

VISUAL IMPAIRMENT GUIDELINES

Federal Definition of Visual Impairment:

An impairment in vision that, even with correction, adversely affects a child's educational performance. This definition includes both partial sight and blindness.

Eligibility:

A "child with a visual impairment" means that a child has been evaluated in accordance with the Department's policies and procedures, determined to have a visual impairment, and as a result of the visual impairment, needs special education (i.e. specially designed instruction) and may require related services. "Specially designed instruction" means adapting, as appropriate, the content, methodology, or delivery of instruction to address the unique needs of the child that results from the disability, and ensure access of the child to the general curriculum so that the child can meet the educational standards within the jurisdiction of the district that apply to all children.

Criteria:

A child is determined by a qualified professional to have no vision, or a serious visual loss after correction. The visual loss should be stated in exact measures of visual field and corrected visual acuity. The report should include prognosis whenever possible. If exact measures cannot be obtained, the report must so state and give a best estimate; AND

Based on at least one of the following assessments, the evaluation team documents the adverse impact on educational performance resulting in the need for specially designed instruction:

- A functional vision assessment, conducted by a teacher licensed in the area of visual impairments, that evaluates the performance of tasks in a variety of environments requiring the use of both near and distance vision; OR
- An orientation and mobility assessment, conducted by a trained professional, that evaluates the child's orientation to, and movement within, his/her home, school and community; OR
- An academic, social, or vocational assessment conducted by a qualified professional, to determine the skills affected by the visual impairment that cannot be addressed through accommodations in the general education curriculum; AND

Documentation of adverse impact on educational performance resulting in the need for specially designed instruction, the type of instruction required, and why it cannot be provided by general education.

Educational Impact:

The impact of the disability requires **specialized instruction** as it has an **adverse impact** on educational performance and is **not** able to be provided by general education.