

2008
Candidate
Handbook
Certified
Paraoptometric
(CPO)



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2008

**Handbook for the
Certified
Paraoptometric
(CPO)**

This handbook contains necessary information about the Certified Paraoptometric Examination. Please retain it for future reference. You are responsible for reading these instructions carefully. The Commission on Paraoptometric Certification should be notified of any changes in your name or address immediately. This handbook is subject to change.

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GENERAL INFORMATION

The Certified Paraoptometric Examination is prepared and administered by the Commission on Paraoptometric Certification (CPC), with the assistance of Professional Testing Corporation. The purpose of this examination is to assure a level of knowledge to perform the functions of a Certified Paraoptometric. Those who successfully complete the examination will be certified with the Commission on Paraoptometric Certification as a Certified Paraoptometric (CPO).

OBJECTIVES FOR CERTIFICATION

To promote excellence in the field of optometry by:

1. Recognizing formally those individuals who meet all requirements of the Commission on Paraoptometric Certification;
2. Encouraging continued professional growth of the paraoptometric;
3. Establishing and measuring the level of knowledge required for certification of paraoptometrics; and
4. Promoting a standard of requisite knowledge required for certification; thereby assisting the employer, public, and members of the health professions in the assessment of paraoptometrics.

ELIGIBILITY

To sit for the Certified Paraoptometric Examination, the following requirements must be met:

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1. Applicants must have a minimum of a high school diploma or equivalent.
 2. Must have a minimum of 6 months employment in the eye care field.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

1. Obtain an application for the Certified Paraoptometric Examination from the Commission on Paraoptometric Certification, 243 N. Lindbergh Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63141-7881 or download the application in PDF format at www.aoa.org.
2. The original application and appropriate fees for the examination must be received by the Commission on Paraoptometric Certification by mail on or before the appropriate deadline listed on the examination schedule (available at www.aoa.org).
3. All correspondence regarding the application should be directed to the Commission on Paraoptometric Certification.

COMPLETION OF APPLICATION

Complete or fill in as appropriate ALL information requested on the application. Mark only one response unless otherwise indicated.

Candidate Information – Starting at the top of the application, print your name, home and business address, telephone numbers, e-mail address, and indicate preferred mailing address, testing center number (see page 5), city, state, and examination date in the appropriate row of empty boxes. Indicate

preferred mailing address by coloring in the appropriate circle.

Eligibility and Background Information – All questions must be answered. Mark only one response unless otherwise indicated.

Optional Information - These questions are optional. The information requested is to assist in complying with equal opportunity guidelines and will be used only in statistical summaries. Such information will in no way affect your test results.

Candidate Signature - When you have completed all required information, sign and date the application in the space provided.

Fees - Indicate which examination you are applying for and complete the payment information.

Fold the completed application and mail with the appropriate fees in time to be received by the deadline date to:

CPC
243 N. Lindbergh Blvd.
St. Louis, MO 63141-7881

Faxed applications will not be accepted.

TESTING CENTERS

The following regional cities will serve as testing centers for the written portion of the examinations on April 5, 2008 and September 13, 2008. Additional locations and dates may be available. Contact CPC at 800-365-2219 ext. 4210. Indicate your choice of center on your application in the space provided, including code number.

Leave test center blank if examination location is not shown.

