



Commission on Paraoptometric Certification

2014 Year in Review

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Executive Summary

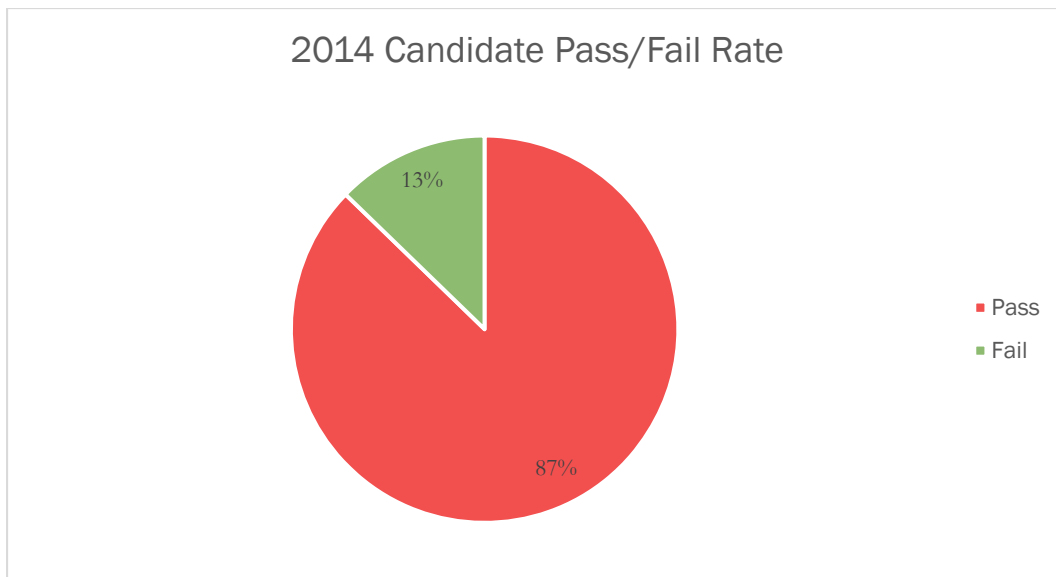
The Commission on Paraoptometric Certification (CPC) continues to offer the only certification available for paraoptometric and seeks to make this experience valuable and desirable for all interested participants. The CPC certified population now represents more than 6,000 participants throughout the United States, Canada, and the Armed Forces. The CPC continues to improve the quality and integrity of the program in order to maintain the positive perception of the program within the optometric community.

Highlights

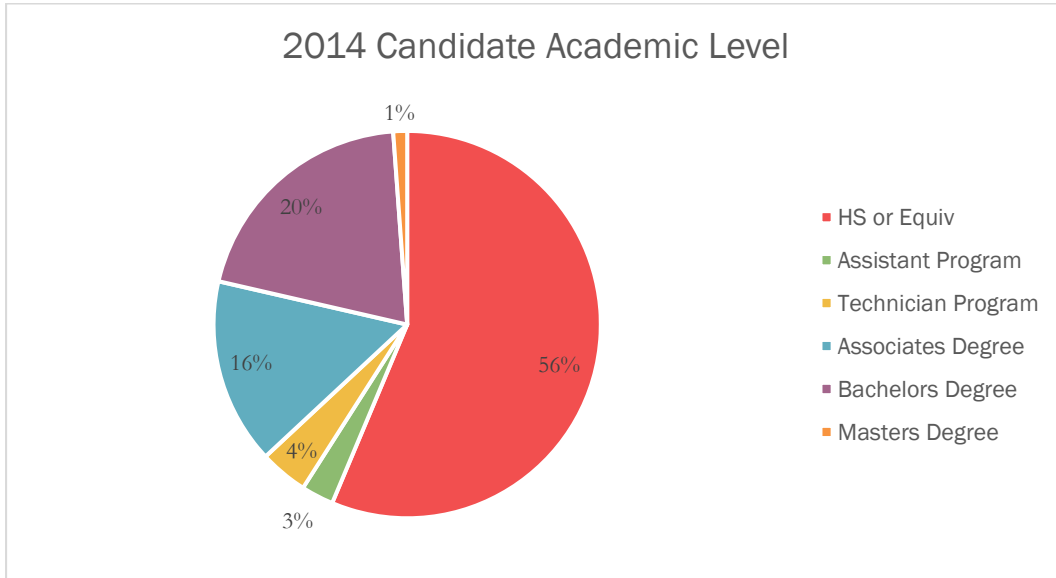
The Commission on Paraoptometric Certification is pleased to report that we have completed another successful year of providing certifications to paraoptometric. The examinations are developed in cooperation with Professional Testing Corporation (PTC) who provides professional organizations of all sizes with quality psychometric services. The CPO, CPOA, and CPOT programs are accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA). The NCCA helps to ensure the health, welfare, and safety of the public through the accreditation of a variety of certification programs/organizations that assess professional competency.

