Information Circular

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Subject: REVISED EYESIGHT SCREENING AND TESTING POLICY

The Department of Commerce has issued Circular to Departments and Authorities No. 1 of 2012 providing notification of the revised Eyesight Screening and Testing Policy.

A copy of the policy may be viewed at:

The most significant amendment is that the subsidy is now up to a maximum of $220 every two years in place of a maximum of $110 per annum as previously applied. It is provided on a biennial basis in line with the Medicare bulk billing of standard eye testing every two years.

The approved and reviewed procedures are outlined below for your information.

- Employees with certification that optical aids are necessary for the performance of work on screen based equipment (SBE) are entitled to a subsidy of 50% of actual out-of-pocket expenses up to a maximum amount of $220.00.
- The subsidy will apply to the difference between the cost of the optical aids and any reimbursement made by a private health insurance fund.
- Only one subsidy payment will be approved for eligible employees in a 24 month period. More than one receipt for optical aids can form part of the single claim for reimbursement where appropriate. For example an employee may have four receipts for a six monthly supply of contact lenses over the 24 month period.
- Employees who are not permanent and have less than 12 months’ service are not eligible for the subsidy.
- Eligible employees are to be encouraged to undergo an initial eyesight screening test on commencement of employment, or at pre-commencement of SBE use, and to continue to have eyesight testing on a regular basis. Testing is recommended every two years for persons over the age of 40 years or whenever symptoms indicate that a problem may exist, such as headaches and eyestrain.
- Eyesight testing is voluntary and must be performed by an optometrist or other appropriately qualified person. If optical aids are necessary for the performance of SBE work, these service providers should supply employees with a prescription for the corrective optical aids, together with a certificate stating that the optical aids are required for performance of SBE work.
- Eyesight screening and testing fees will only be paid if the Department of Health directs an employee to undergo such tests.
• Section 19 of the *Health Insurance Act 1973* [Cth] does not allow Medicare benefits to be paid to persons in respect of medical professional services paid for by employers. This precludes the payment of medical benefits for employer initiated eyesight testing programs.

• Employees seeking to claim the optical aids subsidy or reimbursement for employer directed eyesight screening should follow the procedure outlined on the HCN intranet.

Any queries regarding this circular can be sent to [industrial.relations@health.wa.gov.au](mailto:industrial.relations@health.wa.gov.au).

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This information is available in alternative formats upon request.