

ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC SECURITY

Program Name: Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)

Policy Number: VR-9.3-v1

Effective Date: July 1, 2008

Last Revision: March 31, 2021

CHAPTER 9: Treatments

Section 9.3: Treatments: Vision

I. Policy Statement

This policy provides the guidelines regarding the provision of vision treatment for a client with a documented vision loss and may need these items in order to obtain and achieve a successful employment outcome as listed on their most recent and approved Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE).

II. Authority

Authority for policies contained in this document includes the following:

- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), 29 U.S.C. § 3101 et seq.
- Title IV Amendments to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. § 701 et seq.
- State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program, 34 C.F. R. §§:
 - Applicable definitions 361.5 (c)(39)(viii)
 - Scope of vocational rehabilitation services for individuals with disabilities 361.48 (b)(5)
 - Comparable services and benefits 361.53 (a) and (c-e)
 - Participation of individuals in cost of services based on financial need 361.54 (b)(1-2)
- A.R.S. §§ 23-502 and 503
- Arizona Administrative Code, Title 6, Chapter 4:
 - General considerations, R6-4-201 (A)(1)(c)
 - Provision of VR services R6-4-206 (B)
 - Service and provider standards, service authorizations, equipment purchasing, Workers' Compensation R6-4-402 (A)(1)(d); (B)(1)(b-c)
 - Economic need and similar benefits R6-4-403 (A)(1)(a)(i) and (2-5); (B)(1) and (2)(a)(i) and (c-e) and (3).

III. Applicability

This applies to circumstances when a vision treatment is requested due to vision conditions that prevent participation in the VR program and may be determined necessary in order to achieve a successful employment outcome. The client must:

- A. Meet economic need,
- B. Explore and utilize comparable benefits,
- C. Actively participate in the assessments and IPE development process,
- D. Complete all authorized services as referred by the VR Counselor, and
- E. Meet the following criteria in order to be eligible for cataract surgery:
 - 1. Visual acuity that cannot be corrected by lenses to better than 20/70 and is reasonably attributable to cataract,
 - 2. In the presence of complete inability to see posterior chamber, vision is confirmed by potential acuity meter reading, and
 - 3. In instances when the client has a corrected visual acuity between 20/50 and 20/70, a second opinion by an ophthalmologist is necessary.

IV. Standards

- A. Prior to proceeding with any vision treatment service(s), the VR Counselor must ensure the assessment requirements are completed, refer to section 8.8 Assessments-Vision for more information.
- B. The VR Counselor must ensure the preceding recommendation was reviewed by a VR contracted consultant, as applicable.
- C. Economic need is a requirement for the provision vision treatment service(s).
- D. The VR Counselor must ensure comparable benefits are explored and utilized prior to authorizing vision treatment service(s).
- E. Vision treatment services and prescription of visual aids/optical devices must be prescribed by an optometrist (OD), ophthalmologist (MD or DO) with training and experience in low vision evaluation, or a dispensing optician under the supervision of an optometrist or ophthalmologist.
- F. Cataract surgery must be performed by an ophthalmic surgeon licensed in their field of specialty according to the laws of the residing state.
- G. Vision treatment services and prescribed visual aids/optical devices must be included in the client's IPE.
- H. VR will cover the following prescribed visual aids/optical devices:
 - 1. Eyeglasses (spectacles)
 - 2. Contact lenses

3. Low vision aids (e.g. vision magnifier)
 4. Tinted lenses
 5. Microscopic lenses
 6. Telescopic lenses
- G. Low vision device training and fitting are allowable as prescribed by an optometrist (OD), ophthalmologist (MD or DO) for first time users.
- H. Eyeglasses must consist of glass or plastic mounted in a plastic or metal frame to compensate for refractive errors to achieve the best corrected vision.
- J. Eyeglasses may or may not correct a client's visual acuity to 20/20.
- K. VR does not differentiate between eyeglasses and low vision glasses, except for telescopic or microscopic lens systems.
- L. One (1) pair of glasses every two (2) years per client's specific prescription are allowable using VR contracted service providers and usual and customary rates.
- M. In instances when the client's vision and/or prescription has changed prior to the two (2) year period, documentation is required to show that current glasses no longer correct the vision for 20/40 in the best eye.
- N. In instances when the assessment report states the client has low vision and will need low vision equipment, the report must be forwarded to an VR contracted consultant to determine the appropriateness of the diagnosis and treatment.
- O. VR will not replace lost, stolen, or damaged glasses prior to the end of the two-year period.
- P. Cataract removal is a covered surgical service when the cataract is visible by exam, ophthalmoscopy, or slit lamp.
- Q. Cataract surgery is only covered only when there is a reasonable expectation by the operating ophthalmic surgeon that the member will achieve improved visual functional ability when visual rehabilitation is complete.
- R. Vision treatment services will commence when assessments are complete, using VR contracted vendors.
- S. Results from all vision assessments must be forwarded to VR Contracted Vision Consultant to:
1. Determine rates proposed by the referring ophthalmologist/optometrist are acceptable.
 2. To identify procedures which are outside of the scope of VR policy.
- T. As per the RSA Allowable Services sheet, clients are responsible for the difference above the threshold amount for items not deemed medically necessary by the vision provider.

V. Procedure

- A. Refer to IV. C, N, S and T above.
- B. Refer to Standard Work, if available.
- C. Refer to RSA Allowable Services Spreadsheet, Contracts (Vision Services) and Provider Requirements.
- D. The VR Counselor must complete the agency Referral for Services forms for the following services: Treatment-Vision for eyeglasses and contact lenses and low vision training and fitting, and Treatment-General/Medical Specialty for cataract surgical procedure upon IPE approval.
- E. The VR Counselor must task the Purchasing Technician to create RSA Purchase Authorizations for the services listed in V. D.
- F. The Purchasing Technician must submit the RSA Purchase Authorization for each of the service(s) listed in V.D along with the referral information to the provider(s).
- G. Upon receipt of each provider's reporting documentation (vision training and fitting report, surgical procedure report, or vision device), the VR Counselor must review the reporting documentation for completeness, approve the provider's invoice and process for payment after confirming that the reporting documentation is complete.

VI. Documentation Requirements

The client's electronic case file must include the following:

- A. Referral for Service form,
- B. Results of vision assessment,
- C. Consultation report (for low vision),
- D. Service is included in the IPE Justification Narrative, and
- E. Written summary report (Clinical Low Vision Examination Report for low vision), provided by the service provider, indicating the type of service completed.