



## GUIDE

# No Stress, Just Success: Smoothly Navigating the FTC Eyeglass Rule

Changes to the Federal Trade Commission's (FTC) Eyeglass Rule might sound overwhelming at first, but there's no need to worry. This guide will break down everything you need to know about the 2024 updates and how to keep your vision practice running smoothly while staying compliant.

The new revisions, which kicked in on Sept. 24, 2024, add a few extra steps for eye care providers when handling refraction exams and prescriptions, but we're here to help you effortlessly navigate those changes. From what you need to know about the new law to tools that can ease the burden, let's get you set up to thrive.

# What's New with the FTC Eyeglass Rule?

The FTC's Eyeglass Rule isn't exactly new. In fact, it dates back to 1978 and was originally put in place to ensure patients have the freedom to shop around for the best deal on their glasses. But with the rise of complaints over the past few years about practices not releasing prescriptions on time, the FTC has upped its game with stricter guidelines.<sup>1</sup>

## So, what's changed?

### Here's the short version:

- **Automatic Prescription Release:** You now must provide the patient's eyeglass prescription immediately after their refractive eye exam, no questions asked.
- **Patient Signatures:** You're required to get a signed acknowledgment from each patient confirming they've received their prescription. This can be done digitally or on paper and must be stored for at least three years.
- **Electronic Prescriptions:** If patients agree, you can send prescriptions electronically. They can opt-out anytime, but if you switch methods (from email to patient portal, for example), you'll need to ask for their consent again.

## Here are a few other important updates that you need to know:

- **Prescription First, Sales Later:** You can't offer to sell glasses until the patient has their prescription in hand—no exceptions.
- **Insurance Counts as Payment:** As soon as a patient shows proof of insurance, it's considered payment, and their prescription must be provided.
- **New Terminology:** "Eye examination" is now officially "refractive eye examination." The law makes it clear that a refractive eye exam focuses on vision correction, while a general eye health exam is a broader checkup. Patients need to know that only the refractive exam triggers the automatic prescription release.

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.ftc.gov/system/files/ftc\\_gov/pdf/er\\_frn.final\\_062024.pdf](https://www.ftc.gov/system/files/ftc_gov/pdf/er_frn.final_062024.pdf)

## What Does This Mean for Your Practice?

While the changes might sound minor, they can add up to a significant shift in your daily operations. Here's a quick look at what you'll need to prepare for:

### Increased Documentation

With the need to track and store patient confirmations, your paperwork (or digital records) could pile up fast. It might be time to think about upgrading your recordkeeping system.

### Revenue Impact

Since the Rule aims to increase competition and lower costs for consumers, you might see a dip in optical sales. Now's the time to sharpen your messaging on why buying from you is better—think quality control, warranties, and personalized service.

### More Patient Education

You'll need to make it clear to patients why they should consider purchasing their glasses from you, even though they have the option to take their prescription elsewhere.

### Increased Administrative Burden

The Rule may place a greater workload on your team, particularly if you're a small practice. An increased need for tracking and storing patient confirmations may mean more staff time or investing in a digital solution.



## Let's Talk Solutions: How Software Can Lighten the Load

Here's the good news: you don't have to let these changes bog down your practice. Vision office software designed to simplify secure document sharing can help you meet these new requirements without adding extra work for your team.

### IMAGINE THIS:

- **Instant digital prescriptions:** No more scrambling with paper copies or manual uploads. You can send prescriptions directly to patients via text or email, saving time and making life easier for everyone.
- **Effortless signature collection:** Patient e-signatures can be collected and stored automatically, so you're always covered and compliant.
- **Streamlined patient access:** With a secure document tool, patients can easily access, download, and print their prescriptions whenever they need them—no clunky portals or lost passwords required.

## Why Invest in a Secure Documents Tool?

Using the right software won't just keep you compliant—it'll also make your practice more efficient and improve patient satisfaction. Solutionreach's Secure Documents tool equips you with every ability and benefit you need to save time and reduce labor costs. Here's how:

### Less Manual Work:

Free up your staff from printing, scanning, and filing prescriptions. Instead, everything is handled with a few clicks.

### Remain Compliant:

Seamlessly comply with the updated Rule and without extra work for your team.

### Stay Organized:

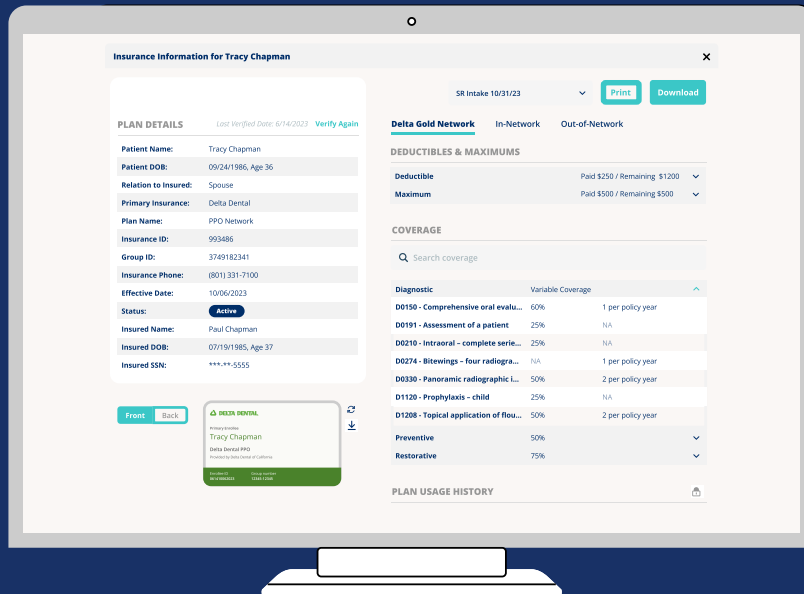
All patient records and prescription confirmations are stored in one place, meaning no more lost paperwork or last-minute scrambles.

### Boost Patient Loyalty:

A smoother, faster prescription process leaves patients with a positive impression of your practice, making them more likely to return.

# Smooth Sailing Ahead

While the FTC Eyeglass Rule may require a few tweaks to your workflow, it's nothing you can't handle with the right tools in place. By staying on top of the updates and using smart solutions to streamline your operations, you can stay compliant without sacrificing efficiency—or your patients' satisfaction.



Ready to learn more about  
how Solutionreach can help?

LET'S GET STARTED TODAY!