SCOPE OF PRACTICE FOR OPTOMETRY TECHNICIAN

**General Description of the Job**
Optometry Technician/ Optometry Assistants are not permitted to examine patients in order to prescribe glasses or contact lenses independently although they can refract under the supervision of Ophthalmologist or Optometrist.

**Duties and Responsibilities**
Optometry technicians are the assistants working alongside Optometrist who helps out with these exams, operating machines used to test for eye disease or taking pictures of the eye.

They also perform vision therapy programs, tell the patient about procedures the optometrist will perform, do lab work that modifies glasses or contacts, keep inventories of clinical materials, and clean and maintain instruments.

They might explain a treatment to a patient and patiently assist new contact lens wearers with learning how to remove and insert contact lenses.

As laser eye surgery becomes more and more common, many technicians work with patients who have had corrective surgery, explaining how they should care for themselves at home following surgery.

Assistants and technicians also do the administrative work that keeps the office running smoothly. In offices that sell eyewear, optometric assistants and technicians also provide customer service.

While many of the tasks that assistants and technicians take care of overlap, there are differences between the two. In most cases, optometric assistants have only on-the-job training, while optometric technicians have completed a formal education program. In small offices, what assistants and technicians do is pretty much interchangeable, but in large offices that hire assistants and technicians, the distinction is clear: assistants do the administrative work and routine tasks at the front desk, while technicians help in the exam room. In these offices, assistants keep records, help customers choose frames, order lenses, provide patients with instructions on handling contact lenses and glasses, and do billing.

**Typical Work Activities**

- Gathering patient information and medical history
- Preparing exam rooms
• Maintaining records
• Fitting, repairing, and adjusting eyewear
• Edging & tinting lenses
• Assisting the optometrist in exams
• Teaching patients about wearing and caring for their glasses and contacts
• Ordering glasses, lenses, and supplies
• Answering telephones and patients’ questions
• Scheduling appointments & doing front office administrative tasks
• Billing customers or insurance companies