



vision australia

blindness and low vision services

NSW Spectacles Program and eligibility requirements

What is the NSW Spectacles Program?

The NSW Spectacles Program (the Program) assists financially disadvantaged people in NSW by providing free spectacles and other optical appliances to improve their vision and avoid preventable decline in eye health.

The Program provides funding to participating optometrists and optical dispensers to supply spectacles and other optical appliances to eligible clients free of charge.

The Program is funded by the NSW government and administered by Vision Australia.

What does the Program provide?

If you meet the Program eligibility criteria you are entitled to, in any two-year period to receive:

- One pair of single vision spectacles; or
- One pair of bifocal spectacles.

If you have particular clinical conditions, you may be entitled to other items including contact lenses, tinted lenses or low vision aids.

These items are provided free of charge through the Program. You can choose to pay an additional fee for items that are not available through the Program (such as multifocal or progressive lenses and non-standard frames).

Who is eligible to access the Program?

The Program is available to those who meet all the following eligibility criteria:

Residency	Be an Australian resident living permanently in NSW
Assets	Have less than \$500 of total assets (if single) OR Have less than \$1,000 in total family assets (if in a couple or a single parent)
Income	Receive a full (non-reduced) Commonwealth pension, benefit or allowance <u>AND</u> I receive no additional income (other than Centrelink payments) OR Be a low income earner with net income no greater than the full Newstart allowance (if under retirement age) or the full aged pension (if over retirement age)
Other schemes	Not be eligible to receive free optical appliances under another program (eg Department of Veterans' Affairs)
Time period	Have not received spectacles or other optical appliances under the Program within the past two years. (Special conditions exist if there has been a significant change in prescription within two years)

Note that dependent children (aged under 18 years) are also eligible for the Program if their parent/guardian(s) meet the eligibility criteria.

How does the application process work?

Before applying for the Program, you must have recently had an eye examination and have a prescription that is not older than 3 months. Most providers participating in the Program are optometrists who can conduct your eye examination. Vision Australia's website (www.visionaustralia.org/spectacles) lists all participating providers across NSW.

The application is completed by your optometrist or optical dispenser. You will receive an instant assessment of your eligibility based on information you provide. If Vision Australia confirms that you are eligible, your optometrist or optical dispenser will order your spectacles or optical appliance and let you know when they are ready to collect.

What information do I need to provide to apply?

Personal information

To make an application to the Program your optometrist or optical dispenser will ask you to provide personal details including your name, address, date of birth, gender, marital status, Medicare number, Pension type and concession number.

Centrelink Income Statement

If you receive a Centrelink benefit, you must provide a Centrelink Income Statement that is no more than 3 months old. The Centrelink Income Statement provides details of your **income** and **assets**. A Centrelink Income Statement can be requested by visiting a Centrelink office, using your Centrelink online account or via telephone, call 136 240.

Low income earners

If you are a low income earner, you must provide a payslip to confirm your income and a bank statement to confirm your assets. Both of these documents must be no more than 3 months old.

Consent and declaration

At the time of application, your optometrist or optical dispenser will provide you with the terms and conditions for participating in the Program. This will explain privacy conditions for the protection of your personal information and any action Vision Australia or the NSW government may take to verify information provided in your application.

You will be asked to provide verbal consent to the terms and conditions of the Program and a declaration that the information you have provided is true and correct.

Where can I get further information?

For further information on the NSW Spectacles Program, visit the Vision Australia website www.visionaustralia.org/spectacles

Or contact Vision Australia on:

Phone: 1300 84 74 66

Email: info@visionaustralia.org