ALABAMA

202 – Birmingham

ALASKA

212 – Fairbanks

ARIZONA

222 – Tempe/Phoenix

CALIFORNIA

247 – Berkeley

255 – Los Angeles

COLORADO

276 – Denver

FLORIDA

318 – St. Petersburg

319 – Ft. Lauderdale

310 – Jacksonville

ILLINOIS

368 – Chicago

INDIANA

393 – Bloomington

KANSAS

421 – Wichita

LOUISIANA

452 – New Orleans

MARYLAND

474 – College Park

MASSACHUSETTS

486 – Boston

MICHIGAN

508 – Detroit

MINNESOTA

538 – St. Cloud

MISSOURI

563 – Kansas City

566 – St. Louis

NEBRASKA

595 – Omaha

NEW YORK

668 – New York

NORTH CAROLINA

698 – Raleigh

OHIO

736 – Toledo

PENNSYLVANIA

784 – Harrisburg

TENNESSEE

852 – Nashville

TEXAS

867 – Dallas

UTAH

894 – Salt Lake City

VIRGINIA

912 – Richmond

WASHINGTON

929 – Spokane

WISCONSIN

962 – Madison

REQUEST FOR SPECIAL TESTING CENTERS

If a candidate lives over 300 miles from an established testing center, it may be possible for the exam candidate to make arrangements to have the test administered at a special test center near his/her home or workplace for an additional \$125 fee. If you are applying to sit for the exam at a special testing center, write the name of the city and state in which you wish to take the exam. Leave the area for Testing Center Number blank when requesting a special testing center. Special test center requests are only an option for the April 5, 2008 and September 13, 2008 exam dates. For additional information on special testing centers, contact the AOA CPC office.

SPECIAL NEEDS INDIVIDUAL

Special testing arrangements may be made for special needs individuals submitting the application examination fee and a letter describing the nature of the disability and the special accommodations needed for testing. Request for special testing needs individuals must be received at least eight weeks before the testing date.

STATEMENT ON NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The Commission on Paraoptometric Certification does not discriminate against any individual on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, disability or any other characteristic protected by law.

COMPLIANCE

The Commission on Paraoptometric Certification supports the intent of and complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The Commission will take steps reasonably necessary to make certification accessible to persons with disabilities covered by the ADA. Appropriate and effective modification and/or auxiliary aids will be provided to persons with such disabilities unless doing so would impose an undue burden on the Commission's programs or fundamentally alter the measurement of skills or knowledge that the programs are intended to test. All requests for special arrangements must be made at least eight weeks in advance of the examination date.

ELIGIBILITY APPEAL PROCEDURES

Any candidate determined ineligible to sit for certification may appeal the ineligibility. Appeals must be made in writing within 30 days of the date of notification of your ineligibility to:

Commission on Paraoptometric Certification
243 North Lindbergh Blvd.
St. Louis MO 63141-7881

The appeal should include a written explanation of the grounds for your appeal, along with any evidence or documentation to support the appeal. The Commission on Paraoptometric Certification will submit the appeal to representatives of the Certification Review Sub-Committee for review, and those appealing will be notified in writing

of the Review Sub-Committee's decision. Should this appeal be denied, you may appeal the decision within 30 days to Commission on Paraoptometric Certification for a decision which shall be final.

FEES

Certified Paraoptometric (CPO)	\$225.00
Special Test Center Request	\$125.00
Rescheduling Fee	\$100.00

A check or credit card information for the appropriate fee must accompany your application. Make check or money order payable to the Commission on Paraoptometric Certification in U.S. funds. No refunds or postponements will be made.

NOTE: THE ABOVE FEES REPRESENT THE COST FOR EXAMINATIONS ONLY AND DOES NOT INCLUDE STUDY MATERIALS. IF THE EXAMINATION IS BEING PROVIDED AT A STATE ORGANIZATION, ADDITIONAL REGISTRATION FEES MAY APPLY.

SCHEDULE FOR EXAMINATION

Candidates will be allotted four (4) hours to complete the 100 multiple choice question CPO examination. The following schedule will be observed at all regional testing centers unless otherwise notified.

- 8:30 a.m. - Report to testing center
- 9:00 a.m. - Examination begins
- 1:00 p.m. - Approximate time testing ends

All candidates are to report to their assigned testing center at least one-half hour prior to the start of the examination. Latecomers may be admitted to the examination but will not be permitted to write beyond the scheduled completion time.

ADMISSION TO TESTING

Professional Testing Corporation will notify candidates approximately two weeks before the testing date of final assignments for testing centers by means of an admission card showing the exact address to which candidates should report.

This admission card and a photo I.D. **MUST BE PRESENTED** in order to gain admission to the testing center. Any candidate not receiving an admission card should phone Professional Testing Corporation at 212/356-0660, no more than one week before the test date. Changes in assignments to testing centers cannot be made later than three weeks prior to the examination date.

