

January 2024

Volunteer Orientation Guide

Alberta
Association
of Optometrists





Thank you for joining the AAOs volunteer team and contributing your time and talents to help advance your association. It's due to committed members, like you, that the AAO has been able to accomplish so much to advance the profession and is considered by many as the most progressive association in Canada.

This Volunteer Orientation Guide was developed to provide you with an overview of the AAO, its bylaws, structure, the various committees, and your role as a volunteer. This overview will help ensure you understand the direction of the AAO and the important role you and your committee play in assisting the AAO in reaching its goals.

Your role, and that of your committee, is to provide recommendations to Council or the CEO according to the committee's terms of reference. We then use this information to help guide the future direction of the AAO, and to ensure our programs and services meet the needs of the public and our members while remaining within the current budget.

I encourage you to visit the AAO website at optometrists.ab.ca and become familiar with the programs and services offered to members and to Albertans who use optometric services. This information is updated often, so checking in on a regular basis will be helpful as you move through your term on an AAO committee.

Again, thank you for offering your time as an AAO volunteer. I look forward to your participation.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrea Lasby".

Dr. Andrea Lasby
AAO President



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AAO Mission Statement

Vision

Advancing the profession of optometry to deliver leading edge eye care for every Albertan.

Mission

To provide leadership and support for our members to be every Albertan's first and continual access point for world leading eye care.

