



PARAOPTOMETRIC
RESOURCE
CENTER



AOA PARAOPTOMETRIC RESOURCE CENTERSM

RESOURCES





WELCOME .

Welcome to the American Optometric Association as an Associate member. The Paraoptometric Resource CenterSM, the nation's largest and most trusted advocate of optometric assistants and technicians, is here to help you enhance your skills and advance your career.

Dear New Member,

Welcome to the American Optometric Association Paraoptometric Resource CenterSM (PRC). AOA resources keep you connected, competitive and ready to experience the best the paraoptometric profession has to offer. The Paraoptometric Resource CenterSM provides invaluable tools and resources for every aspect of optometry:

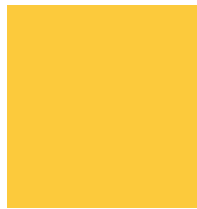
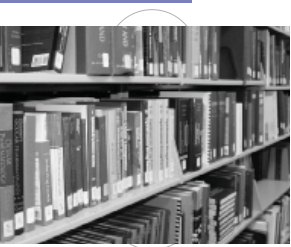
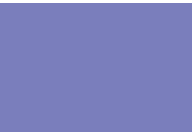
- * Professional networking and leadership opportunities
- * Continuing education and training
- * Ophthalmic industry data and research
- * Industry news
- * Employment opportunities
- * AOA Associate membership

By supporting your professional association, you are actively contributing to the advancement of the profession as well as your own personal growth and success. This resource guide provides an overview of AOA PRC benefits. Throughout the next year, you will receive quarterly newsletters that explore the individual benefits and programs the AOA PRC has to offer. There are too many to keep track of, so be sure to take full advantage!

Sincerely,

Linda Rodriguez, CPO
PRC Executive Committee Chair





AOA PARAOPTOMETRIC RESOURCE CENTERSM MISSION

The American Optometric Association Paraoptometric Resource Center is the nation's largest organization serving the needs of optometric assistants and technicians. The purpose of the Paraoptometric Resource Center is to offer continuing education opportunities, service recognition, professional development and promotion, and opportunities for members to be involved with a national, professional association. The PRC promotes a health-team concept in the delivery of optometric care and enhances the identity of both the optometrist and the paraoptometric.

AOA Paraoptometric Resource CenterSM Mission Statement

The American Optometric Association Paraoptometric Resource Center will seek to ensure that the education and training for all paraoptometrics is consistent with and reflects the growth of the paraoptometric profession.

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."

The paraoptometric may collect patient data, administer routine, yet technical tests of the patient's visual capabilities and assist in office management. The paraoptometric may assist the optometrist in providing primary patient care examination and other services, including ocular trauma and medical procedures such as irrigation and photography, contact lenses, low vision therapy, optical dispensing, and office management.

State laws may limit, restrict, or otherwise affect the duties that may be performed by the paraoptometric.

PARAOPTOMETRIC RESOURCE CENTERSM

**AOA offers paraoptometric education,
recognition, and involvement.**

Paraoptometrics are optometric health personnel who assist doctors of optometry with front office procedures, chairside assisting, visual field testing, contact lens instruction, frame styling, and vision therapy, among other duties. The AOA Paraoptometric Resource Center is the nation's largest organization serving the needs of optometric assistants and technicians. The PRC offers education, recognition, and involvement to its members while promoting the health team concept in the delivery of optometric care. Any ancillary/allied health personnel sponsored by an AOA-member optometrist is eligible for benefits.






**Paraoptometric
professionals play a
valuable role
in providing quality
eye care and improve
the efficiency and
productivity of an
optometric practice.**

AOA PARAOPTOMETRIC RESOURCE CENTERSM BENEFITS

A paraoptometric's occupation is more than just a job. Together with the optometrist, paraoptometrics play a valuable role in providing quality eye care to each and every patient who enters the office or clinic.

