



## National Examining Board of Ocularists

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September 28, 2022

Greetings Fellow Colleagues,

I hope this letter finds you healthy, both physically and mentally, and able to provide comprehensive prosthetic eye care for your patients. The NEBO Board understands that the aftermath of the pandemic has left many of our offices overloaded with patients who may not have received care between 2020-2021. Some practices are also dealing with office staff shortages which can make this a stressful time for all of us. During this time the NEBO Board has been productively improving and strengthening the certification process.

Starting in 2023 the NEBO Certification Exam will be available 'On Demand' from April through December. The written exam will continue to be administered at a Scantron testing center local to the candidate. If a BCO needs to take the exam to re-certify there is additional flexibility. The NEBO website is continuously updating information to retain ocularists' certification.

The transition from the previous route of recertification to the current model will fully take place for all members on January 1, 2023. I encourage you to reach out to NEBO if you have any questions. Each BCO has a personalized timeline for recertification and we want to make sure you have the correct information. All updates, annual MOC (maintenance of certification) fees, and notices from NEBO will be sent via email, so please be sure to keep your email address updated. With all of the NEBO certified members transitioning to the MOC platform at the end of 2022, NEBO can re-focus on ICE accreditation. With the many rules that are applied to accredited organizations, having a clear and defensible recertification process was necessary for the application to go smoothly, as well as being able to prove financial independence and viability.

In mid 2022, NEBO was contacted by Palmetto GBA, a Clearinghouse for CMS, to validate a prosthetic eye care provider. This is not a new request for NEBO's Executive Director or Administration, as many organizations reach out to NEBO for validation, such as medical insurance companies, hospitals and individual patients. This process ensures that those who are providing ocular prosthetic services are certified and in good standing with NEBO. This particular inquiry was unique in

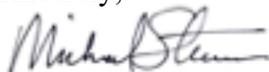
the sense that NEBO was informed that this ocularist had falsified an older NEBO certificate to appear as though they were certified as of 2022. During CMS's site visit, it was discovered that there were prior violations within this individual's practice as well as current violations. NEBO felt that legal action was necessary to protect the public, as well as NEBO certified members who have maintained their certification status. The court case resulted in NEBO successfully winning an injunction to 'cease and desist.' The Attorney General's office, as well as Medicare, are investigating the fraud made by this individual.

As you may have heard, one of our beloved colleagues has passed away. Bud Turntine will always be remembered as a compassionate, intelligent and caring person. He advocated for our profession and made sure that Board Certified Ocularists were informed about current Medicare regulations and guidelines. His family and all who knew him, have our deepest sympathies.

This year the NEBO Board has been diligently working to strengthen and protect our brand. The NEBO Board is always happy to answer any questions you may have, don't hesitate to reach out to us at [nebo@neboboard.org](mailto:nebo@neboboard.org).

Best to you and yours.

Sincerely,



Michael Strauss BCO, BADO, CCS

NEBO Chairman