

Correct as at 25th June 2026. It may be superseded at any time.

Extract taken from: In-service certification (WoF and CoF) > General vehicles > Lighting > Rearward-facing position lamps

4-7 Rearward-facing position lamps

Reasons for rejection

Mandatory and permitted equipment

1. A vehicle first registered in New Zealand on or after 1 January 1978 that is more than 1.5m wide:
 - a) is not fitted with one pair of lamps, or
 - b) is fitted with more than two pairs of lamps, or
 - c) is fitted with a lamp that is not in a pair, or
 - d) is an emergency vehicle and is fitted with more than three pairs of lamps, including top-mounted lamps.
2. A group M or N vehicle first registered in New Zealand before 1 January 1978 or is less than 1.5m wide is:
 - a) not fitted with one single lamp or one pair of lamps, or
 - b) fitted with more than one single lamp, or
 - c) fitted with more than two pairs of lamps.
3. An emergency vehicle is fitted with:
 - a) more than one pair of top-mounted lamps, or
 - b) top-mounted lamps that are not mounted as close as is practicable to the top corners of the bodywork.
4. A class LE vehicle that was first registered in New Zealand before 1 January 1978 or that is less than 1.5m wide is not fitted with at least one lamp.
5. A vehicle (eg a vintage or veteran vehicle) does not meet standard rearward-facing position lamp requirements, and:
 - a) does not have a valid vehicle identity card with a lighting equipment endorsement, or
 - b) does not meet the conditions of the lighting equipment endorsement in its vehicle identity card.
6. A retrofitted lamp, other than a top-mounted lamp on an emergency vehicle, is mounted at a height from the ground exceeding 1.5m (or 2.1m where fitting below 1.5m is not practicable due to the shape of the bodywork of the vehicle).
7. A retrofitted pair of lamps:
 - a) is not symmetrically mounted, or
 - b) is not mounted as far towards each side of the vehicle as is practicable.

Condition

8. A lamp is insecure or, if a mandatory lamp, contains moisture in the form of large droplets, runs or puddles.

9. A lens is missing, or has a hole, crack or other damage that allows moisture or dirt to enter.

10. A lamp's reflector is damaged or has deteriorated so that light output is reduced.

Performance

11. When switched on, a mandatory lamp does not operate.

12. When switched on, a lamp emits a light that is:

a) not substantially red, or

b) not diffuse, or

c) not projected to the rear, or

d) not approximately equal in colour or intensity from that of the other lamp in a pair, or

e) not steady, or

f) not bright enough to be visible from 200m in normal darkness, eg due to modification, deterioration, dirt or an incorrect light source, or

g) is altered, eg due to damage or modification.

13. A non-OE mandatory lamp mounted outside the original position emits a light that is not visible within (Figure 4-7-1):

a) 15° above and below the horizontal, or

b) 45° inboard or 80° outboard.

14. A modification to the vehicle has reduced the visibility angles of a mandatory lamp to less than (Figure 4-7-1):

a) 15° above and below the horizontal, or

b) 45° inboard or 80° outboard.

15. An overlay has been applied that reduces or distorts the light emitted from the lamp (eg a tinted cover).

16. Where a lamp comprises an array of light sources (eg LEDs), fewer than 75% of these operate.

Note 1 Definitions

Modify means to change a vehicle from its original state by altering, substituting, adding or removing a structure, system, component or equipment, but does not include repair.

Repair means to restore a damaged or worn vehicle, its structure, systems, components or equipment to within safe tolerance of its condition when manufactured, including replacement with undamaged or new structures, systems, components or equipment.

Position lamp means a low-intensity lamp that is designed to indicate to road users the presence and dimensions of a vehicle, being:

a) a forward-facing position lamp (front side lamp), or

b) a rearward-facing position lamp (rear side lamp or tail lamp), or

c) a side-marker lamp, or

d) an end-outline marker lamp (including cab roof lamp).

Note 2

A permitted rearward-facing position lamp that does not comply with equipment, condition and performance requirements must be made to comply or be disabled so that it does not emit a light.

