

Registering as sight impaired

Support throughout central vision loss

Being registered often makes it easier to get practical help and may qualify you for certain benefits.

**No one need face macular degeneration alone.
For information and support call 0300 3030 111.**

If you have a permanent visual impairment you may be eligible to be registered as sight impaired. Being registered often makes it easier to get practical help and may qualify you for certain benefits.

Registration is voluntary. There are two categories of registration; sight impaired and severely sight impaired.

The loss of sight in one eye does not generally qualify you for registration.

If you are registered either sight impaired or severely sight impaired you may be entitled to:

- free NHS sight tests
- railcard and other rail or travel concessions
- local travel schemes
- free directory enquiry services from BT
- protection by the Disability Discrimination Act.

In addition, if you are registered as severely sight impaired you may be entitled to:

- blind person's personal income tax allowance
- reduction of 50% on the television licence fee
(N.B. everyone over 75 gets a free television licence)
- car parking concessions such as the blue badge scheme.

You may also get:

- free loan of radios, cassette players and TV sound receivers
- help with telephone installation charges and line rental

How do I register?

To be registered, you must have your sight examined by a hospital consultant ophthalmologist (eye specialist).

This can be arranged by your GP if you are not already a patient of a consultant.

If the ophthalmologist thinks that you are suitable for registration he or she will complete a Certificate of Visual Impairment form (CVI 2003) with you. This form records information about your

condition and certifies you either as sight impaired or severely sight impaired. It also records your permission for your name to be on the register.

Copies of the CVI will be sent to social services and your GP. You can also have a copy if you want one. A member of the sensory services team will then visit you to assess your particular needs and discuss what services and benefits may be available.

Other ways to get help from social services

There are two other forms that can be used to refer someone to social services for assessment:

- **Low Vision Leaflet (LVL).** Your optician may give you a self-referral leaflet that is pre-printed with your local social services contact details.

This needs to be filled in and returned to the social services.

- **Referral of Vision Impaired Patient.** This is a form which eye clinic staff or

your optician can complete on your behalf (with your consent).

It notifies social services that you are having difficulties as a result of your sight loss. It gives some information about your vision and the types of things that you might like help with, for example cooking or getting about safely.

This form is used if your sight is not poor enough to qualify you for registration or if you don't want to be registered but you do want advice and

information that might help you. The type and level of services available differs according to area.

Some people who are not eligible to be registered as sight impaired may still qualify to be registered as disabled.

Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland

Different certification forms for visual impairment are used in other parts of the UK. BD8 in Wales, BP1 in Scotland, A655 in Northern Ireland.

Services in Scotland and Northern Ireland may also be organised in different ways.

Your local social work department in Scotland, or Health and Social Services Trust in Northern Ireland, will be able to give you information about services in your area.

Details are available from our helpline: 0300 3030 111.

You can also call RNIB resource centres for information:

**RNIB Scotland
Dunedin House
25 Ravelston Terrace
Edinburgh EH4 3TP
Tel 0131 311 8500**

**RNIB Northern Ireland
40 Linenhall Street
Belfast BT2 8GB
Tel 028 9032 9373**

**RNIB Cymru
Trident Court
East Moors Road
Cardiff CF24 5TD
Tel: 029 2045 0440**

Further information can be obtained from:

Government's Benefits Enquiry Line
Tel 0800 882200

TV Licence Helpline:
Tel 0845 602 3334

The Macular Society provides support and information so that no one need face macular degeneration alone.

All our services are free and available to anyone who needs them.

Helpline

Our helpline team is there for anyone affected by macular conditions.

**Call 0300 3030 111
Mon-Fri 9-5.**

email help@macularsociety.org

If you've found this leaflet useful please consider making a donation to support our work.

**Macular Society**

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Macular Society

PO Box 1870

Andover

SP10 9AD

01264 350 551

www.macularsociety.org

info@macularsociety.org

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