



## **How to become a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire Driver**

This is a quick guide to explain the different types of licences available and the application process. This information only applies to Hart District Council, for other areas of the UK, contact your local Council. In conjunction with these guidance notes it is **crucial** you read **the Hackney Carriage & Private Hire Licensing Policy** which can be found here <https://hart.gov.uk/taxis> **You will be tested on it at a later date.**

### **Hackney Carriage or Private Hire?**

Both hackney carriage and private hire vehicles transport members of the public to a specific destination upon request, in exchange for payment of a fare. However, only a licensed hackney carriage may ply for hire. Private hire drivers are not allowed to ply for hire. Plying for hire is an offence under the Town Police Clauses Act 1847 and carries a maximum penalty of £2,500.

Hackney carriage vehicles, referred to as taxis, are fitted with a taxi roof light and a fare meter and may ply for hire, i.e. be flagged down in a street by the public. They are also permitted to stand at taxi ranks. Drivers are required to comply with local Byelaws.

The driver of a hackney carriage vehicle is not entitled to charge the hirer a fare for their journey higher than the fare prescribed by the Hart District Council fare table. There are no restrictions however, on the fares which can be charged for Private Hire journeys.

A hackney carriage vehicle can only be driven by a driver who holds a dual hackney carriage and private hire driver's licence. Licences are granted to hackney carriage vehicles to be used primarily within this District to:

- carry passengers for hire or reward
- be hailed by a prospective passenger
- park on a rank to await the approach of passengers
- ply for hire
- be pre-booked for journeys either direct or through a licensed private hire operator.

Private hire is the provision of a vehicle and driver to undertake a journey carrying passengers from one location to another for a fee. The journey may only be undertaken if **booked in advance with a licensed private hire operator**. Three licences are required in order to undertake a private hire journey:

1. **Private hire operator licence** - This authorises a company or an individual to receive bookings and dispatch licensed vehicles and drivers to undertake bookings. The Operator base must be within the controlled District, i.e. the Hart District.

2. **Private hire driver's licence** - This authorises a driver to drive licensed vehicles to carry the passengers.

3. **Private hire vehicle licence** - This authorises a specific vehicle to be used for carrying the passengers.

Private hire vehicles may have a fare meter fitted, however they cannot ply for hire or stand at taxi ranks. Drivers are required to comply with licence conditions.

Private hire drivers must not accept bookings from anyone other than their licensed Operator. Private hire drivers must not draw attention to themselves as being available for hire or provide his/her own telephone number. A gesture accompanied by a conversation with a member of the public suggesting that a private hire driver is available for hire without a prior booking from a licensed operator will be seen as unlawful. A private hire driver must not allow any passenger to enter their vehicle without first having received a booking via their licensed operator. Private hire drivers are not allowed to set down or pick up passengers from a taxi rank even if booked through a licensed operator.

## **There are two types of driver's licences**

	<b>Licence fees</b> – subject to revision
1. <b>Hackney Carriage</b> (which allows you to drive both types of Vehicle)	Three year £240.00
2. <b>Private Hire</b>	Three year £240.00

### **Additional fees** – subject to revision

Disclosure and Barring Service	£40.00
Medical Assessment	£33.00

The full licence fee, together with the DBS fee must be paid at the first appointment. **The fees are not reimbursable.**

**All drivers must be aged over twenty-one years and complete the following:**

**1. A Driving Test:**

**The Blue Lamp Trust**

All applicants must pass a driving test which is set at a level suitable for an experienced driver. The **standard is higher** than the learner driver test, and it is important that you are prepared to answer questions on the Highway Code and traffic signs. Confirmation of your pass must be obtained before you can be licensed.

Book a test with the following organisation:

**The Blue Lamp Trust**

The Blue Lamp Trust, 1 London Road, Southampton, SO15 2AE

**Telephone 0300 777 0157**

Web: [www.bluelamptrust.org.uk](http://www.bluelamptrust.org.uk) Go to 'Business Driver Training', then 'Taxi Driver Assessments'.

**2. Safeguarding Training:**

Licensed drivers play an important role in the community and have a vital role in spotting and reporting the abuse, exploitation or neglect of children and vulnerable adults. To assist this, it is important for drivers and operators to be aware of the signs of potential abuse and who their concerns can be reported to.

**All new driver applicants will need to undertake safeguarding and disability training, and existing drivers will also need to complete this training before January 2022.**

Blue Lamp Trust have, in partnership with Police and Safeguarding organisations, developed Disability Awareness and Safeguarding training specifically for Taxi and Private Hire Drivers. These courses are designed to give drivers an understanding of disabilities and safeguarding, their responsibilities and best practise to ensure safe and secure transport for passenger and driver.

