

Taxi Driving

Bridgend County Borough Council

Guidance to Applicants

Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol



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How do I apply to be a taxi driver?

Application packs are available to download from www.bridgend.gov.uk. Information on taxi licensing can be found on the Licensing pages under the A-Z of services.

Please read page 3 of the driver's licence application form "guidance notes for new applicants" before applying.

Please note you must have held a Driving Licence (not being a provisional) for the 12 months immediately prior to the date of application, your licence must be up to date and in good condition. The Council accepts EU/EEA licences providing you meet this criteria.

You will be required to satisfy the Council that you are entitled to reside and work in the United Kingdom.

If you have any queries about the application process, please contact the Licensing Section via licensing@bridgend.gov.uk or 01656 643643.

How do I submit my application?

Applications are made by appointment only. Please bring the valid identity documents as listed in the Disclosure and Barring Service leaflet in this pack together with a completed application form and fee.

You will also need to provide evidence of your driving record (entitlements and/or penalty points). You can do this online free of charge by accessing the DVLA [Share Driving Licence](#) service at [View Driving Licence](#).

The service should be used by both paper and photocard driving licence holders. You will need to generate a 'check code' to pass to the Council's licensing section so that your driving licence details can be examined.

If you cannot generate a code online then you can call 0300 083 0013 and the DVLA will provide you with a check code.

Please bring the check code with you to the appointment. Please note that the check codes are valid for up to 21 days.

We will not take your application without this check code and the required documents.

How much does it cost?

Please refer to fees list on the website or telephone the Licensing Section on 01656 643643). The cost is subject to annual review but includes the cost of the Disclosure and Barring Service Certificate (DBS) and Knowledge Test.

How long will it take to obtain a licence?

Approximately 8 – 10 weeks or longer (delays may occur depending on the availability of medical appointments and on passing the Knowledge Test). You need to be able to provide all the documents referred to above before your licence is issued, but it is

for you to decide whether or not to book for the medical at the beginning of the process. Before you make a commitment you should be aware that the grant of a licence is dependent on satisfying all five of the pre-licensing criteria and any other statutory requirements:

- Satisfactory medical at DVLA Group 2 Standard
- DVLA driving licence
- Evidence of right to work
- Assessment of DBS Certificate/Motoring convictions record
- Pass the Knowledge Test

What is a Disclosure and Barring Certificate (DBS)?

A DBS Certificate details an individual's criminal record and, where appropriate, details of those who are barred from working with children or vulnerable persons. The Licensing Authority is empowered by law to check with the Disclosure and Barring Service for the existence and content of any criminal record held in the name of an applicant. Your disclosure will be treated in the strictest of confidence and in accordance with the relevant codes of practice.

Further information can be viewed at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service>

Bridgend County Borough Council currently requires a DBS Disclosure to be completed every 3 years. You are strongly advised to join the DBS update service, further details of which can be downloaded from www.bridgend.gov.uk. You must be registered at Enhanced Level and with the Adult and Children Barring lists.

I have a criminal record and/or points on my Driving Licence. Will it affect my application?

The disclosure of a criminal record or other information will not necessarily prohibit you from gaining a licence unless the Authority considers that the conviction renders you unsuitable. In making this decision the Authority will consider the nature of the offence, how long ago it took place and what age you were when it was committed and any other factors which may be relevant. Any applicant refused a driver's licence on the grounds that he/she is not a fit and proper person to hold such a licence has a right of appeal to the Magistrates' Court. A copy of the current suitability policy is available to download at www.bridgend.gov.uk within the application pack.

If you would like to discuss what affect a conviction might have on your application you may telephone the Licensing Section in confidence on 01656 643643 or take independent legal advice.

How do I obtain a Medical Certificate?

Book an appointment with your Doctor at your local surgery where you are registered as a patient. Please take the medical form included in your application pack with you for the Doctor to complete. The Doctor carrying out the examination must have full access to your medical records during the examination. Please make your GP aware that taxi drivers are required to meet the same medical standard (Group 2) as bus and lorry drivers.

I have a health problem. Will it affect my application?

If you have doubts about your ability to meet the medical standards, consult your doctor **Before** making an application and **Before** you arrange for the medical certificate form to be completed. Bridgend County Borough Council requires applicants to meet DVLA Group 2 medical standards. If you have a medical condition which may cause problems for road safety and taxi driving you should discuss this with your doctor. This may include neurological disorders such as epilepsy/seizure or loss of consciousness or disabling giddiness; cardiovascular disorders; insulin treated diabetes or diabetic complications; psychiatric disorders; drugs and alcohol misuse and dependency; visual disorders; renal disorders; respiratory and sleep disorders; difficulty communicating by telephone in an emergency. Your doctor should be aware of the medical standards required for a Group 2 vehicle licence holder.

Do you have a medical condition which is aggravated by exposure to assistance dogs?

If yes, please ask the Licensing Section for appropriate forms for completion by your Doctor. If the condition is so severe the Council may be able to grant an exemption from the carrying of assistance dogs whilst driving hackney carriage and private hire vehicles.