The AOA Paraoptometric Resource Center offers recognition, education, involvement, networking and volunteer opportunities for members. Membership in the Paraoptometric Resource Center opens the door to personal growth and professional development for all paraoptometrics. The benefits offered prepare paraoptometrics for tomorrow's career challenges:

- FREE access to six hours of online Continuing Education opportunities annually
- Reduced registration fees at Optometry's Meeting®. The Paraoptometric Resource Center offers continuing education courses, designed specifically for optometric staff, at Optometry's Meeting®



The Paraoptometric
Resource CenterSM
is the
nation's largest
organization serving
the needs of
optometric
assistants and
technicians

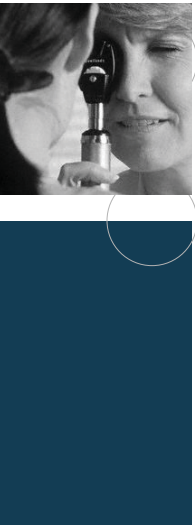
- Discounts on AOA Paraoptometric Resource CenterSM materials including the *Self-Study Course for Paraoptometric Assistants and Technicians*, CPO Study Guide, Study Flash Card sets, and the PRC Library of Learning Education Modules.
- Free access to the Beginner Level 1 of the Paraoptometric Skill Builder[®] program. New staff may go online to learn the “basics” for the profession of paraoptometry. Brought to our members by Johnson & Johnson Vision Care, Inc. through an education grant.
- Associate membership in the AOA
- The *AOA PRC Newsletter*, quarterly Paraoptometric Resource CenterSME-News, and AOA News Online.
- Full inclusion in the AOA's approved provider programs, including insurance products (health, life, disability) and discounts on long-distance service, car rentals, and package delivery.
- Free access to the web page, Webinar Rewind, containing Billing and Coding: Foundations for Beginners webinar training series.
- Membership certificate for recognition as a professional in the field of paraoptometry.

For registering optometric staff/paraoptometrics
visit www.aoa.org
or call 800/365-2219, ext. 4108.



BENEFITS

AT A GLANCE



The advantages of membership in organized paraoptometry are numerous. Continuing education, consumer awareness, professional publications and Optometry's Meeting® are examples of the many AOA PRC member benefits. In addition to a full range of career-enhancing tools and resources, AOA PRC membership is a great way to help give back to the community, the profession, and beyond. It is easy to see why more than 3000 members choose to support organized paraoptometry.

Continuing Education (CE)- Members may receive six hours of online continuing education credit opportunities each year through articles that are relevant to paraoptometric responsibilities. Additional CE is available through the Article Archive program. Paraoptometric members may find continuing education opportunities nationally over the country on the AOA PRC Website.

Discounts on AOA PRC materials - Discounted items include: study guides for certification, self assessment exams, and education modules.

Paraoptometric Skill Builder® - This easy-to-use, online staff training makes learning easy and convenient. Designed for beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels of learning for staff development. Beginner's Level One is free to PRC members, and available through an education grant from Johnson & Johnson Vision Care, Inc.

AOA Website (www.aoa.org) - Online access to member protected pages with benefits, services and industry information.

AOA PRC Newsletter - Quarterly e-newsletter.

AOA News Online - Members will receive an electronic version of *AOA News* with additional web-exclusive content.

Optometry's Meeting® - Discounts on registration for AOA's annual meeting. This national gathering offers valuable opportunities for networking and continuing education.

Optometry's Career Center® (OCC) - A national, online job matching service for optometry that helps provide detailed information for paraoptometric employment.

Pamphlets/Resource Materials - The AOA PRC offers brochures and information for your state meetings free of charge.

PRC certificate - Proudly display the certificate to recognize your commitment to providing quality patient care. These are available to members upon request by emailing PRC@aoa.org.

Research/Statistics on the Profession - The AOA Research and Information Center conducts surveys to collect, analyze and disseminate socio-economic and other data relating to eye care, the paraoptometric profession and the ophthalmic industry. AOA members can access the highlights of each of the surveys by visiting www.aoa.org.