In 2014, there were 1,294 candidates for the CPO, CPOA, CPOT, and CPOC examinations. As of December 2014, there were approximately 3,854 Certified Paraoptometric, 1,598 Certified Paraoptometric Assistants, 607 Certified Paraoptometric Technicians, 110 Certified Paraoptometric Coders, and 52 certificants holding multiple designations.

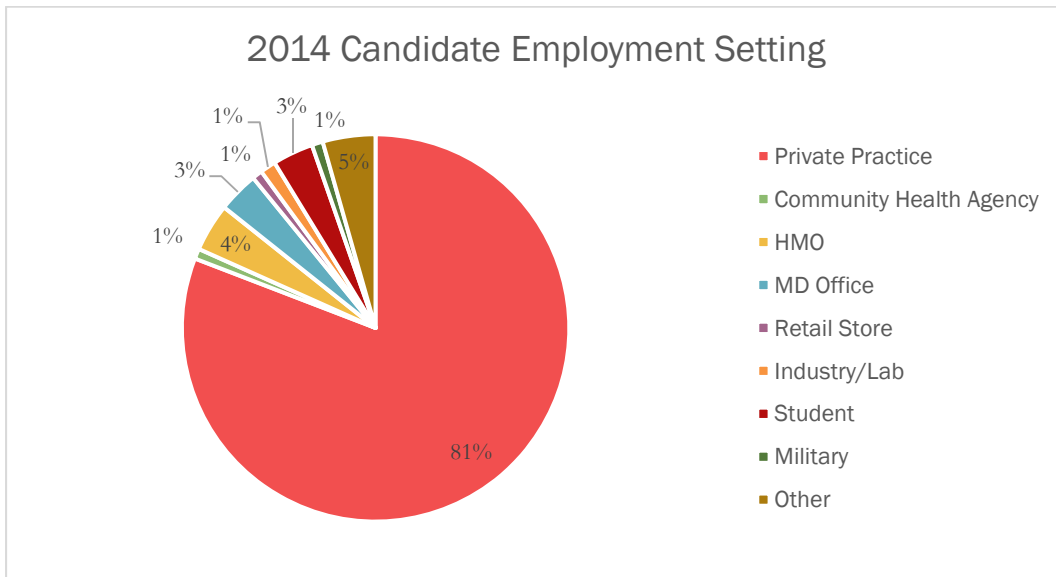
The bulk of 2014 candidates (87%) passed an examination on the first or second attempt.



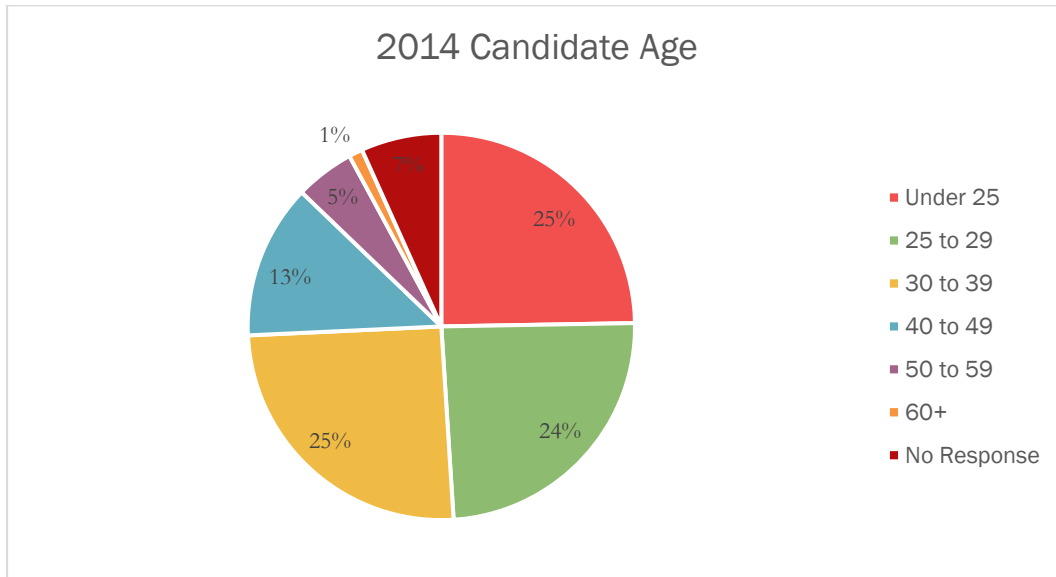
The majority of candidates (56%) hold a high school diploma or equivalent. Followed by 37% with an Associate's, Bachelor's, or Master's degree.



