

Do you know the law on selling contact lenses?

The sale of cosmetic contact lenses is covered by law

The Opticians Act covers the sale of zero-powered cosmetic and novelty contact lenses, used to change the colour or appearance of the eyes, as well as contact lenses that people wear to correct their vision. This is because using contact lenses that are unsuitable for the eyes, or using them incorrectly, can cause serious damage including, in extreme cases, blindness.

Are you breaking the law?

Zero-powered cosmetic contact lenses can be supplied only under the supervision of a registered optometrist, dispensing optician or medical practitioner.

“Supervision” means that the registered person is present on the premises, in a position to oversee the work undertaken and ready to intervene if necessary.

The seller/supplier must also make arrangements for the wearer to receive ongoing care.

Any sales of cosmetic contact lenses that do not meet these requirements are illegal under the Opticians Act.

Why is this the law?

Using unsuitable contact lenses, or using contact lenses incorrectly, can cause serious eye problems including corneal ulcers and infections. In extreme cases, sight loss or blindness can result.

Other risks associated with the use of these contact lenses include conjunctivitis, corneal swelling, allergic reactions, corneal abrasion and reduced vision.

The law is there to protect customers’ health.

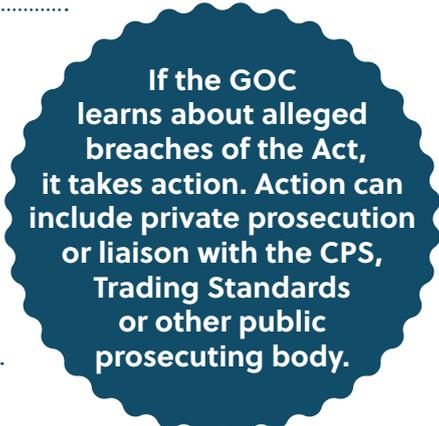
What should you do?

If you are selling contact lenses unlawfully, you must remove them from your shelves immediately. If you have any questions you should contact the General Optical Council on lc@optical.org or 020 7307 3931.

The General Optical Council (GOC) regulates optometrists, dispensing opticians, optical students and optical businesses in the UK. Its purpose is to protect the public.

Don’t risk it!

Check your shelves today to make sure you are complying with the law.



If the GOC learns about alleged breaches of the Act, it takes action. Action can include private prosecution or liaison with the CPS, Trading Standards or other public prosecuting body.