

6500.2800 TERMS AND RENEWAL OF LICENSE.

Subpart 1. **Terms.** An initial license issued by the board is valid from the date issued until renewed or terminated according to this part. An annually renewed license issued by the board is valid from January 1 of the year for which it is issued until renewed or terminated according to this part.

Subp. 2. **Renewal of application including information regarding continuing education and fees.** An optometrist shall submit an application for renewal of license together with the necessary fee no later than December 31 of the year preceding that for which the license renewal is requested. Application for renewal will be considered timely if received by the board no later than December 31 or postmarked on December 31. If the postmark is illegible, the application will be considered timely if received in the board office by United States first class mail on the first workday after December 31. The application form must provide a place for the renewal applicant's signature and must solicit information to include but not be limited to the applicant's office address or addresses, the number of the applicant's license, and any other information that may be reasonably requested by the board.

For those licensees who have not submitted evidence of compliance with their three-year continuing education requirement or special course requirement in parts 6500.0900 and 6500.1700, the board will include in its written notice relating to annual renewal that the licensee shall submit verified evidence of having taken the required number of continuing education credit hours listed in part 6500.0900 or specified under part 6500.1700 in order to have the license renewed.

Subp. 3. **Failure to submit renewal application.** The following procedures will be followed by the board for all licensees who have failed to submit the annual application under subpart 2, including information about continuing education and applicable fees as provided in subpart 5.

A. Any time after January 1, the board will send to the last address on file with the board, a notice to all licensees who have not made application for renewal of their license. The notice will state that the licensee has failed to make application for renewal; the amount of renewal and late fees and the information required about continuing education as specified in subpart 2 which must be submitted in order for the license to be renewed; that the licensee may voluntarily terminate the license by notifying the board; and that failure to respond to notice by the date specified, which date must be at least 30 days after the notice is sent by the board, either by submitting the renewal application and applicable fees and information required about continuing education or by notifying the board that the licensee has voluntarily terminated the license, will result in expiration of the license and terminating the right to practice.

B. If the application for renewal, including required information about continuing education and the applicable annual and late fees or notice of voluntarily termination is not received by the board by the dates specified in the notice, the license will expire and the licensee's right to practice will terminate as of the date specified in the notice. The expiration and termination will not be considered a disciplinary action against the licensee.

C. Notwithstanding items A and B, the expiration date shall be extended six months when a licensee fails to meet the continuing education requirements in parts 6500.0900 and 6500.1700. The license will expire at the end of the six-month extension if the licensee does not submit within that time evidence of having complied with the required continuing education. In those cases where a licensee was physically incapable at the end of the three-year reporting cycle of taking continuing education courses, the expiration date shall be extended for six months for the purpose of giving the person the opportunity to take the necessary number of continuing education course hours. The licensee must submit clear and convincing evidence of physical incapability. The license expires at the end of the six-month extension if the licensee does not submit within that time evidence of taking a number continuing education course hours necessary to comply with parts 6500.0900 and 6500.1700.

In either instance referenced above, a licensee may submit a request for extension of the six-month period. The board will grant the extension only in cases of extreme hardship or compelling reasons. Financial hardship caused by loss of license shall not meet the standards. The burden rests on the licensee to prove that the extension should be granted which in no case shall exceed an additional six months.

Subp. 4. **Reinstatement.** A license that has expired under this part may be reinstated under part 6500.2900.

Subp. 5. **Contested case proceeding.** The board, in lieu of the process in subpart 3, may initiate a contested case hearing to revoke or suspend a license for failure to submit fees and continuing education information requested on the renewal application, at the same time it initiates disciplinary proceedings against the licensee for other grounds specified in Minnesota Statutes, sections 148.52 to 148.62, and parts 6500.0400 to 6500.1700.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 16A.128; 148.53; 214.06*

History: *12 SR 1564*

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