Values

Accountable

Visionary

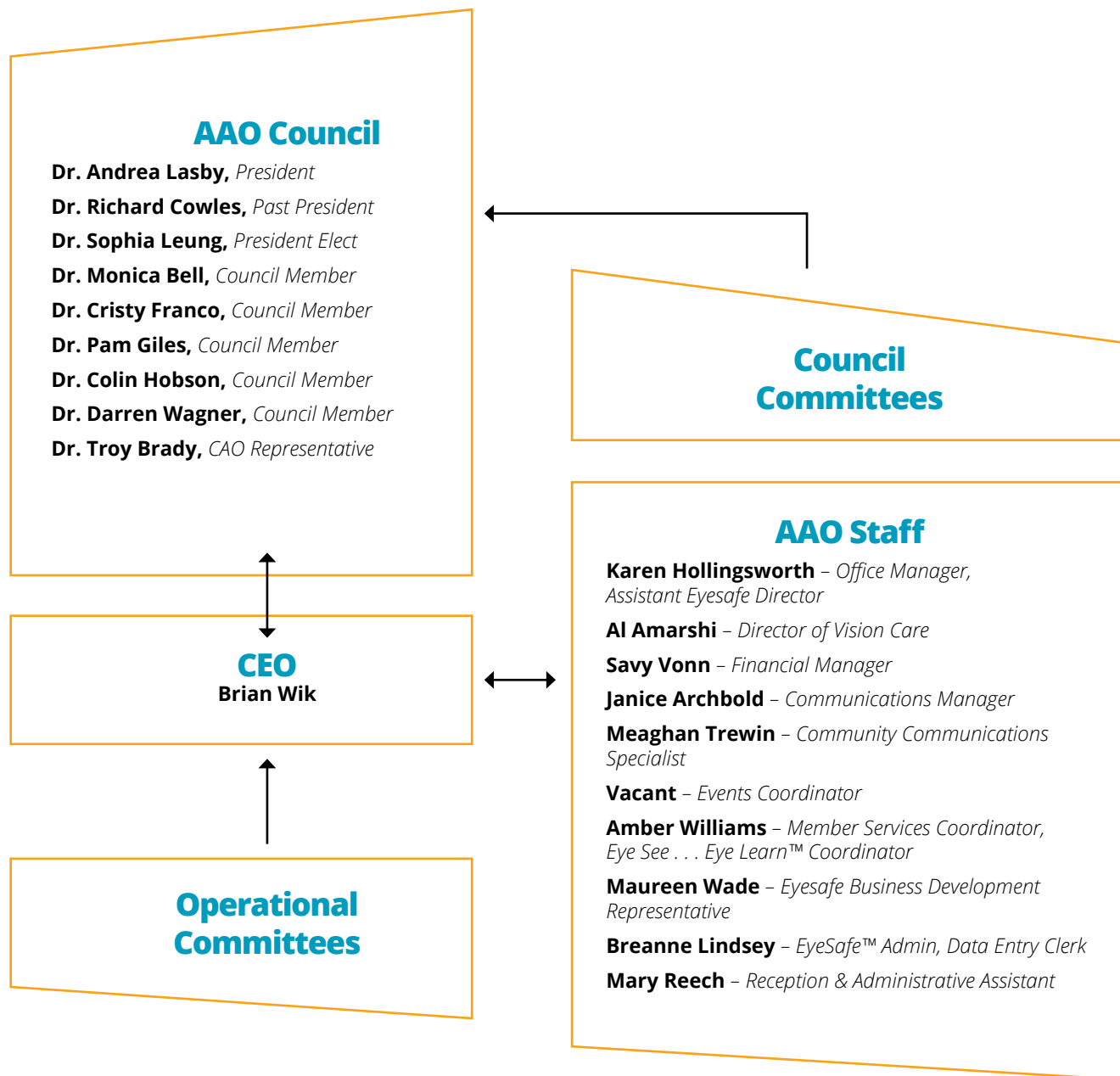
Innovative

Inclusive

Professional



Organizational Structure



Council Members and Biographies



Dr. Andrea Lasby, *President*

Dr. Lasby graduated from the University of Waterloo, School of Optometry and Vision Sciences, in 2013. She went on to complete a Cornea and Contact Lens Residency at Northeastern State University, Oklahoma College of Optometry in 2014. After returning to her hometown of Calgary, she joined

Mission Eye Care, continuing to fit all types of contact lenses for both normal and diseased eyes.

Dr. Lasby is a fellow of the American Academy of Optometry as well as the Scleral Lens Society. She served as president of the Calgary Society of Optometrists from 2016-2018. Dr. Lasby is passionate about teaching and regularly lectures for Optometrists. She is involved in teaching the University of Calgary's medical students and family medicine residents. She is also the program coordinator for Mission Eye Care's Cornea and Contact Lens Optometry Residency Program, beginning in July 2023.

She has served on the Alberta Association of Optometry's Council since 2018 and has served as President since 2022.



Dr. Richard Cowles, *Past President*

Dr. Richard Cowles practices optometry in Sherwood Park. After completing undergraduate studies at the University of Alberta, he graduated from Pacific University with his doctorate of optometry in 2003. He has served on the Alberta Association of Optometrists Council since 2012.

As an optometry student in 2000, Richard participated in a humanitarian vision care mission in Costa Rica. He has also been on four vision missions with Canadian Vision Care in Jamaica over the last decade. Locally, Richard regularly provides vision care at Homeless Connect, a bi-annual event providing services to individuals who may otherwise be unable to access them.



Dr. Sophia Leung, *President Elect*

Dr. Sophia Leung is a residency-trained and fellowship-trained optometrist with a clinical emphasis in cornea, advanced glaucoma, and anterior segment disease. She is currently practicing at a surgical referral center in Calgary, Alberta where she performs surgical triage, secondary and tertiary medical management, and surgical co-management alongside ophthalmologists of various subspecialties.

Dr. Leung is a University of Waterloo School of Optometry alumni, graduating on the Dean's Honours List in 2014. Dr. Leung also completed an Ocular Disease and Refractive Surgery Residency and an Advanced Glaucoma and Cornea Fellowship with Oklahoma Medical Eye Group (affiliated with NSUOCO) in 2019-2021. Dr. Leung has been involved in leadership throughout her career – she has been a council member of the Alberta Association of Optometrists since 2015, as well as various national and international committees. Dr. Leung is a Diplomate of the American Board of Optometry and a Diplomate of the American Academy of Optometry in the Anterior Segment Section, the first Albertan and Canadian to do so.

Dr. Leung is passionate about collaboration and education. She is a local and international speaker and is also an award-winning published author, contributing to journals, posters, and textbooks. Outside of the clinic, Dr. Leung enjoys live music, supporting local restaurants, and spending time with friends and family. She also enjoys staying active with rowing, running, and squash.

Council Members and Biographies



Dr. Monica Bell, Council Member

Dr. Monica Bell, born and raised in Calgary, attended the University of Alberta for her Bachelor of Science before graduating with honours from the University of Waterloo School of Optometry. In school, Monica was an active participant in student organizations with her role as president of the Lions Club, Social Affairs Director of the Canadian Association of Optometry Students and general member of the Low Vision Interest Group and the Sports Vision Club. Currently, she maintains the role of treasurer of the Calgary Society of Optometrists and is serving her second term as AAO council member.

