

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS



Standard Operating Procedures

Policy Name: Optical Services

Policy Number: 507.04.22

Effective Date: 01/25/22

Page Number: 1 of 4

Authority:
Commissioner

Originating Division:
Health Services Division
(Physical Health)

Access Listing:
Level I: All Access

I. Introduction and Summary:

Offenders will be afforded access to medically indicated optical services. This policy is applicable to all offenders housed in Georgia Department of Corrections (GDC) facilities, including private and county prisons.

II. Authority:

- A. GDC Standard Operating Procedure (SOP): 213.17 Offender Property/Contraband;
- B. ACA Standard: 5-ACI-6A-17 (Mandatory);
- C. NCCHC 2018 Adult Standard: P-G-11; and
- D. GDC Board Rule: 125-4-4-.07.

III. Definitions: None.

IV. Statement of Policy and Applicable Procedures:

- A. Eyeglasses:
 - 1. Visual Screening and Optical Services:
 - a. Each Georgia Department of Corrections (GDC) facility will have an identified provider of optometry services.
 - b. Offenders entering GDC will receive visual acuity screening using the Snellen chart for distant vision and the Rosenbaum test for near vision or other acceptable screening method, at the time of diagnostic intake.

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS



Standard Operating Procedures

Policy Name: Optical Services

Policy Number: 507.04.22

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Page Number: 2 of 4

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- c. Thereafter, visual acuity screening will occur during periodic physical examinations and when recommended by specific disease protocols found in the Chronic Care Clinic Procedures and Protocols or Clinical Updates.
2. Criteria for Issuing Eyeglasses:
- a. Offenders who have uncorrected visual acuity of 20/40 or better in the worst eye will not be given eyeglasses.
 - b. Offenders who experience refractive vision asthenopia or visual acuity 20/50 or worse in the worst eye will be given single vision or bifocal eyeglasses at the optometrist's discretion.
 - c. An offender may be considered for eyeglasses if the assigned work detail or vocational program requires corrected vision.
 - d. In short-term facilities (i.e., 120 days or less), offenders will not be issued glasses unless there are vision deficiencies such as legally blind (visual acuity of 20/200 or worse in the better eye) or of such an impairment that the offender cannot function in the judgment of the health authority.
 - e. These criteria will be followed unless there are specific medical indications that dictate a different approach. In such instances, the offender will be referred to an optometrist for consultation. Should the optometrist fail to correct the vision to 20/20 and is unable to discover a reason for the decreased vision, the optometrist may request a consultation with an ophthalmologist, if necessary.
 - f. Eyeglass request forms will be placed in the health record in the eye chart section, together with a copy of the eyeglass prescription.
 - g. Georgia Correctional Industries (GCI) and other contracted vendors may be used in providing eyeglasses for offenders. Appropriate facility personnel should carefully examine quality and stated prices before

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS



Standard Operating Procedures

Policy Name: Optical Services

Policy Number: 507.04.22

Effective Date: 00/00/2021

Page Number: 3 of 4

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ordering glasses. If quality of the product is determined to be the same from all vendors, then the lowest price should be the determinate factor in selecting the vendor.

- h. Offenders will be asked to sign the eyeglass request form, upon receipt of the eyeglasses.
- i. If state issued eyeglasses are lost, damaged or broken, as a result of an offender's willful act, they will be replaced at the offender's expense. During annual intervals, following the initial diagnostic intake evaluation, should an optometry exam determine that an offender's eyesight has changed significantly enough to require a new prescription, and then replacement eyeglasses will be obtained at the contractor's expense.
- j. Offenders may choose to wear personal clear, untinted eyeglasses if approved by the Georgia Department of Corrections. However, if these eyeglasses are lost or broken the offender will receive State issued glasses or have their own repaired at their expense.

B. Contact Lenses:

1. Offenders will not be supplied with contact lenses or related cleaning and disinfecting supplies unless required for documented medical reasons such as keratoconus.
2. Offenders wearing contact lenses upon entering the system will be evaluated by an optometrist to ascertain the need for such devices and any necessity for the offender to continue wearing them until the State can furnish eyeglasses.
3. Offenders entering the system with contact lenses will be given priority for evaluation and for the ordering of eyeglasses.
4. Offenders in short-term facilities (for six months or less) will be permitted to keep contact lenses, and related cleaning and disinfecting solutions will be

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Policy Name: Optical Services

Policy Number: 507.04.22

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Page Number: 4 of 4

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made available in the commissary. If the contact lenses have been prescribed for medical reasons other than decreased visual acuity, the offender will be supplied with cleansing solution.

C. **Sunglasses: (Glasses with Tinted Lenses):**

1. Sunglasses will not be furnished to offenders except by the order of an optometrist or ophthalmologist for documented medical reasons. Such medical reasons will include, but not be limited to chronic diseases and congenital defects of the conjunctiva, cornea, iris, retina, and uvea. Photophobia, in the absence of clinically evident pathology, will not be considered justification for ordering the tinted lenses.

V. **Attachments:** None.

VI. **Record Retention of Forms Relevant to this Policy:** None.