



GUIDANCE INFORMATION - APPLICATION FOR A DUAL DRIVER'S LICENCE AND BADGE

The dual driver's licence covers the driving of both Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles and is valid for one year from the date of grant.

It is Council Policy that the following minimum standards are achieved before making your application.

Criteria for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Drivers:

- Applicants must be over 21 years of age;
- Applicants must hold a DVLA driver's licence or an equivalent E.U. member state driving licence;
- Applicants should have at least 12 months driving experience in the relevant class of vehicle in the UK;
- Applicants must have good conversational English. If the Licensing Officer feels that the applicant does not have conversational English, he/she will refer the applicant to another Officer for their view;
- New applicants should have no more than 6 current penalty points on their DVLA licence; The applicant will be required to complete a DVLA mandate to obtain a copy of their current driving record;
- New applicants must be free from previous convictions and cautions, other than for minor traffic offences. All applicants will be required to have a CRB enhanced check every 3 years;
- New applicants must have passed or be working towards a suitable disability awareness training during the first 12 months of being granted their initial licence. Qualification will be verified by the training provider;
- New applicants must pass the Council's knowledge test before issue of licence;
- Applicants shall be required to provide proof of their medical fitness by completing and submitting a medical certificate carried out by a GP under the DVLA Group 2 standards.

Foreign Nationals and other persons who have lived abroad

If you are a foreign national and/or have lived abroad within the last twenty years for a period of 16 weeks or more, you will be required to produce a document from the relevant Government or Embassy of your country of origin, or last place of residence if more appropriate, which provides a comprehensive criminal record. This document must provide contact details for the Embassy or Government, in order that Officers can verify its authenticity.

Any relevant offences will be put before the Council's Taxi Licensing Sub-Committee so that an informed decision can be made as to the suitability of the applicant, in the same way as any matters disclosed on a CRB check.

Although the Council does not employ drivers who are the recipients of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licences, it is recommended in the Department for Transport Best Practice Guidance to establish the right to work, to determine whether an applicant is a 'fit and proper' person. Consequently you will be required to prove your right to work in the UK. This can be done by submitting relevant original documents as outlined in the guidance on the importance of obtaining evidence that you are legally permitted to work in the UK.

How to make your first application

The following stages set out the Council's administrative procedure in processing your application.

Stage 1 – Submission of application

Once you have received your application pack and are satisfied that you can meet Council Policy, please make an appointment with the Licensing Officer for an interview and bring with you the following completed documentation:

- Licence application form;
- Licence fee – currently £87.00;
- Your original DVLA or equivalent driver's licence (photocopies will not be accepted). The licence must cover you for the category of vehicle you will be driving. If it is a photo card licence, then both the card and paper counterpart must be produced showing your current address.
- Provide a recent colour passport sized photograph.
- A letter from your prospective employer confirming they will employ you should your application be successful.
- DVLA mandate form - applicants must provide their written permission for the Council to undertake a check with the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority at Swansea in order to obtain an up to date record of their driver licence records.
- Criminal Records Bureau disclosure application form and fee - a search is carried out by the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) for previous non-motoring convictions on all new applicants and then every 3 years. The fee for this check is £37.00. We complete Sections 'X' and 'Y' of the CRB Disclosure application form before it can be sent off for processing. Proof of your identity will also be required such as two recent utility bills (not less than 3 months old) showing your name and current home address AND as many of the following original documents as possible:
 - Valid passport (any nationality)
 - Original UK birth Certificate
 - Valid photo identity card (EU countries only)
 - Marriage certificate
 - P45 or P60 showing your national insurance number

When completing the Licence application form, you must declare all convictions imposed by a Civil or Criminal Court. Please note that the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 does not apply to taxi drivers and convictions are never spent. If you are in any doubt as to whether a licence

will be granted, you can get advice (in confidence) from the Licensing Section. If you are unsure how to complete any part of the application the Licensing Section will provide assistance at your interview. The Council does have a guidance booklet relating to the relevance of convictions on cautions, which is available upon request.