During her education, she completed an ocular disease and therapeutics externship in Baltimore, Maryland as well as internships in primary care and vision therapy. She has also had the opportunity to be involved in vision screenings for athletes in the Special Olympics in Baltimore and Thunder Bay.



Dr. Cristy Franco, Council Member

Dr. Cristy Franco received her BSc (Zoology) from the University of Calgary, and then earned her Doctor of Optometry degree from the University of Waterloo in 2016. As an optometry student Dr. Franco was privileged to travel to Romania, Moldova, and Oaxaca, Mexico providing vision care to those in need. She looks forward to participating in similar trips in the future.

Following graduation, Dr. Franco returned to her hometown of Calgary and has been practicing with Airdrie Family Eye Doctors. She provides full scope primary care with a special interest in vision therapy. With her passion for vision therapy, Dr. Franco completed additional education and started a vision therapy program out of the Airdrie practice. She loves to teach and enjoys lecturing on vision therapy and other topics alike. When not at work, Dr. Franco enjoys spending time with her husband and their dog, and with her extended family. She heads out to the mountains whenever possible, loves to bake, and if organization was a hobby it would be her favourite one.



Dr. Pamela Giles, Council Member

Dr. Pamela Giles, born and raised in Grande Prairie, graduated with honors from the University of Waterloo in 2005. She has worked throughout Northern Alberta, and practices full scope optometry in rural settings. She, along with 2 partner ODs, started Aurora Eye Care in 2013 and now own private practice clinics in Grande Prairie, Edson, and Jasper. Her passions include patient health advocacy, a critical role in resource limited rural communities. Pamela and her husband, Ryan, have a great time hiking, skiing, cooking, and traveling with their three children, Emily, Brady, and Josh. She also has an interest in art, taking a variety of courses in oil and watercolor painting.

Council Members and Biographies



Dr. Colin Hobson, *Council Member*

Dr. Colin Hobson graduated from the University of Waterloo School of Optometry in 2012 with an honours BSc and Optometry Degree. Following graduation, he returned home to Fort Saskatchewan and later started Fort Saskatchewan Eyecare where he practices full scope Optometry with special interest in Dry Eye and Paediatrics. In his spare time Colin enjoys volunteering in the community with his Rotary club and spending time at home with his wife Jen and daughter Elliot.



Dr. Darren Wagner, *Council Member*

Dr. Darren Wagner was born in Spirit River, Alberta, and studied Biochemistry at Grande Prairie Regional College, and the University of Alberta before graduating with Honours from the University of Waterloo School of Optometry in 2006. Darren has previously volunteered on an eye mission in Guatemala, and has completed a disease externship in Baltimore, Maryland. He is married to Dr. Dallas Wagner, and they own a practice in Brooks, Alberta. He strives to increase public education of eye health in his community by speaking at schools, diabetes expos, and with local physician groups. Darren has a young family, and together they swim, bike, run, curl, windsurf, and sail, in beautiful Southeastern Alberta.



Dr. Troy Brady, *CAO Representative*

Dr. Brady grew up in Pinawa, Manitoba and graduated from the University of Waterloo in 1999 with a Bachelor of Science and a Doctor of Optometry (Dean's Honours List). Immediately following his graduation, he moved to Edmonton and began practicing at a full scope optometric practice, Optometrists' Clinic Inc. He takes a special interest in ocular disease, contact lenses and family practice. He is a past-president of the Alberta Association of Optometrists, serving on the AAO Council since 2010. He is currently Alberta's representative on the Canadian Association of Optometrists.

Dr. Brady enjoys coaching his two daughters in their sporting activities and remains active in his own right. He is an avid golfer and still plays hockey once a week. This includes playing in the Alzheimer's Faceoff Pro-Am hockey tournament during which he and his team have raised hundreds of thousands of dollars to help find a cure for dementia.

Committee Overview

Role of Committees as per AAO Bylaws

Section 3: Council Committees

Article 1: Roles and Responsibilities

- 3.1.1 All Council committees are appointed by the Council, and are responsible and accountable to the Council.
- 3.1.2 Council shall approve each Council committee's Chair, mandate, and Terms of Reference.
- 3.1.3 A majority of a Council committee's membership constitutes a quorum.
- 3.1.4 Council committees shall be divided into standing and ad hoc categories.
- 3.1.5 Each Council committee chairperson shall provide a report to the Council in accordance with Council policies.
- 3.1.6 Council committees may make recommended changes to Council policies to the Council.
- 3.1.7 The Council may, by a majority vote, remove a member from a Council committee or dissolve a committee.

