



Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired SC

Bioptic Driving in South Carolina

In South Carolina, drivers who use bioptic telescopic lenses may be permitted to get a driver's license with restrictions.

1. Low Vision Evaluation **SCDMV Form 412-LV**

Participate in a low vision evaluation with an optometrist or ophthalmologist who specializes in low vision and/or bioptic telescopes. In most cases, insurance will cover the cost of this evaluation. Discuss with your doctor your medical history, eye condition, and driving goals. Your doctor will explain the pros and cons of bioptics and whether or not you are a candidate for bioptic driving.

2. Pre-Driving Evaluation (Part 1A)

Participate in a 2½ hour pre-driving evaluation with a **Certified Driving Rehabilitation Specialist (CDRS)**. In some cases, insurance may cover a portion of this evaluation. The purpose of this evaluation is to determine whether you have the pre-requisite skills necessary for driving before purchasing a bioptic telescope. If paying privately, this cost may range between \$300 and \$700.

3. Bioptic Telescope Prescribed

Work with your low vision doctor to order a bioptic telescope that works best for you. Your doctor will prescribe and custom fit the telescope to meet your vision needs. The cost of this bioptic telescope may be up to \$2,500.

4. Get a SC Driver's Permit

Get a learner's permit from the SC Department of Motor Vehicles, unless you currently possess a valid SC license. Individuals without a current license should submit SCDMV Form 412-LV to the Driver Improvement Office. If no previous driving experience or a minor, take a state-approved driver education course (about 8 hours in a classroom). If no previous driving experience, you must have the permit for 180 days before taking the road test.

5. Learn how to use the bioptic telescope as a pedestrian.

Your doctor will refer you to work with a professional trained in teaching bioptics to learn to use the bioptic lense first as a pedestrian. This professional may be an occupational therapist (OT), a certified low-vision therapist (CLVT), or a certified orientation and mobility specialist (COMS) with a background in low-vision devices. These instructional lessons in using a bioptic may cost approximately \$500. Insurance may cover this part of the process if medically authorized.

6. Bioptic Driving Training as a Passenger with a CDRS (Part 1B)

While wearing your bioptic telescope, participate as a passenger in bioptic driving lessons for a minimum of 10 hours. If paying privately, this cost may likely be a minimum of \$1,200. In some instances, insurance may cover part of this cost.

7. Behind-the-Wheel Bioptic Driving Training

While wearing your bioptic lenses train with a CDRS “behind the wheel” as a driver. Trainees with previous driving experience will need to have at least 20 hours of training. If a new driver with no driving experience, the hours need to be at least 30 hours and may exceed 30 hours. These training hours will likely cost between \$3,000 and \$4,000 depending on the hours needed to become a proficient driver. Once a Bioptic Driving Training Certificate is awarded to trainee, it shall be sent to the DMV and to the supervising low vision doctor.

8. Contact DMV to set up road test

After reviewing this documentation and confirming all requirements have been met, SCDMV will send you a letter advising you how to set up your on-road driving test.

9. On-Road Driving Test Administered by DMV

Complete the test with the bioptic lense within 12 months of completing Bioptic Driver Training.

10. Driver’s License Awarded with Restrictions

Once you pass the on-road driving test, you’ll be issued a driver’s license with restrictions.

11. Annual Low Vision Evaluation SCDMV Form 412-LV

Lastly, return to your low vision doctor for an annual low vision evaluation. You will need to submit this report to the SCDMV annually, within 60 days of the anniversary of the date your driver’s license was issued to you or risk loss of license. Annual reports should be mailed to:

SCDMV

Driver Improvement Office
Post Office Box 1498
Blythewood, SC 29016-0016



! Please note:

- The driving road test with the DMV must take place within 12 months of completing Bioptic Driving Training
- If road test is failed after three attempts, no additional testing permitted until the individual has successfully repeated Bioptic Driver Training Program and received approval from Driver Improvement to retake road test. (Mandatory SCDMV return testing procedures will be followed for retaking road test).



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