

- Upcoming Policy Changes
- Appointment Scheduling Help
- Exam Booking Help
- Obligations Help
- Policy Browser Help
- Pre-Staging Help
- Registry of Motor Vehicles Bra
- License Policy
  - CDL Self Certification Polic
  - CDL Military Skills Test Wa
  - Testing Requirements Polic
  - Expiration Policy
  - External Systems Verificati
  - Fees Policy
  - Identity Policy
  - Photo-Image and Signatur
  - Medical Impairments Policy
  - Motor Voter Policy
  - Non-Renewal Policy
  - Organ and Tissue Donor Po
  - Veteran's Indicator Policy
  - Restrictions and Endorsem
  - Suspensions and Revocatic
  - Vision Test Policy
    - Vision Screening Test
    - Vision Screening Certifi
    - Vision Standards
    - Self-Estimating Visu**
    - Vision Restrictions
    - Transactions that Requ
    - CDL Requirements
  - License Cancellation Policy
- License Transactions
- Medical Affairs Policy
- System Access Policy
- Title Policy
- Massachusetts Sales and Use
- About Policy Browser
- Glossary

## Self-Estimating Visual Acuity

Certain visual acuities have special significance. Some of these are:

- 20/20 vision is considered normal vision
- 20/40 vision in at least one eye is the vision required to pass the driving test
- 20/200 vision or worse is the legal definition of blindness

The chart below may be used by a [customer](#) to estimate his/her vision online.



Instructions:

1. Measure the blue bar in centimeters on the computer screen.
2. Step back to approximately the same number of feet from the computer screen. For example, if the blue bar measures 5 centimeters, the customer should stand 5 feet from the computer screen.
3. If the customer wears glasses or contacts to operate a motor vehicle, he/she should use them when taking the test.
4. Cover one eye and read the letters in row three (the third row from the top) from right to left. The [vision test](#) should be performed on each eye separately.

The third line is equivalent to 20/40 vision. The customer must be able to read most of the letters on this line in order to obtain an unrestricted Massachusetts Driver's [License](#). If he/she cannot read line three, the customer may be required to submit a vision screening certificate completed by a [physician](#) or optometrist who is licensed to practice in Massachusetts. The vision screening certificate cannot be more than 12 months old from the date of the screening. A copy of the Vision Screening Certificate Form is available online [here](#).

The middle letter of the top line is equivalent to 20/200. A person unable to read this letter with best eyeglass correction is considered legally blind. The "T" and the "B" on the top line are equivalent to 20/100. The second line is 20/50. Best corrected acuity in the range between 20/50 and 20/100 is considered disabling in occupations which require work with numbers or extensive reading.

The bottom three lines represent 20/30, 20/20 and 20/10. These are considered to be "normal vision" with the 20/20 line being the traditional normal vision line.

It is generally felt that the maximum visual acuity of the eye is around 20/15 or 20/16. This means that if the customer is able to read the bottom line, he/she is probably a good guesser.

Note that this vision test can only be considered a self-screening test, and is meant to give a customer an approximate idea of his/her vision capabilities. A variety of factors such as lighting, glare, monitor quality may have an effect on the results of this test. This **does not constitute** an [RMV](#)-approved vision test, and passing this test does not necessarily mean that a customer will pass the vision test at an [RMV branch](#).

Source: *University of Illinois Eye & Ear Infirmary, 2009.*

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All RMV offices will be closed Christmas Day 12/25/2013 and New Years Day 1/1/2014. Please have a happy and safe holiday.

License Renewal Reminder Service Resumes. Includes image of a Massachusetts Driver's License with a birthday reminder and a 'HAPPY BIRTHDAY' graphic.

- Top Online Services: Registration Renewal, Registration Inquiry, Drivers License Renewal, Pay Citation/Court Filing Fee Online

Alerts: Please note that 72 hours or more notice must be provided to cancel a road test appointment without having to pay the fee.

New to Mass

- Converting an Out-of-State License, Converting an Out-of-State Registration, Register to Vote with Driver's License Transaction

More>>

Driving in Mass

- Massachusetts License Introduction, Obtaining a CDL Permit and License, Junior Operator License

More>>

Vehicle Ownership

- Applying for a Registration, Transferring Registration, Massachusetts Title Law

More>>

Locate your nearest branch

- Merit Rating Board, Events and Announcements

Contents

- Upcoming Policy Changes
- Appointment Scheduling Help
- Exam Booking Help
- Obligations Help
- Policy Browser Help
- Pre-Staging Help
- Registry of Motor Vehicles Bra
- License Policy
  - CDL Self Certification Polic
  - CDL Military Skills Test Wa
  - Testing Requirements Polic
  - Expiration Policy
  - External Systems Verificati
  - Fees Policy
  - Identity Policy
  - Photo-Image and Signatur
  - Medical Impairments Policy
  - Motor Voter Policy
  - Non-Renewal Policy
  - Organ and Tissue Donor Po
  - Veteran's Indicator Policy
  - Restrictions and Endorsem
  - Suspensions and Revocatic
  - Vision Test Policy
    - Vision Screening Test
    - Vision Screening Certifi
    - Vision Standards
    - Self-Estimating Visual A
    - Vision Restrictions**
    - Transactions that Requ
    - CDL Requirements
  - License Cancellation Policy
- License Transactions
- Medical Affairs Policy
- System Access Policy
- Title Policy
- Massachusetts Sales and Use
- About Policy Browser
- Glossary

## Vision Restrictions

The [B restriction](#), [G restriction](#), and [R restriction](#) are required for customers with a [bioptic telescopic lens](#).

