- a. Pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. §17-4-101 *et seq*, the Arkansas State board of Optometry shall allow the following individuals to secure employment with a temporary automatic license, certificate, or permit while completing the application process for full licensure or certification or permitting if the individual is the holder in good standing of a license, certificate, or permit with a similar scope of practice issued by another state:
 - (1) A uniformed member stationed in the State of Arkansas
 - (2) A uniformed service veteran who resides in or establishes residency in the State of Arkansas; or
 - (3) The spouse of:
 - (a) A person under a (1) or (2) above;

(b) A uniformed service member who is assigned a tour of duty that excludes the uniformed service member's spouse from accompanying the uniformed service member and the spouse relocates to this state; or

(c) A uniformed service member who is killed or succumbs to his or her injuries or illness in the line of duty if the spouse establishes residency in the state.

b. The Arkansas State Board of Optometry shall expedite the process and procedures for full licensure, certification, or permitting for the following individuals:

(1) A uniformed service member stationed in the State of Arkansas;

(2) A uniformed service veteran who resides in or establishes residency in the State of Arkansas; or

(3) The spouse of:

a. A person under (1) or (2) above;

b. A uniformed service member who is assigned a tour of duty that excludes the uniformed service members spouse from accompanying the uniformed service member and the spouse relocates to this state, or;

c. A uniformed service member who is killed or succumbs to his or her injuries or illness in the line of duty if the spouse establishes residency in the state.

c. When considering an application for full licensure, certification, or permitting for a uniformed service member stationed in the State of Arkansas or a uniformed service veteran who resides in or establishes residency in the State of Arkansas, the Arkansas State Board of Optometry:

(1) Shall consider whether or not the applicant's military training and experience in the area of licensure, certification, or permitting is substantially similar to experience or education required for licensure, certification, or permitting; and

(2) Shall accept the applicant's military training and experience in the area of licensure, certification, or permitting in lieu of experience or education required for licensure, certification, or permitting if the state board or commission determines the military training and experience is a satisfactory substitute for the experience or education required for licensure, certification, or permitting.

d. A license required to enable the holder to lawfully engage in a profession, trade, or employment in this state held by a uniformed service member deployed outside the State of Arkansas or his or her spouse shall not expire until one hundred eighty (180) days following the uniformed service member's or spouse's return from deployment.

e. (1) The Arkansas State Board of Optometry shall allow a full or partial exemption from continuing education required as part of licensure, certification, or permitting for a profession, trade, or employment in this state for a deployed uniform service member or spouse until one hundred and eighty (180) days following the date of the uniformed service member's return from deployment.

(2) If the Arkansas State Board of Optometry allows a full or partial exemption from continuing education required under subdivision (e) (1) of this section, the Board may require evidence of completion of continuing education before issuing the individual a subsequent license, certificate, or permit or authorizing the renewal of a license, certificate, or permit.