RULES FOR EXAMINATION

1. Each candidate must bring several sharpened #2 pencils with erasers to the test.
2. No books, papers, or other reference materials can be taken into the examination room.
3. Calculators are permitted, but not required. Calculators must not be part of any communication device (cell phone, PDA, etc.).

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4. No test materials, documents, or memoranda of any sort are to be taken from the examination room.
 5. The examination will be held only on the day and time scheduled.
 6. No questions concerning the content of the examination may be asked during the testing period. The candidate should listen carefully to the instructions given by the examiner, and should carefully read the directions on the test booklet.

REPORT OF RESULTS

Within six weeks after the examination, candidates will be notified by Professional Testing Corporation of their examination results. The total score and scores on major areas of the examination will be indicated. The passing level will be determined by the Commission on Paraoptometric Certification. Failure to receive the report of the results should be reported to Professional Testing Corporation at (212) 356-0660.

RETESTING AND RESCHEDULING POLICIES

Candidates who do not pass the examination are eligible to re-take the examination beginning with the next regularly scheduled examination date. Candidates must file a new application and fee each time they retest and must apply by the application deadline.

Candidates who cannot attend the examination on the date for which registered and who provide written notification postmarked at least three (3) weeks prior to the examination date may reschedule the examination for a \$100.00 rescheduling fee. Refunds are not issued. Transfer of the fees from one candidate to another is not permitted.

Candidates who cannot attend the examination on the date for which registered and who fail to provide advance notification will have their application withdrawn and fees are forfeited. Re-application requires full payment of application fee.

AFTER PASSING THE EXAMINATION

The CPC will send successful candidates a pin and a certificate suitable for framing. Those who pass the examination will be added to the roster of the Commission on Paraoptometric Certification as a Certified Paraoptometric (CPO). Certification is renewable every three years subsequent to the completion of 18 hours of prescribed education. Guidelines for renewal of registration will be sent upon successful completion of the examination.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The CPC will release the individual test scores ONLY to the individual candidate. Any questions concerning test results should be referred to the Professional Testing Corporation.

ATTAINMENT OF CERTIFICATION, RENEWAL, AND RECERTIFICATION

Eligible candidates who have achieved a passing score on the appropriate CPC certified paraoptometric examination are eligible to use the appropriate designation after their names and will receive a certificate and pin from the CPC. A database of certified paraoptometrics is maintained by the CPC and may be reported in its publications and/or website.

CPC certification is recognized for a period of three years at which time the candidate must meet the requirements in effect at that time in order to retain certification. The requirements for renewal include documented continuing education and the appropriate renewal fee.

Upon failure to maintain a certified status the individual will then be classified "non-certified". Once so classified, the individual must immediately refrain from using/ displaying all related Commission on Paraoptometric Certification abbreviations, certificates, cards, logos, and pins. Consequences for anyone claiming certification when not certified will be determined by the Commission on Paraoptometric Certification, pursuant to written guidelines established by the Commission.

Should an individual wish to become recertified, they must retest at the highest level they had attained. Under no circumstances will an individual be allowed to test for a level they have not previously attained.

REVOCACTION OF CERTIFICATION

Certification will be revoked for any of the following reasons:

1. Falsification of an application
2. Misrepresentation of certification status

The CPC provides the appeal mechanism for challenging revocation of Certification. It is the responsibility of the individual to initiate this process.

VIOLATION PROCESS

The Commission on Paraoptometric Certification will investigate allegations concerning alleged misconduct by paraoptometricians and/or Commission members and/or its consultants regarding violation of certification policies and procedures. Allegations of misconduct must be in writing, signed, and delivered directly to the Commission chairperson within 120 days of the alleged violation(s). Supporting documentation should be submitted with the complaint.

The Commission will review the allegation and take one of the following actions:

- Dismiss the allegation on grounds it lacked sufficient evidence or merit to commence an investigation;
- Attempt to resolve the issues with the parties involved should the allegation appear to be a misunderstanding; or,

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- Conduct a full investigation of the allegation and if deemed necessary, appoint a hearing panel.