A [customer](#) with the B [restriction](#) or G restriction may be eligible for any type of [permit/license](#) if he/she meets the vision standards for that class of permit/license. A customer who uses a bioptic telescopic lens is only eligible for a [Class D](#) permit/license.

Contents Search Favorites

**Contents** x

- [Upcoming Policy Changes](#)
- [Appointment Scheduling Help](#)
- [Exam Booking Help](#)
- [Obligations Help](#)
- [Policy Browser Help](#)
- [Pre-Staging Help](#)
- [Registry of Motor Vehicles Branches](#)
- [License Policy](#)
  - [CDL Self Certification Policy](#)
  - [CDL Military Skills Test Waiver](#)
  - [Testing Requirements Policy](#)
  - [Expiration Policy](#)
  - [External Systems Verification](#)
  - [Fees Policy](#)
  - [Identity Policy](#)
  - [Photo-Image and Signature](#)
  - [Medical Impairments Policy](#)
  - [Motor Voter Policy](#)
  - [Non-Renewal Policy](#)
  - [Organ and Tissue Donor Policy](#)
  - [Veteran's Indicator Policy](#)
  - [Restrictions and Endorsements](#)
  - [Suspensions and Revocations](#)
    - [Reasons for Suspension](#)
    - [Junior Operator License](#)
    - [Criminal Offenses and Suspensions](#)
    - [Civil Offenses and Suspensions](#)
    - [Reinstatement Fees](#)
  - [Vision Test Policy](#)
    - [Vision Screening Test](#)**
    - [Vision Screening Certification](#)
    - [Vision Standards](#)
    - [Self-Estimating Visual Acuity](#)
    - [Vision Restrictions](#)
    - [Transactions that Require a License](#)
    - [CDL Requirements](#)
  - [License Cancellation Policy](#)
- [License Transactions](#)
- [Medical Affairs Policy](#)
- [System Access Policy](#)
- [Title Policy](#)
- [Massachusetts Sales and Use Tax](#)
- [About Policy Browser](#)
- [Glossary](#)

License Policy > [Vision Test Policy](#)

## Vision Screening Test

Testing a customer's vision is a necessary part of ensuring that the [customer](#) is capable of operating a motor vehicle safely. First time [permit/license](#) applicants and customers renewing a license or converting a permit/license at a [branch](#) have to pass a vision screening test that checks visual acuity, color vision, and peripheral vision.

If the customer normally wears contact lenses or corrective lenses to see at a distance, then he/she must wear them during the vision screening test.

To be eligible for an **unrestricted [Class D](#), [Class M](#), or [Class D/M](#) permit/license**, the customer's visual acuity must be at least 20/40 in the better eye, with or without corrective lenses, and he/she must have at least 120 degrees of horizontal peripheral vision (both eyes together). If the corrected visual acuity is 20/50, 20/60, or 20/70 in the better eye, the customer may be eligible for a [Daylight Only](#) permit/license. The customer must also be able to distinguish the colors red, green, and amber.

To be eligible for a **commercial driver's license**, the customer's visual acuity must be at least 20/40 in each eye, with or without corrective lenses, and he/she must have at least 140 degrees of horizontal peripheral vision (both eyes together). The customer must also be able to distinguish the colors red, green, and amber.

Contents

- Upcoming Policy Changes
- Appointment Scheduling Help
- Exam Booking Help
- Obligations Help
- Policy Browser Help
- Pre-Staging Help
- Registry of Motor Vehicles Branch
- License Policy
  - CDL Self Certification Policy
  - CDL Military Skills Test Waiver
  - Testing Requirements Policy
  - Expiration Policy
  - External Systems Verification
  - Fees Policy
  - Identity Policy
  - Photo-Image and Signature
  - Medical Impairments Policy
  - Motor Voter Policy
  - Non-Renewal Policy
  - Organ and Tissue Donor Policy
  - Veteran's Indicator Policy
  - Restrictions and Endorsements
  - Suspensions and Revocations
    - Reasons for Suspension
  - Junior Operator License
  - Criminal Offenses and Suspensions
  - Civil Offenses and Suspensions
  - Reinstatement Fees
- Vision Test Policy
  - Vision Screening Test
  - Vision Screening Certificate**
  - Vision Standards
  - Self-Estimating Visual Acuity
  - Vision Restrictions
  - Transactions that Require a License
  - CDL Requirements
- License Cancellation Policy
- License Transactions
- Medical Affairs Policy
- System Access Policy
- Title Policy
- Massachusetts Sales and Use Tax
- About Policy Browser
- Glossary

## Vision Screening Certificate

If the [customer](#) fails the vision screening test, has a visual acuity between 20/50 and 20/70, declines to take the test, is unable to take the test, or wears a [bioptic telescopic lens](#), he/she is required to submit an original [Registry of Motor Vehicles](#) Vision Screening Certificate that a [physician](#) or optometrist, licensed in Massachusetts, has completed. The Registry of Motor Vehicles will accept this Vision Screening Certificate in lieu of the vision screening test to demonstrate compliance with the minimum vision standards to obtain a Massachusetts [permit/license](#). The [Registry of Motor Vehicles Branch Representative](#) will verify that the Vision Screening Certificate meets the required vision standards.

The Vision Screening Certificate has to be fully completed by an ophthalmologist or optometrist and by the customer, and it has to contain the original signatures of the customer and the certifying ophthalmologist or optometrist. The Vision Screening Certificate cannot be more than 12 months old from the date of the screening. No photocopies of the Vision Screening Certificate will be accepted.

The customer cannot take the [learner's permit exam](#) until he/she either passes the vision screening test or presents a completed and signed Vision Screening Certificate.

The Vision Screening Certificate for a customer seeking to obtain a passenger permit/license is available [here](#), while the Vision Screening Certificate for a customer seeking to obtain a commercial driver's license is available [here](#).

