



Providing in-person care during COVID-19

Additional information for opticians

This document is intended as supplementary information to the already existing Standards of Practice and as guidelines on how opticians can interpret the directions already shared by the British Columbia Centre for Disease Control, Work Safe BC and Office for the Provincial Health Officer. **Please ensure you read and understand those guidelines first and use the following only as additional information for specific scenarios.**

All COVID-19 related resources can be found on the [COBC website](#).

General practice advice

In-person services must only be conducted when the anticipated benefits of such services outweigh the risks to the patient and the health care provider. Each optician is accountable and in the best position to determine this necessity.

- Carry out consultations by telephone, video conference or email.
- Use existing measurement information where available. This may include using the measurements that are already on file for an established patient, working from the patient's existing frames, or requesting the patient's consent to contact their previous eyecare provider to obtain a copy of their patient health record.
- Consider alternate ways of determining the patient's measurements while maintaining a safe physical distance. The optician should explain to the patient how this might impact eyewear performance and document this discussion in the patient file.
- Limit the selection of frames available to patients or ask patients to select frames by pointing from a distance or referring to a catalogue.
- Ask patients to put on and remove frames themselves whenever possible.
- Use contactless methods of delivery such as remote delivery (e.g. mail or courier), curbside pickup, or creating a drop off/pick up tray that is sanitized after each use and positioned away from other individuals.
- Delay unnecessary adjustments. The optician should explain to the patient how this might impact eyewear performance and document this discussion in the patient file.
- Use contactless methods to carry out necessary adjustment, such as using a sanitized drop off/pick up tray to hand the appliance back and forth.
- Remotely counsel patients on proper eyeglass and contact lens hygiene practices, including maintenance and cleaning of eyeglasses and contact lenses, and cleaning and replacement of eyeglass and contact lens cases.

Contact lens fitting and training

- Only perform initial contact lens fittings if it is determined essential. Fittings typically require prolonged close physical contact and it is generally not possible to use adequate PPE.
- Physical distancing measures and remote practice should be used to the greatest extent possible when delivering continuing care and replacement services to established contact lens patients.
- Where a patient requires urgent care (e.g. for a dislodged lens), opticians must ensure that they thoroughly wash hands and use appropriate PPE where applicable. Where in the optician's judgment, the risk level cannot be appropriately mitigated, the patient should refer the patient to another health care provider.
- When training a patient how to insert or remove contact lenses, patients should handle their own lenses and staff should use trial disposable lenses for any demonstrations. Contact lenses handled by staff should be discarded immediately following each contact lens instruction session

Cleaning and caring for frames

Like all equipment, frames should be cleaned and disinfected before and after they have been handled or tried on by a patient. The following methods for cleaning and disinfecting eyeglass frames are advisable however, it is up to the optician to ensure that the method they use is appropriate to the frame material by consulting the manufacturer recommendations.

- **Soap and water**
rinse the frames in clean, warm, running water. Cover all areas of the frame with soap and use physical agitation to lather for at least 20 seconds. Rinse well under clean warm running water. Dry the frames using a clean single-use cloth. Ensure that the clean frames are placed in a sanitized tray or container. Thoroughly wash hands before returning the frames to the frame board or storage.
- **Hydrogen peroxide wipes**
Wipe every part of the frames with a single-use hydrogen peroxide wipe. Discard the wipe and place the frames in a sanitized tray or container. Thoroughly wash hands before returning the frames to the frame board or storage.
- **Hydrogen peroxide solution**
Mix equal parts 3% hydrogen peroxide solution and water. Use a spray bottle to spray the solution on the frames or moisten a clean single-use cloth and wipe every area of the frames. Ensure that the clean frames are placed in a sanitized tray or container. Thoroughly wash hands before returning the frames to the frame board or storage.

Using barriers

Opticians should consider installing barriers (such as plexiglass or plastic shields) on equipment such as pupilometers, keratometers and slit lamps, and at counters or reception desks in order to create an additional safeguard when physical proximity to the patient cannot be avoided. All barriers should be regularly cleaned and sanitized.