



**ADVISORY NO. CLS-2**

**[Please file in your ACO Practitioner Manual in the “Advisories” Section. Replaces CLS-1.]**

**Date: January 1, 2008**

**Subject: CONTACT LENS SALES**

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The Alberta College of Optometrists considers maintenance of competence via the ACO Standards of Practice and Guidelines as paramount in our public protection role. Contact lens sales by regulated members are governed by Section 5.2 of the ACO Standards of Practice and Guidelines. All regulated members providing contact lens sales themselves or through their professional optometric practice must abide by this standard. Contact lens sales by separate companies or business entities that are not regulated by the Alberta College of Optometrists are required to remain completely anonymous and distinct from all regulated members.

The following guide is provided for those regulated members who wish to offer contact lens sales themselves or their professional practice, and those who wish to own or to purchase shares in separate companies or business entities who sell contact lenses through telephone, FAX, mail order, internet or any other electronic means not associated with or linked to the professional practice of optometry.

**A. Contact Lens Sales in Your office**

All regulated members who wish to dispense ophthalmic appliances (including contact lenses) through themselves or their professional optometric practice are required to meet all the requisites for dispensing ophthalmic appliances as listed in Section 5.2 of the ACO Standards of Practice and accompanying Guidelines. If you wish to offer patients the ability to order contact lenses through your office website, telephone, FAX, or any other electronic means, you must abide by Section 5.2 of the Standards of Practice and accompanying Guidelines just as if the patient were to visit your office personally.

**B. Contact Lens Sales Via Independent Electronic Means**

Independent electronic means is defined as using the internet, mail order, telephone, FAX or any other electronic means not directly associated or linked to you or your professional optometric practice. A regulated member who wishes to own and/or purchase an interest in a separate company or business entity that offers contact lens sales must govern themselves as follows:

[i] The separate company cannot advertise nor have any visible identification to your professional optometric practice or to you personally. Therefore, you cannot advertise “a subsidiary of Dr. X” or “a subsidiary of East Side Optometry Centre”.

[ii] The separate company must operate within the generally accepted rules of internet replacement of contact lenses (i.e. prescription verification, not using an expired prescription, privacy protection, etc.).

[iii] The separate company and the regulated member must abide by the ACO Conflict of Interest Advisory with regard to these separate companies and business entities.