- Contents
- Upcoming Policy Changes
- Appointment Scheduling Help
- Exam Booking Help
- Obligations Help
- Policy Browser Help
- Pre-Staging Help
- Registry of Motor Vehicles Bra
- License Policy
  - CDL Self Certification Polic
  - CDL Military Skills Test Wa
  - Testing Requirements Polic
  - Expiration Policy
  - External Systems Verificati
  - Fees Policy
  - Identity Policy
  - Photo-Image and Signatur
  - Medical Impairments Policy
  - Motor Voter Policy
  - Non-Renewal Policy
  - Organ and Tissue Donor Po
  - Veteran's Indicator Policy
  - Restrictions and Endorseme
  - Suspensions and Revocatic
  - Reasons for Suspension
  - Junior Operator License
  - Criminal Offenses and S
  - Civil Offenses and Susp
  - Reinstatement Fees
- Vision Test Policy
  - Vision Screening Test
  - Vision Screening Certifi
  - Vision Standards**
    - Visual Acuity
    - Horizontal Periphera
    - Color
    - Unresolvable Diplop
    - Bioptic Telescopic L
    - Blindness in One Ey
  - Self-Estimating Visual A
  - Vision Restrictions
  - Transactions that Requ
  - CDL Requirements
- License Cancellation Policy
- License Transactions
- Medical Affairs Policy
- System Access Policy
- Title Policy
- Massachusetts Sales and Use
- About Policy Browser
- Glossary

## Vision Standards

Vision standards are broken out into the following sections – visual acuity, horizontal peripheral vision, color, unresolvable [diplopia](#), [bioptic telescopic lens](#), and blindness in one eye. Please refer to the sections underneath this for a detailed explanation about each.



- Contents
- Upcoming Policy Changes
- Appointment Scheduling Help
- Exam Booking Help
- Obligations Help
- Policy Browser Help
- Pre-Staging Help
- Registry of Motor Vehicles Branch
- License Policy
  - CDL Self Certification Policy
  - CDL Military Skills Test Waiver
  - Testing Requirements Policy
  - Expiration Policy
  - External Systems Verification
  - Fees Policy
  - Identity Policy
  - Photo-Image and Signature
  - Medical Impairments Policy
  - Motor Voter Policy
  - Non-Renewal Policy
  - Organ and Tissue Donor Policy
  - Veteran's Indicator Policy
  - Restrictions and Endorsements
  - Suspensions and Revocations
    - Reasons for Suspension
  - Junior Operator License
  - Criminal Offenses and Suspensions
  - Civil Offenses and Suspensions
  - Reinstatement Fees
- Vision Test Policy
  - Vision Screening Test
  - Vision Screening Certificate
  - Vision Standards
    - Visual Acuity**
    - Horizontal Peripheral Vision
    - Color
    - Unresolvable Diplopia
    - Bioptic Telescopic Lenses
    - Blindness in One Eye
    - Self-Estimating Visual Acuity
    - Vision Restrictions
    - Transactions that Require a License
    - CDL Requirements
- License Cancellation Policy
- License Transactions
- Medical Affairs Policy
- System Access Policy
- Title Policy
- Massachusetts Sales and Use Tax
- About Policy Browser
- Glossary

## Visual Acuity

For a [Class D](#), [Class M](#), or [Class D/M permit/license](#), the [customer](#) must have at least 20/40 distant visual acuity ([Snellen](#)) in either eye, with or without corrective lenses.

For [Daylight Only](#) visual acuity, the customer must have at least 20/50, 20/60, or 20/70 distant visual acuity (Snellen) in either eye, with or without corrective lenses.

For a Commercial Driver's License permit/license, the customer must have at least 20/40 distant visual acuity (Snellen) in each eye, with or without corrective lenses.

See the section on [estimating your vision](#) to for more information on self-screening.

See the section on [estimating your vision](#) for more information on self-screening.

Contents

- Upcoming Policy Changes
- Appointment Scheduling Help
- Exam Booking Help
- Obligations Help
- Policy Browser Help
- Pre-Staging Help
- Registry of Motor Vehicles Bra
- License Policy
  - CDL Self Certification Polic
  - CDL Military Skills Test Wa
  - Testing Requirements Polic
  - Expiration Policy
  - External Systems Verificati
  - Fees Policy
  - Identity Policy
  - Photo-Image and Signatur
  - Medical Impairments Policy
  - Motor Voter Policy
  - Non-Renewal Policy
  - Organ and Tissue Donor Po
  - Veteran's Indicator Policy
  - Restrictions and Endorsem
  - Suspensions and Revocatic
  - Reasons for Suspensior
  - Junior Operator License
  - Criminal Offenses and S
  - Civil Offenses and Susp
  - Reinstatement Fees
- Vision Test Policy
  - Vision Screening Test
  - Vision Screening Certifi
  - Vision Standards
    - Visual Acuity
    - Horizontal Periph**
    - Color
    - Unresolvable Diplop
    - Bioptic Telescopic L
    - Blindness in One Ey
  - Self-Estimating Visual A
  - Vision Restrictions
  - Transactions that Requ
  - CDL Requirements
- License Cancellation Policy
- License Transactions
- Medical Affairs Policy
- System Access Policy
- Title Policy
- Massachusetts Sales and Use
- About Policy Browser
- Glossary

## Horizontal Peripheral Field

For a [Class D](#), [Class M](#), or [Class D/M permit/license](#), the [customer](#) must have at least 120 degrees combined horizontal peripheral field of vision.

For a Commercial Driver's License permit/license, the customer must have at least 140 degrees combined horizontal peripheral field of vision.



