

Correct as at 5th June 2026. It may be superseded at any time.

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

4-7 Rearward-facing position lamps

Reasons for rejection

Mandatory and permitted equipment

1. A motorcycle 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.
2. A motorcycle 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.
3. A motorcycle (eg avintage or veteran motorcycle) 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.
4. A retrofitted lamp 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 motorcycle).
5. A retrofitted pair of lamps is not:
 - a) symmetrically mounted, or
 - b) mounted as far towards each side of the motorcycle as is practicable.

Condition

6. A lamp is insecure or, if a mandatory lamp, contains moisture in the form of large droplets, runs or puddles.
7. A lens is missing, or has a hole, crack or other damage that allows moisture or dirt to enter.
8. A lamp's reflector is damaged or has deteriorated so that light output is reduced.

Performance

9. When switched on, a mandatory lamp does not operate.
10. 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
- g) is altered, eg due to damage or modification.

11. A non-OE mandatory lamp not mounted in 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 and 80° outboard.

12. A modification to the motorcycle has reduced the mandatory lamp's angles to less than (Figure 4-7-1):

- a) 15° above and below the horizontal, or
- b) 45° inboard and 80° outboard.

13. 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.

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 (non-OE).

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

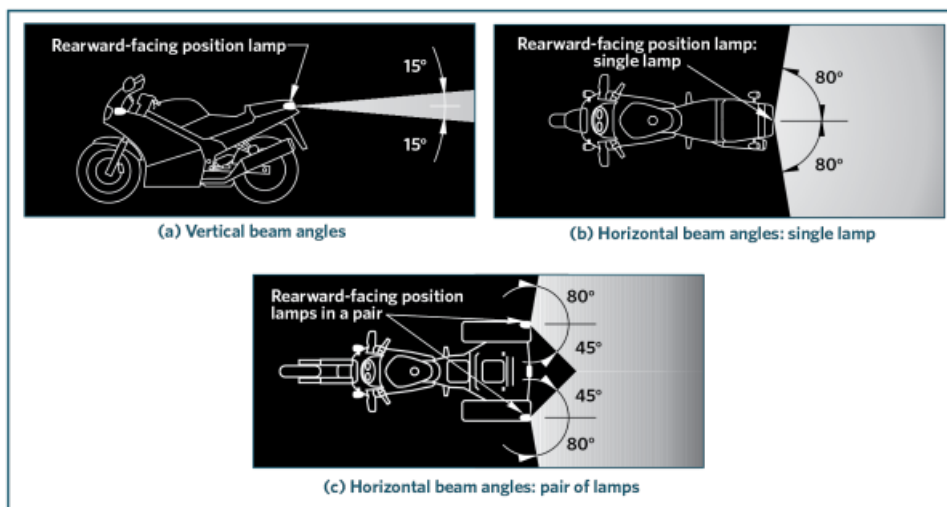
A permitted rearward-facing position lamp that does not comply with equipment, condition and performance requirements must be made to comply or be disabled so that it does not emit a light.

Note 3

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



Summary of legislation

Applicable legislation

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

Mandatory and permitted equipment

1. A motorcycle 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 motorcycle 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.
3. A motorcycle (eg a vintage or veteran motorcycle) manufactured without lamps, or with lamps that cannot meet specified requirements, may obtain a WoF if:
 - a) the motorcycle has a valid vehicle identity card with a lighting equipment endorsement, and
 - b) the motorcycle meets the conditions of that endorsement.
4. A retrofitted pair of lamps must be:
 - a) symmetrically mounted as far towards each side of the motorcycle as is practicable, and
 - b) mounted 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 motorcycle, not exceeding 2.1m.

Condition

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

Performance

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

Modifications

14. 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](#)).