

**COMPETENCIES, CRITERIA, AND CLIENT OUTCOMES**  
**Specialty Certification in Low Vision (Adults)**  
**Occupational Therapy Assistant**

This document represents the competencies and criteria that applicants must use for building their certification portfolio. Complete information about the requirements for certification and instructions on how to complete a certification application can be found in the Low Vision Specialty Certification Handbook for occupational therapy assistants.

**COMPETENCY A**

**Under the direction and supervision of the occupational therapist, contributes to the completion of an individualized occupational therapy low vision evaluation to identify factors that support or hinder use of vision in occupational performance.**

**Client Outcome:** Clients are engaged in the identification of strengths, limitations, and goals that relate to low vision to optimize health and participation in desired occupations.

Standard	Criteria
Knowledge	A1. Has knowledge of the primary conditions that permanently impair vision, including the etiology, prevalence, typical onset, and prognosis, and the medical and optical management.
Knowledge	A2. Has knowledge of the changes in visual functions that can occur from congenital, inherited, and acquired conditions and how those changes affect engagement in areas of occupation, including co-occupations.
Knowledge	A3. Has knowledge of assessment methods and tools used to measure visual functions, including interpretation of vision-specific terminology.
Critical Reasoning	A4. Recognizes when low vision affects client performance in occupations and reports findings to the occupational therapist to ensure appropriate assessments are completed.
Performance Skills	A5. Demonstrates competence in administration of low vision assessments delegated by the supervising occupational therapist.
Performance Skills	A6. Assesses the contexts and environments to identify the elements that support or hinder occupational performance and participation.
Ethical Reasoning	A7. Differentiates between the role and scope of practice of the occupational therapy low vision specialist and those of other members of the rehabilitation team who address low vision.

**COMPETENCY B**

**In collaboration with the occupational therapist and client, contributes to the development and implementation of an individualized occupational therapy low vision intervention plan that reflects the client's priorities for occupational performance.**

**Client Outcomes:**

1. Clients are engaged in the development of the low vision intervention plan, including the identification and prioritization of goals, to achieve desired outcomes.
2. Clients engage in desired occupations as identified in the intervention plan by using the most appropriate visual or nonvisual strategies.
3. Clients are prepared to use services and resources that foster performance and participation in occupations within varied contexts after discharge.

<b>Standard</b>	<b>Criteria</b>
Knowledge	B1. Has knowledge of strategies to facilitate the use of remaining vision through modification of the tasks, environments, and contexts, including application of vision-specific adaptive equipment.
Knowledge	B2. Has knowledge of strategies to facilitate the use of visual performance skills (e.g., scanning, use of PRL) to enhance occupational performance.
Knowledge	B3. Has knowledge of the optical properties and uses of lenses and prisms.
Knowledge	B4. Has knowledge of visual and nonvisual strategies and techniques to facilitate safe negotiation of environments.
Critical Reasoning	B5. Differentiates between the risks and benefits of visual and nonvisual strategies. In collaboration with the occupational therapist, implements the most appropriate interventions to facilitate occupational performance and participation.
Interpersonal Skills	B6. Communicates information in a way that removes or minimizes barriers created by the client's low vision in a given context or environment.
Performance Skills	B7. Uses occupation-based interventions to achieve the client's identified occupational therapy low vision goals.
Interpersonal Skills	B8. Collaborates with referral and resource networks inside and outside the health care community to help the client achieve outcomes that support health and participation in life.
Critical Reasoning	B9. Coordinates with occupational therapist to establish a discharge plan that prepares the client with low vision to obtain and use services and resources that maximize occupational performance and support health, participation, and life satisfaction.
Performance Skills	B10. Contributes to the ongoing dialogue between the occupational therapist and the referring physician to determine optical devices that are compatible with the client's performance patterns, contexts, and environments and client factors that reflect the client's desired goals.

**COMPETENCY C**

**Recognizes immediate and long-term implications of psychosocial issues related to vision loss and modifies therapeutic approach and occupational therapy service delivery accordingly.**

**Client Outcome:** Clients have immediate and long-term emotional and psychosocial issues related to low vision addressed throughout the occupational therapy process.

<b>Standard</b>	<b>Criteria</b>
Knowledge	C1. Has knowledge of the factors unique to vision loss that influence psychological adjustment for clients.
Performance Skills	C2. Following collaboration with the occupational therapist, implements evidence-based intervention strategies that facilitate psychosocial adjustment to vision loss, including therapeutic use of self, and empower the client to advocate for needed services that support social participation.
Performance Skills	C3. In collaboration with the occupational therapist, assists client to access the low vision counseling and support services available in the community.

**COMPETENCY D**

**Advances access to occupational therapy services and advocates for policies, programs, and products that promote health and participation in occupations by persons with low vision.**

**Client Outcome:** Clients experience improved access to services and programs that promote optimal engagement in occupations.

<b>Standard</b>	<b>Criteria</b>
Knowledge	D1. Has knowledge of current and evolving practice developments, trends, and research that affect individuals with low vision.
Knowledge	D2. Has knowledge of federal, state, local, and organizational policies, regulations, qualifying criteria, and procedures for services that support or hinder completion of desired occupations (e.g., driving licensure requirements, Meals on Wheels, talking books) by individuals with low vision.
Performance Skills	D3. Collaborates with key decision makers at the facility, local, state, or national levels to advocate for needed services or products to support health and participation.
Performance Skills	D4. Educates the public and other professionals on the efficacy and scope of occupational therapy services for adults with low vision.
Performance Skills	D5. Contributes to the professional development of occupational therapy practitioners to be specialists in low vision rehabilitation.