Contents

- Upcoming Policy Changes
- Appointment Scheduling Help
- Exam Booking Help
- Obligations Help
- Policy Browser Help
- Pre-Staging Help
- Registry of Motor Vehicles Bra
- License Policy
  - CDL Self Certification Polic
  - CDL Military Skills Test Wa
  - Testing Requirements Polic
  - Expiration Policy
  - External Systems Verificati
  - Fees Policy
  - Identity Policy
  - Photo-Image and Signatur
  - Medical Impairments Policy
  - Motor Voter Policy
  - Non-Renewal Policy
  - Organ and Tissue Donor Po
  - Veteran's Indicator Policy
  - Restrictions and Endorseme
  - Suspensions and Revocatic
  - Reasons for Suspension
  - Junior Operator License
  - Criminal Offenses and S
  - Civil Offenses and Susp
  - Reinstatement Fees
- Vision Test Policy
  - Vision Screening Test
  - Vision Screening Certifi
  - Vision Standards
    - Visual Acuity
    - Horizontal Periphera
    - Color**
    - Unresolvable Diplop
    - Bioptic Telescopic L
    - Blindness in One Ey
  - Self-Estimating Visual A
  - Vision Restrictions
  - Transactions that Requ
  - CDL Requirements
- License Cancellation Policy
- License Transactions
- Medical Affairs Policy
- System Access Policy
- Title Policy
- Massachusetts Sales and Use
- About Policy Browser
- Glossary

## Color

For any type of [permit/license](#), the [customer](#) has to be able to distinguish the colors red, green, and amber.

Contents

- Upcoming Policy Changes
- Appointment Scheduling Help
- Exam Booking Help
- Obligations Help
- Policy Browser Help
- Pre-Staging Help
- Registry of Motor Vehicles Bra
- License Policy
  - CDL Self Certification Polic
  - CDL Military Skills Test Wa
  - Testing Requirements Polic
  - Expiration Policy
  - External Systems Verificati
  - Fees Policy
  - Identity Policy
  - Photo-Image and Signatur
  - Medical Impairments Policy
  - Motor Voter Policy
  - Non-Renewal Policy
  - Organ and Tissue Donor Po
  - Veteran's Indicator Policy
  - Restrictions and Endorsem
  - Suspensions and Revocatic
  - Reasons for Suspension
  - Junior Operator License
  - Criminal Offenses and S
  - Civil Offenses and Susp
  - Reinstatement Fees
- Vision Test Policy
  - Vision Screening Test
  - Vision Screening Certifi
  - Vision Standards
    - Visual Acuity
    - Horizontal Periphera
    - Color
    - Unresolvable Dipl**
    - Bioptic Telescopic L
    - Blindness in One Ey
  - Self-Estimating Visual A
  - Vision Restrictions
  - Transactions that Requ
  - CDL Requirements
- License Cancellation Policy
- License Transactions
- Medical Affairs Policy
- System Access Policy
- Title Policy
- Massachusetts Sales and Use
- About Policy Browser
- Glossary

# Unresolvable Diplopia

The [customer](#) cannot receive a [permit/license](#) if he/she has unresolvable [diplopia](#) (double vision which cannot be resolved by wearing an eye patch or other suppressive device).

- Upcoming Policy Changes
- Appointment Scheduling Help
- Exam Booking Help
- Obligations Help
- Policy Browser Help
- Pre-Staging Help
- Registry of Motor Vehicles Bra
- License Policy
  - CDL Self Certification Polic
  - CDL Military Skills Test Wa
  - Testing Requirements Polic
  - Expiration Policy
  - External Systems Verificati
  - Fees Policy
  - Identity Policy
  - Photo-Image and Signatur
  - Medical Impairments Policy
  - Motor Voter Policy
  - Non-Renewal Policy
  - Organ and Tissue Donor Po
  - Veteran's Indicator Policy
  - Restrictions and Endorsem
  - Suspensions and Revocatic
  - Reasons for Suspensio
  - Junior Operator License
  - Criminal Offenses and S
  - Civil Offenses and Susp
  - Reinstatement Fees
  - Vision Test Policy
    - Vision Screening Test
    - Vision Screening Certifi
    - Vision Standards
      - Visual Acuity
      - Horizontal Periphera
      - Color
      - Unresolvable Diplop
      - Bioptic Telescopi**
      - Blindness in One Ey
      - Self-Estimating Visual A
      - Vision Restrictions
      - Transactions that Requ
      - CDL Requirements
  - License Cancellation Policy
- License Transactions
- Medical Affairs Policy
- System Access Policy
- Title Policy
- Massachusetts Sales and Use
- About Policy Browser
- Glossary

## Bioptic Telescopic Lens

If the [customer](#) uses a [bioptic telescopic lens](#), he/she is eligible to receive a [Class D permit/license](#) if he/she meets all of the following conditions:

1. Has at least 20/40 distant visual acuity through the telescope
2. Has at least 20/100 distant visual acuity through the [carrier](#) lens
3. Has at least 20/100 distant visual acuity through the other lens
4. Has at least 120 degrees combined horizontal peripheral field of vision

The bioptic telescopic lens used by the customer must meet all the following conditions:

1. Must be monocular (the telescope is required to be on one eye only).
2. Must be fixed focus (the telescope is not acceptable if it needs to be rotated to focus).
3. Magnification cannot exceed three times.
4. Must be spectacle-mounted and an integral part of the lens (the customer cannot use clip-on or hand-help telescopes).
5. Must be located so as not to occlude the customer's line of sight and not to occlude the visual field in the customer's other eye (the telescope must be affixed to the upper quadrant of the lens).

