



Ohio Administrative Code

Rule 4501:1-1-20 Vision standards for driver license applicants.

Effective: April 10, 2016

[Comment: For dates and availability of material incorporated by reference in this rule, see rule 4501:1-1-39 of the Administrative Code.]

(A) As used in this chapter:

(1) "Visual acuity" means the ability of the eye to discriminate detail, measured according to the size of letters viewed on a Snellen chart from a given distance.

(2) "Corrective lenses" means exclusively, eyeglasses, contact lenses, and intraocular lenses (IOL) and excludes bioptic/telescopic lenses.

(3) "Binocular vision" means visual acuity of twenty/two hundred or better, in both eyes, with or without corrective lenses.

(4) "Monocular vision" means visual acuity of twenty/two hundred or better in only one eye, with or without corrective lenses.

(5) "Combined visual acuity" means visual acuity attained by using both eyes together where applicant has binocular vision.

(6) "Visual field" means area or extent of physical space visible to an eye in a given position, the extent of which, for purposes of this chapter, shall be a minimum of forty-five degrees inward (nasal) and seventy degrees outward (temporal), when the eye is in the straightforward position.

(B) Applicants being examined for an Ohio driver license or endorsement for the first time, applying for a commercial driver's license, or being authorized by the bureau of motor vehicles for reexamination due to administrative action, shall meet the applicable standards of this rule prior to the issuance of a temporary permit or other class of driver's license.



(1) For purposes of this rule persons examined with corrective lenses who are unable to attain the visual acuity required by this rule and persons examined without corrective lenses who are unable to attain the visual acuity required by this rule for the issuance of the appropriate license without visual restrictions on their driver license shall be referred to an ophthalmologist or licensed optometrist of their choice for correction and/or examination and record the results on the form as prescribed by the registrar of motor vehicles.

(2) For purposes of this rule persons wearing eyeglasses shall be examined with or without eyeglasses. Corrective lenses shall be required for driving if the applicant needs them to meet the standards for visual acuity.

(3) Examination results shall be recorded on forms supplied by the registrar and returned to the driver license examiner.

(C) This paragraph applies to driver's, motorcycle and motorized bicycle license applicants.

(1) Persons with binocular vision

(a) Persons with binocular vision whose combined visual acuity is twenty/forty or better, without corrective lenses, shall be issued a license without visual restrictions.

(b) Persons with binocular vision whose combined acuity is poorer than twenty/forty, but not worse than twenty/seventy, shall be restricted to daytime driving only.

(c) Persons with binocular vision unable to attain a combined visual acuity of at least twenty/seventy shall be denied a license.

(2) Persons with monocular vision

(a) Persons with monocular vision whose visual acuity is twenty/thirty or better, without corrective lenses, shall be issued a license without visual restriction.



(b) Persons with monocular vision whose visual acuity is poorer than twenty/thirty but not worse than twenty/sixty shall be issued a license restricted to daytime driving.

(c) Persons with monocular vision unable to attain acuity of at least twenty/sixty shall be denied a license.

(D) This paragraph applies to commercial driver's license applicants (other than school bus driver's license applicants) who are not required to meet the standards of 49 C.F.R. 391.

(1) Persons with binocular vision

(a) Persons with binocular vision whose visual acuity is twenty/forty or better, without corrective lenses, shall be issued a license restricted to intrastate operation of commercial motor vehicles.

(b) Persons with binocular vision whose combined visual acuity is poorer than twenty/forty but not worse than twenty/seventy shall be issued a license restricted to daytime driving only in any vehicle and intrastate operation of commercial motor vehicles.

(c) Persons with binocular vision unable to attain a combined visual acuity of at least twenty/seventy, shall be denied a license.

(2) Persons with monocular vision

(a) Persons with monocular vision whose visual acuity is twenty/thirty or better, without corrective lenses, shall be issued a license restricted to intrastate operation of commercial motor vehicles.

(b) Persons with monocular vision whose visual acuity is poorer than twenty/thirty but not worse than twenty/sixty shall be issued a license restricted to daytime driving only in any vehicle and intrastate operation of commercial motor vehicles.

(c) Persons with monocular vision unable to attain acuity of at least twenty/sixty shall be denied a license.



(E) This paragraph applies to commercial driver's license school bus driver's endorsement applicants.

(1) A commercial driver's license school bus driver's endorsement shall not be issued to a person with monocular vision or with a field of vision less than seventy degrees in the horizontal meridian in each eye, or without the ability to recognize the colors of traffic signals and devices showing standard red, green, and amber.

(2) Persons whose visual acuity in each eye is twenty/forty or better, without corrective lenses, shall be issued a commercial driver's license school bus driver's endorsement without visual restriction.

(3) Persons unable to attain a visual acuity of at least twenty/forty in each eye, shall be denied a commercial driver's license school bus driver's endorsement.

(4) Persons may use corrective lenses to attain these standards.

(F) This paragraph applies to commercial driver's license applicants who are required to meet the standards of 49 C.F.R. 391.

(1) A commercial driver's license shall not be issued to a person with monocular vision if that person is required to meet the standards of 49 C.F.R. 391.

(2) Persons whose visual acuity in each eye is twenty/forty or better, without corrective lenses, shall be issued a license without visual restriction.

(3) Persons unable to attain a visual acuity of at least twenty/forty in each eye, shall be denied a license.

(4) Persons may use corrective lenses to attain these standards.

(5) Persons unable to recognize the colors of traffic devices showing standard red, green, and amber shall be denied a license.



(6) Persons unable to attain a seventy-degree visual field on both sides of the fixation point shall be denied a license.

(G) This paragraph contains horizontal-peripheral vision standards for driver's, motorcycle and motorized bicycle license and commercial driver's license applicants who are not required to meet the standards of 49 C.F.R. 391.

(1) A person possessing a seventy-degree visual field on both sides of the fixation point shall be issued a non-restricted license.

(2) If the visual field on one side of fixation is less than seventy degrees the applicant shall be tested and must demonstrate a visual field of at least seventy degrees on one side of fixation and forty-five degrees on the other side of fixation, and the applicant is subject to a restricted license and the use of an outside mirror on the side of the more limited visual field, in addition to an inside mirror, and an applicant for a commercial driver's license shall be restricted to intrastate operation of commercial motor vehicles.

(3) A person who does not demonstrate a visual field of at least seventy degrees on one side of fixation and forty-five degrees on the other side of fixation shall not be issued a license.

(4) Anyone who does not meet visual field standards of seventy degrees on one side and forty-five degrees on the other side, will be referred to an ophthalmologist or a licensed optometrist for further examination and such results are to be recorded on the form as prescribed by the registrar.

(H) In all cases where the applicant is sent to an ophthalmologist or a licensed optometrist for visual correction, the temporary permit or license, whichever the case may be, shall be held by the driver license examiner pending the applicant's return.

After being examined by an ophthalmologist or licensed optometrist, the applicant must return to the driver examination station for further processing of the application or refusal. A retest of the visual acuity of the applicant using the driver examination equipment must be passed before a license is issued.



- (1) The applicant shall be instructed that the license will be held at the examination station for a period of thirty days and that the applicant will be unable to drive a motor vehicle until visual correction has been made and the applicant has returned for the remainder of the examination.

- (2) If the applicant fails to return within the thirty-day period, the temporary permit or license shall be forwarded to the bureau.

- (3) A stop shall be placed against the applicant's name in the files, and further permits and licenses shall not be issued until the applicant is in compliance with the vision standards set forth in this rule.