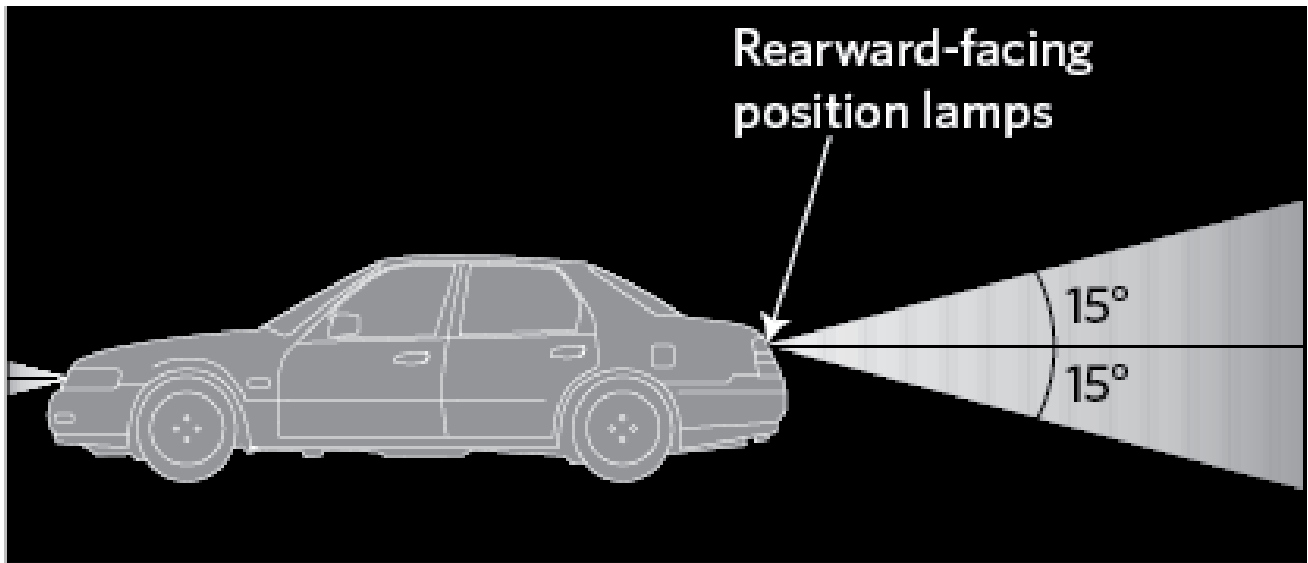
Note 3

An original equipment (OE) lamp is one that is fitted by the vehicle manufacturer in the original position, or is an equivalent replacement or aftermarket lamp suitable for the position provided by the vehicle manufacturer for that lamp. All other lamps are considered retrofitted (ie non-OE).

