

# Spectacle Supply Scheme

Information for clients



**Queensland** Government  
Queensland Health

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## Introduction

The Spectacle Supply Scheme (SSS) provides a comprehensive range of basic prescription spectacles to eligible Queensland residents. All eligible applications to SSS are assessed through an equitable process based on clinical need.

The information contained within this booklet provides a general guide to SSS and cannot address all situations and individual circumstances. If you have further questions concerning any aspect of the Scheme, please contact SSS on 07 3250 8695.

## Who is eligible?

To be eligible for assistance from SSS, you must:

- › Be a permanent resident of Queensland; and
- › Hold, **in your own name**, one of the following concession cards continuously for a minimum period of six months immediately preceding the date of your application to SSS:
  - Commonwealth Pensioner Concession Card
  - Commonwealth Health Care Card
  - Queensland Government Seniors Card
  - Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) Pensioner Concession Card (if not eligible for spectacles provided under the DVA Optical Supplies Program. Holders of Gold and White DVA cards should contact DVA to assess their eligibility).
- › Have a clinical need for spectacles based on an assessment by an optometrist/ophthalmologist who completes the eye examination

There is a two yearly period of entitlement for the replacement of spectacles provided by SSS. Once you have received spectacles/lenses from SSS, you are ineligible to apply to the Scheme again within a two year period unless further clinical need, based on changes to your eyesight, can be demonstrated.

## How do I obtain spectacles if I am eligible?

When applying for spectacles you will first need to have your eyes tested by an optometrist/ophthalmologist of your choice. This eye test will determine whether you have a clinical need for spectacles under the Scheme.

You will need to advise the optometrist/ophthalmologist when you have your eye test that you will be applying for spectacles through SSS.

Once you have had your eye examination and clinical need for spectacles has been determined, you will need to complete Part B of the Spectacle Supply Scheme application form to apply. If your optometrist/ophthalmologist is also a dispensing agent under SSS, they will complete Part C of the application form, and forward the forms to SSS to process. If not, the optometrist/ophthalmologist will write your prescription on their own prescriptions forms, and you will need to present that form to a dispensing agent for the SSS application form to be completed. The dispensing agent will also help you select appropriate frames from a sample range available under the Scheme.

Once your application has been received, SSS will process your application, and advise you in writing if it has been approved or rejected. SSS will forward approved applications to the contractor to make your new spectacles.

The contractor will return the finished spectacles to your dispensing agent, who will notify you when your new spectacles are ready. The dispensing agent will also provide a fitting service when you collect your spectacles. If it is more convenient, you can choose to have the contractor mail the spectacles directly to your home address.

## What happens if I am not eligible?

If you are not eligible under the Scheme you will need to privately purchase any required spectacles from your optometrist.

If you are not eligible for SSS, you will be advised of the reason for the decision. If you disagree with the decision, or are dissatisfied with the service you have received, you may appeal or make a complaint as outlined in the complaint section of this booklet.

## What if English is not my first language?

If you are from a non-English speaking background and have difficulty in completing the Spectacle Supply Scheme application form, you may use an accredited interpreter for the purposes of communication. You should contact your local Community Health Centre to arrange interpreter services.

Queensland Health will be responsible for arranging interpreters for the SSS application form completion only. If you require an interpreter for your eye examination, you and your optometrist/ophthalmologist are responsible for arranging this.

## What if I lose or break my spectacles?

Depending on the circumstances involved in the loss or breakage, you may be eligible for reissue of spectacles of the same prescription. In some circumstances, replacements spectacles are provided at no cost. However, you will generally be required to pay the normal issue cost for the replacement or repair of spectacles directly to SSS. The normal issue cost is the price charged to SSS for the replacement spectacles.

You will be required to privately purchase all repairs or replacement of spectacles caused by *unreasonable use or misuse of your spectacles, or by not cleaning the spectacles to a reasonable standard.*

When applying for replacement spectacles, you will need to complete a SSS application form. You will also be required to complete a Loss/Breakage Declaration form to assess your entitlement to receive replacement spectacles. The declaration should detail the circumstances of how the spectacles were lost or broken.