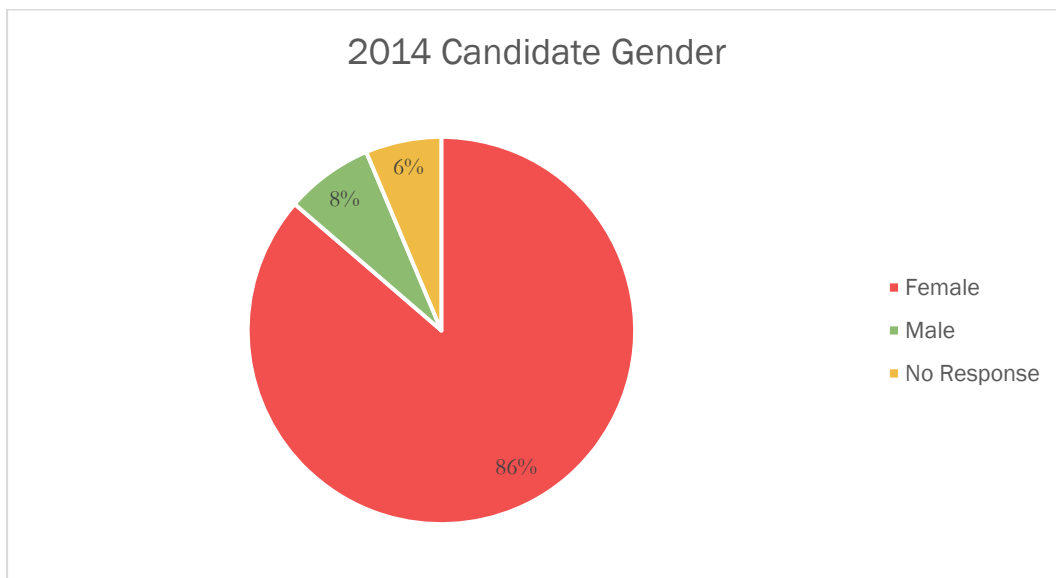
Overall, 81% of candidates are employed by a private practice.



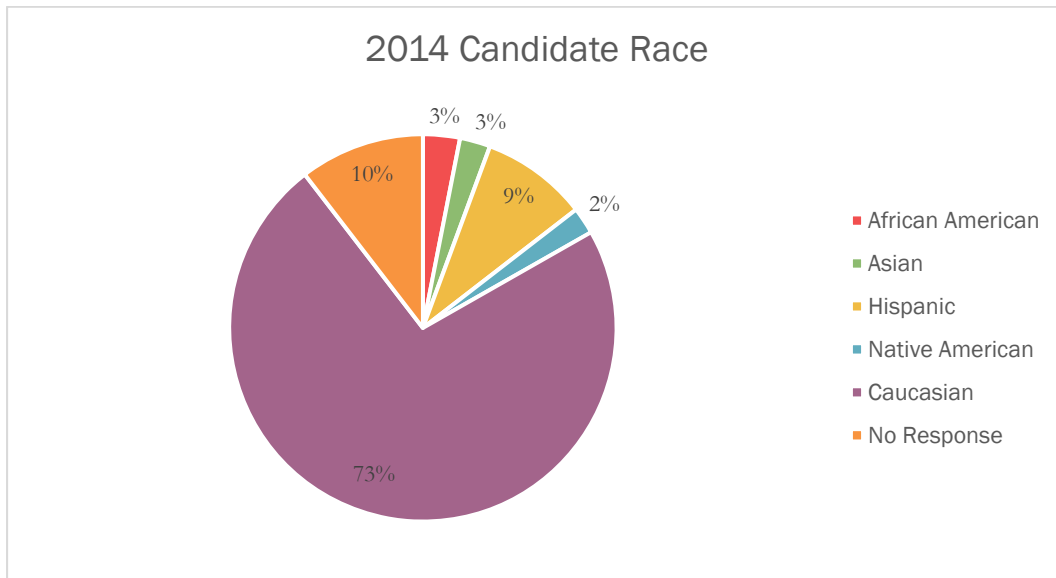
Nearly half the candidates (49%) are between the ages of 25-39, one quarter (25%) are under the age of 25, and the remaining 26% are over the age of 40.