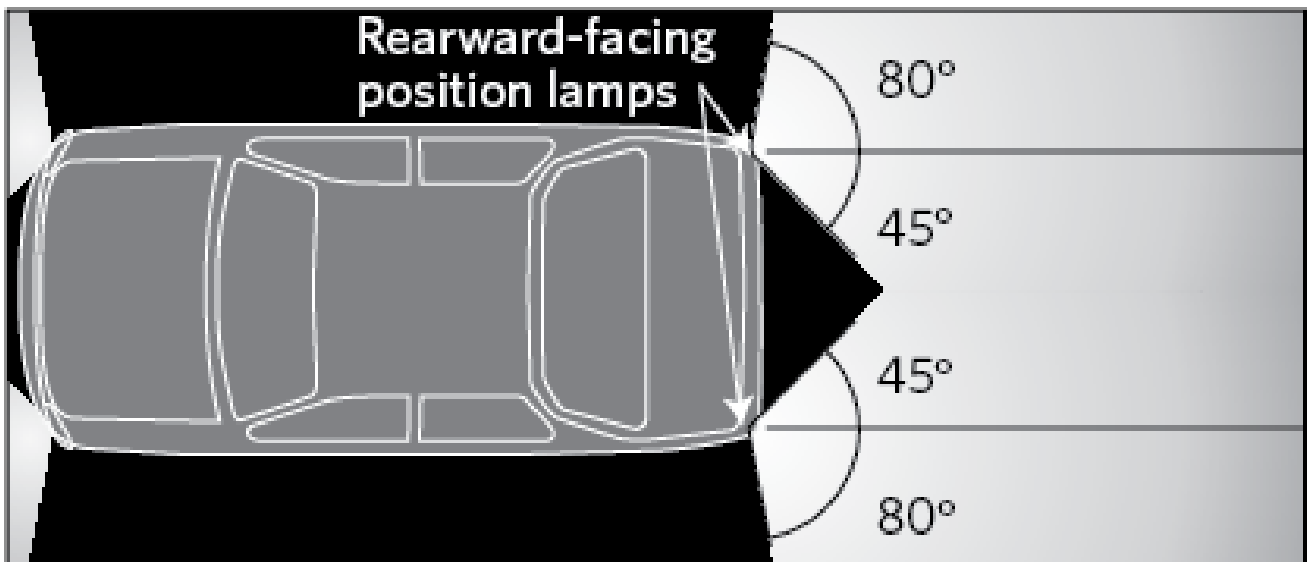
Note 4

A vehicle originally manufactured with a rearward-facing position lamp arrangement that differs from what is required or permitted in this section may retain the original rearward-facing position lamps provided they remain fitted in their original position and perform as intended by the vehicle manufacturer.

Figure 4-7-1. Rearward-facing position lamp beam angles



(a) Vertical beam angles



(b) Horizontal beam angles

Summary of legislation

Applicable legislation

- [Land Transport Rule: Vehicle Lighting 2004](#)

Mandatory and permitted equipment

1. A vehicle first registered in New Zealand on or after 1 January 1978 and that is more than 1.5m wide must be fitted with one or two pairs of rearward-facing position lamps.

2. A vehicle of group M or N that was first registered in New Zealand before 1 January 1978 or that does not exceed 1.5m in width must be fitted with:
 - a) one single rearward-facing position lamp in the centre or to the right of the centre of the vehicle, or
 - b) one or two pairs of rearward-facing position lamps.
3. A vehicle of class LE that was first registered in New Zealand before 1 January 1978 or that does not exceed 1.5m in width must be fitted with at least one rearward-facing position lamp.
4. An emergency vehicle may be fitted with an additional pair of lamps that must be symmetrically mounted as near the top corners of the bodywork of the vehicle as is practicable (top-mounted lamps).
5. A vehicle (eg a vintage or veteran vehicle) manufactured without lamps, or with lamps that cannot meet specified requirements, may obtain a WoF if:
 - a) the vehicle has a valid vehicle identity card with a lighting equipment endorsement, and
 - b) the vehicle meets the conditions of that endorsement.
6. A retrofitted pair of lamps, other than top-mounted lamps, must be mounted:
 - a) symmetrically as far towards each side of the vehicle as is practicable, and
 - b) at a height from the ground not exceeding 1.5m, or if this is not practicable due to the shape of the bodywork of the vehicle, not exceeding 2.1m.

Condition

7. A rearward-facing position lamp must:
 - a) be in sound condition, and
 - b) not be obscured (if a mandatory lamp).

Performance

8. A rearward-facing position lamp must operate in a way that is appropriate for the lamp and the vehicle.
9. A lamp must emit a light that is:
 - a) diffuse, and
 - b) substantially red.
10. A lamp must emit a steady light.
11. A lamp must provide sufficient light output to indicate to other road users the presence and dimensions of the vehicle.
12. A lamp must emit light that is visible from a distance of 200m in normal darkness.
13. A retrofitted mandatory lamp must be visible within angles of 15° above and below the horizontal, and within 45° inboard and 80° outboard.
14. Each lamp in a pair must, when operated, emit a light of approximately equal intensity and colour.
15. Where a lamp comprises an array of light sources (eg LEDs), at least 75% of these must operate.

Modifications (Note 4)

16. A rearward-facing position lamp that is affected by a modification must meet equipment, condition and performance requirements.

Page amended **2 December 2019** (see [amendment details](#)).