The customer is not eligible for a permit/license if the certifying [physician](#) or optometrist has checked "No" next to any of the bioptic telescopic lens criteria on the Vision Screening Certificate.

Due to technical limitations, customers who wear a bioptic telescopic lens cannot be deemed vision qualified by taking the vision screening test. These customers must submit a Vision Screening Certificate.

A customer who uses a bioptic telescopic lens is not eligible for a [Class M](#) or Commercial Driver's License permit/license.

- Contents
- Upcoming Policy Changes
- Appointment Scheduling Help
- Exam Booking Help
- Obligations Help
- Policy Browser Help
- Pre-Staging Help
- Registry of Motor Vehicles Bra
- License Policy
  - CDL Self Certification Polic
  - CDL Military Skills Test Wa
  - Testing Requirements Polic
  - Expiration Policy
  - External Systems Verificati
  - Fees Policy
  - Identity Policy
  - Photo-Image and Signatur
  - Medical Impairments Policy
  - Motor Voter Policy
  - Non-Renewal Policy
  - Organ and Tissue Donor Po
  - Veteran's Indicator Policy
  - Restrictions and Endorsem
  - Suspensions and Revocatic
  - Reasons for Suspension
  - Junior Operator License
  - Criminal Offenses and S
  - Civil Offenses and Susp
  - Reinstatement Fees
- Vision Test Policy
  - Vision Screening Test
  - Vision Screening Certifi
  - Vision Standards
    - Visual Acuity
    - Horizontal Periphera
    - Color
    - Unresolvable Diplop
    - Bioptic Telescopic L
    - Blindness in One**
    - Self-Estimating Visual A
  - Vision Restrictions
  - Transactions that Requ
  - CDL Requirements
- License Cancellation Policy
- License Transactions
- Medical Affairs Policy
- System Access Policy
- Title Policy
- Massachusetts Sales and Use
- About Policy Browser
- Glossary

## Blindness in One Eye

If a [customer](#) is blind in one eye, he/she is eligible for a [Class D](#), [Class M](#), or [Class D/M permit/license](#) if he/she meets all of the visual acuity, horizontal peripheral field, and color vision standards with his/her other eye.

A customer who is blind in one eye is not eligible for a Commercial Driver's License permit/license.

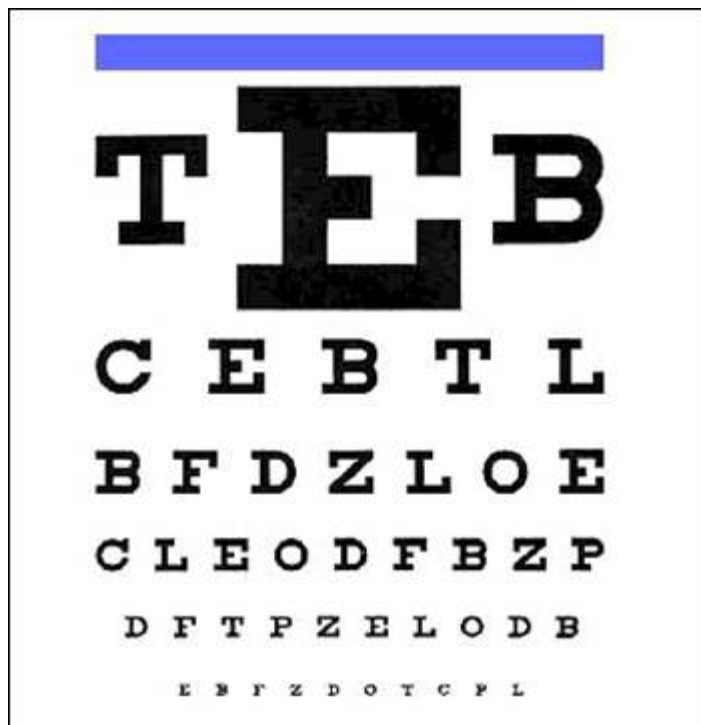
- Upcoming Policy Changes
- Appointment Scheduling Help
- Exam Booking Help
- Obligations Help
- Policy Browser Help
- Pre-Staging Help
- Registry of Motor Vehicles Bra
- License Policy
  - CDL Self Certification Polic
  - CDL Military Skills Test Wa
  - Testing Requirements Polic
  - Expiration Policy
  - External Systems Verificati
  - Fees Policy
  - Identity Policy
  - Photo-Image and Signatur
  - Medical Impairments Policy
  - Motor Voter Policy
  - Non-Renewal Policy
  - Organ and Tissue Donor Po
  - Veteran's Indicator Policy
  - Restrictions and Endorsem
  - Suspensions and Revocatic
  - Reasons for Suspensior
  - Junior Operator License
  - Criminal Offenses and S
  - Civil Offenses and Susp
  - Reinstatement Fees
  - Vision Test Policy
    - Vision Screening Test
    - Vision Screening Certifi
    - Vision Standards
      - Visual Acuity
      - Horizontal Periphera
      - Color
      - Unresolvable Diplop
      - Biopic Telescopic L
      - Blindness in One Ey
      - Self-Estimating Visu**
      - Vision Restrictions
      - Transactions that Requ
      - CDL Requirements
  - License Cancellation Policy
- License Transactions
- Medical Affairs Policy
- System Access Policy
- Title Policy
- Massachusetts Sales and Use
- About Policy Browser
- Glossary

## Self-Estimating Visual Acuity

Certain visual acuities have special significance. Some of these are:

- 20/20 vision is considered normal vision
- 20/40 vision in at least one eye is the vision required to pass the driving test
- 20/200 vision or worse is the legal definition of blindness

The chart below may be used by a [customer](#) to estimate his/her vision online.