In 2014, examination candidates were primarily (86%) female.



Caucasians account for 73% of all candidates. Hispanics made up 9% of the candidate pool, with the remaining 8% being comprised of African American, Asian, and Native American candidates.



Objectives

The purpose of this Year-in-Review report is two-fold. First, it assures that the examinations are compliant with NCCA standards and assists the Commission on Paraoptometric Certification in identifying trends, targeting audiences, and ensuring that the examinations are reliable. Second, these metrics are valuable to stakeholders as they identify potential training opportunities that are lacking, personal development needs that are not being met, and identify target demographic audiences for marketing purposes. The information in this report is derived from candidate responses on the examination applications and the stringent review of score reports. All documentation regarding these reports is kept on file for 5 years. Only through extensive task analysis studies can CPC determine the body of knowledge. Task analyses assess how a task is accomplished, including a detailed description of both manual and mental activities, task and element durations, frequency, allocation, complexity, necessary equipment and precautions, and any other unique factors involved in or required for one or more people to perform a given task. The CPC conducts these analyses every five years. In between these studies, test reviews and item performance reviews are conducted annually. Test specifications are updated frequently according to the environmental scan of the optometric practice

Mission Statement

The Commission on Paraoptometric Certification serves the public by developing, maintaining, and promoting a certification process which reflects current modes of optometric practice and grants certification to those candidates who satisfy the set requirements throughout the world.

Background

The Commission on Paraoptometric Certification (CPC) was established in 2000 by the American Optometric Association. This program replaced the National Paraoptometric Registry which was established by the Background

The Commission on Paraoptometric Certification (CPC) was established in 2000 by the American Optometric Association. This program replaced the National Paraoptometric Registry which was established by the American Optometric Association in 1978. Certification focuses specifically on the individual and is an indication of current proficiency in a specialized field. Certification is highly valued and provides formal acknowledgement of knowledge and skills in a particular area of practice.

The CPC offers four certified programs for optometric staff. Each program requires successful completion of an examination prepared and administered by the CPC with the assistance of Professional Testing Corporation (PTC). The purpose of the examinations is to assure a level of knowledge to perform the functions necessary to each certified designation. Recipients must renew their certification every three years to remain current in their field. Paraoptometric certification provides a formal declaration of education and skill achievement in the profession of optometric assisting by:

- Recognizing formally those individuals who meet all requirements of the Commission on Paraoptometric Certification of the American Optometric Association
- Encouraging continued professional growth of the paraoptometric
- Establishing and measuring the level of knowledge required for certification of paraoptometrics
- 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

The CPO™, CPOA™, and CPOT™ examinations are accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA). The NCCA accreditation serves as a benchmark on how organizations should conduct certification and clearly distinguishes the excellence and value of CPC certification. In order to receive this accreditation, the CPC completed an application for each certification demonstrating compliance with the NCCA's Standards for the Accreditation of Certification Programs, which were the first standards for professional certification programs developed by the industry. NCCA uses a peer review process to: establish accreditation standards; evaluate compliance with the standards; recognize organizations/programs which demonstrate compliance; and serve as a resource on quality certification.

