

NHS funding in England

This leaflet aims to help you understand whether you're eligible for a sight test paid for by the NHS (an NHS sight test) or help towards the cost of your glasses or contact lenses.

In England, you qualify for an NHS sight test if you:

- are aged 60 or over;
- are registered as partially sighted or blind;
- have diabetes;
- have glaucoma or been told by an ophthalmologist (eye doctor) that you're at risk of glaucoma; or
- are 40 or over and have a parent, brother, sister, son or daughter who has been diagnosed with glaucoma.

You are entitled to an NHS sight test, and may also get a voucher towards the cost of glasses or contact lenses, if you:

- are under 16, or under 19 and in full-time education;
- have been prescribed complex lenses and are eligible for a 'complex lens voucher' (your optometrist can tell you more about this);
- are on, or your partner is on, Income Support, income-based Employment and Support Allowance or income-based Jobseeker's Allowance;
- receive, or your partner receives, Pension Credit Guarantee Credit;
- are, or your partner is, awarded Universal Credit and meet the criteria on earnings limit;
- are a prisoner on leave from prison;
- are entitled to, or named on, a valid NHS tax credit exemption certificate; or
- are named on a valid NHS certificate for full help with health costs (HC2) (if you are named on an NHS certificate for partial help with health costs (HC3), you may also get help).

Proving you are entitled to an NHS sight test

When you go for your sight test, tell your optometrist that you're entitled to an NHS sight test. They will give you a GOS1 form to fill in and sign.

You may be asked to show proof that you're entitled to an NHS sight test. For more details, see the NHS leaflet, Help with health costs, which is available at www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/help-with-health-costs

More information

A lot of the information in this leaflet is taken from the NHS website. For more information, visit www.nhs.uk.

NHS mobile sight tests

If you qualify for an NHS sight test, you may be entitled to an NHS mobile sight test, where an optometrist carries out your sight test:

- at home – if you cannot leave home on your own because of physical or mental illness or a disability;
- at a residential or care home – if you normally live there and you cannot leave the home on your own because of physical or mental illness or a disability; or
- at a day centre – if you would have difficulty getting a sight test at an optician's practice because of physical or mental illness or a disability, or because you have difficulty communicating your health needs without help.

Contact your usual optometrist to find out if they can visit you at home.

About the AOP

The Association of Optometrists (AOP) is the voice of the optical profession, representing over 80% of practising optometrists. The AOP elevates the work of its members, safeguards their interests, and champions eye health across the UK. For more information, visit www.aop.org.uk