

Optometric Residencies



“Absolutely the 1 year of residency was worth my time. This one year investment of time was worth 5 years of clinical practice.”

program

Completing a residency in optometry is a unique and invaluable experience! The rich rewards gained from the year of advanced clinical training under an experienced mentor serves to enhance career opportunities and add to the level of confidence the resident has when beginning his/her post-residency career.

Optometric residency programs, which typically start in the summer and last for one year, provide a stipend that varies depending on the institution funding the program. Currently, there are over 150 optometric residency programs with more than 300 approved positions that are accredited by the Accreditation Council on Optometric Education (ACOE).

Specific information on both accredited and non-accredited programs can be accessed through ASCO's Online Residency Program Directory at <http://survey.opted.org/reslookup/>.

areas of emphasis

There are currently ten (10) areas of emphasis for optometric residencies:

- Family Practice Optometry
- Primary Eye Care
- Cornea and Contact Lenses
- Geriatric Optometry
- Pediatric Optometry
- Low Vision Rehabilitation
- Vision Therapy and Rehabilitation
- Ocular Disease
- Refractive and Ocular Surgery
- Community Health Optometry

The title of each residency reflects the primary focus of the clinical subject area and indicates advanced clinical education in that subject area.

employment

Many schools and colleges of optometry require residency training as a basic qualification for new clinical faculty positions. The Veterans Health Administration has always looked favorably at residency training as a prerequisite for employment at its hospitals and outpatient clinics. For those wishing to pursue employment opportunities with ophthalmology, or in multi-disciplinary practice settings, the value-added benefits of residency training are carefully considered by those potential employers whose backgrounds reflect the traditional medical model of training.

deadlines

While the deadlines encountered for applying to residency programs differ slightly, most require that application materials be received by the sponsoring organization around February 1. Applicants are encouraged to begin making inquiries about specific programs by late summer or early fall. Records of school transcripts, national board examination results, and letters of recommendation are examples of the required application materials. Most programs require a face-to-face interview by all applicants. Residency programs receive their applications and match with their residents through the Optometric Residency Matching Service (ORMS). Program Supervisors and applicants must rank their choices through ORMS by the ranking deadline which is typically in early March. ORMS releases match results within a week of the ranking deadline. Please visit the ORMS website at www.optometryresident.org for a full discussion of application procedures and deadlines.

*“I think that doing a residency is very valuable...
It definitely was a very worthwhile extension of
my optometric education...”*