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AB-896 Registered Dispensing Opticians: Dispensing Opticians Fund: Optometry Fund: mobile optometric offices. (2019-2020)

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Assembly Bill No. 896

CHAPTER 121

An act to amend Sections 205, 655, 2545, 2546.9, 2556.2, 2567, 2568, and 3077 of, to add Section 205.3 to, and to add and repeal Section 3070.2 of, the Business and Professions Code, relating to healing arts, and declaring the urgency thereof, to take effect immediately.

[Approved by Governor September 24, 2020. Filed with Secretary of State September 24, 2020.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 896, Low. Registered Dispensing Opticians: Dispensing Opticians Fund: Optometry Fund: mobile optometric offices.

Existing law provides for the registration and regulation of dispensing opticians, spectacle lens dispensers, nonresident contact lens sellers, and contact lens dispensers by the State Board of Optometry and requires certain fees and fines in connection therewith to be paid to the board. Existing law establishes the Dispensing Opticians Fund and requires that these fees and fines be paid into that fund, and provides that the funds be available, upon appropriation, to the board for specified purposes.

Existing law, the Optometry Practice Act, provides for the licensure and regulation of optometrists by the board and requires certain fees and fines in connection therewith to be paid to the board. The act establishes the Optometry Fund and requires that these fees and fines be paid into that fund, and provides that the funds, unless otherwise provided, be available, upon appropriation, to the board in order to carry out the purposes of the act.

This bill would abolish the Dispensing Opticians Fund on July 1, 2022, and would require that any moneys in that fund be transferred to the Optometry Fund before July 1, 2022. The bill would make various related conforming changes.

Existing law provides that specified provisions of the Medical Practice Act that are not inconsistent or in conflict with certain provisions of law relating to the registration and regulation of dispensing opticians apply to the issuance, and govern the expiration and renewal, of certificates of registration issued to dispensing opticians.

This bill would delete that provision.

The Optometry Practice Act requires each licensed optometrist, before engaging in the practice of optometry, to notify the board in writing of the address or addresses where the optometrist is to engage in the practice of optometry and of any changes in their place of practice. A violation of the act is a crime.

This bill would define "mobile optometric office" to mean a trailer, van, or other means of transportation in which the practice of optometry is performed and which is not affiliated with an approved optometry school in California. The bill would limit ownership of a mobile optometric office to a tax-exempt nonprofit or charitable organization that provides optometric services to patients regardless of the patient's ability to pay. The bill would require the owner and operator of a mobile optometric office to register

with the board and to provide specified information on registering. The bill would prohibit the owner and operator of a mobile optometric office from accepting payment for services other than those provided to Medi-Cal beneficiaries. The bill would require the owner and operator of a mobile optometric office to file a quarterly report with the board and to provide a consumer notice prescribed by the board to patients.

The bill would require the board, by January 1, 2022, to adopt regulations establishing a registry for mobile optometric offices and to set a registration fee at an amount not to exceed the costs of administration. The bill would authorize the board to adopt regulations to conduct quality assurance reviews for optometrists engaging in the practice of optometry at a mobile optometric office.

The bill would prohibit the board from bringing an enforcement action against an owner and operator of a mobile optometric office based solely on its affiliation status with an approved optometry school in California for remotely providing optometric service before January 1, 2022.

The bill would require the owner and operator of a mobile optometric office to maintain records, as prescribed, to be made available to the board upon request for inspection. The bill would require a licensed optometrist who provides patient care in conjunction with a mobile optometric office to obtain a statement of licensure with the mobile optometric office's address as registered with the board. The bill would require, if the licensee is not practicing optometry at a location other than with the owner and operator of the mobile optometric office, that the licensee list as their primary address of record the owner and operator of the mobile optometric office's address as registered with the board.

The bill would repeal these mobile optometric office provisions on July 1, 2024.

Because this bill would expand the scope of an existing crime, it would therefore impose a state-mandated local program.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that no reimbursement is required by this act for a specified reason.

This bill would incorporate additional changes to Section 205 of the Business and Professions Code proposed by SB 1474 to be operative only if this bill and SB 1474 are enacted and this bill is enacted last.

This bill would declare that it is to take effect immediately as an urgency statute.

Vote: 2/3 Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: yes

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Section 205 of the Business and Professions Code, as added by Section 3 of Chapter 865 of the Statutes of 2019, is amended to read:

205. (a) There is in the State Treasury the Professions and Vocations Fund. The fund shall consist of the following special funds:

- (1) Accountancy Fund.
- (2) California Architects Board Fund.
- (3) Athletic Commission Fund.
- (4) Barbering and Cosmetology Contingent Fund.
- (5) Cemetery and Funeral Fund.
- (6) Contractors' License Fund.
- (7) State Dentistry Fund.
- (8) Home Furnishings and Thermal Insulation Fund.
- (9) California Architects Board-Landscape Architects Fund.
- (10) Contingent Fund of the Medical Board of California.
- (11) Optometry Fund.
- (12) Pharmacy Board Contingent Fund.

