

Driver Medical Review Ministry of Transportation Telescopic Lens Program

Program Overview

April 2024

Reporting by Healthcare Practitioners

The *Highway Traffic Act* requires physicians, optometrists, and nurse practitioners in Ontario to report to the ministry patients aged 16 or over who have certain medical or visual conditions that make it dangerous to drive. In addition, physicians, nurse practitioners, optometrists and occupational therapists have the discretion to report patients who, in their opinion, have a condition, not specified in regulation, that may make it dangerous to drive. More information can be found in O. Regulation 340/94

What are the vision standards for drivers?

Vision standards for a Class G (G1 & G2) are:

- Visual acuity of no less than 20/50 with both eyes open and examined together with or without the aid of corrective lenses, and with or without the use of telescopic lenses,
- Horizontal visual field of at least 120 continuous degrees along the horizontal meridian and at least 15 continuous degrees above and below fixation, with both eyes open and examined together. The visual field must be distributed equally – 60 degrees on either side of the vertical midline.

What is the Telescopic Lens Program?

The telescopic lens program is for Class G drivers whose corrected visual acuity does not meet the 20/50 requirement. To qualify for this program, drivers must submit a detailed assessment from an optometrist or ophthalmologist who specializes in low vision. To facilitate this process the ministry has developed a form where all necessary information can be collected.

Basic Entry Requirements

- ✓ Best corrected visual acuity no poorer than 20/160
- ✓ Full visual field as required by regulation (e.g. 120 degrees) *
- ✓ Contrast sensitivity values 1.35 or greater **
- ✓ Telescope power not to surpass 4x magnification
- ✓ Auto focus designs not permitted
- ✓ Telescope to fit in true bioptic position
- ✓ In-office training including focusing, spotting, tracking
- ✓ Minimum three months using bioptic device

* Discretion applied regarding central scotoma

** Those below 1.35 may be considered

If approved, the individual will be issued a restricted driver's licence and will proceed to be assessed both in-clinic and on-road with a specially trained occupational therapist (OT). In most cases, a minimum of 10 training sessions with the OT will be required.

What is a Functional Assessment?

A functional assessment, also called a Driving Evaluation, is an assessment by an OT and a licensed driving instructor. It includes an in-clinic assessment and an on-road driving evaluation. It takes 3-4 hours to complete and must be completed at one of the ministry's approved functional assessment centres.

Currently, only one assessment centre is approved to conduct functional driving assessments for individuals with telescopic lenses. Additional centres will be qualified as the program grows and more OTs are trained.

Components of a Telescopic Lens Functional Assessment

The functional assessment consists of a standardized in-clinic assessment and a standardized on-road evaluation.

The **in-clinic assessment** includes,

- A standard group of tests to determine if driving performance will be impacted by the condition,
- A brief medical history and a review of all medical reports provided.

The **on-road portion** of the evaluation includes,

- Standardized manoeuvres aimed at assessing visual function and the individual's ability to use the telescopic lens effectively while driving.
- Recommendations regarding number of training sessions is provided once the evaluation is complete.
- Novice drivers usually require more training than those who are, or have been, licensed.

Follow Up Requirements

- ✓ An annual renewal is required to ensure no deterioration in vision or change in prescription.
- ✓ Renewal form will be sent in advance of the due date.

Costs

The individual being assessed is responsible for all costs relating to the telescopic lens, driving evaluation and lessons.

For more information on the medical review process and national medical standards, please visit us at
[Medical review for Ontario drivers | ontario.ca](https://www.ontario.ca/medical-review)