Program Overview

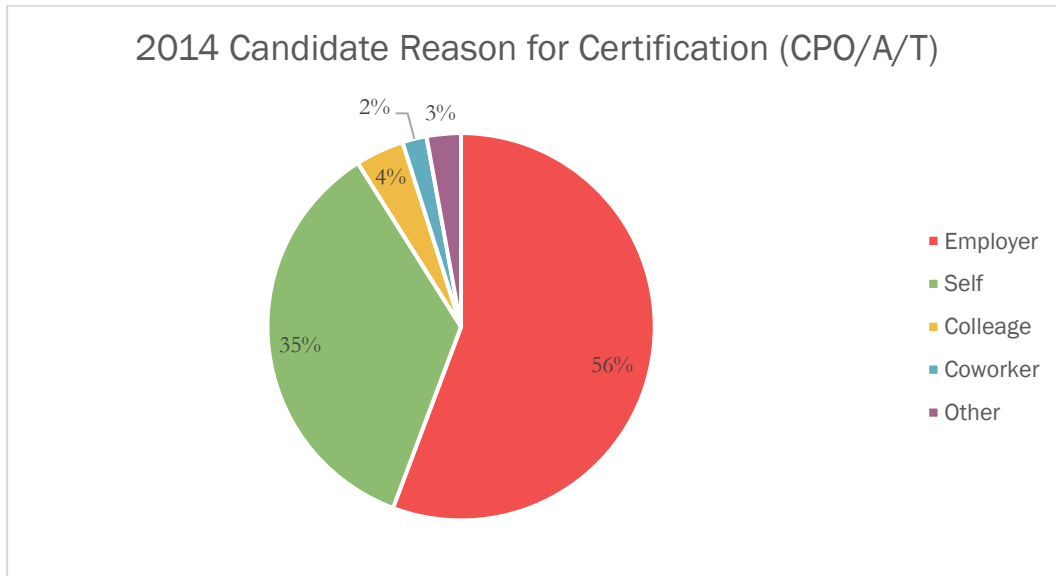
The Certified Paraoptometric Examinations are prepared and administered by the CPC with the assistance of Professional Testing Corporation. The purpose of the examinations is to ensure a level of knowledge to perform the functions of a Certified Paraoptometric at each appropriate level. Those who have successfully completed the appropriate examination will be certified with the Commission on Paraoptometric Certification as a Certified Paraoptometric (CPO), Certified Paraoptometric Assistant (CPOA), Certified Paraoptometric Coder (CPOC), or Certified Paraoptometric Technician (CPOT).

The passing score for the all examinations is set at the time each new form is reviewed for currency, appropriateness, and accuracy by an appointed committee responsible for examination development. During the process, this committee meets with a psychometrician who serves as a consultant to the committee to guide deliberations and to help ensure psychometric soundness of the decisions reached.

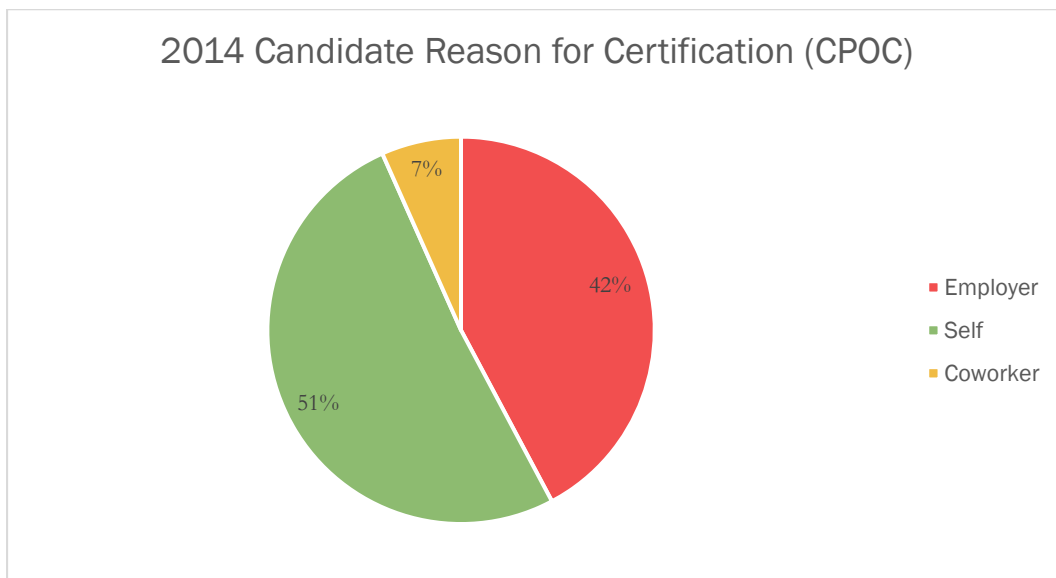
The primary consideration in this process is to represent the basic body of knowledge required for practice. A second consideration is to maintain the equivalent difficulty level of successive examinations. Based on Standard 4.21 of the AERA, APA, and NCME Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing, the passing scores are established so that the test review committee can bring their knowledge and experience to bear in a reasonable way.