Instructions:

1. Measure the blue bar in centimeters on the computer screen.
2. Step back to approximately the same number of feet from the computer screen. For example, if the blue bar measures 5 centimeters, the customer should stand 5 feet from the computer screen.
3. If the customer wears glasses or contacts to operate a motor vehicle, he/she should use them when taking the test.
4. Cover one eye and read the letters in row three (the third row from the top) from right to left. The [vision test](#) should be performed on each eye separately.

The third line is equivalent to 20/40 vision. The customer must be able to read most of the letters on this line in order to obtain an unrestricted Massachusetts Driver's [License](#). If he/she cannot read line three, the customer may be required to submit a vision screening certificate completed by a [physician](#) or optometrist who is licensed to practice in Massachusetts. The vision screening certificate cannot be more than 12 months old from the date of the screening. A copy of the Vision Screening Certificate Form is available online [here](#).

The middle letter of the top line is equivalent to 20/200. A person unable to read this letter with best eyeglass correction is considered legally blind. The "T" and the "B" on the top line are equivalent to 20/100. The second line is 20/50. Best corrected acuity in the range between 20/50 and 20/100 is considered disabling in occupations which require work with numbers or extensive reading.

The bottom three lines represent 20/30, 20/20 and 20/10. These are considered to be "normal vision" with the 20/20 line being the traditional normal vision line.

It is generally felt that the maximum visual acuity of the eye is around 20/15 or 20/16. This means that if the customer is able to read the bottom line, he/she is probably a good guesser.

Note that this vision test can only be considered a self-screening test, and is meant to give a customer an approximate idea of his/her vision capabilities. A variety of factors such as lighting, glare, monitor quality may have an effect on the results of this test. This **does not constitute** an [RMV](#)-approved vision test, and passing this test does not necessarily mean that a customer will pass the vision test at an [RMV branch](#).

Source: *University of Illinois Eye & Ear Infirmary, 2009.*

Contents Search Favorites

Contents x

- [Upcoming Policy Changes](#)
- [Appointment Scheduling Help](#)
- [Exam Booking Help](#)
- [Obligations Help](#)
- [Policy Browser Help](#)
- [Pre-Staging Help](#)
- [Registry of Motor Vehicles Bra](#)
- [License Policy](#)
  - [CDL Self Certification Polic](#)
  - [CDL Military Skills Test Wa](#)
  - [Testing Requirements Polic](#)
  - [Expiration Policy](#)
  - [External Systems Verificati](#)
  - [Fees Policy](#)
  - [Identity Policy](#)
  - [Photo-Image and Signatur](#)
  - [Medical Impairments Policy](#)
  - [Motor Voter Policy](#)
  - [Non-Renewal Policy](#)
  - [Organ and Tissue Donor Po](#)
  - [Veteran's Indicator Policy](#)
  - [Restrictions and Endorseme](#)
  - [Suspensions and Revocatic](#)
    - [Reasons for Suspensior](#)
    - [Junior Operator License](#)
    - [Criminal Offenses and S](#)
    - [Civil Offenses and Susp](#)
    - [Reinstatement Fees](#)
  - [Vision Test Policy](#)
    - [Vision Screening Test](#)
    - [Vision Screening Certifi](#)
    - [Vision Standards](#)
      - [Visual Acuity](#)
      - [Horizontal Periphera](#)
      - [Color](#)
      - [Unresolvable Diplop](#)
      - [Bioptic Telescopic L](#)
      - [Blindness in One Ey](#)
    - [Self-Estimating Visual A](#)
  - [Vision Restrictions](#)
    - [B Restriction](#)
    - [G Restriction](#)
  - [Transactions that Requ](#)
  - [CDL Requirements](#)
- [License Cancellation Policy](#)
- [License Transactions](#)
- [Medical Affairs Policy](#)
- [System Access Policy](#)
- [Title Policy](#)
- [Massachusetts Sales and Use](#)
- [About Policy Browser](#)
- [Glossary](#)

License Policy > Vision Test Policy

## Vision Restrictions

The [B restriction](#), [G restriction](#), and [R restriction](#) are required for customers with a [bioptic telescopic lens](#).

A [customer](#) with the B [restriction](#) or G restriction may be eligible for any type of [permit/license](#) if he/she meets the vision standards for that class of [Class D](#) permit/license. A customer who uses a bioptic telescopic lens is only eligible for a [Class D](#) permit/license.



Contents

- Upcoming Policy Changes
  - Appointment Scheduling Help
  - Exam Booking Help
  - Obligations Help
  - Policy Browser Help
  - Pre-Staging Help
  - Registry of Motor Vehicles Bra
  - License Policy
    - CDL Self Certification Polic
    - CDL Military Skills Test Wa
    - Testing Requirements Polic
    - Expiration Policy
    - External Systems Verificati
    - Fees Policy
    - Identity Policy
    - Photo-Image and Signatur
    - Medical Impairments Policy
    - Motor Voter Policy
    - Non-Renewal Policy
    - Organ and Tissue Donor Po
    - Veteran's Indicator Policy
    - Restrictions and Endorseme
    - Suspensions and Revocatic
    - Reasons for Suspension
    - Junior Operator License
    - Criminal Offenses and S
    - Civil Offenses and Susp
    - Reinstatement Fees
  - Vision Test Policy
    - Vision Screening Test
    - Vision Screening Certifi
    - Vision Standards
      - Visual Acuity
      - Horizontal Periphera
      - Color
      - Unresolvable Diplop
      - Biopic Telescopic L
      - Blindness in One Ey
    - Self-Estimating Visual A
  - Vision Restrictions
    - B Restriction**
    - G Restriction
  - Transactions that Requ
  - CDL Requirements
  - License Cancellation Policy
- License Transactions
  - Medical Affairs Policy
  - System Access Policy
  - Title Policy
  - Massachusetts Sales and Use
  - About Policy Browser
  - Glossary

## B Restriction

If the [customer](#) wishes to have the [B restriction](#) removed from his/her [permit/license](#), he/she must pass a [vision test](#) while not wearing corrective lenses or submit a Vision Screening Certificate that indicates that corrective lenses are not required.

