



Social Security (Tables for the Assessment of Work-related Impairment for Disability Support Pension) Determination 2011

Table 12 – Visual Function

Introduction to Table 12

- Table 12 is to be used where the person has a permanent condition resulting in functional impairment when performing activities involving visual function.
- The diagnosis of the condition must be made by an appropriately qualified medical practitioner with supporting evidence from an ophthalmologist.
- Self-report of symptoms alone is insufficient.
- There must be corroborating evidence of the person’s impairment.
- Examples of corroborating evidence for the purposes of this Table include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - a report from the person’s treating doctor;
 - a report from a medical specialist (e.g. ophthalmologist, ophthalmic surgeon) confirming diagnosis of conditions associated with vision impairment (e.g. diabetic retinopathy, glaucoma, retinitis pigmentosa, macular degeneration, cataracts, congenital blindness);
 - results of vision assessments (e.g. from an optometrist).
- Table 12 should be applied with the person using any visual aids the person usually uses (e.g. spectacles or contact lenses).
- Where severe or extreme loss of visual function is evident or suspected, it is to be recommended that assessment by a qualified ophthalmologist occur to determine if the person meets the criteria for permanent blindness.

Points	Descriptors
0	<p><i>There is no functional impact on activities involving visual function.</i></p> <p>(1) The person has no difficulties seeing things at a distance or close up when wearing glasses or contact lenses if these are usually worn and all of the following apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the person has no difficulties seeing the print in a newspaper or magazine; (b) the person has no difficulties seeing road signs, street signs or bus numbers; (c) the person has a full field of vision, that is, they do not have any problems with peripheral vision (being aware of objects or movement to the sides, above or below, when looking straight ahead) and no patches or areas of lost vision; (d) the person can usually perform all day to day functions involving the eyes without discomfort (e.g. no watering of the eyes, difficulty opening the eyes, or difficulty moving the eyes) and is able to tolerate normal light levels.

5	<p><i>There is a mild functional impact on activities involving visual function.</i></p> <p>(1) The person can perform most day to day activities involving vision and has mild difficulties seeing things at a distance or close up when wearing glasses or contact lenses (if these are usually worn), and at least one of the following applies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(a) the person has some difficulty seeing the fine print in newspapers or magazines (e.g. they have to hold the print further away or use brighter light);(b) the person has some difficulty seeing road signs, street signs or bus numbers or has some difficulty reading road signs at night but can still travel around the community and use public transport without assistance;(c) when looking straight ahead, the person has some difficulty seeing objects to the side or in the centre of their field of vision;(d) the person experiences some discomfort when performing day to day activities involving the eyes (e.g. mild occasional watering of the eyes, mild difficulty opening the eyes, or mild difficulty moving or coordinating the eyes, or difficulty tolerating bright lights and sunlight);(e) the person has functional vision in only 1 eye, or only has 1 eye, but has good vision in the remaining eye.
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*There is a **moderate** functional impact on activities involving visual function.*

(1) The person:

- (a) has moderate difficulties seeing things at a distance or close up when wearing glasses or contact lenses if these are usually worn or the person has very limited vision to the sides when looking straight ahead or the person has other significant loss in their field of vision (e.g. patches where they can see nothing or very little); and
- (b) needs to use vision aids or assistive devices other than spectacles and contact lenses for some tasks; and
- (c) has difficulty performing some day to day activities involving vision (e.g. difficulty seeing the print letters, signs or route numbers on approaching buses or at train stations); and
- (d) has at least one of the following:
 - (i) some difficulty seeing routine workplace, educational or training information (e.g. signs, safety information, or manuals) and may need to use alternative formats (e.g. large print), assistive devices or technology for vision in work, training or educational settings;
 - (ii) moderate discomfort when performing day to day activities involving the eyes (e.g. frequent watering of the eyes, frequent difficulty opening the eyes, or moderate difficulty moving or coordinating the eyes, or unable to tolerate normal levels of light indoors or outdoors);
 - (iii) only 1 eye or functional vision in only 1 eye and has mild problems with the vision in their only functioning eye; and

(2) The person:

- (a) is able to function independently in familiar environments (that is, without regular assistance from other people); and
- (b) is able to travel independently using public transport when using any assistive devices that they have and usually use.

20	<p><i>There is a severe functional impact on activities involving visual function.</i></p> <p>(1) The person:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) has severe difficulties seeing things at a distance or close up when wearing glasses or contact lenses if these are usually worn; and (b) needs to use vision aids or assistive devices other than spectacles and contact lenses for many tasks; and (c) has severe difficulty performing many day to day activities involving vision (e.g. difficulty distinguishing between different types of food in tins or packets, seeing the level of fluid in a cup or reading aisle signs in the supermarket even when standing close to these); and (d) either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) is unable to see routine workplace, educational or training information (e.g. signs, safety information, or manuals) even when using any assistive devices or technology that they have; or (ii) needs assistance to use public or other means of transport to travel to work, educational or community facilities even when using any assistive devices that they have (e.g. a guide dog or cane); and (e) is unable to move around independently in unfamiliar environments.
30	<p><i>There is an extreme functional impact on activities involving visual function.</i></p> <p>(1) The person is not considered permanently blind and, due to extreme functional impact on vision, the person:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) needs assistance to move around even in familiar environments; and (b) needs assistance to perform most day to day activities.