

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRY
OFFICE OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

PROGRAM POLICIES & GUIDELINES

NUMBER: This is a new memo. It will be assigned a number in the 200 series.

SUBJECT: Low Vision Services –
Qualifications, Approval, & Use of Low Vision Providers & Services

STATE BOARD

APPROVAL DATE: This will be the date of the State Board meeting.

DISTRIBUTION: OVR Staff
OVR Legal Counsel
Pennsylvania State Board of Vocational Rehabilitation
Pennsylvania State Rehabilitation Council
Client Assistance Program
Statewide Independent Living Council
Advisory Committee for People who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing
Advisory Committee for the Blind of Pennsylvania
External Stakeholders

EFFECTIVE DATE: This will be the date of the State Board meeting.

IMPORTANT CHANGES: Establishes criteria for OVR to purchase services from low vision providers on behalf of their customers.
Establishes criteria for a low vision provider approval process.

RESULTING ACTION: Archive numbered memo 04-300.06 Procedures for Provision of CCTVs.

INQUIRIES: **BBVS** Director of Field Operations
570-826-5540

Copies of this numbered memorandum are available upon request.

All materials provided, produced and published by OVR will be made available in the appropriate alternative format when necessary and/or upon request.

POLICY

Low vision services are provided in order to advance a customer's vocational and/or independent living goals. In order for OVR to purchase low vision services, including low vision exams (LVE), low vision aids and devices, that provider must meet specific criteria. This memorandum establishes the criteria for the approval of low vision providers and the purchasing of low vision aids and devices.

PROCEDURE

Qualifications

In order for an eye care professional to qualify as a provider of low vision exams (LVE), he or she shall meet the following minimum requirements:

1. Graduate of approved ophthalmologic residency program or from an approved optometric program.
2. Licensure as M.D., D.O. or O.D. in state of Pennsylvania.
3. Specific training in the provision of low vision services to include 1 of the following:
 - a. 6 credit hours of post graduate training in the provision of low vision services **or**;
 - b. completion of an approved post graduate program in low vision of at least 6 months duration **or**;
 - c. At least 1 year of experience in providing low vision services to a patient/client population of at least 50 persons.
4. Capacity to perform LVE, which includes at a minimum the following equipment and devices:
 - a. Desk top electronic magnification devices (CCTV)
 - b. Portable electronic magnification devices
 - c. Hand held video magnifier
 - d. Magnifiers with various powers and lighting sources
 - e. Binoculars
 - f. Telescopes and monoculars
 - g. Prisms
 - h. Sun shields in a variety of colors
 - i. Lighting sources
 - j. High powered reading glasses

Documentation

A professional interested in providing LVE services to OVR customers must submit a PA Low Vision Provider Application (see Attachment 1). The application must include the following documentation:

1. Copy of Diploma from an approved Ophthalmologic program
2. Copy of Licensure with the state of Pennsylvania
3. Curriculum Vitae (C.V.) listing training and work experience
4. List of the equipment which will be used to perform the LVE (must meet the minimum requirements listed above in number 4).

Upon receipt of the requested information, the local District Administrator, or designee, will conduct a site visit to review the provider's capacity to conduct LVE. After initial approval, periodic reviews may occur to verify providers continued capacity to conduct LVE.

Approval of Low Vision Providers

Upon the successful completion of the site visit and confirmation that the professional meets the above established qualifications the District Administrator will inform the Local Office Fiscal Assistant (LOFA) to assist the Low Vision Provider with the provider enrollment process as described in 15-100.02 Fiscal Procedures & Documentation. The LOFA must upload the following documents into the CWDS business folder:

1. W-9 and OVR-120 *Provider Enrollment Form*
2. OVR-131 *Provider Agreement*
3. Copy of Diploma from an approved Ophthalmologic program
4. Copy of Licensure with the state of Pennsylvania
5. C.V. listing training and work experience
6. List of the equipment which will be used to perform the LVE (must meet the minimum requirements listed above in number 4).

Once uploaded the following will occur:

1. The Central Office Fiscal Technician (COFT) reviews the business folder and puts services in *Pending*
2. Then, the COFT e-mails the CO Specialist that the provider and services are ready for approval.
3. The Specialist reviews the business folder, verifies licenses (using www.licensepa.state.pa.us/), etc. and changes the status from *Pending* to *Approved*
4. The Specialist then lets the COFT know that they approved this provider
5. The COFT *informs* the LOFA that they have received *Approval* status
6. The LOFA informs the District Administrator *that the* provider has received approval status
7. The District Administrator informs the provider that they have received *Approval* status

NOTE: If disciplinary action has been noted on the license and the license has been verified as being reinstated, a provider may be approved by Central Office Staff. The requesting District Office will be made aware of the disciplinary action on record. The District Office will have the discretion to use that particular provider. If a license is not verified as being active/valid, the provider will not be approved. For more detailed information, go to www.licensepa.state.pa.us/ and enter the license number of low vision provider.

