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## DIRECTIONS

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# NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE, ENGLAND

## The National Health Service (Charges for Optical Appliances) Directions 2024

The Secretary of State gives the following Directions, in exercise of the powers conferred by sections 179(2)(b) and (3)(a), 272(7) and (8) and 273(1) of the National Health Service Act 2006(a).

### Citation, commencement, extent and application

- 1.—(1) These Directions may be cited as the National Health Service (Charges for Optical Appliances) Directions 2024.
- (2) These Directions come into force on 1st April 2024.
- (3) These Directions extend to England and Wales, but apply to England only.

### Interpretation

2. In these Directions—

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

“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 3;

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

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

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

“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.

### Maximum charge for lenses for glasses

3. The appropriate maximum charge for lenses for glasses is—

- (1) £75.85 for a single vision lens;
- (2) £123.34 for all other lenses.

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(a) 2006 c.41. Section 98A of the National Health Service Act 2006 (“the Act”) was inserted by section 49(1) of the Health and Social Care Act 2012 c. 7. By virtue of section 271(1) of the Act, the powers conferred by these sections are exercisable by the Secretary of State only in relation to England.

(b) S.I. 2013/461. There are amending instruments but none that are relevant.

### **Charges for glasses**

**4.**—(1) The charge to be made and recovered by a responsible body in respect of the supply of glasses is determined in accordance with paragraphs (2) to (4).

(2) Subject to paragraph (4), where the actual cost of the lenses together with the dispensing cost is less than the appropriate maximum charge, the charge payable is the sum of—

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

(3) Subject to paragraph (4), where the actual cost of the lenses together with the dispensing cost is equal to or more than the appropriate maximum charge, the charge payable is the sum 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 cost of the cheapest frame, the charge payable in respect of the frame supplied is the cost of the cheapest frame.

(5) In paragraph (4), the “cost of the cheapest frame” means—

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

### **Charge for contact lens**

**5.** The charge to be made or recovered by a responsible body in respect of one contact lens is £61.77.

### **Revocation and Savings**

**6.**—(1) Subject to paragraph (2), the National Health Service (Charges for Optical Appliances) Directions 2023 (“the 2023 Directions”) which were signed on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2023 are revoked<sup>(a)</sup>.

(2) The 2023 Directions continue to apply in relation to charges to be made and recovered in respect of the supply of glasses and contact lenses, resulting from sight tests which took place before 1st April 2024.

Signed by the authority of Secretary of state of Health and Social Care



*Alette Addison*  
Member of the Senior Civil Service  
Department of Health and Social Care

Date: 25<sup>th</sup> March 2024

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(a) A copy of these Directions is available from the Department of Health and Social Care website at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nhs-general-ophthalmic-service-fees-and-optical-voucher-values-from-april-2023>