Financial Assistance Eligibility: Frequently Asked Questions

The Center for the Visually Impaired's (CVI) mission is to empower people impacted by vision loss to live with independence and dignity.

We offer a wide range of services for people of all ages experiencing vision loss. The fees for services vary from program to program.

CVI is committed to ensuring you and your family can receive the life-changing services you need regardless of your financial resources. You may qualify to receive services at a discounted rate through our sliding fee scale. The amount of the discount will be based on your income. With the help of generous donors, you may also receive support through our Financial Assistance Fund.

Please read the following information carefully to learn more.

What is covered under the financial assistance program?

- Low Vision Exams
- Certain items in the Visibility Store (check with store for details on qualifying items)
- Orientation and Mobility, Independent Living Skills, Braille, Assistive Technology, and other Vision Rehabilitation Services
- Functional Vision Assessments for babies, preschoolers, and school age children
- Educational, social and summer enrichment programs for school age children

What about Insurance?

Your insurance policy may cover all or part of the cost of a low vision exam for individuals ages five and up. Your insurance may NOT cover rehabilitation services or training related to blindness or low vision. You may fund the cost of these services yourself or apply for financial assistance.

How does CVI determine if I'm eligible for financial assistance?

Fee reductions are based on a sliding scale. To be eligible, you must first supply documentation showing your individual and/or household gross income for the most recent tax year. For consideration, you must provide the following documentation to CVI:

- The first page of your federal tax return showing all gross income and household dependents for the most recent tax year if before April 15 or the current tax year if after April 15.

- For clients 17 and younger whose family does not file taxes, the parent/guardian must submit a letter from the IRS confirming a status of non-filing along with documentation of income (such as a Social Security benefit letter) in order for the family to be considered for financial assistance.
- For adult clients who receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and who do not file income taxes, you must submit a benefit verification letter from the Social Security Administration for the year in which the fee reduction is being requested. If you have active Medicaid coverage, this will also serve as proof of income and will be approved for financial assistance (please provide CVI with your Medicaid member ID during the intake process so your policy can be verified).

Applicants can obtain required income verification documents from the IRS or Social Security Administration at the following websites or by calling the numbers below:

Internal Revenue Service (IRS):

Online: https://www.irs.gov/individuals/transcript-types-and-ways-to-order-them

By Phone: 1-844-545-5640 or for automated ordering of tax documents 1-800-908-9946. If you are unable to complete the IRS transcript request form, you can make an appointment to visit a local IRS Taxpayer Assistance Center to obtain any required tax document(s) (such as a Proof of Non-Filing Status letter).

Social Security Administration (SSA):

Online: www.ssa.gov/myaccount/proof-of-benefits.html

By Phone: 1-800-772-1213.

How do I submit documentation?

Income documentation must be presented to CVI and verified before any fee discounts will be approved. CVI will accept all documents via email, fax, or they may be dropped off at the CVI building located at 739 West Peachtree Street NW, Atlanta, GA 30308 (if dropping off documents, please write the applicant's name on the envelope). Also, please mark out all Social Security number(s) on tax or Social Security documentation. These numbers are not required for proof of income, only the applicant's full name is needed to be listed on documents.

The documentation from clients to CVI for consideration for a fee reduction must accurately reflect the client and/or their family's current financial situation at the time of the fee reduction request. Any attempt to mislead or conceal your true financial situation may result in the inability to apply for such discounts in the future. These requirements are intended to ensure that precious financial assistance funds go to as many clients as possible who qualify for fee reductions.

Once income verification is complete, your approved discount will be applied, and you will be contacted to schedule the initial evaluation and any subsequent training.

How do I pay for Services?

Payment for services must be made before an evaluation and/or training can begin. Clients may pay with cash, credit card or debit card. Clients may pay prior to their service in the VisAbility Store or inside the Florence Maxwell Low Vision Clinic at the check-in window.

Who do I contact if I'm interested in applying for financial assistance?

If you are interested in financial assistance, please contact Client Services at 404-875-9011 or jrobinson@cviga.org. If you wish to submit financial documents via fax, please send to 404-602-4360.