NOTE: If a professional group applies to become an OVR provider, each person in the group intending to provide LVE services to OVR customers must also provide all documentation outlined above. A specific contact person must be named for the approved provider. Established providers must provide documentation of qualifications of new eye care professionals who intend to provide services to OVR customers.

Minimum Components of Low Vision Exams

When obtaining a low vision evaluation for a customer, the LVE must address and provide documentation for the following:

- Case history
- Ocular health (if appropriate)
- Acuities
- Visual fields
- Refraction
- Binocularity
- Lighting needs
- Sun lens evaluation
- Magnification needs (including electronic magnification device evaluation)
- Contrast sensitivity

Low Vision Evaluation Report

A typed report must be submitted to OVR within 90 days of the evaluation. All minimum components of exam must be addressed along with any recommendations for aids/devices. Reports must be typed and signed by the provider completing the exam. If the provider's evaluation is received within 90 days from the evaluation, a 10% incentive will be added to their fee for the performed evaluation. If the report is received within 60 days of the performed evaluation, the provider will receive a 20% incentive. In the case of vocational rehabilitation

consumers, if the low vision evaluation report is received within 30 days from the low vision evaluation, the provider will receive the 30% incentive. Non-vocational rehabilitation cases will not be eligible for the 30 day incentive. The base fee will be applied to any LVE that does not meeting any of the incentives, longer than 90 days from the date of the performed evaluation.

VR Case Examples

- LVE report is received within 30 days, \$195 (includes 30% incentive)
- LVE report is received within 60 days, \$180 (includes 20% incentive)
- LVE is received within 90 days, \$165 (includes 10% incentive)
- LVE is received after 90 days, \$150 (base fee)

Non-Vocational Rehabilitation Low Vision Evaluation Exam Example:

- LVE is received within 60 days, \$180 (includes 20% incentive)
- LVE is received within 90 days, \$165 (includes 10% incentive)
- LVE is received after 90 days, \$150 (base fee)

Provision of Glasses, Low Vision Aids and Electronic Magnification Devices

As the result of the LVE, the provider may recommend the purchase of glasses, contact lenses, low vision aids and/or electronic magnification devices. The recommended services, aids and or devices may be authorized by OVR on a case by case basis, with concurrence of the OVR Case Manager (VRC, ERC or SW). OVR will not cover any services that are not pre-authorized.

1. The purchase price of recommended items is limited to the manufacturer's suggested retail price (excluding electronic magnification devices). OVR staff may also purchase the recommended low vision aids from other sources other than the Low Vision provider for cost containment reasons.
2. Authorizations for glasses and contacts are completed according to the OVR fee schedule.
3. OVR staff will provide the most appropriate Assistive Technology (AT) available.
4. When purchasing recommended electronic magnification devices (i.e. portable hand-held electronic devices and CCTV's) OVR staff will follow the procedures outlined in numbered memo 15-100.02 Fiscal Procedures & Documentation.

NOTE: The provision of CCTV's includes delivery, setup and training.

District Offices can "bundle" CCTV purchases, but must follow the procedures outlined in numbered memo 15-100.02 Fiscal Procedures & Documentation.

5. OVR staff may choose to provide equipment through the loan process available through Pennsylvania's Assistive Technology Lending Library to ensure that the equipment recommended is appropriate and will be utilized by the customer prior to purchasing the equipment for the customer.

Note: In VRE cases regarding customers transitioning to postsecondary training or obtained employment, the LVE should be completed with time allowance for the purchase of appropriate recommended low vision aides.

Comparable Benefit Information

Comparable benefits must be identified and utilized prior to authorizing BBVS funding for Low Vision Evaluations, aids or devices.

1. Comparable benefits include but are not limited to:
 - a) Medical Assistance (MA)
 - b) Medicare
 - c) American Healthcare (if it is accepted by the provider and it can be pre-approved)
 - d) Health insurance provided by an employer (If it is accepted by the provider and can be pre-approved)
 - e) Private health insurance plan (If it is accepted by the provider and can be pre-approved)
 - f) Long-term Disability Insurance
2. If known, all services listed in an Individualized Education Program (IEP) for Transition Students must be provided and/or paid for by the Local Education Agency (LEA).
3. Documentation (i.e. EOB) that comparable benefits were applied is required prior to payment by BBVS. This documentation must accompany the signed purchase order.

Purchasing of Low Vision Aids and Electronic Magnification Devices from a Low Vision provider:

When OVR purchases aids and/or devices from the provider, a Low Vision Follow-Up Exam with the provider is required to dispense, train and assess the effectiveness of the items purchased by OVR.

The Low Vision Follow-Up Exam will be authorized using Fee Code-S9791.

Waiver

Customers who require aids and services in excess of established programmatic per case allotments may request a waiver due to financial hardship. The customer must provide information to the Case Manager relating to their current income, household composition and the reason for their present financial hardship. The District Administrator or designee must approve all waivers.

Replacement of glasses, contacts and/or low vision aids

The replacement of glasses, contacts and/or low vision aids may be provided only when there is a significant change or further loss of vision and a demonstrated functional visual need. The Case Manager shall document the functional limitations of the customer and how new aids would alleviate these limitations.

