



TAXI LICENCES
INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS

**Environmental Health and
Community Safety**

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SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The District Council issues three types of licence:

- (i) a driver's licence
- (ii) a vehicle licence and
- (iii) a Private Hire Operator's licence

1.2 Licensing Policy

We strongly recommend that potential applicants read the Council's *Licensing Policy – Taxi and Private Hire Licences* which can be viewed and downloaded from our website at <http://www.torridge.gov.uk/article/14409/Licensing-Policy-for-Taxis-and-Private-Hire-Vehicles>. This contains more detailed information about our policies and procedures and the standards the Council expects of the licensed trade in general.

1.3 Licensing Costs

The cost of setting up a hackney carriage/ private hire business can be considerable and applicants may incur significant initial costs. We strongly recommend that you carry out proper market research to establish the viability of your prospective business **before** applying for licences. The Council's role as licensing authority is purely regulatory and the responsibility for all commercial decisions involved in setting up and running the business rests squarely with the applicant.

1.4 Licensing Requirements

All application forms must be completed in FULL and submitted with ALL the required documents. Incomplete applicants will be rejected and returned to the applicant. Please ensure you read this document carefully and obtain all required documents before applying.

2.0 DRIVER'S LICENCE

IMPORTANT NOTE

The cost of obtaining a licence is significant. If you have any criminal convictions, cautions or endorsements on your driving licence which may prevent a licence being granted, you are **strongly advised** to discuss these, in confidence, with a Licensing Officer **prior** to making your application. If you make an application and it subsequently comes to light that you have a criminal record, the Council may refuse to grant you a licence. If your application is rejected, the Council will not be liable for any costs you may have incurred in obtaining certificates and qualifications as part of the application process. The Council's policy on treatment of criminal convictions can be found on the intranet: <http://www.torridge.gov.uk/article/14406/Taxi--Private-Hire-Licences>

2.1 Licence duration

By law the standard duration of a Driver's Licence is three years. The Council is however able to issue a licence for a period of one year based upon circumstances of an individual case. For those driver's wishing to gain a licence for a period of one year you will need to indicate on the application form under what circumstances you wish to be considered for a one year licence.

2.2 How to apply for a driver's licence

You will need to provide the following:

- **A fully completed application form and the relevant fee(s).**

Current fees can be found on the website:

<http://www.torridge.gov.uk/article/12721/Financial-Services-Publications>

- **Satisfactory Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Criminal Record Check**

You will need to contact the Licensing Team to arrange an appointment to commence the process of applying to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for an enhanced criminal disclosure. You will need to bring with you various forms of identification (see Appendix 1). The actual checking process is carried out on-line via Devon County Council's Recruitment Service. Please note that you will need to provide a current e-mail address in order to access the service.

Applicants from outside the UK will also be required to provide a Certificate of Good Conduct authenticated by the Embassy or High Commission of the country in which they resided. A licence will not be granted unless a satisfactory certificate is provided. Contact details of embassies and High Commissions in the UK can be found on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website at www.fco.gov.uk. Further information can be viewed on the DBS website at www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service.

- **Satisfactory medical report.**

You must use the medical form provided by the Council and take it to your GP for a medical examination. Please note that the Council applies the Group 2 medical standards of fitness to drive as recommended by the Driver Medical Group, DVLA.

The medical form must be signed by your GP and endorsed with the official surgery stamp. Once licensed, you will require a medical examination every 5 years until age 65 and annually after 65.

- **BTEC Certificate – Introduction to the Role of the Professional Taxi and Private Hire Driver (Level 2).**

The Council's current training provider is People People Development. The course lasts for 2½ days. Courses are normally held in Barnstaple. The course will cost approximately £350. Please contact People People Development. Tel: 0330 223 1063, Email: hello@peoplepeopledevelopment.co.uk

- **A pass certificate for a taxi driving assessment**

The Council will accept a pass certificate for the following providers:

- Devon Travel Academy (Red One Ltd)
 - Tel: 01392 444773
 - Website: www.red1drivertraining.co.uk
 - Email: drivers@red1ltd.com
- Diamond Advanced Motorists
 - Tel: 020 8686 8010
 - Website: www.advancedmotoring.co.uk
 - Email: info@advancedmotoring.co.uk
- The Blue Lamp Trust
 - Tel: 0333 700 0157
 - Website: www.bluelamptrust.org.uk/Driver_Training/taxi_driver_assessment.php

- **Your current UK Driver's Licence (or EU equivalent) and a DVLA check code**

You must have held your driving licence for at least 12 months. We will need a check code from the DVLA's 'Share Driving Licence' service so that we can see your licence endorsement information. Please go to www.gov.uk/view-driving-licence and follow the instructions to obtain a check code.

