Optometric residency programs are optional after graduating from optometry school. They typically start in the summer and last for one year. A stipend is provided and will vary based on the institution funding the program. The stipends are considerably less than the starting salary of a newly graduated Doctor of Optometry so this is something to be aware of when starting the decision process.

The benefits to completing a residency are:

- Schools and colleges of optometry require residency training for clinical positions.
- The Veterans Health Administration looks favorably at residency training as a prerequisite for employment at hospitals and outpatient clinics.
- A growing number of private practice optometrists, ophthalmology and multi-disciplinary practice settings prefer an optometrist who has completed a residency.

There are many different areas that you can specialize in during a residency – the “Category” title most accurately reflects the content of the majority of the program's clinical and didactic curricula. A program may have a substantial portion (≥ 30%) of the clinical and didactic curricula devoted to an area of emphasis.

- **CATEGORY:** Primary Care Optometry, Pediatric Optometry, Cornea and Contact Lenses, Vision Rehabilitation, Ocular Disease
- **EMPHASIS AREAS:** Primary Care Optometry, Pediatric Optometry, Family Practice Optometry, Community Health Optometry, Geriatric Optometry, Cornea and Contact Lenses, Ocular Disease, Refractive and Ocular Surgery, Anterior Segment, Glaucoma, Retina, Neuro-Optometry, Vision Rehabilitation, Vision Therapy and Vision Rehabilitation, Low Vision Rehabilitation, Brain Injury Rehabilitation

By now, hopefully you have decided a residency is for you! Here’s what you need to do:

- Take Part III of the NBEO Exam early in the fourth year
- Submit applications to programs through ORMatch (opens in October and closes end of January)
- Get ready for face-to-face interviews! (These are usually required for most programs)
- Rank your choices through ORMatch by the ranking deadline (March)
- ORMatch releases results 1-2 weeks later
- Relax, and get ready to enjoy your residency

**Residency Resources on ASCO Website**

- FAQs about Residencies
- Residency Directory (provides the specific details of all the residency programs included in ORMatch)
- Optometry Resident Directory (gives you an opportunity to contact current and past residents with your questions)
- How to Apply - Optometry Residency Match (ORMatch)

optometriceducation.org