Committees of the AAO

2023/2024 AAO Standing and Ad Hoc Committees

Executive Committee of Council – Standing Committee as per AAO Bylaws

Dr. Andrea Lasby, *President*
Dr. Richard Cowles, *Past President*
Dr. Sophia Leung, *President Elect*
Mr. Brian Wik, *CEO (non-voting)*

Standing committees - are permanently established and may be composed of appointed, elected, or ex-officio members.

Ad hoc committees - are temporarily established for a special purpose or to complete a particular task.

Policy Committees

Policy Committees Report through to Council. They help guide the AAO's future direction by providing insights on emerging trends, or help monitor specific functions.

Artificial Intelligence & Teleoptometry SUBCommittee

Board Development & Nominations Committee

Business Management Subcommittee

Cosmetic Optometry Subcommittee

Emerging Trends Committee

Finance, Audit & Risk Management Committee

Local Optometric Societies SUBCommittee

Vision Development & Rehabilitation Subcommittee



Operational Committees

Operational Committees are working bodies. Committee members provide advice that directly helps guide programs and services. These committees report to the CEO.

Billing Committee

Continuing Education Committee

Editorial Board Committee

Government Relations Committee

New Grad Committee



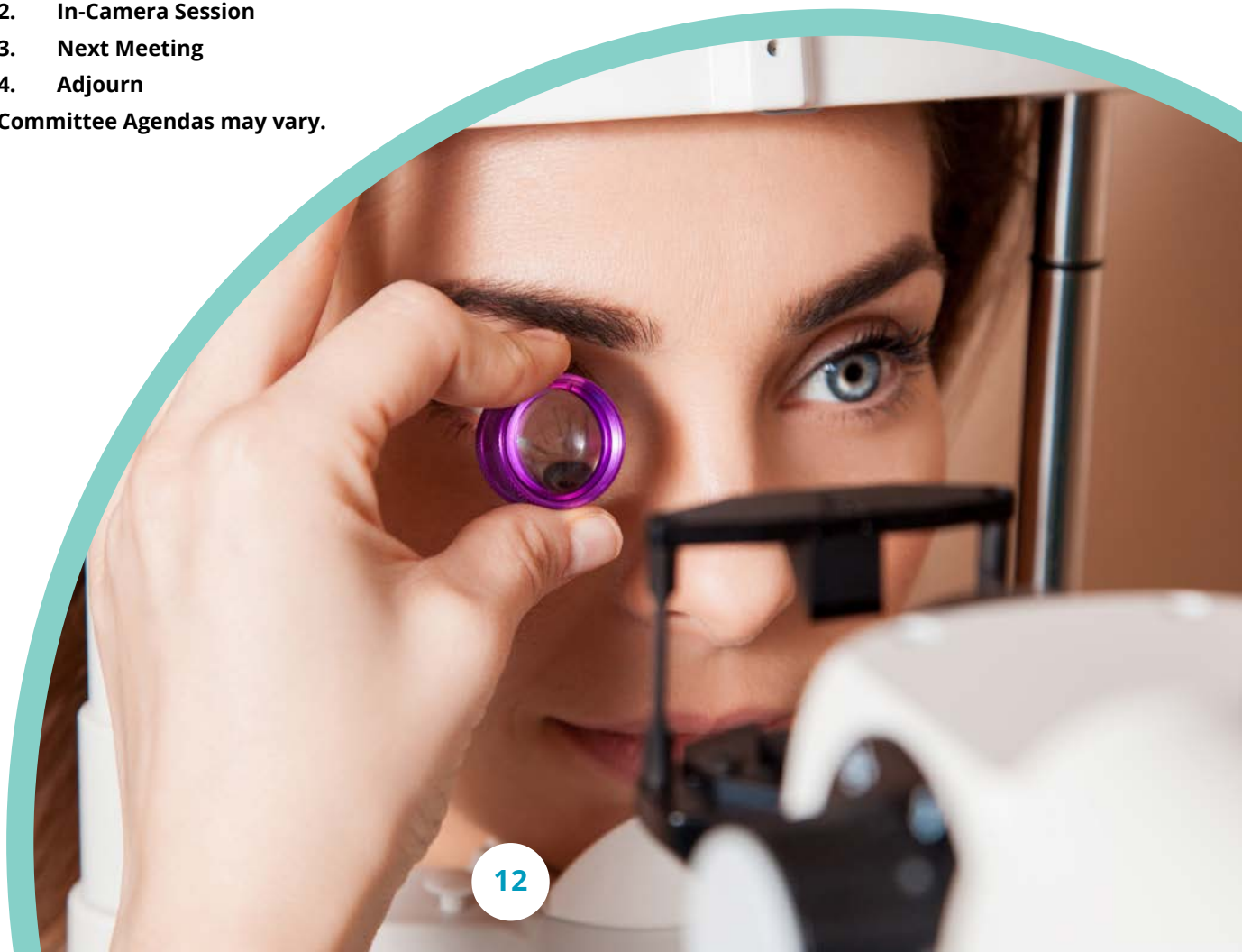
Agenda Format Example

AAO Council Meeting AGENDA

Date	January 10, 2024
Time	7:00 pm – 8:00 pm
Place	Virtual Meeting

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Review of Agenda**
3. **Treaty Land Acknowledgement**
4. **Declaration of Conflict**
5. **Review and Adoption of Minutes**
6. **Strategic Plan Review**
7. **CEO Accountability/Monitoring**
8. **Policy Review**
9. **Council Committee Accountability**
10. **New Business**
11. **Consent Agenda**
12. **In-Camera Session**
13. **Next Meeting**
14. **Adjourn**

*Committee Agendas may vary.



Oath of Confidentiality

I, _____, being a member of the Alberta Association of Optometrists (the "AAO") Council (the "Council") or a Committee Member (Committee), acknowledge and agree as follows:

- 1) As a member of the AAO Council or an AAO Committee, I may receive, or have access to, information that is confidential to the AAO, its employees or the Council ("Confidential Information").
- 2) For purposes of this Oath of Confidentiality, "Confidential Information" means all information and communications pertaining to the AAO that is provided or communicated to you, whether provided or communicated before or after the date of this Oath of Confidentiality, verbally, in writing, by inspection, or through any other means, at Council or Committee meetings or otherwise, regardless of whether specifically identified as being confidential, and regardless of whatever form such information may take after its communication, excluding (a) information, as shown by written records, was already known by me at the time of its receipt by me without a breach of my obligations hereunder, or (b) at the time of its disclosure to me, is in the public domain or which thereafter enters the public domain through no fault of mine.