- (13) Physical Therapy Fund.
- (14) Private Investigator Fund.
- (15) Private Security Services Fund.
- (16) Professional Engineer's, Land Surveyor's, and Geologist's Fund.
- (17) Consumer Affairs Fund.
- (18) Behavioral Sciences Fund.
- (19) Licensed Midwifery Fund.
- (20) Court Reporters' Fund.
- (21) Veterinary Medical Board Contingent Fund.
- (22) Vocational Nursing and Psychiatric Technicians Fund.
- (23) Electronic and Appliance Repair Fund.
- (24) Acupuncture Fund.
- (25) Physician Assistant Fund.
- (26) Board of Podiatric Medicine Fund.
- (27) Psychology Fund.
- (28) Respiratory Care Fund.
- (29) Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology and Hearing Aid Dispensers Fund.
- (30) Board of Registered Nursing Fund.
- (31) Animal Health Technician Examining Committee Fund.
- (32) State Dental Hygiene Fund.
- (33) Structural Pest Control Fund.
- (34) Structural Pest Control Eradication and Enforcement Fund.
- (35) Structural Pest Control Research Fund.
- (36) Household Movers Fund.

(b) For accounting and recordkeeping purposes, the Professions and Vocations Fund shall be deemed to be a single special fund, and each of the several special funds therein shall constitute and be deemed to be a separate account in the Professions and Vocations Fund. Each account or fund shall be available for expenditure only for the purposes as are now or may hereafter be provided by law.

(c) This section shall become operative on July 1, 2022.

SEC. 1.5. Section 205 of the Business and Professions Code, as added by Section 3 of Chapter 865 of the Statutes of 2019, is amended to read:

205. (a) There is in the State Treasury the Professions and Vocations Fund. The fund shall consist of the following special funds:

- (1) Accountancy Fund.
- (2) California Architects Board Fund.
- (3) Athletic Commission Fund.
- (4) Barbering and Cosmetology Contingent Fund.
- (5) Cemetery and Funeral Fund.

- (6) Contractors License Fund.
- (7) State Dentistry Fund.
- (8) Home Furnishings and Thermal Insulation Fund.
- (9) California Architects Board-Landscape Architects Fund.
- (10) Contingent Fund of the Medical Board of California.
- (11) Optometry Fund.
- (12) Pharmacy Board Contingent Fund.
- (13) Physical Therapy Fund.
- (14) Private Investigator Fund.
- (15) Private Security Services Fund.
- (16) Professional Engineer's, Land Surveyor's, and Geologist's Fund.
- (17) Consumer Affairs Fund.
- (18) Behavioral Sciences Fund.
- (19) Licensed Midwifery Fund.
- (20) Court Reporters' Fund.
- (21) Veterinary Medical Board Contingent Fund.
- (22) Vocational Nursing and Psychiatric Technicians Fund.
- (23) Electronic and Appliance Repair Fund.
- (24) Acupuncture Fund.
- (25) Physician Assistant Fund.
- (26) Board of Podiatric Medicine Fund.
- (27) Psychology Fund.
- (28) Respiratory Care Fund.
- (29) Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology and Hearing Aid Dispensers Fund.
- (30) Board of Registered Nursing Fund.
- (31) Animal Health Technician Examining Committee Fund.
- (32) State Dental Hygiene Fund.
- (33) Structural Pest Control Fund.
- (34) Structural Pest Control Eradication and Enforcement Fund.
- (35) Structural Pest Control Research Fund.
- (36) Household Movers Fund.

(b) For accounting and recordkeeping purposes, the Professions and Vocations Fund shall be deemed to be a single special fund, and each of the several special funds therein shall constitute and be deemed to be a separate account in the Professions and Vocations Fund. Each account or fund shall be available for expenditure only for the purposes as are now or may hereafter be provided by law.

(c) This section shall become operative on July 1, 2022.

SEC. 2. Section 205.3 is added to the Business and Professions Code, to read:

205.3. Whenever any reference is made in any provision of this code to the "Dispensing Opticians Fund," it means the Optometry Fund. All moneys within the Dispensing Opticians Fund shall be deposited into the Optometry Fund by July 1, 2022. On July 1, 2022, the Dispensing Opticians Fund shall be abolished.

SEC. 3. Section 655 of the Business and Professions Code is amended to read:

655. (a) For the purposes of this section, the following terms have the following meanings:

(1) "Health plan" means a health care service plan licensed pursuant to the Knox-Keene Health Care Service Plan Act of 1975 (Chapter 2.2 (commencing with Section 1340) of Division 2 of the Health and Safety Code).

(2) "Optical company" means a person or entity that is engaged in the manufacture, sale, or distribution to physicians and surgeons, optometrists, health plans, or dispensing opticians of lenses, frames, optical supplies, or optometric appliances or devices or kindred products.

(3) "Optometrist" means a person licensed pursuant to Chapter 7 (commencing with Section 3000) or an optometric corporation, as described in Section 3160.