Should an investigation be warranted, the Commission chairperson will appoint a three member panel within 45 days of the receipt of the allegation. The panel will consist of three CPOT'S chosen by the Commission chairperson, one of whom will act as the panel's chair-person. The panel shall give not less than 30 days notice to the subject of the investigation of the right to appear before the panel, give testimony, confront witnesses and evidence presented and to be represented by counsel. The AOA Office of Counsel shall assist the panel in conducting the proceeding.

The panel will convene within 60 days of its appointment, meeting in either the AOA's St. Louis or Washington office. A recorded record will be kept of all testimony. Upon conclusion of the hearing, the panel shall deliberate and render its written decision within 30 days. The panel's decision shall be final unless appealed within 30 days to the full Commission.

If appealed, the Commission will review the panel's findings within 30 days and inform the parties involved of its decision. The Commission's decision on appeal is final and cannot be appealed.

All decisions on appeal by the Commission, as well as on hearing by the panel, concerning allegations, be they dismissed, resolved,

or investigated, will be delivered in writing to all parties involved by certified mail with return receipt.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR CERTIFIED PARAOPTOMETRICS

Paraoptometrics who have been certified by the Commission on Paraoptometric Certification are expected to abide by a Code of Conduct. Inasmuch as certification represents to the public an attained level of skill, it therefore is incumbent upon each paraoptometric to:

- Place the welfare of the patient above all else;
- Maintain patient confidentiality at all times;
- Treat patients with respect and a caring attitude regardless of their backgrounds, preferences, or prejudices;
- Avoid gossip and expression of personal biases;
- Promote ways for maintaining visual health and eye care to both patients and the public;
- Continue an ongoing educational process to upgrade and enhance paraoptometric skills;
- Conduct oneself in a professional manner in the office and be an exemplary citizen within the community;
- Support colleagues in efforts to achieve maximum level of certification.

APPEALS ON EXAMINATION

Candidates with reason to believe a discrepancy exists in the scoring or reporting of their test results may appeal in writing to the Commission on Paraoptometric Certification. The letter must be accompanied by supporting documents. The appeal must be received within 30 days after examination results are sent to candidates. The Commission on Paraoptometric Certification will review the appeal and notify the candidate in writing of its decision.

OUTLINE

This outline will provide you with information on the content of the Certified Paraoptometric Examination. The following outline includes a brief explanation of the areas covered in the Study Guide and on the examination. You should be familiar with all the terms, meanings and use. All 100 questions on the examination are of the objective, multiple choice type. Passing score is determined by the CPC.

I. Basic Science (29%)

- A. Anatomy
 - 1. Definitions of Anatomical Parts
 - 2. Function
- B. Common Eye Disorders
 - 1. Definitions
 - 2. Causes
- C. Terminology
 - 1. Prefixes
 - 2. Suffixes
 - 3. Root Words

- D. Surgery
- E. Basic Pharmacology

**II. Clinical Principles and Procedures
(37%)**

- A. Eye Examination
 - 1. Case History
 - 2. Visual Acuity
 - 3. Keratometry
 - 4. Retinoscopy
 - 5. Subjective Refraction
 - 6. Ophthalmoscopy
 - 7. Binocular Vision
 - 8. Tonometry
 - 9. Visual Fields
 - 10. Biomicroscopy
 - 11. Fundus Photography
 - 12. Tomography
 - 13. Topography
- B. Refractive Status
 - 1. Emmetropia
 - 2. Myopia
 - 3. Hyperopia
 - 4. Astigmatism
 - 5. Presbyopia
 - 6. Accommodation
- C. Contact Lenses
 - 1. Soft
 - 2. Rigid
 - 3. Care and Handling
 - 4. Patient Education
 - 5. Base Curve Radius
 - 6. Lens Power
 - 7. Overall Diameter
 - 8. Optical Zone Diameter
 - 9. Peripheral Curves
 - 10. Edge and Center Thickness

II. Ophthalmic Optics and Dispensing (22%)

- A. Ophthalmic Prescriptions
 - 1. Components of a Lens Prescription
 - 2. Add Power
 - 3. Prism
 - 4. Optics
- B. Ophthalmic Lenses
 - 1. Types of Lenses
 - 2. Lens Materials
 - 3. Neutralization
- C. Ophthalmic Dispensing
 - 1. Frame Anatomy
 - 2. Sizes and Measurements
 - 3. Basics of Frame Selection
 - 4. PD/Segment Height
 - 5. Ordering
 - 6. Basic Adjustments