- 3) As a Council or Committee member, I will not disclose or discuss any Confidential Information received in my capacity as Council or Committee member, unless authorized to do so by majority vote of the Council. This includes, without limitation, disclosing or discussing Confidential Information with the public or the media.
- 4) Video and audio recordings of Council or Committee meetings are not allowed unless authorized by majority vote of the Council.
- 5) As a member of the Council or a Committee, I will at all times act honestly and in good faith with a view to the best interests of the AAO and, in doing so, will act impartially and place the interests of the AAO first, not allowing any of my decisions to be tainted by self-interest or self-dealing.
- 6) Failure to observe this Oath of Confidentiality could result in dismissal from the Council or Committee(s) in accordance with the AAO bylaws.

DATED this _____ day of _____, 20_____.

Council or Committee Member (signature)

Council or Committee Member Name (print)

Witness (signature)

Witness Name (print)

Conflict of Interest Form

The Alberta Association of Optometrists (the “AAO”) provides leadership and support for its members, and is prominent and influential in Alberta’s society. To maintain our reputation, we must act with professionalism, accountability, and honesty.

Council and committee members of the AAO may have other interests that could affect a decision made while serving in their capacity on AAO Council or an AAO committee. This duality of commitments can raise the potential for a conflict of interest or a conflict of loyalty. Interests may go beyond personal interests and include interests of a close friend, family member, business associate, corporation or partnership in which they hold a significant interest, or a person whom they owe an obligation. All individuals serving on the AAO Council and its committees are asked to question whether or not their affiliations, activities, interests, and influences are impacting their ability to act in the AAO’s best interest and/or represent the AAO fairly, impartially, and without bias. In addition, all individuals serving on the AAO Council are asked to question whether or not their affiliations, activities, interests, and influences are compatible with the respective duties to the Council.

