
DIRECTIONS

NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE, ENGLAND

The National Health Service (Charges for Optical Appliances) Directions 2016

Regulation 2(1) of the National Health Service (Optical Charges and Payments) Regulations 2013^(a) provides for the making and recovery of charges in respect of the supply of glasses and contact lenses under the National Health Service Act 2006^(b) by NHS trusts, NHS foundation trusts and other persons acting on their behalf.

By virtue of section 179(2)(b) of that Act, those charges may be determined by or in accordance with directions given by the Secretary of State.

The Secretary of State for Health gives the following directions in exercise of the powers conferred by sections 179(2)(b) and (3), 272(7) and (8) and 273(1) of that Act^(c).

Citation, commencement and interpretation

1.—(1) These Directions may be cited as the National Health Service (Charges for Optical Appliances) Directions 2016, and come into force on 1st April 2016.

(2) In these Directions—

“the 2013 Regulations” means the National Health Service (Optical Charges and Payments) Regulations 2013;

“actual cost of lenses” means the amount equal to the cost to the responsible body of the purchase of the lenses;

“appropriate maximum charge” has the meaning given in direction 2;

“dispensing cost” means the amount equal to the cost to the responsible body of dispensing the lenses;

“full cost of a frame” means the amount equal to the cost to the responsible body of the purchase of—

(a) in the case of an adult, an adult’s frame; or

(b) in the case of a child, a child’s frame; and

“responsible body” means the person that is required, by virtue of regulation 2 of the 2013 Regulations (charges for glasses and contact lenses), to make and recover a charge of such amount as may be determined in accordance with directions given by the Secretary of State.

(a) S.I. 2013/461, as amended by S.I. 2013/1856, 2015/417, 570 and 1776.

(b) 2006 c.41.

(c) By virtue of section 271(1) of the National Health Service Act 2006, the powers conferred by these sections are exercisable by the Secretary of State only in relation to England.

Maximum charge for lenses for glasses

2. The appropriate maximum charge for lenses for glasses is, in the case of—

- (a) a single vision lens, £70.00; or
- (b) all other lenses, £113.80.

Charge for glasses

3.—(1) The charge to be made and recovered by a responsible body by virtue of regulation 2 of the 2013 Regulations (charges for glasses and contact lenses) in respect of the supply of glasses is determined in accordance with the following paragraphs.

(2) Where the actual cost of the lenses together with the dispensing cost is less than the appropriate maximum charge, subject to paragraph (4), the charge payable is the total amount of—

- (a) the actual cost of lenses;
- (b) the dispensing cost; and
- (c) the full cost of the frame.

(3) Where the actual cost of the lenses together with the dispensing cost is equal to or more than the appropriate maximum charge, subject to paragraph (4), the charge payable is the total of—

- (a) the appropriate maximum charge; and
- (b) the full cost of the frame.

(4) Where it is clinically necessary to supply a frame and the cost of that frame is more than the cheapest full cost of a frame in the range of frames supplied by the responsible body, the charge payable in respect of the frame supplied is—

- (a) in the case of an adult, the cheapest full cost of a frame in the range of frames supplied by the responsible body to adults; or
- (b) in the case of a child, the cheapest full cost of a frame in the range of frames supplied by the responsible body to children.

Charge for a contact lens

4. The charge to be made and recovered by a responsible body by virtue of regulation 2 of the 2013 Regulations (charges for glasses and contact lenses) in respect of one contact lens is £57.00.

Revocation and saving

5.—(1) The National Health Service (Charges for Optical Appliances) Directions 2015 (a) (“the 2015 Directions”) are revoked.

(2) The 2015 Directions continue to apply to the amount of the charge that is to be made and recovered where the requirement to supply glasses or contact lenses that gives rise to the charge results from a sight test which took place before 1st April 2016.

Signed by authority of the Secretary of State for Health

22nd March 2016

Peter Howitt
A Member of the Senior Civil Service
Department of Health

(a) Signed on the 25th March 2015 and available to download from <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nhs-optical-voucher-values-from-1-april-2015>. Hard copies are available from Eye Care Services, Department of Health, 201 Richmond House, 79 Whitehall, London, SW1A 2NS.