



A Canadian first: Alberta Doctors of Optometry can soon perform laser and minor surgical procedures

October 26, 2026 – The Government of Alberta has announced changes to modernize the scope of practice for optometrists. Beginning November 1, 2026, Alberta will be the first province in Canada to authorize qualified Doctors of Optometry to perform certain laser and minor surgical procedures, as well as administer injections. The Canadian Association of Optometrists (CAO) welcomes the announcement.

What this means for Albertans

For Albertans, this change means fewer referrals, less travel and easier access to certain eye treatments, right in their optometrist's office.

For example, someone who's had cataract surgery may notice their vision becoming cloudy again a few years later. This is fairly common and can often be treated with a quick laser procedure. Until now, that has meant a separate appointment with an ophthalmologist. Beginning November 1, optometrists will be able to provide this treatment in their own offices, making it easier for patients to get back to seeing clearly.

The change also gives patients with glaucoma better access to certain in-office laser treatments that help lower eye pressure and protect their vision. Optometrists already diagnose and manage glaucoma, and these additional treatment options will allow them to provide more of that care directly to their patients.

These changes recognize the training and skills of Doctors of Optometry and will help make better use of the eye care professionals already serving Alberta communities.

A milestone for optometry across Canada

Alberta's achievement follows years of work by the Alberta College of Optometrists and the Alberta Association of Optometrists, in partnership with the Government of Alberta, and sets a precedent for optometry across the country.

"This is a big moment for optometry in Canada, but more importantly, it's good news for patients," said Dr. Allison Scott, President of the Canadian Association of Optometrists. "Albertans will now be able to get more of their eye care right in their optometrist's office, without having to see another specialist for certain treatments. It's a practical change that will make care easier to access, and we hope other provinces will follow Alberta's lead."

CAO will continue to support our members as scope expansion moves forward across the country, so that patients everywhere can benefit from the full training and skills of their optometrists.

Learn more

- [From the Government of Alberta](#)
- [From the Alberta College of Optometrists](#)
- [From the Alberta Association of Optometrists](#)

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About the Canadian Association of Optometrists

The Canadian Association of Optometrists (CAO) is the national voice of optometry. As Canada's primary eye care professionals, optometrists serve as the first point of contact for Canadians seeking to protect their vision and eye health. CAO works collaboratively to advance the highest standard of primary eye care, promoting optimal vision, and eye health for all Canadians.

For more information, visit opto.ca.

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