DISCOUNTED SERVICES THROUGH AOA PREFERRED PROVIDERS:

AOA Member Credit Card - MBNA Platinum Plus MasterCard® credit card with no annual fee.

Automobile Rental - Discounted rates from National® Car Rental.

Equipment Leasing - Equipment leasing packages from Great America® Leasing.

Medical/Dental/Life/Disability/Hospital Indemnity Insurance - Provided by AGIA (www.aoainsurance.com)

Long-Distance Telephone Service - Special residential and commercial long distance rates from 2nd Century Communications.

On-Hold Telephone Services - Customized messages from OMG National.

CONTINUING EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

Online Continuing Education Program

Continuing education (CE) allows the paraoptometric to stay current within the eye care field and is especially important in the study of direct patient care and office competency. Additionally, certified paraoptometrics must obtain 18 hours of CE credit from approved education providers to maintain certification designation. The Paraoptometric Resource Center (PRC) provides six FREE articles each year (one every other month) for PRC members that are worth one hour of CE. Any PRC member who reads the article and successfully answers the exam questions will receive CE slips by email.

The articles are designed to cover a broad scope of patient issues including patient care, disease treatment, practice management, and ophthalmic dispensing. Participants should review each article and complete the accompanying continuing education examination. Each accurately completed examination is worth one hour of paraoptometric continuing education credit. The corresponding CE exams expire at the end of each year. Please allow four to six weeks to receive proof of CE.

The AOA Paraoptometric Resource Center is dedicated to supporting its members as they continue to seek and maintain the knowledge necessary to provide quality eye health care for patients.

Continuing Education Article Archive

To meet the needs of PRC members who need additional CE for recertification requirements, the PRC is happy to offer articles from our CE Archive worth one hour of CE per article.

Members may purchase access to an article for just \$10, and will receive one hour of CE for successfully passing the exam at the end of the article. There is no limit on the number of titles a member may choose.

Self-Assessment Examination - Study Material

The Self-Assessment Exam includes 350 multiple choice questions on information covered in the Self-Study Course for Paraoptometric Assistants and Technicians textbook and may be completed in a convenient timeframe. After completion, a member may mail the Self-Assessment Examination to the Paraoptometric Resource Center office in St. Louis for grading. If a member answers 249 questions correctly, they will receive 12 hours of continuing education credit and a certificate of achievement. Once a paraoptometric is certified at any level, he or she must obtain 18 hours of approved CE credit over the course of three years to maintain certification designation. The Self Assessment Examination is a great resource for training or studying.

Paraoptometric Resource Center Member Price: \$65 /Non-Member Price: \$105



The AOA
Paraoptometric
Resource CenterSM offers
several continuing
education opportunities
for paraoptometrics.



Home Study Education Modules

Members interested in receiving continuing education credit or expanding one's knowledge about a specific topic, may access the Section's educational module collection. The PRC recently developed 10 education modules which may be utilized for educational purposes. Topics include:

- CPO Review Course
- Introduction to Freeform® (Courtesy of Shamir)
- Fitting Soft Toric Contact Lenses (Courtesy of SpecialEyes)
- Optimizing Efficiency in the Optical Dispensary (Courtesy of HOYA)
- The ABCs of Optical Dispensing (Courtesy of Luxottica Group)
- Soft Contact Lens Wear & Care Module (Courtesy of Bausch & Lomb)
- Practice Management 101 Module
- Ophthalmic Dispensing Module
- Anatomy and Physiology Module
- Special Procedures Module

The modules have been designed in an easy-to-use automated, audio Power Point format, perfect for at-home study. The modules would also be great for educational offerings during staff meetings in the practice. Staff can participate in the lecture portion of the course and then download the CE exam for individual use. With the successful completion of the examination members may receive one hour of CE per module. The cost of each modules is \$45 for AOA PRC member/\$70 for non-member, in addition to a usage fee for the actual CE exam. For information on the modules currently available or on authoring a module, please contact the Paraoptometric Resource Center at PRC@aoa.org.