IV. Professional Issues (12%)

- A. Eyecare Specialists and Ancillary Personnel
- B. Practice Management
 - 1. Telephone Techniques
 - 2. Appointments
 - 3. Record Filing Systems
 - 4. Recalls
 - 5. Fee Presentation
 - 6. Collections
 - 7. Third Party Payments
 - 8. HIPAA

RECOMMENDED REFERENCE MATERIAL

Listed below is a general reference that may be useful in preparing for the Certified Paraoptometric (CPO) examination. The CPC does not constitute an endorsement concerning this source and does not imply a guarantee that candidates will be successful in passing the Certified Paraoptometric (CPO) examination.

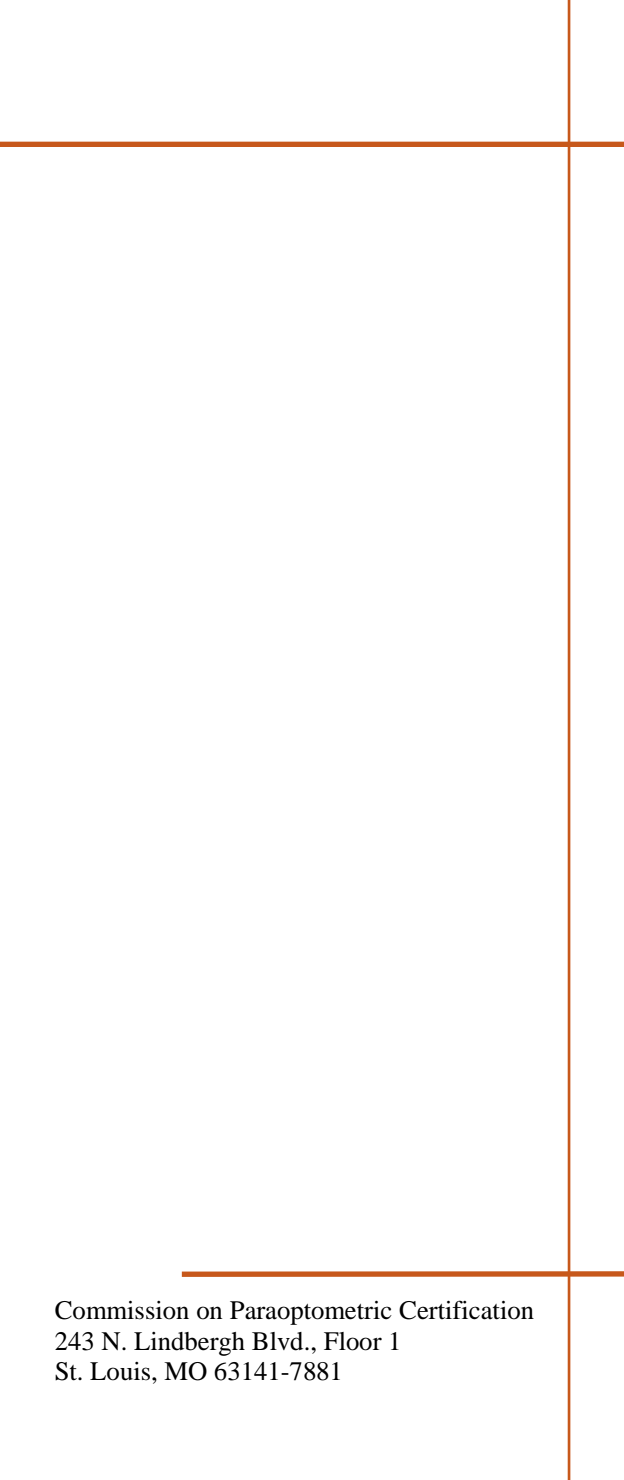
- American Optometric Association Paraoptometric Section. Study Guide for the Certified Paraoptometric (CPO). 2008.
- Bittinger, Marvin. General Medical Knowledge for Eyecare Paraprofessionals. Slack, Inc. 1999.
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