

**TITLE 7           HEALTH**  
**CHAPTER 30   FAMILY AND CHILDREN HEALTH CARE SERVICES**  
**PART 11       VISION SCREENING TEST STANDARDS FOR STUDENTS**

**7.30.11.1       ISSUING AGENCY:** New Mexico Department of Health.  
[7.30.11.1 NMAC - N, 10/29/2010]

**7.30.11.2       SCOPE:** This rule applies to vision screeners and students enrolled in public schools in New Mexico in pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, first grade and third grade and transfer and new students in those grades unless a parent (guardian) affirmatively prohibits the vision screening.  
[7.30.11.2 NMAC - N, 10/29/2010]

**7.30.11.3       STATUTORY AUTHORITY:** This rule is adopted pursuant to Sections 9-7-6, 24-1-32 and 22-13-30 NMSA 1978.  
[7.30.11.3 NMAC - N, 10/29/2010]

**7.30.11.4       DURATION:** Permanent.  
[7.30.11.4 NMAC - N, 10/29/2010]

**7.30.11.5       EFFECTIVE DATE:** October 29, 2010 unless a later date is cited in the history at the end of a section.  
[7.30.11.5 NMAC - N, 10/29/2010]

**7.30.11.6       OBJECTIVE:** To establish standards for required vision screening of students in New Mexico public schools.  
[7.30.11.6 NMAC - N, 10/29/2010]

**7.30.11.7       DEFINITIONS:**

- A.       **“The department”** means New Mexico department of health.
- B.       **“Student”** means an individual enrolled in a New Mexico public school in one of the following grades: pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, first or third.
- C.       **“Photoscreeing”** means a method of vision screening with a machine with automated technique that uses red reflex of the eye to screen for eye problems and produces immediate readable results and timely report of the results thereafter.
- D.       **“Vision pre-screening observation”** means any observation listed in New Mexico vision screening standards that requires follow-up as a potential result of vision limitation.
- E.       **“Vision screening standards”** means the department’s approved manner of vision screening for students in New Mexico, established pursuant to report from an advisory committee appointed by the secretary of the department.
- F.       **“Vision screening test”** means any vision test administered in accordance with vision screening standards in New Mexico schools.
- G.       **“Vision screener”** means a school nurse or the nurse’s designee, a primary care health provider or a lay screener trained to administer a vision screening test to students in New Mexico schools in accordance with vision screening standards.

[7.30.11.7 NMAC - N, 10/29/2010]

**7.30.11.8       REQUIREMENTS:**

- A.       **Target population for required screening:** All public school students enrolled in pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, first grade and third grade including new students and transfer students in those grades shall have a vision screening test administered unless the parent (guardian) affirmatively prohibits the screening.
- B.       **Parental notification:** The parent (guardian) shall be provided notification of school vision screening to include the date and location of screening. The parent (guardian) shall have an opportunity to prohibit the screening for the student.
- C.       **Vision screener:** A school nurse or the nurse’s designee, a primary care health provider or a trained lay eye screener shall administer the screening tests.
- D.       **Vision screening standards:**

(1) Vision screening standards for pre-screening observations and screening tests in the school setting are established by the department and shall be reviewed periodically as determined by the secretary of the department.

(2) Vision pre-screening observation standards shall include but are not limited to eye appearance and visual behaviors.

(a) Eye appearance observations shall include at a minimum the following:

- (i) cloudy or milky appearance,
- (ii) keyhole pupil,
- (iii) sustained eye turn inward or outward,
- (iv) droopy eyelids,
- (v) absence of eyes moving together,
- (vi) abnormal pupil constriction or dilation,
- (vii) difference in size and shape of eyes, and
- (viii) excessive tearing,
- (ix) jerky eye movements (nystagmus).

(b) Visual behavior observations shall include at a minimum the following:

- (i) inconsistent visual behavior,
- (ii) visually inattentive or uninterested,
- (iii) difficulty sustaining eye contact,
- (iv) holding objects close to face,
- (v) bending close to view objects,
- (vi) tilting head,
- (vii) staring at lights and ceiling fans,
- (viii) high sensitivity to room light or sunlight,
- (ix) appearing to look beside, under or above an object or person,
- (x) bumping into things, and
- (xi) tripping over objects.

(3) Vision screening test standards in the school setting for the target population shall include but is not limited to distance visual acuity, ocular alignment, and color vision. Ocular alignment and color vision testing are required only once in any one of the targeted grades.

(4) Referral criteria for the required screening tests shall be in alignment with failure to meet the following test passing criteria:

(a) distance visual acuity passing criteria shall be identification of test line 20/40 for 3-5 years of age and 20/30 for 6 years of age and older;

(b) ocular alignment passing criteria shall be identification of the testing tool object; and

(c) color vision passing criteria shall be meeting passing criteria for any standard color vision test.

E. **Screening methods:** Acceptable screening methods include traditional screening and photostereopsis as outlined in the department approved vision screening standards. These methods shall adhere to the testing tools approved and adopted for use in the most current vision screening standards.

F. **Results notification:** Based on the school-based vision screening test results, the student's school shall notify the student's parent (guardian) if the need for further evaluation is indicated and shall provide information on application to the save our children's sight fund (7.30.10 NMAC).

G. **Referral process:** A standardized referral form approved by the administering agent of the save our children's sight fund shall be used for referring a student for further evaluation. The form shall include screening results held in the student's school health record. Any information resulting from a comprehensive vision evaluation reported back to the school on this referral form may be used for the purpose of completing the school health record and to collect information to evaluate the school vision screening program. Information on this form shall be treated as confidential medical information, and its use shall comply with all applicable federal and state laws.

[7.30.11.8 NMAC - N 10/29/2010]

**HISTORY of 7.30.11 NMAC:** [RESERVED]