AOA Paraoptometric Section

The Bridge
Between the AOA Paraoptometric Section and YOU!
What is a Paraoptometric?

The American Optometric Association’s definition of a paraoptometric is a person who works under the direct supervision of a licensed doctor of optometry.

Paraoptometrics may:

- Collect patient data
- Administer routine, yet technical, tests of the patients’ visual capabilities
- Assist in office management
What is a Paraoptometric?

A paraoptometric may assist the optometrist in primary patient care examination and other services, including:

- Medical procedures such as irrigation and photography
- Contact lenses
- Low vision
- Vision therapy
- Optical dispensing
- Office management
- Ocular trauma

State laws may limit, restrict, or otherwise affect the duties that may be performed by the paraoptometric.
Who is a Paraoptometric?

What are some of the titles used in reference to paraoptometrics?

- Office Manager
- Optometric Assistant
- Optician
- Allied Health Professional
- Business Manager
- Certified Paraoptometric
- Certified Assistant
- Optometric Technician
- Paraoptometric
- Certified Paraoptometric Assistant
- Billing and coding staff
- Contact lens technicians
- Receptionists
- Pre-testing technicians
- Certified Paraoptometric Technician
What is the AOA Paraoptometric Section?

The nation’s largest organization serving the needs of optometric assistants and technicians.

The *purpose* of the PS is to provide:

- continuing education opportunities
- service recognition
- professional development and promotion
- opportunities for members to be involved with a national professional association
Paraoptometric Section Mission Statement

The American Optometric Association Paraoptometric Section (PS) will seek to ensure that the education and training for all paraoptometrics is consistent with and reflects the growth of the paraoptometric profession.
History of the Paraoptometric Section

- Committee on Optometric Assistants, Technicians and Technologists established within the AOA Education and Manpower Division.

- 1971- The AOA National Registry for Paraoptometric Personnel (AOAR) established to recognize assistants with higher levels of competency in patient care and practice management.
1974- the first paraoptometric education program was offered at the AOA Annual Congress in Washington, DC.
History of the Paraoptometric Section

- 1978- AOA 81st Annual Congress, AOA House of Delegates approved formation of the Paraoptometric Section

- AOA Paraoptometric Section Bylaws approved; officers elected and installed.
History of the Paraoptometric Section

Council members establish permanent goals:

- Recognition of paraoptometrics’ status
- Promotion of quality education
- Involve paraoptometrics in the optometric profession.
History of the Paraoptometric Section

Recognition Awards

- The Paraoptometric of the Year
- Community Service
- State Affiliate Membership Recruitment
- Special Service
History of the Paraoptometric Section

- 1980- National Paraoptometric Registry (NPR) established
- 1981- Developed nationally administered exams and established a career ladder
History of the Paraoptometric Section

2002- the National Paraoptometric Registry (NPR) became the Commission on Paraoptometric Certification (CPC).

CPC Certification Designations
- CPO
- CPOA
- CPOT
History of the Paraoptometric Section

Roles and responsibilities established defining two separate entities.

- Paraoptometric Section develops EDUCATION and provides MEMBERSHIP services.
- The CPC administers CERTIFICATION program and EXAMinations.
2009- AOA merged the Paraoptometric Section and the Commission on Paraoptometric Certification as a new AOA Paraoptometric Group.
Current Education Materials

- 3rd Edition of the *Self Study Course for Paraoptometric Assistants and Technicians* formerly titled as *Self Study Course for Paraoptometric Certification* published in 2007, revised in 2008.
Other materials available assisting paraoptometrics in preparation for:

- Certification examination
- Staff training
- Professional Development
- Self Assessment Examination
- CPO Study Guide
- Certified Paraoptometric Study Flash Cards
- Education Modules
Education Modules

- Practice Management 101
- Special Procedures
- Anatomy and Physiology
- Ophthalmic Dispensing
- Soft Contact Lens Wear and Care
- ABCs of Optical Dispensing
- Optimizing Office Efficiency in the Optical Dispensary
- Fitting Soft Toric Contact Lenses
Membership Benefits

- Continuing Education opportunities
- Discounts on PS education materials
- AOA and AOA PS publications
- Discounts on registration for Optometry’s Meeting®
- Optometry’s Career Center®
- Speakers’ Bureau
- Special benefits
Continuing Education (CE) Opportunities

- 6 hours of CE credit opportunities annually with membership
- Article Archive for additional CE
- Education Finder Opportunities Listing
Discounts

- PS education materials
- Reduced registration fees at Optometry’s Meeting®
AOA Publications

You will become an Associate member of the AOA with your PS membership.

AOA publications:

- PS Quarterly Newsletter
- *Optometry: Journal of the American Optometric Association*
- *AOA News* (hard copy, online and e-newsletter)
The OCC is an online, national opportunity matching service for optometry.

- Service to connect providers of opportunities for paraoptometrics with qualified paraoptometric candidates
- Premier national career site for optometry
- More than 9,000 seekers and providers registered

FEATURES AVAILABLE TO REGISTERED JOB SEEKERS INCLUDE:

- Detailed opportunity listings
- Advanced search features
- Ability to post your resume
- Confidentiality options
- E-mail alerts
Speakers’ Bureau

- 2007- Speakers’ Bureau established to assist regional and state meeting organizers.

- National database of speakers, topic categories
Special Benefits

- Receive special discounts on various services and programs
Paraoptometric Recognition Week

- Observed the third week of September
- The only formal observance in the nation
- Honor paraoptometrics for dedication to patients, profession of optometry
- Encourage professionalism, pride and professional development
Volunteer Opportunities

Opportunities to serve the profession at a national level:

- PS Council Member
- Awards and Membership Committee
- State Affiliate Relations Committee
- Online Continuing Education Committee
- Speakers Bureau Committee
- PS Newsletter
- Optometry’s Meeting® Ambassador

Have Time to Make a Difference?
FACEBOOK

- Visit FACEBOOK  www.facebook.com
- Type “AOA Paraoptometric Section” in search box.

Join the Paraoptometric Section’s Page for discussion, articles, pictures and networking opportunities. Plus, a monthly prize drawing for members—while supplies last!
Why Join the BEST?

- Belong to an organization that represents the BEST of the paraoptometric community.
- Be part of the BEST who contribute to the advancement of the profession of paraoptometry.
- Gain knowledge and skills to BEST serve your patients’ vision care needs.

Make the commitment to providing quality care; develop a sense of pride in your profession; and JOIN the BEST today!
Moving Toward the Future

Section celebrates a strong foundation, innovative and responsive leadership and the support and involvement of countless members and volunteers.

We look forward to continued achievement and progress with you!
Paraoptometric Section
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