**Classroom courses are currently being delivered virtually via Zoom so you must have a device which has a camera or webcam and have Zoom installed to undertake these courses.**

**E-Learning certificates will NOT be accepted.**

[https://bluelamptrust.org.uk/disability\\_awareness/classroom](https://bluelamptrust.org.uk/disability_awareness/classroom)

This is bookable online using their live booking system. Cost is £40 (subject to change) and drivers will have to provide photo ID to join and will receive an electronic certificate to evidence completion.

The Safeguarding course is £25 (subject to change) and also bookable online.

<https://bluelamptrust.org.uk/safeguarding-classroom/classroom>

Once drivers have completed both courses they will receive an electronic certificate which they must forward to the licensing team as soon as possible.

### **3. An application to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)**

We require an enhanced criminal records disclosure to assist us in determining if applicants are fit and proper to hold a licence. A licence cannot be granted until the disclosure certificate is received. The fee is £40.00 which we collect on behalf of the DBS, please read the guidance leaflets before completing the application form. DBS checks are now carried out **every 6 months** further to the adoption of this mandate from the Department for Transport (DfT) "*Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards*" (July 2020) Information is contained within this pack. Therefore if not already subscribed to the DBS Update Service, you **must** subscribe following receipt of your certificate otherwise your licence will not be renewed. Information follows.

### **4. A Medical**

Applicants must meet the DVLA group 2 medicals fitness standard. Applicants are required to be examined at the **Doctors surgery where they are registered as patients and where their medical records are stored**. Medicals undertaken at surgeries other than the applicants own will not be accepted. The Doctor's report must be completed on the Hart District Council Medical form. Fees are payable directly to the Surgery. Once we receive your report it will be sent to the Council's independent medical advisor for which a fee of £33 is charged to you. Medicals are repeated every 5 years or more frequently if advised by the Council's independent medical advisor.

### **5. The Taxi knowledge test**

Private Hire applicants are required to pass the 'Golden Rules', a verbal examination on taxi law and Council Policy.

Applicants for Hackney Carriage licences must also pass the 'Golden Rules', together with a verbal examination on the local geography of the district. A fee is charged in the event either exam has to be retaken.

### **6. Your DVLA driving licence**

You need to produce your DVLA driving licence. You must have held a full car licence for more than one year and the licence must be in your current address. Previous convictions for certain offences or more than eight current penalty points on your licence may result in your application being rejected.

## **7. DVLA Licence Check**

You are required to provide a check code to us in order for us to view your current driving licence information. This can be obtained from [www.gov.uk/check-driving-information](http://www.gov.uk/check-driving-information). This is to verify the information shown on your current licence and to provide details of all previous convictions.

## **8. Prove your right to reside and work in the United Kingdom**

All applicants must be able to demonstrate that they are authorised to reside and work in the UK before an application may be considered. Evidence of eligibility will be required where applicable. This also applies to applicants who have been resident in any other country(s) for any length of time since the age of ten who must submit a Statement of Good Conduct from each country.

**Further information can be obtained from:** <https://www.gov.uk/browse/visas-immigration/work-visas> or [www.workpermit.com](http://www.workpermit.com)

Any documents you provide to demonstrate your right to work in the UK may be passed to the Home Office for verification.

## **9. Public Liability Insurance**

The licensing authority recognises that licensed drivers often perform duties other than driving passengers from A to B as part of their daily business e.g. carriage and loading of luggage, assistance of passengers (including the elderly and wheelchair passengers) etc.

For this reason, the licensing authority will require applicants to provide and maintain a suitable policy of public liability insurance of not less than £5 million covering any damage, loss or injury to any third party (e.g. customers and other members of the public) or property that may arise during the course of a driver's day to day activities.

## **10. HM Revenues and Customs - Tax Conditionality**

You must confirm you are aware of your tax responsibilities when you apply for a taxi driver, private hire driver, private hire vehicle operator (or scrap metal dealer) licence for the first time.

You will be expected to sign a declaration form to confirm your understanding and awareness of the HMRC guidance. Further information can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/confirm-your-tax-responsibilities-when-applying-for-a-taxi-private-hire-or-scrap-metal-licence>

## **11. NR3 - National Register of taxi and private hire licence revocations and refusals**

Licensing authorities will search the register when they are processing new applications or renewals. Where an authority finds a match for their applicant on NR3, they will contact the licensing authority that recorded the entry to seek more information, which, if shared, will then be used to help reach a decision on the application.

### **What you should do next.**

A driver's pack contains an application form, together with the DBS form, guidance documents and information on the DBS Update Service.

Should you decide to apply for a taxi driver's licence, please contact the licensing team on **01252 622122** to arrange an appointment at the Civic Offices, Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council, London Road, Basingstoke, Hampshire, RG21 4AH and to discuss your application and the licensing process. Alternatively, we can be contacted via email at [Hartlicensing@basingstoke.gov.uk](mailto:Hartlicensing@basingstoke.gov.uk)

At the appointment you will need to bring the completed application forms, together with the prescribed documents which provide evidence of your name, address, national insurance, date of birth and right to work in the UK.

**Additional information will be provided at the appointment, including the examination study guides and medical form.**