(4) "Registered dispensing optician" means a person licensed pursuant to Chapter 5.5 (commencing with Section 2550).

(5) "Therapeutic ophthalmic product" means lenses or other products that provide direct treatment of eye disease or visual rehabilitation for diseased eyes.

(b) No optometrist may have any membership, proprietary interest, coownership, or any profit-sharing arrangement, either by stock ownership, interlocking directors, trusteeship, mortgage, or trust deed, with any registered dispensing optician or any optical company, except as otherwise permitted under this section.

(c) (1) A registered dispensing optician or an optical company may operate, own, or have an ownership interest in a health plan so long as the health plan does not directly employ optometrists to provide optometric services directly to enrollees of the health plan, and may directly or indirectly provide products and services to the health plan or its contracted providers or enrollees or to other optometrists. For purposes of this section, an optometrist may be employed by a health plan as a clinical director for the health plan pursuant to Section 1367.01 of the Health and Safety Code or to perform services related to utilization management or quality assurance or other similar related services that do not require the optometrist to directly provide health care services to enrollees. In addition, an optometrist serving as a clinical director may not employ optometrists to provide health care services to enrollees of the health plan for which the optometrist is serving as clinical director. For the purposes of this section, the health plan's utilization management and quality assurance programs that are consistent with the Knox-Keene Health Care Service Plan Act of 1975 (Chapter 2.2 (commencing with Section 1340) of Division 2 of the Health and Safety Code) do not constitute providing health care services to enrollees.

(2) The registered dispensing optician or optical company shall not interfere with the professional judgment of the optometrist.

(3) The Department of Managed Health Care shall forward to the State Board of Optometry any complaints received from consumers that allege that an optometrist violated the Optometry Practice Act (Chapter 7 (commencing with Section 3000)). The Department of Managed Health Care and the State Board of Optometry shall enter into an Inter-Agency Agreement regarding the sharing of information related to the services provided by an optometrist that may be in violation of the Optometry Practice Act that the Department of Managed Health Care encounters in the course of the administration of the Knox-Keene Health Care Service Plan Act of 1975 (Chapter 2.2 (commencing with Section 1340) of Division 2 of the Health and Safety Code).

(d) An optometrist, a registered dispensing optician, an optical company, or a health plan may execute a lease or other written agreement giving rise to a direct or indirect landlord-tenant relationship with an optometrist, if all of the following conditions are contained in a written agreement establishing the landlord-tenant relationship:

(1) (A) The practice shall be owned by the optometrist and in every phase be under the optometrist's exclusive control, including the selection and supervision of optometric staff, the scheduling of patients, the amount of time the optometrist spends with patients, fees charged for optometric products and services, the examination procedures and treatment provided to patients and the optometrist's contracting with managed care organizations.

(B) Subparagraph (A) shall not preclude a lease from including commercially reasonable terms that: (i) require the provision of optometric services at the leased space during certain days and hours, (ii) restrict the leased space from being used for the sale or offer for sale of spectacles, frames, lenses, contact lenses, or other ophthalmic products, except that the optometrist shall be permitted to sell therapeutic ophthalmic products if the registered dispensing optician, health plan, or optical company located on or adjacent to the optometrist's leased space does not offer any substantially similar therapeutic

ophthalmic products for sale, (iii) require the optometrist to contract with a health plan network, health plan, or health insurer, or (iv) permit the landlord to directly or indirectly provide furnishings and equipment in the leased space.

(2) The optometrist's records shall be the sole property of the optometrist. Only the optometrist and those persons with written authorization from the optometrist shall have access to the patient records and the examination room, except as otherwise provided by law.

(3) The optometrist's leased space shall be definite and distinct from space occupied by other occupants of the premises, have a sign designating that the leased space is occupied by an independent optometrist or optometrists and be accessible to the optometrist after hours or in the case of an emergency, subject to the facility's general accessibility. This paragraph shall not require a separate entrance to the optometrist's leased space.

(4) All signs and displays shall be separate and distinct from that of the other occupants and shall have the optometrist's name and the word "optometrist" prominently displayed in connection therewith. This paragraph shall not prohibit the optometrist from advertising the optometrist's practice location with reference to other occupants or prohibit the optometrist or registered dispensing optician from advertising their participation in any health plan's network or the health plan's products in which the optometrist or registered dispensing optician participates.

(5) There shall be no signs displayed on any part of the premises or in any advertising indicating that the optometrist is employed or controlled by the registered dispensing optician, health plan or optical company.

(6) Except for a statement that an independent doctor of optometry is located in the leased space, in-store pricing signs and as otherwise permitted by this subdivision, the registered dispensing optician or optical company shall not link its advertising with the optometrist's name, practice, or fees.

