



Eye Health, Vision and subsidised glasses for Refugees and Asylum Seekers - Victoria

The Australian College of Optometry and Victorian Eyecare Service

Healthy eyes and good vision are important to all of us for daily life, education, employment and community and family participation. That is why the Victorian Department of Health, through the Victorian Eyecare Service, provides funding to help people who are disadvantaged or on low incomes to access low cost optometry services and subsidised glasses.

If you are a Refugee or Asylum Seeker, you may be referred to the Australian College of Optometry (ACO) Clinic by a welfare or social support agency. Your Refugee or Asylum seeker status needs to be confirmed by a letter from such an agency. A Medicare card is not required if you have a letter confirming your Refugee status or Asylum seeker status.

If you have a Pensioner Concession Card or Health Care Card you are eligible to attend ACO clinics without a letter confirming your status.

If you have a Medicare card, Medicare covers the costs of most optometry consultations. The Clinic bulk bills consultation fees, so normally no consultation fee is payable by the patient. If glasses are needed, they may be provided at a subsidised rate (starting from \$30 - \$50).

There are **interpreter services** available for Refugees and Asylum Seekers if required. You will be placed on a waiting list for an interpreter service and be contacted once an appointment can be confirmed. Please note that there may be longer waiting times for interpreter services.

More information is available at

<http://www.aco.org.au/eye-care-services/eye-care-in-melbourne>

or telephone (03) 9349 7400 or 9349 7455 (appointments)

Eye Health and Eye Examinations

Vision loss from diabetes, cataract, and refractive error (the need for glasses) is common in communities in Victoria and up to **75% of vision loss is unnecessary as it is preventable or treatable**. Regular eye examinations, early detection and treatment of eye problems helps prevent vision loss. An eye examination with an optometrist generally takes about 40 minutes and allows investigation of all aspects of how your eyes are functioning. Your eyes will be tested for eye diseases such as cataract, diabetic eye disease, macular degeneration, glaucoma, dry eye, binocular vision problems (how the two eyes work together) and your glasses prescription. Drops to dilate the pupil are usually used (especially if you have diabetes) to allow the optometrist to check the health of the retina, macula and optic nerve at the back of the eye. These drops sometimes make the eyes blurry for about 2 hours after the eye test. If cataract surgery or laser treatment is needed, the optometrist will arrange a referral to an eye specialist (ophthalmologist) in a public hospital eye clinic (no fees) or you may choose to see a private specialist (private fees apply).

Children's eye examinations will help to find any eye problems that affect your child's ability to see clearly and comfortably for near vision and long distance vision.

Locations

The Australian College of Optometry has primary care optometry services for people who are Refugees or Asylum Seekers at a range of locations around Melbourne. To arrange an appointment at any of the following clinics, please contact the site directly:

Carlton Clinic

Australian College of Optometry (ACO)

Corner Keppel and Cardigan Streets Carlton 3053

Telephone 9349 7400 or 9349 7455 Monday to Friday 8.30am - 5.30pm ; Saturday 8.30am - 5.00pm

Community Health Services – Melbourne metropolitan area

- Western Region Health Service – Optometry clinic

107 – 139 Churchill Ave Braybrook 3019

Telephone 9334 6622 Monday to Friday 8.30am - 5.00pm

- Darebin Community Health Centre – Optometry clinic

Cnr Blake and Crevelli St Reservoir 3073

Telephone 8470 1199 Monday to Friday 8.30am - 5.30pm

- Peninsula Community Health – Optometry clinic

8-10 Hastings Rd Frankston 3199

Telephone 9784 8342 Monday to Friday 9.00am - 5.00pm

- Casey – Cardinia Community Health – Optometry clinic

67 Power Road Doveton 3177

Telephone 9212 5700 Monday to Friday 8.45am - 5.00pm

- Broadmeadows Health Service – Optometry clinic

35 Johnstone Street Broadmeadows 3047

Telephone 8345 5414 Monday to Friday 8.30am - 5.30pm ; Saturday 8.30am - 5.00pm

Outreach / Visiting Services - Melbourne area

Enquiries to: outreach@aco.org.au ph 9349 7472

EACH - Eastern Access Community Health

75 Patterson Street Ringwood

ph 9837 3999 and ask for an appointment in the visiting optometry clinic

ISIS Primary Care

117-129 Warringa Cres, Hoppers Crossing 3029

ph 8734 1400 and ask for an appointment in the visiting optometry clinic

Services in Regional Victoria – Victorian Eyecare Service participating optometry practices

For services locations in regional Victoria under the Victorian Eyecare Service

Telephone 1300 303 125 for the cost of a local call (excluding calls from mobiles) or on (03) 9349 7434

<http://www.aco.org.au/eye-care-services/eye-care-in-rural-victoria>

Australian College of Optometry

The Barry Cole Building cnr Keppel and Cardigan Streets Carlton Vic 3053

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