



American Association
of Certified Orthoptists

2022 AACO Town Hall FAQs
The Road to Licensure: Past, Present, and Future
Presented by the AACO Practice Management Committee
April 7, 2022

Who is:

AACO: American Association of Certified Orthoptists

The AACO was established in 1940 and is the professional member association for orthoptists in the United States. [Learn More](#)

AOC: American Orthoptic Council

The AOC was established in 1935 and is responsible for establishing the standards for orthoptist education in the United States. Presently, the AOC both certifies orthoptic students and accredits orthoptic programs. Program accreditation will be assumed by CoA-OFP in 2023 (see below). [Learn More](#)

AAPOS: American Association for Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus

AAPOS establishes practice guidelines for pediatric ophthalmology, encourages the training of ophthalmologists who are primarily concerned with the eye care of children, and fosters concepts that benefit children's eye health through preventative, as well as remedial activities. Orthoptists can become members of AAPOS. [Learn More](#)

AAP: American Academy of Pediatrics

The AAP is an organization of 67,000 pediatricians committed to the optimal physical, mental, and social health and well-being for all infants, children, adolescents, and young adults. The SOOp or Section on Ophthalmology of the AAP is dedicated to providing an education forum for the discussion of problems and treatments related to ophthalmologic conditions in children. Orthoptists can become members of the AAP SOOp. [Learn More](#)

AAO: American Academy of Ophthalmology

The AAO is the world's largest association of eye physicians and surgeons. A global community of 32,000 medical doctors, that protect sight and empower lives by setting the standards for ophthalmic education and advocating for patients and the public. [Learn More](#)

CAAHEP: The Committee on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs

CAAHEP is the largest programmatic accreditor of the health sciences professions. In collaboration with its Committees on Accreditation, or CoAs, CAAHEP reviews and accredits over 2100 individual education programs in 32 health science occupations. CAAHEP is recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA). CAAHEP is also a member of the Association of Specialized & Professional Accreditors (ASPA).

CoA-OFP: The Committee on Accreditation of Orthoptic Fellowship Programs

CoA-OFP was approved by CAAHEP in 2019 to assume the role of third-party accreditation of all orthoptic fellowships programs presently accredited by the AOC.

How to Join:

AACO: Visit www.orthoptics.org for more information.

AOC: There is no membership with the AOC. Orthoptists maintain their certification through the AOC and therefore must re-certify with the AOC every three years.

AAP: Visit <https://www.aap.org/en/community/aap-sections/ophthalmology/> for more information or contact the AACO representative to the AAP Jennifer Lambert. jennifer.lambert@bmc.org

AAPOS: Visit <https://aapos.org/members/join-aapos> for more information and to apply for membership.

AAO: Currently, membership is not available to Orthoptists.

How to get involved:

AACO: Contact the AACO president Alex Christoff at AACOPresident@orthoptics.org

AACO Practice Management: Contact Chair Beth Colon at colonbeth@gmail.com

CoA-OFP: Contact David Wheeler at david.wheeler.md@gmail.com