(7) Notwithstanding paragraphs (4) and (6), this subdivision shall not preclude a health plan from advertising its health plan products and associated premium costs and any copayments, coinsurance, deductibles, or other forms of cost sharing, or the names and locations of the health plan's providers, including any optometrists or registered dispensing opticians that provide professional services, in compliance with the Knox-Keene Health Care Service Plan Act of 1975 (Chapter 2.2 (commencing with Section 1340) of Division 2 of the Health and Safety Code).

(8) A health plan that advertises its products and services in accordance with paragraph (7) shall not advertise the optometrist's fees for products and services that are not included in the health plan's contract with the optometrist.

(9) The optometrist shall not be precluded from collecting fees for services that are not included in a health plan's products and services, subject to any patient disclosure requirements contained in the health plan's provider agreement with the optometrist or that are not otherwise prohibited by the Knox-Keene Health Care Service Plan Act of 1975 (Chapter 2.2 (commencing with Section 1340) of Division 2 of the Health and Safety Code).

(10) The term of the lease shall be no less than one year and shall not require the optometrist to contract exclusively with a health plan. The optometrist may terminate the lease according to the terms of the lease. The landlord may terminate the lease for the following reasons:

(A) The optometrist's failure to maintain a license to practice optometry or the imposition of restrictions, suspension or revocation of the optometrist's license or if the optometrist or the optometrist's employee is or becomes ineligible to participate in state or federal government-funded programs.

(B) Termination of any underlying lease where the optometrist has subleased space, or the optometrist's failure to comply with the underlying lease provisions that are made applicable to the optometrist.

(C) If the health plan is the landlord, the termination of the provider agreement between the health plan and the optometrist, in accordance with the Knox-Keene Health Care Service Plan Act of 1975 (Chapter 2.2 (commencing with Section 1340) of Division 2 of the Health and Safety Code).

(D) Other reasons pursuant to the terms of the lease or permitted under the Civil Code.

(11) The landlord shall act in good faith in terminating the lease and in no case shall the landlord terminate the lease for reasons that constitute interference with the practice of optometry.

(12) Lease or rent terms and payments shall not be based on number of eye exams performed, prescriptions written, patient referrals or the sale or promotion of the products of a registered dispensing optician or an optical company.

(13) The landlord shall not terminate the lease solely because of a report, complaint, or allegation filed by the optometrist against the landlord, a registered dispensing optician or a health plan, to the State Board of Optometry or the Department of

Managed Health Care or any law enforcement or regulatory agency.

(14) The landlord shall provide the optometrist with written notice of the scheduled expiration date of a lease at least 60 days prior to the scheduled expiration date. This notice obligation shall not affect the ability of either party to terminate the lease pursuant to this section. The landlord may not interfere with an outgoing optometrist's efforts to inform the optometrist's patients, in accordance with customary practice and professional obligations, of the relocation of the optometrist's practice.

(15) The State Board of Optometry may inspect, upon request, an individual lease agreement pursuant to its investigational authority, and if such a request is made, the landlord or tenant, as applicable, shall promptly comply with the request. Failure or refusal to comply with the request for lease agreements within 30 days of receiving the request constitutes unprofessional conduct and is grounds for disciplinary action by the appropriate regulatory agency. This section shall not affect the Department of Managed Health Care's authority to inspect all books and records of a health plan pursuant to Section 1381 of the Health and Safety Code.

Any financial information contained in the lease submitted to a regulatory entity, pursuant to this paragraph, shall be considered confidential trade secret information that is exempt from disclosure under the California Public Records Act (Chapter 3.5 (commencing with Section 6250) of Division 7 of Title 1 of the Government Code).

(16) This subdivision shall not be applicable to the relationship between any optometrist employee and the employer medical group, or the relationship between a medical group exclusively contracted with a health plan regulated by the Department of Managed Health Care and that health plan.

(e) No registered dispensing optician may have any membership, proprietary interest, coownership, or profit-sharing arrangement either by stock ownership, interlocking directors, trusteeship, mortgage, or trust deed, with an optometrist, except as permitted under this section.

(f) Nothing in this section shall prohibit a person licensed under Chapter 5 (commencing with Section 2000) or its professional corporation from contracting with or employing optometrists, ophthalmologists, or optometric assistants and entering into a contract or landlord tenant relationship with a health plan, an optical company, or a registered dispensing optician, in accordance with Sections 650 and 654 of this code.

(g) Any violation of this section constitutes a misdemeanor as to such person licensed under Chapter 7 (commencing with Section 3000) of this division and as to any and all persons, whether or not so licensed under this division, who participate with such licensed person in a violation of any provision of this section.

(h) (1) Notwithstanding any other law and in addition to any action available to the State Board of Optometry, the State Board of Optometry may issue a citation containing an order of abatement, an order to pay an administrative fine, or both, to an optical company, an optometrist, or a registered dispensing optician for a violation of this section. The administrative fine shall not exceed fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) per investigation. In assessing the amount of the fine, the board shall give due consideration to all of the following:

(A) The gravity of the violation.

(B) The good faith of the cited person or entity.

(C) The history of previous violations of the same or similar nature.

(D) Evidence that the violation was or was not willful.