Who will decide whether I will be granted a licence?

When submitting an application you are requested to declare any convictions or cautions you may have, unless they are regarded as “spent” under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. You should be aware that the licensing authority has the power to consider any spent convictions disclosed on the Disclosure and Barring Certificate.

Under the Council’s Scheme of Delegation to Officers a hackney carriage/private hire driver’s licence may be granted by licensing officers. This will depend on individual circumstances. Staff of the Licensing Section will give you advice as to whether your application may have to be placed before the Licensing Sub-Committee for a decision to be made.

What happens at a Sub Committee?

The Licensing Sub-Committee consists of County Borough Councillors who will determine your application based on the criteria of whether you are a fit and proper person to hold a licence. Any medical matters or convictions can be referred to the Sub-Committee. You will be notified of the date of this meeting, and you may be accompanied. You will receive a letter explaining the decision of the Sub-Committee and how to appeal against a decision, if you are dissatisfied with the decision, or any conditions imposed on your licence.

What do I need to do when my application is confirmed?

You will need to make an appointment so that we can check your documentation and issue you with a photo card licence.

Before a licence is issued you must provide (if not provided with the application):

- Satisfactory Medical Certificate
- Photographic proof of identity
- Knowledge Test pass

What documents will I receive when I get my licence?

You will receive:

- A photo card, which must be worn at all times whilst driving your Hackney Carriage /Private Hire vehicle.
- A counterpart paper copy of your hackney carriage/private hire driver's licence. Please read this carefully and keep in a safe place.
- A copy of Hackney Carriage Byelaws.

What is the Knowledge Test and when should I attend?

Professional drivers require relevant knowledge, skills and experience to safely and effectively discharge their role and responsibilities. The Knowledge Test enables the Licensing Authority to verify that you have understood and are conversant with the topics covered by the Knowledge Test, which are:

- Numeracy/literacy questions
- Hackney Carriage & Private Hire Legislation
- Location of Buildings and Places of Interest / Location of Streets in the County Borough
- Disability and Equality Awareness
- Safeguarding
- Routes within the County Borough and to major places of interest outside the County Borough e.g. airports, cultural and sporting venues.

You will be allowed to take up to a maximum of three separate tests in a six month period. The licensing authority will normally refuse to grant a hackney carriage and/or private hire driver's licence if you do not pass the test within these limits.

You must pass the Knowledge Test before your licence is granted. Appointments to attend the Knowledge Test will be arranged by the Licensing Authority and you will be notified accordingly.

If my licence is granted how do I renew it?

If you wish to carry on driving it is your responsibility to ensure that you apply for the renewal of the licence **Before** the expiry date shown on your taxi ID badge.

Please refer to fees list on the website or telephone the Licensing Section on 01656 643643.

Will you send me a reminder to renew my licence?

Yes, a reminder will be sent before your licence expires. It will include an application form and details of any further documentation required. You are strongly advised to make your application at least 1 month before the expiry date so that your application can be processed. It is an offence to drive without a valid licence and if you fail to apply before the expiry date your licence will expire and you will not be able to drive until your application is determined. Although we send you a reminder, it is your responsibility to make the application in sufficient time for it to be processed.

What happens if I get penalty points on my licence or if I am convicted of an offence during the year?

You will need to declare this offence as soon as you receive the conviction and when you complete your application to renew your licence. It is particularly important for you to make your application at least 1 month before you are due to renew your licence, as penalty points and/or a conviction may result in your application being considered by a Licensing Sub-Committee, and your application will take longer to process.

What if I change my address?

You need to notify the Licensing Section in by telephone, in writing or by e-mail within 7 days of such change taking place. Your records can then be amended so any correspondence can be sent to the correct address. It is a requirement of application that the address on your driving licence is your current address, and the same as the address on your application form. It is a legal requirement to notify DVLA immediately of any changes to your name or permanent address. Failure to do this may result in a fine of up to £1,000.

What should I do if I lose my ID badge?

Please notify the Licensing Section immediately. You will need to apply for a replacement badge.

What should I do when I have concerns when working as a taxi driver?

Please do not hesitate to contact Bridgend County Borough's Licensing Enforcement Officers or any of the Licensing Section team for assistance.

What if I am not resident in the United Kingdom when I make my application?

Applications from persons who are not resident in the UK at the time of application must be accompanied by a Certificate of Good Conduct and an officially certified translation if this is available. You will also be asked to confirm whether you have at any time visited or resided in the UK, and if this is the case, a Disclosure and Barring Service check will be commissioned by the Council. You will have to pay for the Disclosure.

For local information or any further information required regarding licensing please contact the Licensing Section or visit www.bridgend.gov.uk

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Please note: This is a summary of detailed legal provisions. The Council has taken reasonable precautions to ensure that the summary is accurate, but you may contact the Council for information on the application process. Please note that the Council cannot offer advice on individual applications.