Joining AAO Council in 2012 introduced me to a new side of optometry, being part of a group that can affect meaningful changes for our profession in Alberta. Working with council members, AAO staff, and meeting fellow Alberta optometrists gave me the experience to be effective as AAO President and now as Past President. I am enjoying my time serving our membership and encourage you to consider getting involved on an AAO committee or running for council.

Dr. Richard Cowles, *Past President*

Definitions

A conflict of interest is when you or someone you know would, or could be perceived to, benefit or be harmed financially from a decision or action of the AAO.

A conflict of loyalties exists when your actions or decision could benefit or harm someone you know or something you care about/believe in. There does not have to be a financial consequence for a conflict of loyalty to exist

It is important to understand that a conflict of interest or loyalties exists if the decision or action could be influenced; it is not necessary that the influence takes place. If a reasonably well-informed person could have the perception that you are making a decision or taking an action on behalf of the AAO that promotes your personal interests, or the interests of someone you know, it is the “appearance” of a conflict of interest.

Requirements

Council and committee members of the AAO are in a position of fiduciary trust with the AAO. As such, they are required to disclose interests, holdings, relationships, etc that might result in a conflict of interest. This would include affiliations with other bodies that do business with the AAO (buying groups, corporations, other associations, etc.), particularly if these affiliations provide a personal benefit to the council member or committee member. This would include being an officer of or holding shares or stocks in such a company, consulting agreements, and other activities that would benefit the council or committee member or those associated with the council or committee member.

This disclosure must occur as soon as the conflict of interest or loyalty is known, even if that is after the discussion has occurred, decision has been made, or action has been taken.

The information contained on this document must be updated annually or sooner if the council or committee member becomes aware of any previously unmentioned or new conflicts.

AAO Programs and Services

The AAO runs a number of programs and services which are available to the public and the members. Below is a list of those items and the web page location where they can be found. ***Please ensure you are logged into the Members Only section prior to clicking on the links.***

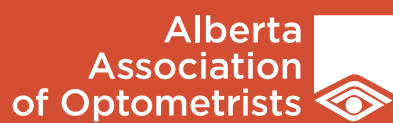
AAO Home Page	www.optometrists.ab.ca
Members Section	www.optometrists.ab.ca/membersonly
Billing Information	www.optometrists.ab.ca/billing
Resources & Equipment Borrowing	www.optometrists.ab.ca/resourcesandequipment
Eye See ... Eye Learn	www.optometrists.ab.ca/ESEL
Grad Matching Services	www.optometrists.ab.ca/gradmatching
Local Societies	www.optometrists.ab.ca/localsocieties
Member Benefits	www.optometrists.ab.ca/memberdiscounts
Eyesafe	www.optometrists.ab.ca/eyesafe www.eyesafe.ca
Classifieds	www.optometrists.ab.ca/classifieds
Patients Information	www.optometrists.ab.ca/patients
Publications	www.optometrists.ab.ca/publications
Resources and Materials	www.optometrists.ab.ca/resourcesandequipment

Acronyms Reference Guide

Acronym	What it stands for	What it is/What it means
AAO	Alberta Association of Optometrists	Provincial Association
AAO	American Academy of Optometry	American Academy
ABC	Alberta Blue Cross	
ACA	Academic Credential Assessment	
ACFB	Alberta Child and Family Benefit	Benefits for low income working families
ACO	Alberta College of Optometrists	Regulatory Body for Alberta ODs
ACOE	Accreditation Council on Optometric Education	
ACOCC	Alberta College of Optometrists Competence Committee	
AH	Alberta Health	
AHCIA	Alberta Health Care Insurance Act	
AHCIP	Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan	
AISH	Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped	Social welfare program and service offered only in Alberta
AMA	Alberta Medical Association	
ACOA	Alberta College and Association of Opticians	
AOA	American Optometric Association	The US national optometric body
AOQ	L'Association des optométristes du Quebec	Provincial Association
AQUA	Academic Qualifications Assessment	
ARBO	Association of Regulatory Boards of Optometry (Mainly USA)	
ASB	Alberta Seniors Benefit Program	
BCDO	British Columbia Doctors of Optometry	Provincial Association
CAO	Canadian Association of Optometrists	The national office, of which all 10 provincial associations are members
CAOE	Canadian Association of Optometric Executives	The body of all optometric association exec directors
CAOS	Canadian Association of Optometry Students	UW and UM have branches; they prepare an annual booklet
CCPP	Canadian Council of Provincial Presidents	The body of all optometric association presidents
CRA	Canada Revenue Agency	Formerly known as "Revenue Canada"
DC	Diabetes Canada	With whom we are always trying to forge closer ties
CE (CEP)	Continuing Education, Continuing Education Program	ODs are required to obtain a certain number of CE hours per three years
CEO	Canadian Examiners in Optometry	Reps from all provinces that oversee the national OD exam
CJO	Canadian Journal of Optometry	CAO's flagship publication; the national official journal for the profession