Article Submission Process

The AOA Paraoptometric Resource Center has launched a major campaign to recruit authors of articles for use by the section to provide continuing education for its members. The PRC is interested in articles on topics included in the handbooks for the paraoptometric certification examinations. You may view the handbook outlines in detail at www.aoa.org.

Topics may include: Practice Management, Ophthalmic Optics & Dispensing, Pre-testing Procedures, Clinical Procedures, Refractive Status of the Eye and Binocularity, Basic Ocular Anatomy and Physiology, Contact Lenses, Low Vision, Sports Vision, Ophthalmic Prescriptions, and Frames Sales and Inventory.

The PRC is soliciting articles that are written for basic, intermediate, and advanced levels of knowledge, so it can serve the varying needs of its membership. The AOA PRC believes optimal patient care can only be provided when paraoptometric members are well-educated and informed members of the eye care team. That is why the PRC must provide continuing education articles for all levels. Authors whose articles are selected for publication in any paraoptometric continuing education opportunity will be able to take part in the incentive program. The PRC will provide paraoptometric continuing education credit to authors used for paraoptometric education based on the length of the article written. The specifics of the incentive program include:

- A published article worth one continuing education credit to the reader will be worth three CE credits to the author.
- A published article worth two continuing education credits to the reader will be worth six CE credits to the author.
- Articles that are published and exceed these specific guidelines will merit three times the number of CE credits awarded to the reader.

HOW THE AOA WEB SITE SERVES YOU

Find it all at www.aoa.org –
Optometry's Online Resource

AS A MEMBER BENEFIT

The Internet continues to flourish as a dynamic clearinghouse for research and services. The AOA has taken full advantage of the online medium, offering a wealth of information accessible with a click of the mouse. Thousands of members have downloaded valuable AOA PRC resources. Visit www.aoa.org today and see for yourself!

AS A PUBLIC RESOURCE

The AOA PRC is aggressively expanding its presence on the Internet, marketing optometry as the primary eye care profession to the millions of Americans seeking answers online. Tens of thousands visit www.aoa.org each month to learn about cataracts, strabismus, children's vision and a host of other ocular health topics. Searches for a host of eye care-related keywords like "diabetic retinopathy," "contact lens" and "astigmatism" consistently return AOA resources.

AOA PRC members can enhance their patients' online experience by linking www.aoa.org resources from their own practice Websites.

AS A FOUNDATION FOR YOUR CAREER

With its substantial online presence, the AOA is doing much more than educating the public about optometry. Find your next employment opportunity by accessing Optometry's Career Center® or advance your career through other PRC programs.

Find Your Next Position

- Search employment opportunities
- Post your resume

- Receive e-mail alerts
www.optometrycareercenter.org

Online Continuing Education

- For PRC members
 - Six hours of CE each year with membership
 - Article Archive- more CE opportunities
- www.aoa.org/ParaCE.xml

Certification Exam Preparation

- Self-study guides
 - Education modules
 - Study Flash Card sets
- www.aoa.org/paraoptometrics/tools-and-resources

Certification Resources

- Certification handbooks
 - Directory of certified paraoptometrics
 - Credential promotion tools
- www.aoa.org/paraoptometrics/certification

Other AOA Web sites:

- www.aoanews.org
- www.infantsee.org
- www.optometrymeeting.org



NEWS AND INFORMATION

AOA brings you up-to-date information about the paraoptometric profession.

The AOA's numerous publications provide you with timely political and legislative news affecting optometry, unique practice management tools and information, and breakthrough clinical research. These publications include the *AOA PRC Newsletter*, *AOA News Online*, and various electronic newsletters.

Each of these publications is carefully written, edited, and designed to bring you the updated information you need to maintain your skills and practice efficiently.

AOA PERIODICALS KEEP YOU UP-TO-DATE

The AOA offers several periodicals such as *AOA PRC News letter*, and *AOA News Online* providing the latest industry research, news and products.

Join our Facebook Page Community to stay connected with your professional peers.

