

Guidance on eligibility for NHS eye tests – tax credit and universal credit



Patients are entitled to a free NHS sight test if they:

- are under 16
- are 16, 17 or 18 and in full-time education
- are 60 or over
- are registered as partially sighted or blind
- have been diagnosed with diabetes or glaucoma
- are 40 or over and your mother, father, sibling or child has been diagnosed with glaucoma
- have been advised by an eye doctor (ophthalmologist) that you're at risk of glaucoma
- are a prisoner on leave from prison
- are eligible for an NHS complex lens voucher – your optician can advise you about your entitlement

Patients also qualify for a free NHS sight test if they receive:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-based Employment and Support Allowance
- Pension Credit Guarantee Credit
- tax credits and meet the criteria below
- Universal credit and meet the criteria below
- have a low income and are named on a valid NHS HC2 certificate for full help with health costs

Tax Credit Eligibility:

Patients are entitled to full help with health costs if their annual family income used to calculate their Tax Credits is £15,276 or less and they receive either:

- Child Tax Credit
- Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit paid together
- Working Tax Credit including a disability or severe disability element

Help with health costs for patients getting Universal Credit:

If patients receive universal credit they may also qualify for help with health costs. Patients qualify if, on the date they claim help with health costs:

a) they receive Universal Credit and either had no earnings or had net earnings of £435 or less in their last Universal Credit assessment period. NB: Patients must have one or the other here – universal credit alone does not qualify)

or

b) they receive Universal Credit, which includes an element for a child, or them (or their partner) had limited capability for work (LCW) or limited capability for work and work-related activity (LCWRA), and they either have no earnings or net earnings of £935 or less in their last Universal Credit assessment period. NB: Patients must have one or the other here – universal credit alone does not qualify)

Note: If the patient is part of a couple, the net earning threshold applies to their combined net earnings.

Patients should present a copy of their Universal Credit award notice to prove entitlement.

Evidence should be produced by the patient upon signing the declaration at the bottom of the GOS form. Not all help with health costs claim forms have a tick box for Universal Credit. If that's the case, you should tick the box for income-based Jobseeker's Allowance instead.

This information was derived from: www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/help-with-health-costs/free-nhs-eye-tests-and-optical-vouchers

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