- **One current colour passport-size photograph.**

All drivers are required to wear a driver's ID badge.

- **Evidence of Right to Work in UK.**

Under the Immigration Act 2016 the Authority needs to be satisfied that **ALL** applicants for a Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Driver's Licence have the right to work in the United Kingdom regardless of nationality. Applicants should note that a Criminal Disclosure Certificate does not confer the right to work in the UK. A list of acceptable documents is detailed in Appendix 2.

The Council will not issue a licence unless the applicant meets all the above criteria. We will aim to issue your licence within 6 working days of receipt of all valid documents.

3.0 VEHICLE LICENCE

There are two types of vehicle licence:

- (i) hackney carriages (commonly known as 'taxis'), and
- (ii) private hire vehicles

Hackney carriages are vehicles, which are licensed to ply for hire in the street or from an official rank. Private hire vehicles are licensed to operate only from specified premises (generally an office or the operator's home) and their fares must be pre-booked (usually by telephone). Any person applying for a private hire vehicle licence is also required to hold a Private Hire Operator's licence (see 4.0 below).

The Council currently restricts the number of hackney carriage licences it issues. For applicants wishing to enter the hackney trade, the only method of doing this at present is to purchase a vehicle which is already licensed. We recommend that you speak to a member of the Licensing Team before proceeding with such a purchase. There is no restriction on the issue of private hire vehicle licences.

3.1 Vehicle Type

The Council will consider licensing any vehicle of suitable design and construction which complies with our current vehicle specification. However, there is now such a diverse range of vehicles available that applicants are strongly recommended to seek advice from the Licensing Office **before** purchasing a vehicle. We will advise if the vehicle is suitable for use as a taxi or private hire vehicle. The Council will accept no responsibility if an applicant purchases a vehicle, which subsequently proves to be unsuitable for licensing without first seeking advice from the Council.

The maximum number of seats permitted for both hackney carriages and private hire vehicles is eight (excluding the driver). Vehicles with more than eight passenger seats are classified as Public Service Vehicles (PSVs) and are licensed by the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA).

Vehicle licences are valid for 12 months from date of issue.

The Council does not currently have an age policy.

3.2 Taximeters

All hackney carriages licensed by the Council must be fitted with a meter approved by the Public Carriage Office, London. The meter must be calendar controlled and calibrated to the tariffs laid down in the Council's Table of Fares. There is no legal requirement for a private hire car to be fitted with a meter. Any meter fitted to a hackney carriage or private hire car must be tested by the Council to ensure it is accurate. Local meter suppliers are:
DIGITAX - Paul Blackmore, Appledore, Tel: 01237 423781
CYGNUS – CBM, South Molton, Tel: 01769 572820

Fares for hackney carriages are set by the Council in consultation with the taxi trade and reviewed periodically. The latest fares are available on the Council's website.

<http://www.torridge.gov.uk/article/14407/Taxi-Vehicle-Licences--more-information>

3.3 How to Apply for a Vehicle Licence

You must provide the following:

- **a fully completed application form and the relevant fee(s)**

Current fees can be found on the website:

<http://www.torridge.gov.uk/article/12721/Financial-Services-Publications>

- **satisfactory vehicle inspection form**

The vehicle must be inspected by an independent MOT testing station. The testing station must complete the Council's vehicle inspection form. The form must be signed and endorsed with their company stamp. Vehicle inspections are conducted on initial application and annually at renewal. Vehicles over five years old are required to undertake an additional inspection six months after renewal. Vehicles over ten years old require two additional inspections per year.

- **a current MOT certificate**

You must provide evidence that your vehicle has a valid MOT certificate.

- **a current registration document (V5) for your vehicle**

You must enclose the Vehicle Registration Document (V5C) for the vehicle. If this is not available, other proof of ownership (e.g. New Keeper Supplement or a bill of sale) must be provided.

- **a current insurance certificate**

Applicants for a vehicle licence must produce a valid certificate of insurance (or cover note) to the Council before the vehicle can be licensed. The Council requires, **as a minimum**, insurance cover for third party, fire and theft although we strongly recommend that proprietors take out fully comprehensive insurance. Hackney carriages must be insured for 'public hire and reward', private hire vehicles for 'private hire and reward'. **Applicants are strongly advised to check their policy details to ensure they have correct and adequate cover.** The Council will accept no liability for loss or damage to vehicles, contents and/or persons arising from a defective insurance policy. Once you have been granted a licence, it is your responsibility to ensure that you have continuous insurance cover in place for your vehicle.

The Council will not issue a licence unless the applicant meets all the above criteria. We will aim to issue your licence within 6 working days of receipt of all valid documents.

