Kent Association for the Blind

Registration as sight impaired

Certification of your eligibility to register your sight loss is carried out by a Consultant Ophthalmologist. There are two levels of registration:

- Severely sight impaired (this used to be registered blind) and
- Sight impaired (this used to be partially sighted)

The registration process

1. Your Consultant Ophthalmologist will determine if you are eligible to be registered as sight impaired or severely sight impaired.
2. If you are eligible, the consultant will complete a Certificate of Vision Impairment (CVI) and give copies to you, your GP and to KAB.
   KAB holds the register of visual impairment on behalf of the local authority.

3. KAB will then contact you to confirm that you agree to be registered by being placed on the local authority's voluntary, confidential register of sight impaired people. We will also offer you a free assessment of your needs and talk to you about the range of services available.
4. If you have been registered as severely sight impaired KAB will provide you with a registration card, and letters which you can use to claim blind person's tax allowance and a concession on your TV licence.
5. If you have been registered as sight impaired KAB will provide you with a registration card, and letters which you can use to claim appropriate concessions.

Most people who are registered as severely sight impaired still have some useful vision and it doesn't mean you will lose all your sight in the future. KAB's services are free and available to anyone with a sight impairment, whether you are registered or not.

Eligibility for registration

Only a Consultant Ophthalmologist can register you as severely sight impaired or sight impaired after completing a detailed test of your vision whilst you are wearing your most up to date glasses or contact lenses. In very simple terms, if you can only see the top letter of the eye test chart at a distance of 3 metres you are likely to be certified as severely sight impaired. You may also be certified as severely sight impaired if you have lost the majority of your peripheral vision.

If you have difficulties reading the top of the eye test chart, but have a wider field of vision, or if your field of vision is narrow but you can see a few lines clearly, you may be certified as sight impaired.

If you have one eye which has normal vision then you are not eligible for registration.

If you have any questions or are worried about becoming registered, you can contact KAB or ask to speak to a KAB Eye Clinic Liaison Officer (ECLO) at the hospital eye clinic.

The Benefits of Registration

Below is a summary of the benefits and concessions you may be entitled to if you are registered.

These benefits are only available to those registered as Severely Sight Impaired (SSI):

Blind Person's tax allowance
www.gov.uk/blind-persons-allowance
Tel: 0300 2003301

Television licence fee reduction
www.tvlicensing.co.uk
Tel: 0300 7906071

Blue Badge Scheme – car parking concessions
www.kent.gov.uk/bluebadge
Tel: 03000 416262

These benefits are available to those registered as Severely Sight Impaired (SSI) and Sight Impaired (SI)

Free Postage – Articles for the Blind
www.rnib.org.uk
Tel: 0303 1239999

Free NHS eye examination
www.nhs.uk

Rail Concessions
Severely sight impaired people travelling with a companion are entitled to discounted fares on production of a registration card. Terms and conditions: www.nationalrail.co.uk

Disabled person's railcard
www.disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk
Tel: 0345 6050525

Disabled person's bus pass
www.kent.gov.uk/buspass
Tel: 03000 418383

Free directory enquiries
www.bt.com/includingyou/other-products-services.html
Tel: 0800 800150

Cinema Pass for carer
Available to people registered SSI and those registered SI who are in receipt of Attendance Allowance (AA), Disability Living Allowance (DLA)/ Personal Independence Payment (PIP)
Tel: 0845 1231292 www.ceacard.co.uk

Protection under the Equality Act
www.rnib.org.uk
Tel: 0303 1239999

Some sight impaired people may be eligible for some of the following allowances which require separate application

Personal Independence Payment (PIP) (under 65 years)
DWP disability helpline
www.rnib.org.uk
Tel: 0345 8503322

Attendance Allowance (over 65 years)
DWP disability helpline
www.rnib.org.uk
Tel: 0345 6056055

Disability Living Allowance
DWP disability helpline
www.rnib.org.uk
Tel: 0345 7123456

Carers Allowance
DWP disability helpline
www.rnib.org.uk
Tel: 0845 6084321

Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
DWP disability helpline
www.rnib.org.uk
Tel: 0843 5159469

Tax Credits
DWP disability helpline
www.rnib.org.uk
Tel: 0843 5159469

Housing Benefit
Contact your local district council

Council Tax disability reduction
Contact your local district council

Universal Credit
DWP disability helpline
www.rnib.org.uk
Tel: 0843 5159469

Pension Credit
DWP disability helpline
www.rnib.org.uk
Tel: 0843 5159469

A free ticket for a guide at theatres, galleries or tourist attractions
Contact attraction for venue specific information.

For more information contact KAB's Duty Officers:

West Kent - Gravesend, Maidstone & Medway
01622 358995 rehab.maidstone@kab.org.uk

East Kent - Canterbury & Dover
01227 763366 rehab.canterbury@kab.org.uk

Bromley
0208 464 8406 rehab.bromley@kab.org.uk

Kent Association for the Blind
72 College Road, Maidstone, Kent ME15 6SJ
Tel: 01622 691357
Email: enquiry@kab.org.uk
www.kab.org.uk