(E) The extent to which the cited person or entity has cooperated with the board's investigation.

(F) The extent to which the cited person or entity has mitigated or attempted to mitigate any damage or injury caused by the violation.

(G) Any other factors as justice may require.

(2) A citation or fine assessment issued pursuant to a citation shall inform the cited person or entity that if a hearing is desired to contest the finding of a violation, that hearing shall be requested by written notice to the board within 30 days of the date of issuance of the citation or assessment. If a hearing is not requested pursuant to this section, payment of any fine shall not constitute an admission of the violation charged. Hearings shall be held pursuant to Chapter 5 (commencing with Section 11500) of Part 1 of Division 3 of Title 2 of the Government Code.

(3) The board shall adopt regulations to implement a system for the issuance of citations, administrative fines, and orders of abatement authorized by this section. The regulations shall include provisions for both of the following:

(A) The issuance of a citation without an administrative fine.

(B) The opportunity for a cited person or entity to have an informal conference with the executive officer of the board in addition to the hearing described in paragraph (2).

(4) The failure of a licensee to pay a fine within 30 days of the date of assessment, unless the citation is being appealed, may result in disciplinary action being taken by the board. Where a citation is not contested and a fine is not paid, the full amount of the assessed fine shall be added to the fee for renewal of the license. A license shall not be renewed without payment of the renewal fee and fine.

(5) Notwithstanding any other law, if a fine is paid to satisfy an assessment based on the finding of a violation, payment of the fine shall be represented as satisfactory resolution of the matter for purposes of public disclosure.

(i) Administrative fines collected pursuant to this section shall be deposited in the Optometry Fund. It is the intent of the Legislature that moneys collected as fines and deposited in the fund be used by the board primarily for enforcement purposes.

SEC. 4. Section 2545 of the Business and Professions Code is amended to read:

2545. (a) Whenever any person has engaged, or is about to engage, in any acts or practices which constitute, or will constitute, an offense against this chapter, the superior court in and for the county wherein the acts or practices take place, or are about to take place, may issue an injunction, or other appropriate order, restraining the conduct on application of the State Board of Optometry, the Medical Board of California, the Osteopathic Medical Board of California, the Attorney General, or the district attorney of the county.

The proceedings under this section shall be governed by Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 525) of Title 7 of Part 2 of the Code of Civil Procedure.

(b) (1) Any person who violates any of the provisions of this chapter shall be subject to a fine of not less than one thousand dollars (\$1,000) nor more than two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500) per violation. The fines collected pursuant to this section from licensed physicians and surgeons shall be available upon appropriation to the Medical Board of California for the purposes of administration and enforcement. The fines collected pursuant to this section from licensed optometrists and registered dispensing opticians shall be deposited into the Optometry Fund and shall be available upon appropriation to the State Board of Optometry for the purposes of administration and enforcement.

(2) The Medical Board of California and the State Board of Optometry shall adopt regulations implementing this section and shall consider the following factors, including, but not limited to, applicable enforcement penalties, prior conduct, gravity of the offense, and the manner in which complaints will be processed.

(3) The proceedings under this section shall be conducted in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 5 (commencing with Section 11500) of Part 1 of Division 3 of Title 2 of the Government Code.

SEC. 5. Section 2546.9 of the Business and Professions Code is amended to read:

2546.9. The amount of fees prescribed in connection with the registration of nonresident contact lens sellers is that established by the following schedule:

(a) The application fee for a nonresident contact lens seller shall be a minimum of one hundred fifty dollars (\$150) and shall not exceed two hundred dollars (\$200).

(b) The initial registration fee shall be a minimum of two hundred dollars (\$200) and shall not exceed three hundred dollars (\$300).

(c) The renewal fee shall be a minimum of two hundred dollars (\$200) and shall not exceed three hundred dollars (\$300).

(d) The delinquency fee shall be a minimum of fifty dollars (\$50) and shall not exceed seventy-five dollars (\$75).

(e) The fee for replacement of a lost, stolen, or destroyed registration shall be twenty-five dollars (\$25).

(f) The State Board of Optometry may periodically revise and fix by regulation the fees specified in subdivisions (a), (b), (c), and (d), and these revised fees shall not exceed the reasonable regulatory cost.

(g) The fees collected pursuant to this chapter shall be deposited in the Optometry Fund, and shall be available, upon appropriation, to the State Board of Optometry for the purposes of this chapter.

SEC. 6. Section 2556.2 of the Business and Professions Code is amended to read:

2556.2. (a) Notwithstanding any other law, subsequent to the effective date of this section and until January 1, 2019, any individual, corporation, or firm operating as a registered dispensing optician under this chapter before the effective date of this section, or an employee of such an entity, shall not be subject to any action for engaging in conduct prohibited by Section 2556 or Section 655 as those sections existed prior to the effective date of this bill, except that a registrant shall be subject to discipline for duplicating or changing lenses without a prescription or order from a person duly licensed to issue the same.