4.0 PRIVATE HIRE OPERATOR'S LICENCE

Any person wishing to operate a private hire car is legally required to have a Private Hire Operator's Licence. This licence is required because, unlike hackney carriages, private hire vehicles may not ply for hire and are required to operate from a specified address. To 'operate' means, '*in the course of business, to make provision for the invitation and acceptance of bookings*'.

4.1 Licence duration

By law the standard duration of a Private Hire Operator's Licence is five years. The Council is however able to issue a licence for a period of one year based upon circumstances of an individual case. For those operators wishing to gain a licence for a period of one year you will need to indicate on the application form under what circumstances you wish to be considered for a one year licence.

4.2 How to Apply for a Private Hire Operator's Licence

You will need to provide the following:

- **a fully completed application form and the relevant fee(s)**

Current fees can be found on the website:

<http://www.torridge.gov.uk/article/12721/Financial-Services-Publications>

- **a copy of any planning consent (if required)**

Applicants for a Private Hire Operator's Licence are strongly advised to check whether planning permission is required to operate private hire vehicles from their designated premises. It is recommended that applicants contact the Council's Planning Service (tel. 01237-428700) **before** submitting an application for an Operator's Licence. Any person operating private hire vehicles without the necessary planning consent may face legal action and may have their Private Hire Operator's Licence suspended/revoked

PLEASE NOTE: THE FOLLOWING WILL BE REQUIRED IF YOU DO NOT ALREADY HOLD OR ARE APPLYING FOR A DRIVER'S LICENCE

- **a Basic Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Criminal Record Check.**

These can be obtained from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). For further details visit their website: <https://www.gov.uk/request-copy-criminal-record>.

- **Evidence of Right to Work in UK.**

Under the Immigration Act 2016 the Authority needs to be satisfied that **ALL** applicants for an Operators Licence have the right to work in the United Kingdom regardless of nationality. A list of acceptable documents is detailed in Appendix 2.

ADDITIONAL NOTES: If you are setting up a Private Hire business from scratch, you will need all three licences (vehicle, driver and operator) and all three must be issued by this Council

The Council will not issue a licence unless the applicant meets all the above criteria. We will aim to issue your licence within 6 working days of receipt of all valid documents.

APPENDIX 1

ID DOCUMENTS REQUIRED FOR DBS DISCLOSURE

Applicants requested to go through a DBS check must provide original documents (not copies) to prove their identity. The documents needed will depend on the route the application takes as detailed below (published by the Disclosure and Barring Service on 27 September 2017). The applicant must try to provide documents from Route 1 first. A current email address and National Insurance Number must also be provided.

Route 1

The applicant must be able to show:

one document from Group 1 plus two further documents from either Group 1, or Group 2a or 2b. At least one of the documents must show the applicant's current address.

Route 2

If the applicant doesn't have any of the documents in Group 1, then they must be able to show:

one document from Group 2a and two further documents from either Group 2a or 2b. At least one of the documents must show the applicant's current address. The organisation conducting their ID check must then also use an appropriate external ID validation service to check the application.

Route 3

Route 3 can only be used if it's impossible to process the application through Routes 1 or 2.

For Route 3, the applicant must be able to show:

a birth certificate issued after the time of birth (UK and Channel Islands) one document from Group 2a and three further documents from Group 2a or 2b. At least one of the documents must show the applicant's current address. If the applicant can't provide these documents they may need to be fingerprinted.

Group 1 Primary identity documents

Any current and valid Passport
Current valid Driving Licence Photocard (full or provisional) - UK, Isle of Man, Channel Islands and EEA
Birth Certificate (issued within 12 months of birth) – UK, Isle of Man and Channel Islands – including those issued by UK authorities overseas, for example embassies, High Commissions and HM Forces
Biometric Residence Permit – UK
Adoption Certificate – UK and Channel Islands

Group 2a
Trusted government documents

Current valid Driving Licence Photocard (full or provisional) - all countries outside the EEA (excluding Isle of Man and Channel Islands)
Current valid Driving Licence (full or provisional) – paper version (if issued before 1998) – UK, Isle of Man, Channel Islands and EEA
Birth Certificate (issued after time of birth) – UK and Channel Islands
Marriage/Civil Partnership Certificate - UK and Channel Islands
HM Forces ID Card - UK
Firearms Licence – UK and Channel Islands

