

1. Purpose and Scope

This policy explains what happens to fees paid to Blue Fin Vision® when a patient cancels an appointment, does not attend, reschedules, or decides not to proceed with treatment, and what happens where surgery is cancelled by Blue Fin Vision® or an operating hospital rather than by the patient. It applies to all self-pay patients across all Blue Fin Vision® sites, including Harley Street, Weymouth Street Hospital, London Eye Diagnostic Centre, One Hatfield Hospital, Phoenix Hospital Chelmsford and Chase Lodge Hospital.

The operative principle throughout is straightforward. If a patient cancels, they may be responsible for genuine losses caused by their cancellation. If Blue Fin Vision® or an operating hospital cancels, the patient is not responsible for ours.

The charges described in this policy are not penalties. They reflect genuine and directly attributable losses incurred when reserved clinical time cannot be refilled, when hospital fees have already been paid on a patient's behalf, or when custom lenses have been ordered that cannot be returned. Section 9 sets out this basis in full.

2. Key Definitions

- **Consultation Fee:** the fee of £325, payable in advance, which secures a 30 minute consultation with a consultant ophthalmic surgeon.
- **Procedure Deposit:** a deposit of 50% of the procedure fee, payable in advance, which secures extended clinical time for a see and treat appointment expected to run beyond the standard 30 minute consultation.
- **Surgical Fee:** the full fee for intraocular surgery, payable no later than 48 hours before the date of surgery.
- **Notice Period:** 48 hours before the scheduled appointment or surgery time.

3. Consultations

All consultations are prepaid at £325. This fee reserves dedicated consultant time which may not be possible to offer to another patient if cancelled at short notice.

- **Cancellation with at least 48 hours' notice:** the Consultation Fee is carried forward to a rescheduled appointment or refunded.
- **Cancellation with less than 48 hours' notice:** the Consultation Fee is forfeited.
- **Non-attendance (DNA):** the Consultation Fee is forfeited.
- **Rescheduling with at least 48 hours' notice:** the Consultation Fee is carried forward in full to the new appointment.

- Rescheduling with less than 48 hours' notice: whether the Consultation Fee is carried forward is at the discretion of Blue Fin Vision®. A slot vacated at short notice can rarely be refilled, and a call shortly before an appointment to say a patient is not coming still costs the practice that clinical time. We reserve the right to consider the reason for the late change when deciding whether the fee may be transferred to a different time slot.

4. See and Treat Procedures Requiring Extended Time

Many patients ask to be seen and treated on the same day. Where photographs and clinical information supplied in advance confirm that a patient is likely to be suitable, and the planned procedure is expected to extend beyond the standard 30 minute consultation, we book extended clinical time out of the operating pattern. For example, a procedure expected to take one hour requires double the standard consultation slot to be reserved.

To secure this extended time, the patient pays the Consultation Fee plus a Procedure Deposit of 50% of the procedure fee in advance.

- Patient confirmed suitable but elects not to proceed on the day: the Procedure Deposit is forfeited. The extended clinical time was reserved exclusively for that patient and has been lost. The Consultation Fee is also retained, as the consultation has been delivered.
- Patient found unsuitable at consultation: the Procedure Deposit is refunded in full. The Consultation Fee is retained, as the consultation has been delivered.
- Non-attendance or cancellation with less than 48 hours' notice: the Consultation Fee is forfeited and the Procedure Deposit is forfeited, reflecting the extended clinical time reserved and lost.
- Cancellation or rescheduling with at least 48 hours' notice: both the Consultation Fee and the Procedure Deposit are carried forward or refunded.

5. Chalazion and Procedures Within the Standard Consultation

Chalazion removal and similar minor procedures can typically be assessed and treated within the standard 30 minute consultation. For these appointments, only the Consultation Fee of £325 is prepaid. The procedure fee is payable on the day, once the patient has been assessed and elects to proceed.

- Patient elects not to proceed after assessment: only the Consultation Fee is retained, as this reflects the clinical time the patient has received. No procedure fee is charged.
- Non-attendance or cancellation with less than 48 hours' notice: the Consultation Fee is forfeited.
- Cancellation or rescheduling with at least 48 hours' notice: the Consultation Fee is carried forward or refunded.

6. Intraocular Surgery

Fees for all intraocular surgery are payable in full no later than 48 hours before the date of surgery. By this point, Blue Fin Vision® may have paid hospital facility fees on the patient's behalf and may have ordered patient-specific lenses or other items.

Where the patient cancels or does not attend

- Cancellation with at least 48 hours' notice: the Surgical Fee is refunded in full, less any actual non-refundable cost of a toric or custom lens already ordered specifically for that patient, as set out in Section 7.
- Cancellation with less than 48 hours' notice: Blue Fin Vision® may retain up to 50% of the Surgical Fee to reflect actual unrecoverable losses arising directly from the late cancellation, including hospital facility fees and, where applicable, patient-specific items already ordered. Blue Fin Vision® will not recover the same loss twice.
- Non-attendance on the day of surgery: Blue Fin Vision® may retain up to 50% of the Surgical Fee on the same basis.
- Rescheduling with less than 48 hours' notice: where the hospital permits the booking and fees already paid to be transferred to another date, those fees will be transferred and the patient will not be charged again for the same hospital costs.

The total amount retained under this provision, including any hospital facility fee, patient-specific lens cost and other unrecoverable patient-specific cost, will not exceed 50% of the Surgical Fee.