(b) Nothing in this section shall be construed to imply or suggest that a person registered under this chapter is in violation of or in compliance with the law.

(c) This section shall not apply to any business relationships prohibited by Section 2556 commencing registration or operations on or after the effective date of this section.

(d) Subsequent to the effective date of this section and until January 1, 2019, nothing in this section shall prohibit an individual, corporation, or firm operating as a registered dispensing optician from engaging in a business relationship with an optometrist licensed pursuant to Chapter 7 (commencing with Section 3000) before the effective date of this section at locations registered with the Medical Board of California before the effective date of this section.

(e) This section does not apply to any administrative action pending, litigation pending, cause for discipline, or cause of action accruing prior to September 1, 2015.

(f) Any registered dispensing optician or optical company that owns a health plan that employs optometrists, subject to this section, shall comply with the following milestones:

(1) By January 1, 2017, 15 percent of its locations shall no longer employ an optometrist.

(2) By August 1, 2017, 45 percent of its locations shall no longer employ an optometrist.

(3) By January 1, 2019, 100 percent of its locations shall no longer employ an optometrist.

(g) Any registered dispensing optician or optical company that owns a health plan that employs optometrists shall report to the State Board of Optometry in writing as to whether it has met each of the milestones in subdivision (f) within 30 days of each milestone. The State Board of Optometry shall provide those reports as soon as it receives them to the director and the Legislature. The report to the Legislature shall be submitted in compliance with Section 9795 of the Government Code.

(h) (1) Notwithstanding any other law and in addition to any action available to the State Board of Optometry, the State Board of Optometry may issue a citation containing an order of abatement, an order to pay an administrative fine, or both, to an optical company, an optometrist, or a registered dispensing optician for a violation of this section. The administrative fine shall not exceed fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000). In assessing the amount of the fine, the board shall give due consideration to all of the following:

(A) The gravity of the violation.

(B) The good faith of the cited person or entity.

(C) The history of previous violations of the same or similar nature.

(D) Evidence that the violation was or was not willful.

(E) The extent to which the cited person or entity has cooperated with the board's investigation.

(F) The extent to which the cited person or entity has mitigated or attempted to mitigate any damage or injury caused by the violation.

(G) Any other factors as justice may require.

(2) A citation or fine assessment issued pursuant to a citation shall inform the cited person or entity that if a hearing is desired to contest the finding of a violation, that hearing shall be requested by written notice to the board within 30 days of the date of issuance of the citation or assessment. If a hearing is not requested pursuant to this section, payment of any fine shall not constitute an admission of the violation charged. Hearings shall be held pursuant to Chapter 5 (commencing with Section 11500) of Part 1 of Division 3 of Title 2 of the Government Code.

(3) The board shall adopt regulations to implement a system for the issuance of citations, administrative fines, and orders of abatement authorized by this section. The regulations shall include provisions for both of the following:

(A) The issuance of a citation without an administrative fine.

(B) The opportunity for a cited person or entity to have an informal conference with the executive officer of the board in addition to the hearing described in paragraph (2).

(4) The failure of a licensee to pay a fine within 30 days of the date of assessment, unless the citation is being appealed, may result in disciplinary action being taken by the board. Where a citation is not contested and a fine is not paid, the full amount of the assessed fine shall be added to the fee for renewal of the license. A license shall not be renewed without payment of the renewal fee and fine.

(5) Notwithstanding any other law, if a fine is paid to satisfy an assessment based on the finding of a violation, payment of the fine shall be represented as satisfactory resolution of the matter for purposes of public disclosure.

(i) Administrative fines collected pursuant to this section shall be deposited in the Optometry Fund. It is the intent of the Legislature that moneys collected as fines and deposited in the fund be used by the board primarily for enforcement purposes.

SEC. 7. Section 2567 of the Business and Professions Code is amended to read:

2567. (a) All fees collected from persons registered or seeking registration under this chapter shall be paid into the Optometry Fund, and shall be available, upon appropriation, to the State Board of Optometry for the purposes of this chapter. Any moneys within the Contingent Fund of the Medical Board of California collected pursuant to this chapter shall be deposited in the Optometry Fund. Any moneys within the Dispensing Opticians Fund collected pursuant to this chapter shall be deposited in the Optometry Fund.

(b) The board may employ, subject to civil service regulations, whatever additional clerical assistance is necessary for the administration of this chapter.

SEC. 8. Section 2568 of the Business and Professions Code is amended to read:

2568. The board shall report to the Controller at the beginning of each month for the month preceding the amount and source of all revenue received by it pursuant to this chapter, and shall pay the entire amount thereof to the Treasurer for deposit in the Optometry Fund.

SEC. 9. Section 3070.2 is added to the Business and Professions Code, to read:

3070.2. (a) As used in this section, "mobile optometric office" means a trailer, van, or other means of transportation in which the practice of optometry, as defined in Section 3041, is performed and which is not affiliated with an approved optometry school in California.

