Opticians

Pathway to Registration for Internationally Educated Professionals (IEP) in New Brunswick

Opticians are regulated professionals in New Brunswick (NB). Registration with the Opticians Association of New Brunswick (OANB)—the regulatory authority—is required to use the title "Optician" as outlined in the New Brunswick Opticians Act.

Opticians assist clients in the selection of eyeglass frames, take the necessary measurements and arrange for the production of eyeglasses or contact lenses, mount lenses in eyeglass frames and fit clients with final prescription eyeglasses and contact lenses. They are employed in optical retail outlets or other establishments with optical dispensing departments, or they may be self-employed.[1]

For work opportunities and other information, visit NBHealthJobs.com or NBjobs.ca.

STEPS TO REGISTRATION

PART 1: COMPETENCY ASSESSMENT

International applicants must complete the Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) process administered by the National Alliance of Canadian Optician Regulators (NACOR).

Step 1 - Language Proficiency: Neither NACOR nor OANB requires a language test for registration. However, working proficiency in English or French[2] is helpful to complete the certification process and serve clients. Language testing may be required for immigration or academic upgrading.

Step 2 – Application and Document Review: The minimum educational requirement to practice in NB is an opticianry college diploma from an institution accredited by Accreditation Canada. All other applicants must demonstrate equivalence by completing the NACOR PLAR application form and submitting required documents. Current fees are listed in the application form.

Step 3 – Competency Gap Analysis (CGA): Applicants must complete the online CGA, a multiple-choice assessment based on the National Competencies for Canadian Opticians. Fees for each section can be found here.

Step 4 – PLAR Results: Applicants receive a Reasons and Decisions letter from the OANB based on PLAR results. If any competencies are ranked "Below" the level of a recent Canadian graduate, assigned bridging modules must be completed before being eligible to write the national examination. Applicants ranked "At" or "Above" may proceed to write the national exam (Step 6).

Step 5 – Upgrading: NACOR offers 18 online bridging module courses. Any assigned modules must be completed within one year, and applicants must apply and pass a post-test for each module. The fee for each post-test may be found here.

Step 6 – National Optical Sciences Exam: After successfully completing the PLAR process, applicants must pass the National Optical Sciences Exam, a practical examination offered throughout the year in

[1] National Occupational Classification (NOC) definition.
[2] English and French are the official languages of New Brunswick.

rotating locations across Canada. Separate exams are required for eyeglasses and contact lenses. Current fees can be found here.

PART 2: REGISTRATION WITH THE NEW BRUNSWICK REGULATORY BODY

Step 7 – Licensure: Applicants who successfully complete the National Optical Sciences Exam may apply for licensure with the Opticians Association of New Brunswick (OANB) by requesting an application package via email (mailto:nbgdo@nbnet.nb.ca). Applications are reviewed once all required materials and fees are received and are typically approved within one day to one week. Current fees can be found here.

Navigation Services: To obtain assistance through the process, connect with your health professions navigator at NBHealthJobs.com.

REGISTRATION COSTS AND TIMELINE[3]

Total fees to become a licensed optician vary depending on whether applicants seek certification to dispense eyeglasses only or both eyeglasses and contact lenses, as well as the number of required bridging modules. Fees range from approximately $2,200 CAD for eyeglasses only with no bridging modules, to approximately $5,360 CAD for both eyeglasses and contact lenses when all bridging modules are required. Timelines depend on the number of bridging modules assigned and the timing of application submission relative to national exam scheduling. The process typically takes one year or longer.

Pre-arrival: You may complete the NACOR document review and CGA prior to arriving in Canada; however, the National Exam must be completed in Canada.

WORKING IN NEW BRUNSWICK, CANADA

To work legally in Canada, you must be a Canadian citizen, a permanent resident, or hold a valid work permit. For immigration assistance, visit Immigration New Brunswick.

New Nouveau Brunswick CANADA

[3] Fee and timeline estimates are as of February 2026 and are subject to change. Individual situations may increase costs and timelines—some examples include: document translation into English or French, international couriers, travel and living related to education and exams, etc.