

SCHOOL OF OPTOMETRY POLICY

Date Revised: 12/19/2025

Effective Date: January 5, 2026

Responsible Party: Office of Student Affairs

Contact(s): Delia Lewis, MA, ALC, Assistant Director of Student Affairs

Student Wellness and Resource Policy and Procedures

Policy Statement

The University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) and the UAB School of Optometry (UABSO) are committed to promoting the health, safety, and well-being of all students. To ensure students have access to appropriate medical and mental health services, all enrolled students are required to maintain active health insurance coverage throughout their academic program. The UAB Student Health Services Department and the UABSO Office of Student Affairs provide detailed information on available healthcare resources, insurance requirements, and mental health support services prior to and during enrollment. UABSO Office of Student Affairs staff assist students with these resources and additional resources found on the UABSO Student Resources list.

Purpose

This policy outlines procedures for informing students of available healthcare services and support resources. The goal is to promote comprehensive wellness and ensure that all students can access timely and appropriate care to support their academic and personal success.

Scope

This policy applies to all students enrolled in the UAB School of Optometry.

Procedures

1. Pre-Matriculation Communication

- Prior to matriculation, all incoming students receive comprehensive information regarding healthcare resources, insurance requirements, and enrollment procedures.
- The Office of Student Affairs provides this information through orientation materials, email communications, and the UAB Student Health Services website.

2. Health Insurance Requirement

- All students must maintain active health insurance coverage as a condition of enrollment.
- Students may enroll in the university-sponsored student health insurance plan or submit proof of comparable private insurance to qualify for a waiver.
- Failure to provide proof of coverage will result in automatic enrollment in the university plan or a hold on registration.

UAB Optometry

3. Healthcare Services Access

- Students have access to on-campus healthcare services through UAB Student Health Services, which offers general medical care, immunizations, and preventive services.
- UABSO ensures that students receive information from a representative from Student Health Services during spring visit and new student orientation. That representative instructs them on the process of scheduling appointments, submitting insurance claims, and how to obtain referrals for specialty care.

4. Mental Health and Wellness Support

- Confidential mental health services are available to students through UAB Student Counseling Services.
- These services provide counseling, crisis intervention, and wellness programming designed to promote emotional well-being and academic success.
- UABSO Student Affairs has a Student Life and Success Manager and an Assistant Director that promote wellness and offers support to the students.

5. Ongoing Communication and Support

- The Office of Student Affairs maintains updated information regarding student health and wellness resources. This information is included on the Student Resources list.
- Students are encouraged to contact the Office of Student Affairs or UAB Student Health Services with questions or concerns related to healthcare coverage or access.

Review and Revision

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Office of Student Affairs to ensure continued alignment with university health requirements and best practices in student wellness support.