(b) This section shall not apply to any of the following:

(1) Optometric services provided remotely by an approved optometry school in California that meets the requirements of Section 1507 of Title 16 of the California Code of Regulations.

(2) A licensee engaged in the practice of optometry at a facility defined in paragraph (1), (2), or (3) of subdivision (a) of Section 3070.1.

(3) A federally qualified health center, as defined in Section 1396d(l)(2)(B) of Title 42 of the United States Code.

(4) A nonprofit or charitable organization exempt from taxation pursuant to Section 501(c)(3), 501(c)(4), or 501(c)(6) of the Internal Revenue Code (26 U.S.C. Sec. 501(c)(3), 501(c)(4), or 501(c)(6)), which utilizes the volunteer services of licensees engaging in the temporary practice of optometry pursuant to subdivision (b) of Section 3070.

(5) A free clinic, as defined in subparagraph (B) of paragraph (1) of subdivision (a) of Section 1204 of the Health and Safety Code, which is operated by a clinic corporation, as defined in paragraph (3) of subdivision (b) of Section 1200 of the Health and Safety Code.

(6) A specialized vision health care service plan, as defined in subdivision (f) of Section 1345 of the Health and Safety Code, formed and existing pursuant to the provisions of the Nonprofit Corporation Law (Division 2 (commencing with Section 5000) of Title 1 of the Corporations Code).

(c) The ownership and operation of a mobile optometric office shall be limited to a nonprofit or charitable organization that is exempt from taxation pursuant to Section 501(c)(3) or Section 501(c)(4) of the United States Internal Revenue Code that provides optometric services to patients regardless of the patient's ability to pay. The owner and operator of a mobile optometric office shall register with the board. The owner and operator of a mobile optometric office and the optometrist providing services shall not accept payment for services other than those provided to Medi-Cal beneficiaries. The medical operations of the mobile optometric

office shall be directed by a licensed optometrist and in every phase shall be under the exclusive control of the licensed optometrist, including the selection and supervision of optometric staff, the scheduling of patients, the amount of time the optometrist spends with patients, the fees charged for optometric products and services, the examination procedures, the treatment provided to patients, and the followup care pursuant to this section.

(d) The owner and operator of the mobile optometric office registering with the board pursuant to subdivision (c) shall provide the following information to the board:

- (1) The description of services to be rendered within the mobile optometric office.
- (2) The names and optometry license numbers of optometrists providing patient care.
- (3) The dates of operation and cities or counties served.
- (4) A description of how followup care will be provided.
- (5) A catalog of complaints, if any.

(e) The owner and operator of the mobile optometric office, on a form prescribed by the board, shall file a quarterly report containing the following information:

- (1) A list of all visits made by the mobile optometric office, including dates of operation, address, care provided, and names and license numbers of optometrists who provided care.
- (2) A summary of all complaints received by the mobile optometric office, the disposition of those complaints, and referral information.
- (3) An updated and current list of licensed optometrists who have provided care within the mobile optometric office since the last reporting period.
- (4) An updated and current list of licensed optometrists who are available for followup care as a result of a complaint on a volunteer basis or who accept Medi-Cal payments.

(f) The owner and operator of the mobile optometric office shall notify the board of any change to the information provided to the board pursuant to subdivision (d) within 14 days.

(g) (1) The owner and operator of the mobile optometric office shall provide each patient and, if applicable, the patient's caregiver or guardian, a consumer notice prescribed by the board that includes the following:

- (A) The name, license number, and contact information for the optometrist.
- (B) Optometrists providing services at a mobile optometric office are regulated by the board and the contact information for filing a complaint with the board.
- (C) Information on how to obtain a copy of the patient's medical information.
- (D) Information on followup care available for the patient, including a list of available Medi-Cal or volunteer optometrists. This list shall be updated every six months and is subject to the inspection by the board.
- (E) Any other information the board deems appropriate to safeguard the public from substandard optometric care, fraud, or other violation of this chapter.

(2) The optometrist shall maintain a copy of the consumer notice described in paragraph (1) in the patient's medical record.

(3) Upon request by the patient's caregiver or guardian, a copy of the prescription made for the patient shall be provided.

(h) Any person who is employed by the owner and operator of the mobile optometric office to drive or transport the vehicle shall possess a valid driver's license.

(i) By January 1, 2022, the board shall adopt regulations establishing a registry for the owners and operators of mobile optometric offices and shall set a registration fee at an amount not to exceed the reasonable regulatory costs of administration.

(j) The board may adopt regulations to conduct quality assurance reviews for the owner and operator of a mobile optometric office and optometrists engaging in the practice of optometry at a mobile optometric office.

(k) The board shall not bring an enforcement action against an owner and operator of a mobile optometric office based solely on its affiliation status with an approved optometry school in California for remotely providing optometric service before January 1,

2022.

(l) The owner and operator of a mobile optometric office shall maintain records in the following manner, which shall be made available to the board upon request for inspection:

(1) Records are maintained and made available to the patient in such a way that the type and extent of services provided to the patient are conspicuously disclosed. The disclosure of records shall be made at or near the time services are rendered and shall be maintained at the primary business office specified.

