

Financial Aid for Eye Care

A Lighthouse Center for Education Resource



Thank you for contacting Lighthouse International regarding free and low cost vision care. The following organizations assist people who cannot afford eye examinations, eyeglasses or surgery. We suggest that you contact these agencies directly for more information about their programs and eligibility requirements.

Eye Examinations

American Optometric Association

243 North Lindbergh Boulevard
St. Louis, MO 63141
Tel 314-991-4100
Fax 314-991-4101

Sponsors **Vision USA**, a program offering free eye. Call 1-800-766-4466 to apply.

EyeCare America

P.O. Box 429098
San Francisco, CA 94142
Tel 800-222-EYES (3937)
Fax 415-561-8567
<http://www.eyecareamerica.org>

Sponsors **The Seniors EyeCare Program**, which provides free eye care educational materials and facilitates access to eye care at no out-of-pocket expense. People eligible receive an eye exam

and up to one year of treatment for any disease diagnosed during the initial exam. Ophthalmologists who provide care accept Medicare and/or other insurance reimbursement as payment in full; patients without insurance receive care at no cost.

Also, sponsors **Celebrate Sight: Do You Know Your Glaucoma Risk?** which provides free eye examinations and treatment for glaucoma. Contact EyeCare America at **800-391-EYES (3937)**.

LensCrafters: Gift of Sight

Tel 800-522-LENS (5367)

<http://www.GivetheGiftofSight.org>

LensCrafters doctors and associates collect and recycle old glasses, execute optical missions in developing countries, offer vision screening at health fairs, and provide new glasses to pre-selected needy people in LensCrafters stores and their two mobile "Vision Vans". **To become a recipient, contact the Gift of Sight store captain at the LensCrafters store nearest you. For an online store locator, go to http://www.lenscrafters.com/CompanyInfo/Ci_Find_a_Store.cfm on the Internet.**

Medicare Glaucoma Benefit

Tel 800-633-4227

<http://www.medicare.gov>

People at high risk for glaucoma include those with diabetes or a family history of glaucoma, or African Americans age 50 or older. Medicare will pay for an eye exam to check for glaucoma once every 12 months. Patients must pay 20 percent of the Medicare-approved amount after the yearly Part B deductible.

Eyeglasses

New Eyes for the Needy

549 Millburn Avenue
P.O. Box 332
Short Hills, NJ 07078
Tel 973-376-4903
Fax 973-376-3807

Accepts donations of used prescription eyeglasses and distributes them to persons with limited incomes. Recipients must have a letter of referral from a social services agency.

SCHIP – State Children’s Health Insurance Program

Tel 1-877-KIDS-NOW

In this program, eligible children receive regular checkups, doctor visits, immunizations, prescription drug coverage, eyeglasses, and hospital care. **To find the CHIP program in your state, go online to <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/schip>**

Surgery

The Hill Burton Program

Health Resources and Services Administration
4350 East West Highway
Bethesda, MD 20814
Tel 301-443-5656
Fax 301-443-0619

Participating hospitals and other health care facilities provide medical care for free, or at reduced cost, to those who meet

eligibility requirements. Procedures covered vary from hospital to hospital.

Mission Cataract USA

Tel 949-720-0984

A program coordinated by the Volunteer Eye Surgeons' Association providing free cataract surgery to people of all ages who have no other means to pay. Surgeries are scheduled annually on one day, usually in May.

Prescription Drugs

The Medicine Program

P.O. Box 4182

Poplar Bluff, MO 63902-4182

Tel 573-996-7300

E-mail: help@themedicineprogram.com

<http://www.themedicineprogram.com>

Assists people to enroll in one or more of the many patient assistance programs that provide prescription medicine free-of-charge to those in need. Patients must meet the sponsor's criteria. The program is conducted in cooperation with the patient's doctor.

HelpingPatients.org

<http://www.helpingpatients.org>

A new interactive website offered by the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA) and 48 of its member companies. This site was designed to help patients find medication assistance programs for which they may qualify.

State Pharmaceutical Assistance Programs

<http://www.ncsl.org/programs/health/drugaid.htm>

National Conference of State Legislatures provides general information on state drug assistance programs for low-income people.

Suggestions for Finding Resources in Your Community

County Medical Society

State Ophthalmological Society

Provide referrals to ophthalmologists. Some medical societies and ophthalmological societies maintain listings of practices that accept Medicaid or Medicare, or provide free or low-cost eye examinations.

State Optometric Association

Provides referrals to optometrists. Some optometric associations have information about local programs that provide free or low-cost eye examinations.

The Knights Templar Eye Foundation

Headquarters

P.O. Box 579

Springfield, IL 62705-0579

Helps individuals who cannot afford surgery and who are not eligible for government-funded health care. Local chapters are listed in the phone book under "fraternal organizations."

Lions Club International

300 22nd Street

Oak Brook, IL 60523-8842
Tel 630-571-5466

Many Lions Clubs have chosen vision care as their primary charitable focus. The availability of Lions services and eligibility requirements vary from community to community. Use your local telephone directory (see Fraternal Organizations) to find local chapters.

Sight for Students, Vision Service Plan (VSP)

888-290-4964

<http://www.SightforStudents.org>

Provides eye exams and glasses to children 18 years of age and younger whose families cannot afford vision care.

Visit us on the Web at www.lighthouse.org

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