Acronym	What it stands for	What it is/What it means
CMA	Canadian Medical Association	National Association
CMPA	Canadian Medical Protection Association	National Association
CNIB	Canadian National Institute for the Blind	Provides services and low vision aids to visually impaired persons
COETF	Canadian Optometric Education Trust Fund	Like SOF, but out of the CAO office; national scale
COS	Canadian Ophthalmologists Society	The national body representing ophthalmologists
CPHA	Canadian Public Health Association	National Association
CPSA	College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta	
CSA	Canadian Standards Association	National Association
EHCC	Eye Health Council of Canada	The public name of CAO's advertising entity
FAAO	Fellow of the American Academy of Optometry	A professional designation occasionally sought by Canadian ODs
FHP	Federal Healthcare Partnership	Formerly known as "Health Care Coordination Initiative Secretariat"
FOIP	Freedom of Information and Protections Privacy Act	
FORAC	Federation of Optometric Regulatory Authorities of Canada	A board of representatives from licensing bodies (colleges) of optometrists
FPA	Federal Privacy Act	
GOA	Government Organizations Act	
GWCO	Great Western Council of Optometry	American Congress in Portland, Oregon
HEAL	Health Action Lobby	Coalition of health groups
HFA	Health Facilities Act	
HPRAC	Health Professions Regulatory Advisory Council	Ontario Government's advisory board of 7 members
ICLO	Indicator of Current Learning of Optometric	A bridging program to the CSO exam
ICSO	Indicator of Current Skills in Optometry	
IOBP	International Optometric Bridging Program	U of W Bridging program for Foreign trained OD's
IOG	International Optometric Graduate (Previous acronym was NNATO)	
IPHCWG	Integrated Primary Health Care Working Group	Primary health providers working together to improve healthcare delivery
MAO	Manitoba Association of Optometrists	Provincial Association
MRA	Mutual Recognition Agreement	The agreement by which practicing ODs are recognized in other provinces
NAO	Newfoundland Association of Optometrists	Provincial Association
NBAO	New Brunswick Association of Optometrists	Provincial Association
NBEO	National Board of Examiners in Optometry (US)	The American version of CEO
NCVH	National Coalition for Vision Health	National Association
NIHB	Non Insured Health Benefits	Third-party coverage for all First Nations not covered under other programs

Acronym	What it stands for	What it is/What it means
NLAO	Newfoundland & Labrador Association of Optometrists	Provincial Association
NSAO	Nova Scotia Association of Optometrists	Provincial Association
OAC	Opticians Association of Canada	National Association
OAO	Ontario Association of Optometrists	Provincial Association
OEBC	Optometry Examining Board of Canada	
OEBC EXAM	Canadian Standard Assessment in Optometry	The national exam all ODs must pass (except in QC) to practice
OGS	Optometry Giving Sight	International Eye Health Charity supported by the CAO
OHS	Occupational Health & Safety	
OLF	Optometric Leaders' Forum	CAO's annual leaders' meeting in Ottawa (provincial and national leaders)
OSI	Optometric Services Incorporated	A buying group many ODs join; provides marketing support
PEIAO	Prince Edward Island Association of Optometrists	Provincial Association
PIPA	Personal Information and Protection Act	
PIPEDA	Personal Information Protection & Electronic Documents Act	Regulates the private sectors collection, use & disclosure of personal info
PLAR	Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition	
SAO	Saskatchewan Association of Optometrists	Saskatchewan Association of Optometrists
UM	University of Montreal	One of two Canadian Optometry Schools (and the only French)
UW	University of Waterloo	One of two Canadian Optometry Schools (and the only English)
VCC	Vision Council of Canada	A body that represents large retail optical chains, based in Ontario
WCO	World Council of Optometry	An international optometric body
WHO	World Health Organization	Advocacy body for health issues of national concern



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