

Certified Ophthalmic Assistant Certification Requirements (COA)

To qualify for certification at the COA level, you must meet one of the following three options:

A1. GRADUATE OF A FORMAL CLINICAL TRAINING PROGRAM¹

- Graduated from a CoA-OMP or CMA accredited Clinical Ophthalmic Assistant program within the 12 months (one-year) prior to submitting your application. *(Candidates who attend a formal training program may apply for the certification exam up to two months prior to graduation from the program; however, no examination results will be sent by JCAHPO to the candidate until official notification of graduation is received.)*
- If you completed the program more than 12 months ago, you will need to obtain 18 JCAHPO Group A credits for each year following graduation.
- No work experience is necessary.

A2. GRADUATE OF A FORMAL TRAINING PROGRAM AND WORK EXPERIENCE

- Graduated from a CoA-OMP or CMA accredited Ophthalmic Assistant program including the distance learning programs from Centennial College or Southern Alberta Institute of Technology within the 12 months (one-year) prior to submitting your application. *(Candidates who attend a formal training program may apply for the certification exam up to two months prior to graduation from the program; however, no examination results will be sent by JCAHPO to the candidate until official notification of graduation is received and verification of the work experience is submitted.)*
- If you completed the program more than 12 months ago, you will need to obtain 18 JCAHPO Group A credits, for each year following graduation.
- Employed at least 500 hours (three-months full-time equivalent) under ophthalmologic supervision within 12 months prior to submitting your application.

A3. COMPLETION OF INDEPENDENT STUDY COURSE AND WORK EXPERIENCE

- Graduated from high school or equivalent.
- Successfully completed an approved independent study course (e.g., JCAHPO Independent Study Course (JCAT) or the American Academy of Ophthalmology Independent Study Course) within the 36 months prior to submitting your exam application.
 - If you completed an independent study course more than 36 months ago, you will need to repeat the course or submit 18 Group A credits for each year following the 36-month period.
- Employed at least 1,000 hours (six months full-time equivalent) under ophthalmologic supervision within 12 months prior to submitting your application.

COA Examination Content Areas

Please refer to Appendix A to review the content areas.

¹Individuals who graduate from an accredited formal training program at the Technician or Technologist level are eligible to apply for a lower-level certification under the formal training program eligibility option. For example, graduates of an accredited Ophthalmic Technician program may choose to apply for certification at the Ophthalmic Assistant level. Likewise, graduates for an accredited Ophthalmic Technologist program may choose to apply for certification at the Ophthalmic Assistant or the Ophthalmic Technician level. CoA-OMP - Committee on Accreditation for Ophthalmic Medical Personnel; CMA - Canadian Medical Association; CAAHEP - Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs