

Donate Your Used Eyeglasses and Give the Gift of Sight

Vision is an essential part of daily life. Poor vision can negatively affect a person's independence, cognition, and mental health, while increasing the risk of injury. Yet, many people around the world do not have access to the vision care they need, including access to eyeglasses. This is where eyeglass donations come into play. Donating used eyeglasses can make a significant difference in the lives of individuals who cannot afford them on their own, and by helping to improve their vision, help them regain their independence and improve the quality of their lives.

The Need for Eyeglasses

According to the World Health Organization, approximately 2.2 billion people worldwide have a vision impairment or blindness, and at least 1 billion have a vision impairment that could have been prevented or has yet to be addressed. In California, millions of people do not have access to vision care, and children, the elderly, and historically marginalized and underrepresented populations are disproportionately impacted. Many of these individuals live in settings where access to eye care services is limited or non-existent. The donation of used eyeglasses could help address this need.

The Impact of Eyeglass Donation

Donating eyeglasses is a simple act that can have a profound impact. Here's how:

1. **Improving Lives**—Eyeglasses can dramatically improve the quality of life for individuals with vision impairments, enabling them to read, work, and live independently.
2. **Promoting Education**—For children, having the right pair of glasses can significantly enhance learning and comprehension, leading to better educational outcomes.
3. **Boosting Economy**—Adults who receive donated glasses can increase their productivity at work, potentially boosting the local economy.

How Eyeglass Donation Works

Organizations collect used eyeglasses and sort them by prescription strength. The glasses are then cleaned and repaired if necessary. These glasses are then distributed to individuals in need, either for free or at a very low cost.

The Board has found the following organizations specifically engaged in collecting and disseminating used eyeglasses. Click these links to learn more:

- **Lions Clubs International—Lions In Sight.**
- **Respectacle.**
- **Volunteer Optometric Services to Humanity.**

How do these programs work? Typically, the programs partner with locations to establish drop-off boxes that collect used eyeglasses. For example, the Lions In Sight program, which has been operating for decades in California and Nevada, has more than 400 drop-off locations, with most located in California. The boxes are periodically checked and must be delivered to a Lions In Sight affiliated drop-off location or mailed to the Lions In Sight warehouse located in Vallejo. Lions In Sight publishes a list of more than 400 drop-off locations, which can be accessed [online](#). More than 95% of the locations are in California and donation boxes may be found at diverse places, including grocery stores, optometric colleges, and at many licensed locations across the state such as optometric offices and dispensing locations.

Give the Gift of Sight!

Eyeglass donation is a powerful tool in the fight against vision impairment. By donating your used eyeglasses, you're not just recycling an old item—you're giving someone the gift of sight. So, the next time you get a new pair of glasses, consider donating your old ones. It's a small act of kindness that can make a world of difference.

Click to Find an Eyeglass Donation Location

