

Equipment

for people who are blind or have reduced vision



Equipment and Modification Services

Is it difficult for you to do everyday tasks because of your reduced vision? If you need equipment to live safely in your home, to work or study, or to look after someone who depends on you the Ministry of Health may be able to help.

There is a range of equipment which may benefit people who are blind or have reduced vision, including mobility canes, screenreading software, magnifiers and glasses.

Who can get equipment?

If you are a New Zealand resident living in New Zealand, are blind, Deafblind or have reduced vision, and are not covered by ACC you may be able to get equipment through the Ministry of Health.

Equipment may be provided to you at no charge. Children 15 years and under may be able to access a subsidy for glasses.

How can I get equipment?

An assessor completes an assessment of your needs, and may recommend glasses or other vision equipment. An assessor is usually an optometrist, eye specialist or a service co-ordinator for the Royal New Zealand Foundation of the Blind. Not all optometrists and eye specialists are accredited vision assessors. Contact Enable New Zealand to find a vision assessor in your area (Ph 0800 17 1981).

The assessor identifies what equipment is needed for you to be safe and independent at home and in the community, to work or study, or to look after someone who depends on you.

To apply for Ministry of Health funding the assessor sends an equipment application to Accessable (if you live in Auckland or Northland) or Enable New Zealand (if you live in the rest of New Zealand).

Types of equipment

Equipment

An assessor might recommend equipment such as mobility canes, screenreading software or magnifiers. High-cost equipment, such as sonar canes, to help with independent mobility will be considered if no other mobility resources meet your needs.



Glasses

An optometrist or eye specialist assesses for glasses, and applies to Accessable or Enable New Zealand if:

- your corrected vision is within a certain range, and
- glasses are essential for you to be safe and independent at home, work or study to your maximum capacity, or look after family who depend on you.



Subsidy for glasses/spectacles

Children with vision problems, aged 15 years and under, who are in low income families may be able to get funding assistance for examinations, frames, lenses, eye patches and repairs. Your child will need to have an assessment by an optometrist or eye specialist who is registered as an assessor for this subsidy. To find an assessor phone 0800 17 1981.

What do Accessable and Enable New Zealand do?

Accessable and Enable New Zealand receive applications from assessors, and check these to ensure the assessor has considered the different support and equipment options available. This is so any equipment you get is suitable and the best for you. People with urgent needs usually get their equipment first.

Accessable and Enable New Zealand can repair equipment and collect it when you no longer need it (not including glasses).



For more information contact:

Accessable (Auckland/Northland)

Ph 0508 001 002 Fax 09 620 1702

www.accessable.co.nz

Enable New Zealand (rest of New Zealand)

Ph 0800 17 1981 Fax 06 353 5876

www.disabilityfunding.co.nz

Royal New Zealand Foundation of the Blind (RNZFB) has a range of services for members who are blind, Deafblind and have vision loss, including instructors to help you learn skills for everyday activities and mobility, communication and employment, equipment, counselling and guide dogs.

Ph 0800 24 33 33

www.rnzfb.org.nz