Appendix

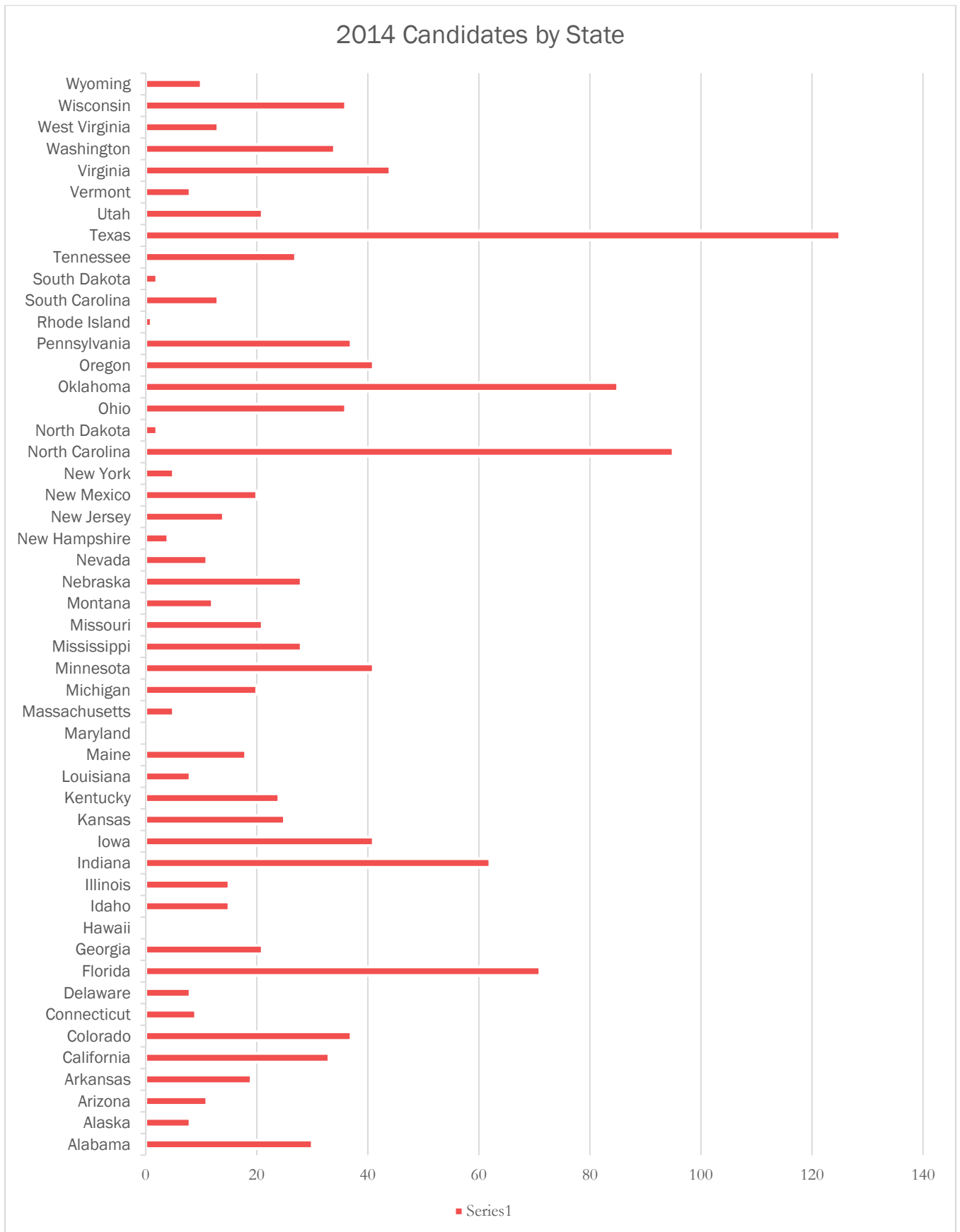
More than half (56%) of 2014 CPO, CPOA, and CPOT candidates stated their employer was the reason for taking the exam, with 35% of candidates indicating that they were self-motivated to sit for the exam.