During the interview we will check your driving licence and complete the final sections of the CRB disclosure application form by confirming your identity. You will also be required to pay the licence application fee and the CRB disclosure application fee. Cheques should be made payable to Bromsgrove District Council. Only one cheque is required to cover the cost of both fees.

At this stage you will be given a copy of the Council's Taxi Handbook which is a comprehensive guide to taxi licensing in Bromsgrove.

If any convictions arise during the application process, the Licensing Section must be informed in writing within 7 days from the date of conviction.

Stage 2 – Receipt of CRB/medical/ DVLA check

On receipt of a satisfactory CRB disclosure and DVLA check, you will need to obtain a medical report from your Doctor. Time taken by the CRB and/or DVLA to check your record is out of the Council's control and can take several months. It is possible to track your CRB application on line at www.crb.org.uk

Stage 3 – Knowledge Test

On receipt of a satisfactory medical report an appointment will be made for you at a mutually convenient date/time, for you to take the knowledge test.

The knowledge test will consist of three parts:-

- Part 1 - You will be given a map on which names of streets and popular locations in Bromsgrove District have been blanked out. You will be required to identify these street/locations.
- Part 2 - You will be given two locations and you will be asked to describe the shortest convenient route to be taken from the start of the journey to the final destination.
- Part 3 - You will be required to answer a number of questions relating to the law, regulations and conditions relating to Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles and drivers.

In order to pass the test, you will be expected to achieve at least 80% in Parts 1 and 3 and 100% in Part 2.

If you fail the test or any part of it at the first attempt, then you can take a further test at a later date without fee.

Stage 4 - Disability Awareness Training

All new applicants must attend an accredited Training Course which incorporates disability awareness, such as NVQ level 2 in Road Passenger Transport within 12 months of their initial application. Officers may not grant renewal applications if the driver has not undertaken the training without reasonable excuse. Please contact the Licensing Section for details of training providers.

Stage 5 - Issue of Licence

A licence will normally be granted if:

- you have no “unspent” criminal convictions (see below) and have no pending prosecutions for criminal or motoring offences,
- you have no more than 6 penalty points on your driving licence,
- you have been certified physically fit by a registered medical practitioner to drive a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle, and
- you have passed the geographical knowledge test.

Your Licence can be posted to you or made available for collection at the Customer Service Centre within 5 working days of you being informed that your application has been successful.

If the badge is damaged after being issued to the driver, a replacement shall be provided by the Council, at the driver’s expense.

Those who do not meet Council Policy

Under taxi licensing legislation, the Council has to ensure that anyone holding a licence is a ‘fit and proper person’. Obviously, when all the checks and tests set out above are satisfactory then the applicant is judged to be ‘fit and proper’ and a licence is granted.

However, where there is any doubt as to whether the applicant is a ‘fit and proper’ person, for instance because the CRB or DVLA checks have shown the applicant has criminal or motoring convictions, including cautions and any other relevant information disclosed by the Chief Police Officer, the Licensing Section may not have authority to grant or renew that application. In that instance the applicant can request in writing to have their application determined by the Council’s Taxi Licensing Sub-Committee.

A report will be compiled by the Licensing Officer outlining the application details and they will be presented to the Sub-Committee.

Applicants are entitled to attend the meeting to explain the circumstances of their conviction (or other reason for referral) and speak in support of their application. They are entitled to be accompanied by a representative (whether they are legally qualified or not).

In respect of criminal convictions that are declared, the Sub-Committee will have regard to the guidelines relating to the relevance of convictions.

Appealing against a decision of the Council

After considering the applicant’s representations, the Sub-Committee will determine the matter. If the applicant is not satisfied with the decision of the Taxi Licensing Sub-Committee, there is a right of appeal to the Magistrates Court within 21 days of being notified of the Sub-Committee’s decision.