## Can I purchase extras?

If you are eligible to obtain spectacles under the Scheme, then you are entitled to purchase limited extras for the spectacles. Extras include tinting, photochromatic lenses, UV protection, hard coating, and hardening for glass lenses.

You are responsible for all costs associated with the purchase of any extras, as they are requested through personal choice, rather than clinical need. You must arrange payment for any extras directly with your optometrist/ophthalmologist.

## Can I provide my own frames?

You can have SSS lenses fitted to your own existing or privately purchased frames, or for SSS frames to be fitted to existing or privately purchased lenses.

*SSS will not be responsible for any breakages or loss that may occur when you choose to have your own existing frames or lenses fitted to the SSS spectacles. SSS will also not accept responsibility for frames lost in the process of frames being delivered to the Contractor for the manufacture of the spectacles.*

*You are also liable for any extra costs that may be associated and are outside the normal SSS frames or lenses as determined by the contractor, eg. Regular size SSS lenses being fitted to your larger type frames, lenses being fitted to rimless/half rim or “nylon fit” frames, and all freight costs.*

## How do I make a complaint, appeal or a comment?

SSS recognises that feedback, both positive and negative, is essential in order to provide a quality service. Compliments and complaints can be made both verbally and in writing. Issues concerning the performance of SSS are investigated and resolved, where possible, at local SSS level by the SSS Service Manager or Team Leader, who can be contacted on 07 3250 8695. Complaints that cannot be resolved at the local level are referred to the MASS Executive Officer for consideration.

The Client Satisfaction feedback form, available on the Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme Website at [www.health.qld.gov/mass](http://www.health.qld.gov/mass) may also assist you to provide feedback to SSS.

*You may also choose to contact the Health Quality and Complaints Commission on 1800 077 308, or write directly to the Minister for Health or the State Ombudsman. You can also seek the assistance of the Justice Department’s Community Justice Program.*

## Complaints about an Optometrist

If you are dissatisfied with the service provided by an optometrist, you should initially discuss and try and resolve the matter directly with them. If you believe the matter has not been resolved satisfactorily, you should address your complaint to:

Optometrists Board of Queensland  
Office of Health Practitioner Registration Boards  
GPO Box 2438  
Brisbane QLD 4001  
Ph: 07 3234 1884  
Fax: 07 3225 2527  
Website: [www.optomboard.qld.gov.au](http://www.optomboard.qld.gov.au)

## Further information

If you have any questions concerning any aspect of the Spectacle Supply Scheme, please contact SSS:

Address: 184 St Paul's Terrace, Fortitude Valley QLD 4006  
Postal Address: PO Box 1507, Fortitude Valley QLD 4006  
Phone: 07 3250 8695  
Fax: 1300 362 276  
Email: [sss184@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:sss184@health.qld.gov.au)  
Website: [www.health.qld.gov.au/mass/spectacles.asp](http://www.health.qld.gov.au/mass/spectacles.asp)

## Definition of terms

<b>Applicant:</b>	Any person applying for provision of spectacles under the Scheme.
<b>Contractor:</b>	Manufactures, repairs and supplies spectacles to Dispensing Agents.
<b>Dispensing Agent:</b>	The Contractor has nominated service providers, who also provide a measuring and fitting service for clients once spectacles have been delivered to them by the Contractor. The Dispensing Agent also provides a sample range of frames that are available under the Scheme from which applicants may choose. These service providers may or may not be an Optometrist.
<b>Prescriber (Optometrist/ Ophthalmologist):</b>	Undertakes the initial eye examinations for the client and may also be a Dispensing Agent. In the majority of cases an Applicant will attend an Optometrist. Ophthalmologists are doctors who specialise in eye disorders and on rare occasions may provide a prescription to a SSS Applicant. However, the Applicant must attend a Dispensing Agent to complete the SSS Application form.
<b>Spectacles:</b>	Refers to any optometric aids supplied under the Scheme.

## Disclaimer

Queensland Health has made every effort to ensure this information is accurate, however, Queensland Health accepts no responsibility for any errors, omissions or inaccuracies in respect of the information contained in this booklet and accepts no responsibility for the use of this information.

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