Just over half (51%) of 2014 CPOC candidates were self-motivated to sit for the exam, while 42% stated their employer was the reason they took the exam.



The top three states with the most exam candidates in 2014 were, Texas, North Carolina, and Oklahoma.

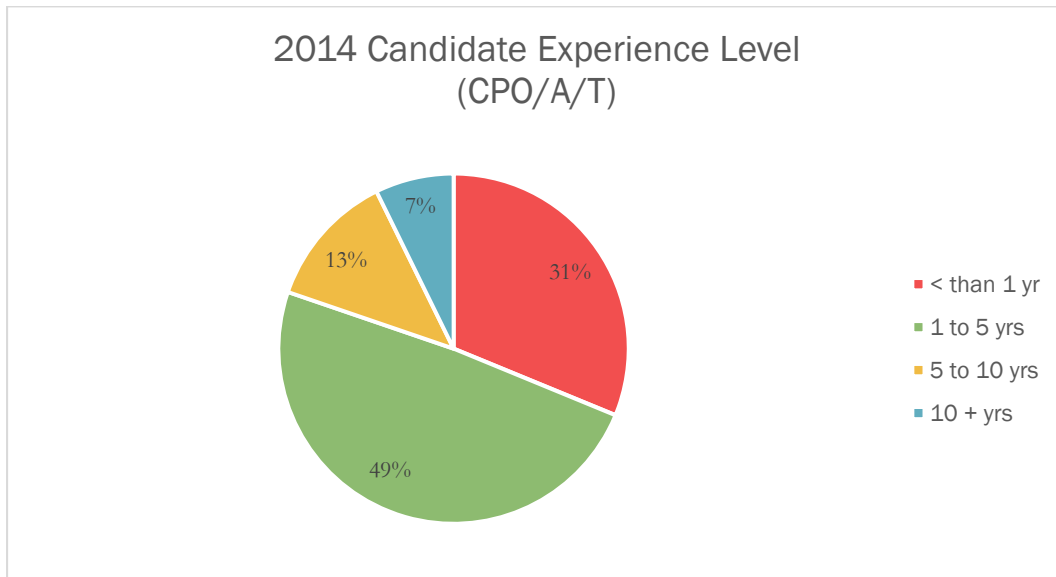


Certified Paraoptometric (CPO) Exam

The CPO examination is comprised of 100 multiple choice questions. A minimum score of 75% is required to pass. The examination is divided into four main domains: basic science (29%), clinical principles and procedures (37%), ophthalmic optics and dispensing (18%), and professional issues (16%). A total of 910 candidates sat for the CPO examination in 2014.

Month	Total Candidates		High Score	Low Score	Avg % Correct	Repeat Candidates	
	Pass	Fail				Pass	Fail
February	129	16	100%	60%	86%	10	1
May	242	31	100%	55%	86%	10	0
August	181	21	100%	49%	86%	15	3
November	243	47	99%	45%	84%	8	6