THE AOA PRC NEWSLETTER and AOA NEWS ONLINE AOA PRC Newsletter

Published four times per year, the *AOA PRC e-newsletter* has information about upcoming events, PRC programs, volunteers, continuing education, and special promotions.

AOA News Online

Published 12 times a year, the *AOA News online* is the profession's pre-eminent news publication. Its efficient layout allows you to stay informed at a glance.

The *AOA News Online* reports on AOA activities, meetings and seminars, federal and state legislation affecting optometry, government regulatory agencies, people and other organizations within the profession. It also provides newsworthy information on areas of optometry as well as in-depth coverage of compelling industry-related issues, products, and business news.

The AOA keeps members informed through electronic newsletters (www.aoanews.org). From the monthly *AOA Newsletter* to special e-publications like the Contact Lens and Cornea Section newsletter and special newsletters for Topical Interest Groups (TIGs), the AOA delivers interactive publications straight to your inbox.



The AOA is
your one-stop
resource for
research and data
collection

**STAY ON THE CUTTING EDGE OF OPTOMETRY WITH
AOA RESEARCH**

The AOA routinely conducts and compiles practice-related and demographic survey information. *Caring for the Eyes of America* and *The State of the Profession* both provide an overview of trends and developments in eye care and optometry. Each of these surveys is available to AOA members.

Every other year, the AOA Research & Information Center publishes a comprehensive summary of its current research findings in a report called *Caring for the Eyes of America*. Visit www.aoa.org to find out more about how to obtain a copy.

To ensure the accuracy and integrity of our survey data, the AOA always selects survey recipients using a stratified random sample of AOA members. The responses are collected and the data is analyzed by statisticians at Washington University in St Louis. The AOA makes the results of these surveys available to all AOA members.

Visit www.aoa.org, click the “doctors” tab, then select “Manuals, Guides and Surveys.” Use your AOA member ID number and your last name to log on as a member.

SOCIAL NETWORK CONNECTIONS

Stay connected with your professional peers and keep informed in the latest industry news by joining our Facebook Community. Just type in AOA Paraoptometric Resource Center in the Facebook search bar to find us!

**AOA Members have direct access
to all AOA optometric surveys.
The AOA PRC conducts regular
surveys to give a comprehensive
overview of the issues affecting
paraoptometry today.**

THE COMMISSION ON PARAOPTOMETRIC CERTIFICATION (CPC)

For more
information, visit
www.aoa.org, click
“Paraoptometrics”
on the upper
navigation bar.

For more information on
paraoptometric certification,
contact the AOA Commission on
Paraoptometric Certification:
800/365-2219, ext. 4135 or 4210,
e-mail cpc@aoa.org,
or visit www.aoa.org

Paraoptometric certification can provide a formal declaration of education and skill achievement in the profession of paraoptometry. Increasing your knowledge of paraoptometry will provide the opportunity to improve job satisfaction and professional relationships. Certified paraoptometricians obtain the ability to become a part of the clinical team resulting in increased respect and job satisfaction.

Mission

The mission of the CPC is to develop and maintain a consistent and ongoing process for paraoptometric certification, and grant certification to qualified candidates.

Purpose

The purpose of paraoptometric certification is to promote excellence in the field of optometry by recognizing individuals who have met all the requirements of the Commission on Paraoptometric Certification; encourage continued professional growth; and to demonstrate a commitment to the profession resulting in an increased level of competence.

Certified Paraoptometric (CPO)

A CPO is a person who has attained national recognition via certification by demonstrating an understanding of the concepts used in optometric care. The CPO examination consists of 100 multiple-choice questions and is designed for the entry level paraoptometric.

Certified Paraoptometric Assistant (CPOA)

A CPOA is a person who has attained national recognition via certification by demonstrating the ability to understand and apply the concepts used in optometric care. The CPOA examination consists of 200 multiple-choice questions and is designed for the paraoptometric with intermediate level experience.

