

BRIEFING NOTE

TO: Board of Directors

FROM: Executive Committee

DATE: December 4 and 5, 2023

SUBJECT: Proposed Updates to Assessment and Miscellaneous Fees

☒ For Decision ☐ For Information ☐ Monitoring Report

Purpose:

To review stakeholder feedback regarding proposed amendments to fees relating to competency assessments and miscellaneous services.

Background:

Article 5 of the by-laws lists fees for the following COO processes:

- Processing fees for applications for registration that have been referred by the Registrar to the Registration Committee
- Fees for eyeglass and/or contact lens competency assessments
- Fees for the Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition Process (PLAR)
- Fees relating to the Quality Assurance Program

Schedule A to the by-laws lists fees for miscellaneous services, including issuing certificates of standing, replacement certificates/decals/badges, tax receipts and other items.

Fees are set based on an analysis of the actual cost of carrying out the requested service, taking into account factors such as staff time, assessor fees (e.g. in the case of a Peer and Practice Assessment), materials, shipping, etc. The fees are reviewed periodically to determine whether any adjustments are needed so they continue to reflect reasonable cost recovery.

At its September meeting the Executive Committee reviewed proposed amendments to certain fees under Article 5 and Schedule A to the by-laws. At that meeting, the committee directed administration to circulate the proposed changes for stakeholder feedback. The committee met again to review the feedback on November 20, 2023.

For Consideration:

The proposed fee changes (**Appendix A**) were posted for stakeholder feedback. The survey closed on November 17, 2023.

The full survey results are attached (**Appendix B**) and are overall positive with 71 – 73% respondents in favour of the changes. A detailed breakdown of the proposed fee changes and stakeholder comments follows.

Competency assessment and PLAR fees

Competency assessments and PLARs are carried out by COO in conjunction with the National Alliance of Canadian Opticianry Regulators (NACOR). This ensures consistency amongst the national regulators and helps keep costs down for applicants.

Over the last year, COO has been working with NACOR to further streamline the process, including redistributing some of the functions involved in carrying out competency assessments and PLARs. As a result, we have identified certain fees that can be adjusted to reflect the efficiencies gained from the new process.

Specifically, the proposal is to reduce assessment fees from \$600 to \$350, and increase the application fee (aka document review fee) from \$150 to \$250.

The majority of survey respondents indicated they were in favour of these changes, with some commenting that fees remain too high.

Quality Assurance fees

No changes are being proposed to QA Fees at this time. However, a need has been identified to update some of the terminology used in the bylaws to reflect the fact that registrants' annual professional portfolio is uploaded to their registrant portal, rather than being submitted on request via email.

Miscellaneous fees

Adjustments are being proposed to various fees in this section in order to better reflect the resources needed to fulfill requests from registrants for items such as replacement decals, tax receipts and certificates of standing.

We are also proposing to remove the fee for duplicate certified contact lens fitter certificates, which is now redundant in light of the fact that CCLF certificates are no longer issued by the COO.

The majority of survey respondents indicated they were in favour of these changes, with some commenting that fees remain too high.

Public Interest Considerations

The Board is charged with ensuring that the College is adequately funded in order to carry out its

statutory mandate. When determining fees for services, the board should consider setting fee levels at rates that will reflect reasonable cost recovery so the college can maintain service levels.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Considerations

The Board should consider whether fees for service will give rise to any challenges from a DEI perspective.

Action Required:

That the board approve the proposed by-law changes.