(2) The owner and operator of a mobile optometric office complies with all federal and state laws and regulations regarding the maintenance and protection of medical records, including, but not limited to, the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (42 U.S.C. Sec. 300gg).

(3) Pursuant to Section 3007, the owner and operator of the mobile optometric office keeps all necessary records for a minimum of seven years from the date of service in order to disclose fully the extent of services furnished to a patient. Any information included on a printed copy of an original document to a patient shall be certified by the owner and operator of the mobile optometric office as being true, accurate, and complete.

(4) If a prescription is issued to a patient, records shall be maintained for each prescription as part of the patient's chart, including all of the following information about the optometrist:

(A) Name.

(B) Optometrist license number.

(C) The place of practice and the primary business office.

(D) Description of the goods and services for which the patient is charged and the amount charged. If no charge was made to the patient, a description of the goods and services provided.

(5) The owners and operators of a mobile optometric offices shall maintain accurate records of the mobile optometric offices, including vehicle registration numbers and the year, make, and model of each trailer or van.

(m) Any licensed optometrist who provides patient care in conjunction with a mobile optometric office shall obtain a statement of licensure pursuant to subdivision (a) of Section 3070 with the mobile optometric office's address as registered with the board. If the licensee is not practicing optometry at a location other than with the owner and operator of the mobile optometric office, then the licensee shall list as their primary address of record the owner and operator of the mobile optometric office's address as registered with the board.

(n) All examinations performed at the mobile optometric office shall be performed by a licensed optometrist who is certified to use therapeutic pharmaceutical agents pursuant to Section 3041.3.

(o) This section does not apply to optometry services defined in Section 3070.1.

(p) This section shall remain in effect only until July 1, 2024, and as of that date is repealed.

SEC. 10. Section 3077 of the Business and Professions Code is amended to read:

3077. As used in this section, "office" means any office or other place for the practice of optometry, including but not limited to vans, trailers, or other mobile equipment.

(a) No person, singly or in combination with others, may have an office unless that person is licensed to practice optometry under this chapter or the registered owner and operator of a nonprofit mobile optometric office as set out in this chapter.

(b) No optometrist, and no two or more optometrists jointly, may have more than 11 offices.

(c) Any failure to comply with the provisions of this section shall result in the suspension of the optometrist license of each optometrist who, individually or with others, has an office. An optometrist license so suspended shall not be restored except upon compliance with those provisions and the payment of the fee prescribed by this chapter for restoration of a license after suspension for failure to comply with this section.

(d) The board shall have the power to adopt, amend, and repeal rules and regulations to carry out the provisions of this section.

(e) Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, neither an optometrist nor an individual practice association shall be deemed to have an additional office solely by reason of the optometrist's participation in an individual practice association or the

individual practice association's creation or operation. As used in this subdivision, the term "individual practice association" means an entity that meets all of the following requirements:

(1) Complies with the definition of an optometric corporation in Section 3160.

(2) Operates primarily for the purpose of securing contracts with health care service plans or other third-party payers that make available eye/vision services to enrollees or subscribers through a panel of optometrists.

(3) Contracts with optometrists to serve on the panel of optometrists, but does not obtain an ownership interest in, or otherwise exercise control over, the respective optometric practices of those optometrists on the panel.

(f) For purposes of Section 3070.2, "office" shall include a van, trailer, or mobile equipment owned and operated by a mobile optometric office.

SEC. 11. No reimbursement is required by this act pursuant to Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution because the only costs that may be incurred by a local agency or school district will be incurred because this act creates a new crime or infraction, eliminates a crime or infraction, or changes the penalty for a crime or infraction, within the meaning of Section 17556 of the Government Code, or changes the definition of a crime within the meaning of Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution.

SEC. 12. Section 1.5 of this bill incorporates amendments to Section 205 of the Business and Professions Code, as added by Section 3 of Chapter 865 of the Statutes of 2019, proposed by both this bill and Senate Bill 1474. That section of this bill shall only become operative if (1) both bills are enacted and become effective on or before January 1, 2021, but this bill becomes operative first, (2) each bill amends Section 205 of the Business and Professions Code, as added by Section 3 of Chapter 865 of the Statutes of 2019, and (3) this bill is enacted after Senate Bill 1474, in which case Section 205 of the Business and Professions Code, as added by Section 3 of Chapter 865 of the Statutes of 2019, as amended by Section 1 of this bill, shall remain operative only until the operative date of Senate Bill 1474, at which time Section 1.5 of this bill shall become operative.

SEC. 13. This act is an urgency statute necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety within the meaning of Article IV of the California Constitution and shall go into immediate effect. The facts constituting the necessity are:

Because it is necessary to make changes to the Optometry Fund and related provisions governing registered dispensing opticians and to ensure all Californians have access to necessary optometric services in order to preserve the public health and safety at the earliest possible time, it is imperative that this bill take effect immediately.