Certified Paraoptometric Technician (CPOT)

A CPOT is a person who has attained national recognition via certification by demonstrating the ability to understand, apply, and interrelate the concepts used in optometric care. The CPOT examination consists of 225 multiple-choice questions and a practical examination in which one would be required to demonstrate specific skills. The CPOT examination is designed for the paraoptometric with advanced level of experience.

Certified Paraoptometric Coder (CPOC)

A CPOC is a person who has attained national recognition via certification by demonstrating proficiency, expertise, and validating superior knowledge in an optometric coding environment. The open book CPOC examination consists of 125 multiple-choice questions and is designed for the paraoptometric with experience in coding and billing practices.



CAREER TRANSITIONS

**AOA offers a convenient way to locate
employment opportunities.**

OPTOMETRY'S CAREER CENTER[®]

YOUR SOURCE FOR PRACTICE OPPORTUNITIES OR CANDIDATES

Optometry's Career Center[®] (OCC) is a national, online career-opportunity matching service and resource center free to active AOA PRC members.

**Optometry's
Career Center[®]
is FREE
to active AOA
PRC members and
provides 24-hour
access to valuable
career/practice
management
information.**

Found online at www.optometryscareercenter.org, it provides around-the-clock access to valuable career/practice management information, instant opportunity search results and detailed opportunity and candidate profiles. The OCC includes helpful articles and resources, such as sample resumes, sample letters to potential candidates/buyers, and much more:

- A Career Resource Center with pertinent, downloadable articles and materials, including interviewing and CV/resume tips for seekers and a guide to pre-employment inquiries for providers
- E-mail alerts to automatically notify users of opportunities matching their predefined criteria
- Job seekers can send their CV/resumes to providers with one click
- Enhanced searches by keyword, new listings, new resumes and more
- Expiration/renewal reminders automatically sent via e-mail
- Options for confidentiality
- Detailed listings and candidate profiles

OCC Opportunity Providers may post their detailed opportunity listings online for hundreds of potential candidates to view. Providers may also access detailed candidate profiles nationwide and receive e-mail alerts each time a new resume/profile is posted that matches their criteria.



The OCC includes
helpful articles
and resources,
such as
sample resumes,
sample letters
to potential
employers,
and much more.

Typical OCC Providers Include:

- Optometrists
- Retail optical chains
- Ophthalmologists
- Civil service agencies
- Hospitals
- Academic institutions
- Clinics
- Community health center eye care providers
- Practices for sale

OCC Opportunity Seekers may post their CV/resumes online for providers to view, access providers nationwide who match their search criteria, and receive automatic e-mail updates each time a new match is made.

The OCC is supported by a grant from Marchon Eyewear, Inc. and the Vision Care Institute™, a Johnson & Johnson company.

**For more information
or to register with the OCC,**
please visit:

www.optometrycareercenter.org
call 800/365-2219 ext. 4107,
or e-mail occ@aoa.org



CONTACT INFORMATION

Getting in touch with the AOA

The AOA volunteer structure is supported by dedicated staff members. For more information on the AOA programs and services, contact staff at the following numbers.

CALLING THE AOA

Help us serve you better. When calling, if you leave a message, be sure to speak your name clearly and spell it along with including information on whether the number is for your home or office and from what time zone you are calling. Better yet, include information on the best time for AOA staff to return your call.

DIRECT LINES TO THE AOA

Our phone system allows AOA members to reach AOA staff directly. For St. Louis staff, dial 314/983-XXXX. The four Xs represent the four-digit extension code listed below.

For Washington, D.C., office staff, dial 703/837-XXXX.

CONTACTS

FOR MEMBERSHIP and EDUCATION

AOA Paraoptometric Resource Center 800-365-2219

PRC Associate Director Ext. 4222

PRC Administrative Assistant Ext. 4108

FOR CERTIFICATION and EXAMINATIONS

Commission on Paraoptometric Certification 800-365-2219

Certification Specialist Ext. 4135

Administrative Assistant Ext. 4210