

BRADENTON HERALD

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Education Today / Career Tomorrow

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Optometric Assistant

Optometry is the professional practice of eye care, including the diagnosis and treatment of eye diseases and injuries, the measurement of visual refractive power and the correction of visual defects with glasses and contact lenses.

Optometric Assistants are vital members of the eye care team. Optometric Assistants can work in all aspects of eye care, assisting eye doctors, both Optometrists and Ophthalmologists.

Optometrists give their patients eye examinations for vision, color blindness, and eye pressure. When the tests are completed, an optometrist can prescribe the necessary eyeglasses for the patient. Optometric assistants often prepare patients for the tests.

Optometric Assistants help with eye examinations, specialized diagnostic testing, and assisting patients with eyeglass selection and contact lens care. Their work enables optometrists to devote

their time to patient care that requires specialized training.

Optometric Assistants also offer superior leadership in the business management of the Optometric Practice. Optometric Assistants are also employed by retail establishments that dispense glasses and contact lenses, under the supervision of an Optician licensed by the State of Florida

Source: www.careers.stateuniversity.com

Job Outlook

The employment outlook is excellent for Optometric Assistants. Also, the growth of the older population will assure the need for qualified optometric assistants. There are many opportunities for employments as an Optometric Assistant in a variety of settings working with an optometrist (OD), ophthalmologist (MD) or optician. An Optometric Assistant can join a private practice, an ophthalmology office, a commercial optical business or a health clinic.

Money

Career: Optometric Assistant
Job description: Obtains and records patient's history. Schedules appointments and performs bookkeeping. Prepares patient for vision examination. Instructs patient in care and use of glasses or contact lenses. Assists patient in frame selection. Manages business operations.
Annual Salary: Average starting salary for Optometric Assistants is \$13.00 to \$15.00 per hour.
 For more information on how to start your career as an Optometric Assistant, please contact:
 Career Counselor Ronai Krugh (941) 751-8479 ext. 2038 krughr@manateeschools.net

Education

Optometric assistants should have a high school diploma or its equivalent. Optometrists prefer applicants who are accurate and able to work well with delicate and breakable tools and materials. There are also formal training programs for this work. Technical schools, community colleges, and colleges of optometry offer one-year programs. Training for optometric assistants generally includes Optometric Office Management, Vision Screening and Preliminary Eye Examination, Specialized Diagnostic Testing, Ocular (eye) Anatomy and Physiology, Ocular Pathology (diseases and conditions), Ocular Medications, Eye Surgery, Contact Lenses and Glasses, Optics (How Glasses and Contact Lenses Work), Cooperative Clinical Training – Using knowledge and skills gained in the classroom with future employers. To prepare for training and a career in the field, students should take math and science classes in high school. The most important tools used in the eye care industry are critical thinking and problem solving. Manual dexterity, a neat appearance, and tactfulness are valuable assets for success on the job.



Teacher

"Manatee Technical Institute's Optometric Assisting program offers fundamentals of all aspects of eye care; instruction includes hands on learning, advanced technologies, and integrated clinical experience. A career in eye care is extremely rewarding and opportunities are vast. The gift of sight is precious. Program graduates are eligible for national certification. **Have the vision - See your future with MT-EYE!**"

- Tiffany Bustle

Student

"I joined the Optometric Assisting program at MTI because, when I was in 7th grade, my Grandmother was diagnosed with glaucoma. I decided to pursue this career so that I could help her and others. As far as the future goes, I plan to advance and become an Optometric Technician. From there, I would like to join a pediatrics practice. This program has majorly prepared me. The instructor was extremely knowledgeable and I learned so much about this career!"

- Dominique McDaniel

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Main Campus
 5603 34th Street West
 (941) 751-7900



East Campus
 5520 Lakewood Ranch Blvd.
 (941) 752-8100



www.niemanatee.com

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and Julie Beacham-Hooie, Page Editor