



Lions Screen Kids Sight

Overview - Implementing Vision Screening Rules

Implementation of the rules by ADHS (Arizona Department of Health Services) for the 2019 AZ Vision Screening Legislation have been finalized. After delays over several years, a preliminary set of rules was written 2022 and finalized in May of 2024, after going through several iterations of on-line meetings and public comment periods. They were released on July 7th, 2024 and will be in effect for the 2024-2025 school year. They apply to all district and charter schools, but do not apply to private schools. Below are relevant details about those rules as it affects Lions Screen Kids Sight program:

1. The final rules listed in 9 A.A.C. 13 Department of Health Services - Health Programs Services - ARTICLE 1. HEARING AND VISION SCREENING - Supp. 24-2, have now been published. All previous draft versions are now obsolete, including edited text version listed in the Arizona Administrative Register, May 31, 2024, Volume 30, Issue 22.
2. With the vision screening rules now officially released, we will take the following actions.
 - a. Mandated grade levels are entry into school (preK or K), 3rd and 7th grades.
Proposed Action: Screen entry into school (preK and K) with conditions and skip grades 3 and 7 (when applicable) in our screenings. The rules for preK or K are more restrictive.
 - b. ADHS in specifying AAPOS guidelines, is currently prohibiting the use of photoscreeners above the age of 5 for the mandated grade levels only.
Proposed Action: To clarify, the first mandated grade is not for both Pre-K and K, but for entry into school. For most schools, K is the entry level into school. If a given school, however, has a full contingent of preschoolers, then that becomes the mandated grade, FOR THAT SCHOOL. In that case, kindergarten students who are in their second year at that school, would not qualify for the entry into school designation and would not be subject to the ADHS rules. So, in that case, you could vision screen 6-year-old kindergarten students who are in their second year. We will need to ask schools not to send us any students in Kindergarten who are older than five years old and are in their first year.
 - c. The legislation only covers the mandated grade levels and all other grades are available to vision screen using photoscreeners.
Proposed Action: Convince our school partners to be permitted to also vision screen non-mandated grade levels between preK- 4 using photoscreeners, at a minimum. That would be grades: preK and K (with conditions), 1, 2, and 4. In some schools, where we are vision screening additional grades, skip grade 7.
 - d. Students who are referred need to be retested between 1 and 30 days after the initial screening.
Proposed Action: We rescreen all Refers immediately. For preK or K if entry into school, we will need to work out the details with our school partners for the requirement to retest Refers between 1 and 30 days after the screening event. Because this generally is a modest number of students, either we could return to re-screen or the we could leave it to the school health official to re-screen..
 - e. Additional rule: Conduct an inspection of students eyes (only for preK or K). If defect(s) found, the rule says do not screen.
Proposed Action: We will attempt to screen all students in our program as long as there is no discomfort to the student using the photoscreener and make a notation of any visible eye abnormalities at the bottom of the student's index card.
 - f. Reschedule absent students within 45 days of the vision screening event.
Proposed Action: We will make arrangements, case by case, whether to return to screen absentees within 45 days, or leave it to school health official.

- g. The requirement for stereoacuity screening is for entry into school (preK or K) and 3rd grade. **Proposed Action:** We will not provide stereoacuity screening this year. We will review whether adding this service in future years is appropriate,
- h. Color testing will be required for entry into school (preK or K).
Proposed Actions: 1. We should plan to continue color testing prek and kindergarten, where applicable. 2. We recommend that the school nurse retest all Nonconforming students for color.
3. Data that schools need to report annually for vision screening (may only apply to preK or K)
- Name of screener:
Proposed Action: This will be the name of Team Leader or event Lead Screener.
 - Copy of screener's certificate of completion:
Proposed Action: The Team Leader or event Lead Screener should bring a copy of their **Lions KidSight USA Foundation** Certified Vision Screener certificate, if it is dated before 8/27/19. They should present that certificate to fulfill this requirement. (It is recommended that as a precaution, they also bring a copy of their AZ Vision Screening Certificate.)
 - Type of vision equipment used: **Welch Allyn Spot Vision Screener**
 - Date of calibration: **Not applicable. Recalibration not required**
4. Team Leaders or other Lions leading vision screening events, need to either have their Kid Sight certification dated before August 27, 2019, or need to get their AZ Vision Screening Certification. If their Kid Sight certification is dated before August 27, 2019, they are not required to retrain.
5. How do we proceed with our partner schools?
- Now that the rules are released, some schools may opt to do the anticipated bare minimum. Our goal is to convince them that we continue to vision screen grades preK – 2 and 4th grade, with the restrictions already discussed above (don't screen preK or K students over the age of 5, if entry into school). In some schools where we may vision screen additional grades above 4th grade, we need to skip 7th grade.
Action: Give schools the following reasons to continue to vision screen grades preK – 2, 4th grade (with restrictions):
 - The 2019 legislation gives schools the authority to add more grades to the minimum grades mandated for vision screening.
 - The minimum vision screening requirement under the mandate does not negate the long time recommended practice of vision screening lower grades every year. It is a bare minimum. The ADHS 2010 Vision Screening Guidelines recommend vision screening every year through 4th grade, then every other year.
 - In this age group, children's eyes change every year & need to be tested every year.
 - Charts alone are not as effective in detecting certain eye conditions that photoscreeners can detect. Photoscreeners detect:
Astigmatism - irregularly shaped corneas or lenses; **Myopia** – nearsightedness; **Strabismus** - misalignment of the eyes; **Hyperopia** – farsightedness; **Anisometropia** - unequal refractive power; **Anisocoria** - pupil size anomalies
Amblyopia risk factors - reduced vision in one eye. Eliminating Amblyopia is a core Lions objective.
 - Eliminating vision impairment is a necessary component in a comprehensive strategy for improving student literacy. Children who do not have strong reading skills by the end of 3rd grade, do poorly for years afterward.
 - Vision screening with the Lions program is time efficient, minimizing the time lost in the classroom and is at no cost to the school.
 - This Lions program has the resources to pay for an eye exam and glasses for students if their parents can't afford to pay.
 - A Baltimore study found that getting eyeglasses to students paid significant dividends in student performance and these dividends had a biggest impact on students the lowest quartile.