Fee Codes

S9790 – Low Vision Exam

S9791 – Low Vision Follow-Up Exam, including training

Examples of how Low Vision Evaluation may be billed to insurance:

99214 – office visit - \$107.83 (25 mins.)

92015 – refraction - \$18.00

92081 or 92083 – visual field test – 92081- \$52.00 92083 - \$174.00

92250 – ophthalmoscopy - \$65.64

99204 – office visit - \$166.22 (45 mins.)

92015 – refraction - \$18.00

99203 – office visit - \$108.19 (30 mins.)
92015 – refraction - \$18.00
92133 – ophthalmic imaging - \$43.55
76514 – ophthalmic ultrasound – prevailing fee

99204 – office visit - \$166.22 (45 mins.)
92015 – refraction - \$18.00
92134- ophthalmic imaging - \$43.55

92004 – office visit - \$121.91 (comprehensive, new patient, one or more visits)
92015 – refraction - \$18.00

99203 – office visit - \$108.19 (30 mins.)
92250 – ophthalmoscopy – \$65.64

Definitions

1. Low Vision Specialist: An Optometrist or Ophthalmologist who specializes in providing low vision evaluations and has the ability to determine if optical devices, large print materials, better lighting, filters and/or vision rehab services can help an individual use his/her remaining vision more effectively.
2. Low Vision Evaluation: A comprehensive vision evaluation comprised of the following components used to maximize potential for visual functioning.
 - Case history
 - Ocular health
 - Visual acuity
 - Visual fields
 - Refraction
 - Binocularity
 - Lighting needs
 - Sun lenses evaluation
 - Magnification needs
 - Contrast sensitivity
3. Case History: A summary of the customer's
 - Overall health and that of the immediate family
 - Medications (prescription and over the counter)
 - History of smoking, diabetes, hypertension and sun exposure
 - Previous eye treatments and/or surgeries
 - Onset of visual difficulties
 - Recent changes in vision
 - Date of last eye exam
 - Prior vision rehabilitation services
 - Statement of present functional limitations due to vision loss

4. Ocular Health Exam: An examination of the external parts of the eye including the shape of the pupils and reaction to light, eyelids and surrounding tissue, eye muscles, tear ducts and cornea. This should also include an internal examination through the use of drops to open the pupil and examine the optic nerve and retina.
5. Visual Acuity: The ability of the eye to detect fine details and see in focus an image at a certain distance. Specialized low vision charts which contain different size letters and numbers are used to determine sharpness and clarity of vision for both distance and reading.
6. Visual Field: The total area in which objects can be seen using peripheral (side vision) while focusing on a central point.
7. Binocularity: The ability to focus on an object with both eyes and create a single stereoscopic image. (depth perception)
8. Refractive Error: An error in the focusing of light by the eye. When light rays are not focused on the retina, a refractive error is present. This is usually caused by changes in the shape of the cornea or length of the lens.
9. Types of refractive errors:
 - Myopia: (Nearsightedness) difficulty seeing distant objects clearly
 - Hyperopia: (Farsightedness) difficulty seeing objects up close
 - Presbyopia: (Age related) difficulty reading at arm's length
 - Astigmatism: distorted vision resulting from irregularly curved cornea
10. Refraction: The measurement of a refractive error by an eye care professional for the purpose of correcting the error with glasses or contact lenses.
11. Contrast: The difference in luminance or color that makes an object or its representation in an image or display distinguishable.
12. Contrast Sensitivity: The ability to see objects that may not be outlined clearly or stand out from their background. Contrast sensitivity is a major component of functional vision.
13. Sun Lens Evaluation: Assessment of different colored filters which would reduce glare and increase visual functioning.
14. Electronic Magnification Devices:
 - CCTV: An electronic magnification reading system that magnifies print material and projects onto a monitor. It is generally a combination of a customized camera, mount arm for steady hands free positioning of the camera, a viewing screen or monitor and lenses with the ability to zoom sometimes as great as 82X magnification. There are various modes for lighting, color and contrast and a viewing platform which allows for easy positioning of the book, item or image to be viewed.
 - Portable Electronic Magnifiers: An electronic magnification system that can easily be transported.
15. Binocular Telescope: A binocular telescope is a pair of identical mirror symmetrical telescopes mounted side by side and aligned to point accurately in the same direction allowing viewer to use both eyes when viewing distant objects. Binoculars give a three dimensional image for distant objects and an impression of depth for objects which are closer.
16. Monocular Telescope: a modified refracting telescope used to magnify the images of distant objects by passing light through a series of lenses. Monocular telescopes are light in weight and produce a two

dimensional image. Individuals with visual impairment(s) may use monocular telescopes for various distance tasks such as viewing street signs, bus signs etc.

17. Prisms: In optics, a lens that can have precise geometric configurations enabling light to be bent and reflected in certain ways. A prism can also split white light into different wave lengths and colors.
18. Prismatic Microscopic Reading Eyewear: These are high powered reading glasses that include a strong prism component which allows both eyes to work comfortably together at close distances.

Attachments

PA Low Vision Provider Application

DRAFT