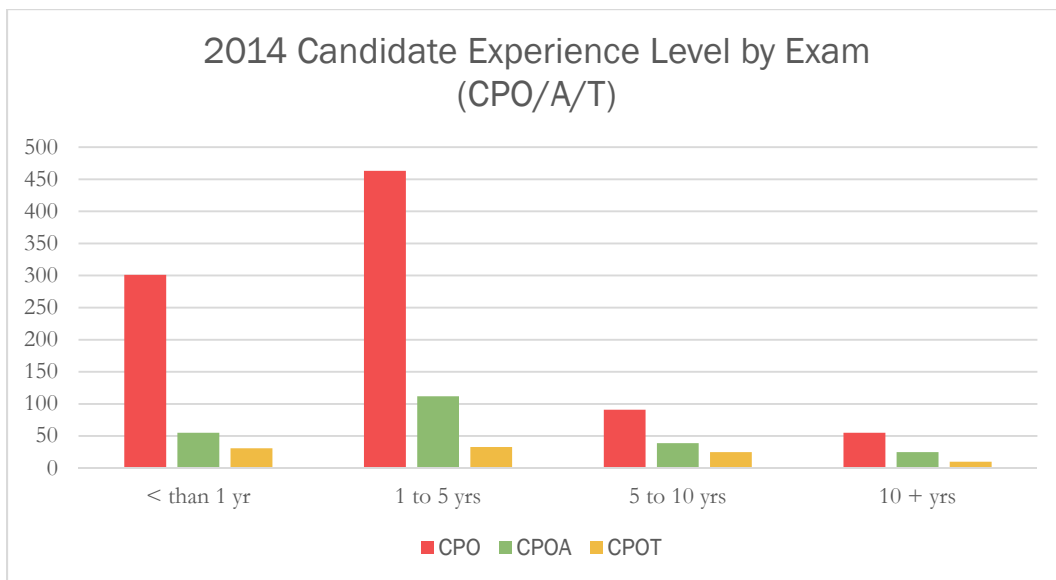
Almost half (49%) of 2014 CPO, CPOA, and CPOT candidates had between one and five years of experience, with 31% having less than one year.



Certified Paraoptometric Assistant (CPOA) Exam

The CPOA examination is comprised of 200 multiple choice questions. A minimum score of 69% is required to pass. The examination is divided into six main domains: office operations (13%), testing and procedures (20%), special procedures (17%), ophthalmic optics and dispensing (20%), refractive status of the eye and binocularity (13%), and basic ocular anatomy and physiology (17%). A total of 231 candidates sat for the CPOA examination in 2014.

Month	Total Candidates		High Score	Low Score	Avg % Correct	Repeat Candidates	
	Pass	Fail				Pass	Fail
February	30	4	90%	60%	78%	2	0
May	85	10	98%	59%	79%	2	1
August	43	6	90%	61%	78%	3	1
November	48	5	96%	61%	80%	2	1



Certified Paraoptometric Technician (CPOT) Exam - Written

The CPOT Written examination is comprised of 225 multiple choice questions. A minimum score of 66% is required to pass. The examination is divided into six main domains: pre-testing procedures (20%), clinical procedures (28%), practice management (7%), ophthalmic optics and dispensing (18%), refractive status of the eye and binocularity (12%), and anatomy and physiology (15%). A total of 77 candidates sat for the CPOT Written examination in 2014.

Month	Total Candidates		High Score	Low Score	Avg % Correct	Repeat Candidates	
	Pass	Fail				Pass	Fail
February	7	1	83%	63%	74%	2	0
May	25	5	87%	52%	79%	2	1
August	23	5	80%	54%	78%	3	1
November	9	2	80%	65%	72%	1	0

Certified Paraoptometric Technician (CPOT) Exam – Clinical

The CPOT Clinical examination was offered for the first time in November of 2014. It is comprised of 100 multiple choice questions. A minimum score of 75% is required to pass. The examination is divided into four main domains: case history scenarios (10%), pre-testing procedures (30%), special procedures (30%), and optical dispensing techniques and recording (30%). A total of 22 candidates sat for the CPOT Clinical examination in 2014.

Month	Total Candidates		High Score	Low Score	Avg % Correct	Repeat Candidates	
	Pass	Fail				Pass	Fail
November	19	3	92%	67%	79%	0	0

Certified Paraoptometric Coder (CPOC) Exam

The CPOC examination is comprised of 125 multiple choice questions. A minimum score of 70% is required to pass. The examination is divided into seven main domains: anatomy and physiology (8%), medical terminology (8%), review of current procedural terminology (22%), diagnosis codes (24%), medical records (14%), claim filing (12%), and compliance (12%). A total of 54 candidates sat for the CPOC examination in 2014.

Month	Total Candidates		High Score	Low Score	Avg % Correct	Repeat Candidates	
	Pass	Fail				Pass	Fail
February	6	1	85%	59%	74%	1	0
May	12	4	86%	59%	74%	2	0
August	11	1	85%	67%	79%	1	0
November	16	3	92%	66%	80%	3	0

Nearly half (48%) of 2014 CPOC candidates had five or more years of experience, and approximately one-third (32%) had two years of experience.

