

Correct as at 17th May 2026. It may be superseded at any time.

Extract taken from: In-service certification (WoF and CoF) > Unclassified 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 (other than top-mounted lamps), or
 - c) is fitted with a lamp that is not in a pair.
2. A vehicle first registered in New Zealand before 1 January 1978 or that is less than 1.5m wide is:
 - a) not fitted with one pair of lamps, or
 - b) fitted with more than one single lamp, or
 - c) fitted with more than two pairs of lamps (other than top-mounted lamps).
3. A light trailer is fitted with top-mounted lamps.
4. A self-propelled vehicle or heavy trailer is fitted with:
 - a) more than one pair of top-mounted lamps, or
 - b) a top-mounted lamp that is not in a pair.
5. A retrofitted lamp, other than a top-mounted 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 vehicle).
6. A single lamp is fitted to the left of the centre of the vehicle.
7. A retrofitted pair of lamps is not:
 - a) symmetrically mounted, or
 - b) mounted as far towards each side of the vehicle as is practicable.
8. A pair of top-mounted lamps is not:
 - a) symmetrically mounted, or
 - b) mounted as far towards the top corners of the bodywork as is practicable.
9. A lamp is not positioned to the rear of the vehicle.

Condition

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

Performance

14. When switched on, a mandatory lamp does not operate.
15. When switched on, a lamp emits a light that is not:
 - a) substantially red, or
 - b) diffuse, or
 - c) projected to the rear, or
 - d) approximately equal in colour or intensity to the other lamp in a pair, or
 - e) steady, or
 - f) bright enough to be visible from 200m in normal darkness, eg due to modification, deterioration, dirt or an incorrect light source.
16. 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.
17. 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.
18. Where a lamp comprises an array of light sources (eg LEDs), fewer than 75% of these operate.

Note 1

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.

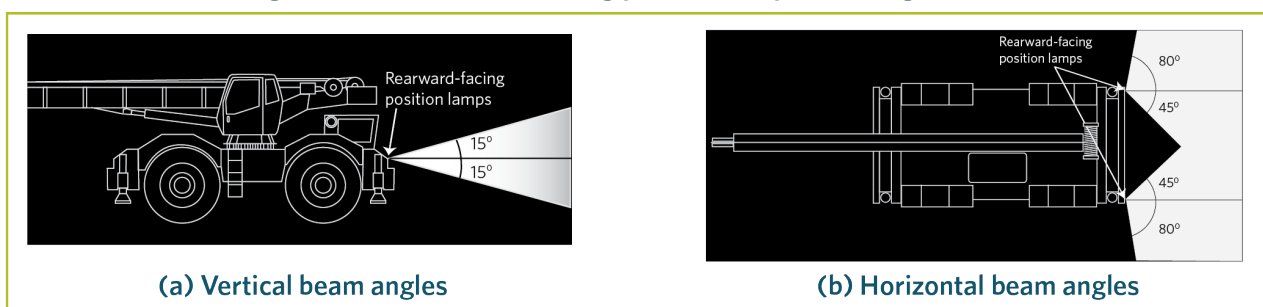
Note 3

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



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 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 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.
4. A self-propelled vehicle or heavy trailer may be fitted with an additional pair of rearward-facing position lamps symmetrically mounted as far towards each side and top of the bodywork of the vehicle as possible (top-mounted lamps).

5. A lamp must be positioned to the rear of the vehicle.

Condition

6. A rearward-facing position lamp must not be obscured (if a mandatory lamp).

Performance

7. A rearward-facing position lamp must operate in a way that is appropriate for the lamp and the vehicle.

8. A lamp must emit a light that is:

a) diffuse, and

b) substantially red, and

c) steady, and

d) sufficient to indicate to other road users the presence and dimensions of the vehicle, and

e) visible from a distance of 200m in normal darkness, and

f) of approximately equal intensity and colour to the other lamp of the pair.

9. A retrofitted mandatory lamp must be visible within angles of 15° above and below the horizontal, and within 45° inboard and 80° outboard.

10. Where a lamp comprises an array of light sources (eg LEDs), at least 75% of these must operate.