ALABAMA BOARD OF OPTOMETRY
ADMINISTRATIVE CODE

CHAPTER 630-X-13
PRACTICE OF OPTOMETRY THROUGH TELEMEDICINE

630-X-13-.01 Definitions.

(1) Distant Site Provider. A provider of optometric services through telemedicine from a site other than the patient's then current location. A distant site provider shall hold an active Alabama optometry license as set out in §34-22-20 and §34-22-21 of the Code of Ala. 1975.

(2) Emergency. A situation or condition where failure to provide immediate treatment poses a threat of loss of sight to a person. For the purposes hereof, routine visual care shall not be an emergency.

(3) Established Treatment Site. A location where a patient shall present to seek optometric care (through telemedicine). An established treatment site shall have an optometrist licensed by the Alabama Board of Optometry present on site during the provision of any telemedicine to a patient, and there must exist between said optometrist and patient an optometrist-patient relationship. There shall be sufficient equipment and technology present at any established treatment site to allow for an adequate physical evaluation as appropriate for the patient's presenting complaint. A patient's home is not considered an established treatment site.

(4) Face-to-face Visit. An evaluation or appointment for treatment at which both the provider and patient are at the same physical location, or where the patient is at an established treatment site and the provider is a distant site provider.

(5) In-person Evaluation. A patient evaluation conducted by a provider who is at the same physical location as the location of the client.

(6) Provider. As used in this chapter the term "provider" shall mean an optometrist holding an active license to practice optometry granted by the Alabama Board of Optometry in accordance with §34-22-20 and §34-22-21 of the Code of Ala. 1975.

(7) Telemedicine. As used in these regulations, a health service that is delivered by a licensed optometrist acting within the scope of his or her license and that requires the use of telecommunications technology other than telephone or facsimile. Telecommunications technology as used herein shall include, but not be limited to:

(a) compressed digital interactive video, audio, or data transmission;

(b) clinical data transmission using computer imaging by way of still image capture and store and forward;

(c) other technology that facilitates access to health care services or optometric specialty services.

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