Contents Search Favorites

Contents x

- [Upcoming Policy Changes](#)
- [Appointment Scheduling Help](#)
- [Exam Booking Help](#)
- [Obligations Help](#)
- [Policy Browser Help](#)
- [Pre-Staging Help](#)
- [Registry of Motor Vehicles Bra](#)
- [License Policy](#)
  - [CDL Self Certification Polic](#)
  - [CDL Military Skills Test Wa](#)
  - [Testing Requirements Polic](#)
  - [Expiration Policy](#)
  - [External Systems Verificati](#)
  - [Fees Policy](#)
  - [Identity Policy](#)
  - [Photo-Image and Signatur](#)
  - [Medical Impairments Policy](#)
  - [Motor Voter Policy](#)
  - [Non-Renewal Policy](#)
  - [Organ and Tissue Donor Po](#)
  - [Veteran's Indicator Policy](#)
  - [Restrictions and Endorsem](#)
  - [Suspensions and Revocatic](#)
    - [Reasons for Suspensior](#)
    - [Junior Operator License](#)
    - [Criminal Offenses and S](#)
    - [Civil Offenses and Susp](#)
    - [Reinstatement Fees](#)
  - [Vision Test Policy](#)
    - [Vision Screening Test](#)
    - [Vision Screening Certifi](#)
    - [Vision Standards](#)
      - [Visual Acuity](#)
      - [Horizontal Periphera](#)
      - [Color](#)
      - [Unresolvable Diplop](#)
      - [Biopic Telescopic L](#)
      - [Blindness in One Ey](#)
    - [Self-Estimating Visual A](#)
  - [Vision Restrictions](#)
    - [B Restriction](#)
    - [G Restriction](#)
    - [Transactions that Requ](#)
    - [CDL Requirements](#)
- [License Cancellation Policy](#)
- [License Transactions](#)
- [Medical Affairs Policy](#)
- [System Access Policy](#)
- [Title Policy](#)
- [Massachusetts Sales and Use](#)
- [About Policy Browser](#)
- [Glossary](#)

License Policy > Vision Test Policy > Vision Restrictions

## G Restriction

If the [customer](#) wishes to have the [G restriction](#) removed from his/her [permit/license](#), he/she must either submit a Vision Screening Certificate or doctor's letter indicating that he/she is eligible for an unrestricted license or he/she must pass a nighttime [road test](#).

If the customer has a G [restriction](#) and desires to take a nighttime road test to determine his/her ability to drive safely at night, he/she must request the nighttime road test in writing to the [Medical Affairs Branch](#) of the [Registry of Motor Vehicles](#).

Contents

- Upcoming Policy Changes
- Appointment Scheduling Help
- Exam Booking Help
- Obligations Help
- Policy Browser Help
- Pre-Staging Help
- Registry of Motor Vehicles Bra
- License Policy
  - CDL Self Certification Polic
  - CDL Military Skills Test Wa
  - Testing Requirements Polic
  - Expiration Policy
  - External Systems Verificati
  - Fees Policy
  - Identity Policy
  - Photo-Image and Signatur
  - Medical Impairments Policy
  - Motor Voter Policy
  - Non-Renewal Policy
  - Organ and Tissue Donor Po
  - Veteran's Indicator Policy
  - Restrictions and Endorsem
  - Suspensions and Revocatio
  - Reasons for Suspension
  - Junior Operator License
  - Criminal Offenses and S
  - Civil Offenses and Susp
  - Reinstatement Fees
  - Vision Test Policy
    - Vision Screening Test
    - Vision Screening Certifi
    - Vision Standards
      - Visual Acuity
      - Horizontal Periphera
      - Color
      - Unresolvable Diplop
      - Bioptic Telescopic L
      - Blindness in One Ey
      - Self-Estimating Visual /
    - Vision Restrictions
      - B Restriction
      - G Restriction
  - Transactions that Re
  - CDL Requirements
  - License Cancellation Policy
- License Transactions
- Medical Affairs Policy
- System Access Policy
- Title Policy
- Massachusetts Sales and Use
- About Policy Browser
- Glossary

## Transactions that Require a Vision Test

Transaction	Class
<a href="#">Permit</a>	<a href="#">Class A</a> Permit
Permit	<a href="#">Class B</a> Permit
Permit	<a href="#">Class C</a> Permit
Permit	<a href="#">Class D</a> Permit
Permit	<a href="#">Class M</a> Permit
<a href="#">Out-of-State Permit</a> Conversion	<a href="#">Class D License</a>
<a href="#">Out-of-State</a> Permit Conversion	<a href="#">Class M License</a>
<a href="#">Out-of-State License</a> Conversion	<a href="#">Class A License</a>
Out-of-State License Conversion	<a href="#">Class B License</a>
Out-of-State License Conversion	<a href="#">Class C License</a>
Out-of-State License Conversion	Class D License
Out-of-State License Conversion	Class M License
Out-of-State License Conversion	Class A/M License
Out-of-State License Conversion	Class B/M License
Out-of-State License Conversion	Class C/M License
Out-of-State License Conversion	<a href="#">Class D/M License</a>
License <a href="#">Renewal</a>	Class A License
License Renewal	Class B License
License Renewal	Class C License
License Renewal	Class D License
License Renewal	Class M License
License Renewal	Class A/M License
License Renewal	Class B/M License
License Renewal	Class C/M License
License Renewal	Class D/M License
<a href="#">Amendment</a> (removing a vision restriction)	Class A License
Amendment (removing a vision restriction)	Class B License
Amendment (removing a vision restriction)	Class C License
Amendment (removing a vision restriction)	Class D License
Amendment (removing a vision restriction)	Class M License
Amendment (removing a vision restriction)	Class A/M License
Amendment (removing a vision restriction)	Class B/M License
Amendment (removing a vision restriction)	Class C/M License
Amendment (removing a vision restriction)	Class D/M License