Group 2b
Financial and social history documents

Mortgage Statement - UK or EEA – issued in last 12 months
Bank/Building Society Statement – All countries – issued in last 3 months
Bank/Building Society Account Opening Confirmation Letter – UK - issued in last 3 months
Credit Card Statement - UK or EEA - issued in last 3 months
Financial Statement, for example pension, endowment, ISA – UK - issued in last 12 months
P45 or P60 Statement - UK and Channel Islands - issued in last 12 months
Council Tax Statement - UK and Channel Islands - issued in last 12 months
Utility Bill – UK - not mobile telephone bill - issued in last 3 months
Benefit Statement, for example Child Benefit, Pension – UK - issued in last 3 months
Central or local government, government agency or local council document giving entitlement, for example from the Department for Work and Pensions, the Employment Service, HMRC, Job Centre, Job Centre Plus, Social Security – UK and Channel Islands - issued in last 3 months
EU National Identity Card or Irish Passport Card
Cards carrying the PASS accreditation logo – UK and Channel Islands
Letter from Head Teacher or College Principal – UK - for 16 to 19 year olds in full time education - only used in exceptional circumstances if all other documents cannot be provided

NB. The documentation provided will be treated in strict confidence and any copies taken will be securely destroyed once the disclosure process has been completed.

Further Information

DBS information line: 03000 200190

DBS website:

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

DBS Update Service

We strongly recommend that applicants apply to join the DBS update service, which for an annual fee (currently £13.00) allows you to keep your DBS Enhanced Disclosure up to date. Doing this will save you both time and money in the future. Log on to www.gov.uk/dbs to register.

APPENDIX 2

Immigration Act 2016

List of acceptable documents for right to a licence checks

The lists of documents are based on those prescribed to show evidence of a right to work.

<p>List A: No immigration restrictions on right to a licence in the UK. Once you have undertaken the necessary check once in respect of an application made on or after 1 December 2016, if you retained the copy, you will not have to repeat the check when they subsequently apply to renew or extend their licence.</p>	
1.	A passport showing the holder, or a person named in the passport as the child of the holder, is a British citizen or a citizen of the UK and Colonies having the right of abode in the UK.
2.	A passport or national identity card showing the holder, or a person named in the passport as the child of the holder, is a national of a European Economic Area country or Switzerland.
3.	A Registration Certificate or Document Certifying Permanent Residence issued by the Home Office to a national of a European Economic Area country or Switzerland.
4.	A Permanent Residence Card issued by the Home Office to the family member of a national a European Economic Area country or Switzerland.
5.	A current Biometric Immigration Document (Biometric Residence Permit) issued by the Home Office to the holder indicating that the person named is allowed to stay indefinitely in the UK, or has no time limit on their stay in the UK.
6.	A current passport endorsed to show that the holder is exempt from immigration control, is allowed to stay indefinitely in the UK, has the right of abode in the UK, or has no time limit on their stay in the UK.
7.	A current Immigration Status Document issued by the Home Office to the holder with an endorsement indicating that the named person is allowed to stay indefinitely in the UK or has no time limit on their stay in the UK, together with an official document giving the person's permanent National Insurance number and their name issued by a Government agency or a previous employer.
8.	A full birth or adoption certificate issued in the UK which includes the name(s) of at least one of the holder's parents or adoptive parents, together with an official document giving the person's permanent National Insurance number and their name issued by a Government agency or a previous employer
9.	A birth or adoption certificate issued in the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man or Ireland, together with an official document giving the person's permanent National Insurance number and their name issued by a Government agency or a previous employer.
10.	A certificate of registration or naturalisation as a British citizen, together with an official document giving the person's permanent National Insurance number and their name issued by a Government agency or a previous employer.

List B: Immigration restrictions on the right to a licence in the UK. You may issue the licence (subject to statutory limitations) up to the expiry date of the permission to work in the UK. You will need to check immigration status each time they make an application to renew or extend their licence.

1.	A current passport endorsed to show that the holder is allowed to stay in the UK and is currently allowed to do the type of work in question.
2.	A current Biometric Immigration Document (Biometric Residence Permit) issued by the Home Office to the holder which indicates that the named person can currently stay in the UK and is allowed to do the work in question.
3.	A current Residence Card (including an Accession Residence Card or a Derivative Residence Card) issued by the Home Office to a non-European Economic Area national who is a family member of a national of a European Economic Area country or Switzerland or who has a derivative right of residence.
4.	A current Immigration Status Document containing a photograph issued by the Home Office to the holder with a valid endorsement indicating that the named person may stay in the UK, and is allowed to do the type of work in question, together with an official document giving the person's permanent National Insurance number and their name issued by a Government agency or a previous employer.
1.	A Certificate of Application issued by the Home Office under regulation 17(3) or 18A (2) of the Immigration (European Economic Area) Regulations 2006, to a family member of a national of a European Economic Area country or Switzerland stating that the holder is permitted to take employment which is less than 6 months old together with Verification from the Home Office Evidence and Enquiry Unit. The licence may be granted for six months from the date of the Certificate of Application.
2.	A Verification issued by the Home Office Evidence and Enquiry Unit to you, which indicates that the named person may stay in the UK because they have an in time application, appeal or administrative review and which is outstanding. The licence may be issued for six months from the date of the licence decision.