Where Blue Fin Vision® or the hospital cancels or postpones surgery

Where the patient remains willing to proceed but Blue Fin Vision® or the operating hospital decides that the planned surgery cannot proceed, this will be treated as a provider-initiated cancellation for the purposes of this policy, irrespective of whether the decision is made for clinical, anaesthetic, operational or administrative reasons, subject to the exception below concerning pre-operative medical information.

An increasing proportion of patients elect to have intravenous sedation for their surgery. Safe sedation and anaesthesia depend on complete and accurate pre-operative medical information. Where surgery is cancelled for anaesthetic reasons because the patient's medical questionnaire was not completed, was incomplete, or contained inaccurate or misleading information, the cancellation arises from the patient's non-compliance and will be treated as a patient cancellation for the purposes of this policy, notwithstanding that the decision not to proceed is made by the anaesthetist, the operating hospital or Blue Fin Vision®. Where a cancellation is treated as a patient cancellation under this provision, Blue Fin Vision® retains discretion to waive or reduce any amount otherwise retainable, and will consider the circumstances of each case individually.

For the avoidance of doubt, where the patient has completed the medical questionnaire fully and accurately and surgery is nevertheless cancelled for anaesthetic or clinical reasons, this remains a provider-initiated cancellation.

Where surgery is cancelled or cannot proceed because of a decision made by Blue Fin Vision®, the operating hospital or another healthcare provider within the treatment pathway, the patient will not bear the financial consequences of that decision.

Blue Fin Vision® will offer the patient the earliest clinically appropriate alternative date, at the same hospital or another Blue Fin Vision® operating site wherever reasonably possible.

Where the patient accepts an alternative date or site:

- all fees already paid by the patient will transfer in full to the replacement surgery;
- the patient will not be required to pay a second hospital facility fee because the original hospital has retained or delayed repayment of fees already paid;
- any toric or custom lenses already ordered and capable of being used for the replacement surgery will transfer with the patient and no second lens charge will be made; and
- Blue Fin Vision® will meet any additional hospital costs necessary to provide the replacement surgery and will recover sums due from the original hospital separately.

The patient will not be required to wait for Blue Fin Vision® to obtain a refund from a hospital before their treatment can be rearranged.

Where the patient does not wish to accept an alternative date or site following a provider-initiated cancellation, Blue Fin Vision® will provide a full refund of all fees paid in relation to the cancelled surgery, including any patient-specific lens costs. Blue Fin Vision® will recover any sums due from the hospital separately. The patient will not be required to fund a dispute or delayed financial settlement between Blue Fin Vision® and the hospital.

7. Toric and Custom Lenses

Approximately 50% of patients undergoing lens surgery require toric lenses. These may be manufactured or supplied specifically according to the individual patient's measurements and may become non-refundable once ordered.

For this reason, toric and custom lenses are not ordered until the patient has paid, and patients are informed before payment where a lens will become non-refundable once ordered.

Where the patient subsequently cancels or withdraws, the actual unrecoverable acquisition cost of a toric or custom lens already ordered may be deducted from any refund otherwise due.

This deduction does not apply where Blue Fin Vision® or the operating hospital cancels the procedure and the patient is not responsible for that cancellation.

Where surgery is transferred to another Blue Fin Vision® operating site and the lens can still be used, the lens will follow the patient to the replacement surgery and no additional lens charge will be made.

8. Medical and Exceptional Circumstances

For consultations and see and treat procedures, Blue Fin Vision® may, at its discretion, waive forfeiture or carry fees forward where a patient provides evidence of sudden illness or a genuine emergency. Each case will be considered individually.

For intraocular surgery, where a patient requests cancellation or postponement because of sudden illness or an emergency, Blue Fin Vision® will consider the circumstances and any unrecoverable hospital or patient-specific costs individually and will seek to minimise the patient's loss wherever reasonably possible.

Where the decision not to proceed is made by Blue Fin Vision® or the operating hospital rather than by the patient, Section 6 applies.

A patient will not be required to wait for the hospital to refund Blue Fin Vision® before Blue Fin Vision® rearranges treatment or provides any refund that is properly due to the patient.

Any dispute, delay or refusal by a hospital concerning repayment of facility fees is a matter between Blue Fin Vision® and that hospital and will not be transferred to the patient.

9. Basis of These Charges

The sums retained under this policy are intended to reflect genuine and directly attributable losses arising when a patient cancels, reschedules at short notice or does not attend. They are not intended to operate as penalties or to place Blue Fin Vision® in a better financial position than if the appointment or procedure had proceeded.

Relevant losses may include:

- consultant and clinical time reserved for the patient that cannot reasonably be refilled;
- hospital facility fees actually incurred and not recoverable following a patient-initiated cancellation;
- the actual unrecoverable cost of patient-specific toric or custom lenses already ordered; and
- other patient-specific costs already reasonably incurred and incapable of being recovered or reused.

Blue Fin Vision® will not seek compensation twice for the same loss.

Where Blue Fin Vision® retains an amount representing a third-party cost believed to be unrecoverable and subsequently recovers that cost from the third party, the corresponding recovered amount will be returned to the patient where retaining it would otherwise result in Blue Fin Vision® recovering more than its actual loss.

Where cancellation is initiated by Blue Fin Vision® or an operating hospital, the financial consequences of any dispute or delay in recovering hospital fees will be borne by Blue Fin Vision® and not transferred to the patient.

Nothing in this policy affects a patient's statutory rights.

Blue Fin Vision® | Consultant led ophthalmology

This policy should be read alongside the Blue Fin Vision® Terms and Conditions for the relevant procedure. Nothing in this policy affects a patient's statutory rights.