Contents Search Favorites

Contents

- [Upcoming Policy Changes](#)
- [Appointment Scheduling Help](#)
- [Exam Booking Help](#)
- [Obligations Help](#)
- [Policy Browser Help](#)
- [Pre-Staging Help](#)
- [Registry of Motor Vehicles Branch](#)
- [License Policy](#)
  - [CDL Self Certification Policy](#)
  - [CDL Military Skills Test Waiver](#)
  - [Testing Requirements Policy](#)
  - [Expiration Policy](#)
  - [External Systems Verification](#)
  - [Fees Policy](#)
  - [Identity Policy](#)
  - [Photo-Image and Signature](#)
  - [Medical Impairments Policy](#)
  - [Motor Voter Policy](#)
  - [Non-Renewal Policy](#)
  - [Organ and Tissue Donor Policy](#)
  - [Veteran's Indicator Policy](#)
  - [Restrictions and Endorsements](#)
  - [Suspensions and Revocations](#)
    - [Reasons for Suspension](#)
    - [Junior Operator License](#)
    - [Criminal Offenses and Suspensions](#)
    - [Civil Offenses and Suspensions](#)
    - [Reinstatement Fees](#)
  - [Vision Test Policy](#)
    - [Vision Screening Test](#)
    - [Vision Screening Certificate](#)
    - [Vision Standards](#)
      - [Visual Acuity](#)
      - [Horizontal Peripheral Vision](#)
      - [Color](#)
      - [Unresolvable Diplopia](#)
      - [Bioptic Telescopic Lenses](#)
      - [Blindness in One Eye](#)
      - [Self-Estimating Visual Acuity](#)
    - [Vision Restrictions](#)
      - [B Restriction](#)
      - [G Restriction](#)
  - [Transactions that Require a License](#)
  - [\*\*CDL Requirements\*\*](#)
  - [License Cancellation Policy](#)
- [License Transactions](#)
- [Medical Affairs Policy](#)
- [System Access Policy](#)
- [Title Policy](#)
- [Massachusetts Sales and Use Tax](#)
- [About Policy Browser](#)
- [Glossary](#)

License Policy > Vision Test Policy

## CDL Requirements

A [Registry of Motor Vehicles Branch Representative](#) will screen your vision when you apply for a [CDL](#) or CDL [permit](#). If you normally wear contact lenses or glasses to see at a distance, you must wear them during the vision screening examination. For more information on vision requirements, please see the [Vision Test Policy](#).

Alternatively, you may provide an original vision screening certificate completed by a [physician](#) or optometrist who is licensed to practice in Massachusetts. The vision screening certificate cannot be more than 12 months old from the date of the screening. A copy of the Vision Screening Certificate Form for CDL is available online [here](#).

The minimum required standards for a CDL are:

- 1) distant visual acuity of at least 20/40 ([Snellen](#)) in each eye without corrective lenses or visual acuity separately corrected to 20/40 (Snellen) or better with corrective lenses, and
- 2) distant binocular acuity of at least 20/40 (Snellen) in both eyes with or without corrective lenses, and
- 3) field of vision of at least 70° in the horizontal meridian in each eye, and
- 4) the ability to recognize the colors of traffic signals and devices showing standard red, green, and amber

Monocular drivers are not qualified for a CDL.

Massachusetts may waive the federal visual standards for [INTRASTATE](#) commerce if the individual has a combined horizontal peripheral field of vision of not less than 120 degrees; provided the individual also has a distant visual acuity of at least 20/40 (Snellen) in either eye, with or without corrective lenses, and the ability to distinguish the colors red, green, and amber.

The federal government also has a vision exemption program for [INTERSTATE](#) driving. To learn more about the federal program, visit their [website](#).

Contents

- Upcoming Policy Changes
- Appointment Scheduling Help
- Exam Booking Help
- Obligations Help
- Policy Browser Help
- Pre-Staging Help
- Registry of Motor Vehicles Bra
- License Policy
  - CDL Self Certification Polic
  - CDL Military Skills Test Wa
  - Testing Requirements Polic
  - Expiration Policy
  - External Systems Verificati
  - Fees Policy
  - Identity Policy
  - Photo-Image and Signatur
  - Medical Impairments Policy
  - Motor Voter Policy
  - Non-Renewal Policy
  - Organ and Tissue Donor Po
  - Veteran's Indicator Policy
  - Restrictions and Endorsem
  - Suspensions and Revocatic
  - Reasons for Suspension
  - Junior Operator License
  - Criminal Offenses and S
  - Civil Offenses and Susp
  - Reinstatement Fees
- Vision Test Policy**
  - Vision Screening Test
  - Vision Screening Certifi
  - Vision Standards
  - Self-Estimating Visual A
  - Vision Restrictions
  - Transactions that Requ
  - CDL Requirements
- License Cancellation Policy
- License Transactions
- Medical Affairs Policy
- System Access Policy
- Title Policy
- Massachusetts Sales and Use
- About Policy Browser
- Glossary

License Policy

# Vision Test Policy

This section provides the Registry of Motor Vehicles' current [vision test](#) policy.