

## Appendix A

### Procedure for Hackney Carriage & Private Hire Driver's Licence Application



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

This document is a general statement of East Staffordshire Borough Council's Licensing Authorities policy in relation to applicants for Hackney carriage or Private Hire Driver's licences and existing drivers of those vehicles. It will provide information on what the authority requires of drivers and applicants before the Council issues a licence. It is not a complete and authoritative document in itself, and other guidelines are available for the Council when determining who is fit and proper etc.

The purpose of the licensing regime is, in short, to ensure the safety of the travelling public, and that vehicles are safe and comfortable, that drivers are courteous not only to passengers but to other members of the public, and that licensing rules are obeyed. To achieve this, the Licensing Authority sets certain standards for applicants to meet, and existing drivers to maintain, and this document does in part go some way to providing what is expected of you from the authority.

#### **Making an Application**

When you submit your application, you will be required to bring with you the following forms of identification:

- Fully completed driver's licence application form (available from the licensing office);
- Your DVLA driver's licence (both parts if photo-card type); or For holders of a full EU licence we will also require the DVLA UK Paper counterpart.
- Completed Medical Certificate issued by your GP;
- Supporting identity evidence for the CRB application of which a leaflet is included in the pack;
- The application fee.

If the application form is completed incorrectly, or the documents required for application are not provided, incomplete, out of date or are not correct, the application will not be accepted.

#### **Existing Driver Applying for another Licence**

If you currently hold a Private Hire or Hackney Carriage Driver's licence with this authority and wish to apply for another licence, you will be required to submit a new application form along with the necessary fee and your driving licence. You will not

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need to undertake another CRB check or medical because these will have been done with your existing licence. You will however need to take a knowledge test for the licence that you are applying for and if you are applying for a Hackney Carriage Drivers licence you will need to arrange to take the wheelchair loading exercise with the Driving Standards Agency. Your knowledge test appointment will be arranged by a Licensing Officer and sent out to you in the post. When you pass the knowledge test (and wheelchair test if necessary) your licence will be granted for 1 year. If you would like to combine your two separate licences into Combined Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Drivers licence you can do this on your next renewal.

## **Application Forms**

All applications for the grant of a Hackney Carriage, Private Hire or Combined driver's licence must be made on the application form supplied by the Licensing Authority for that purpose. The person making the application should complete the form, but where this is not possible, it can be completed by another person provided the relevant section on the form reflects that fact, and more importantly, no false statements are made. The applicant must sign the form. From the date of submission, your application will only be valid for a period of 6 months. If you have to appear before the Licensing Committee and they approve your application, you will be given 3 months from the date of your Committee hearing to pass the required tests. Failure to pass tests by the stated expiry date will result in your application being cancelled; any owed fees will be refunded to you automatically. If you wish to apply for a licence again, your application will be treated as a new application (see 'Making an application' above) i.e. you will need to produce a newly completed application form, medical, CRB disclosure, take any tests and pay the relevant fees.

## **Criminal Records Bureau Application Forms**

The Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) application form will be completed with a Licensing Officer at your application appointment. You must bring any supporting identity documents to the application appointment. The Licensing Authority has a statutory duty to ensure that all licence holders are "fit and proper" to hold a licence. The CRB is the body that will supply the certificate listing any convictions recorded against any applicant. Please note, your licence cannot be granted until your Criminal Records Certificate is returned from the CRB.

There are several elements taken into account when considering who is a "fit and proper" person to be granted a licence issued by the Licensing Authority. This comprises of the following items: -

## **Applicants Knowledge Test**

The Council requires all applicants to demonstrate certain competencies in relation to their knowledge of East Staffordshire and importantly customer care. These competencies are achieved by completing a Knowledge test conducted by a Licensing

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Officer. The knowledge test will be a written assessment and will be split into four parts, part one conditions test, part two a receipt exercise, part three identification of landmark/premises locations and part four identification of routes.

If you fail the test once, you will be required to wait 14 days until you take the next test. If you fail a second time you will be required to wait a month before taking a third test. If you fail 3 times you will be required to undertake tuition with the Private Hire Operator/Hackney Carriage Proprietor you intend to work for.

**PLEASE NOTE IF YOU ARE REQUIRED TO RE SIT THE KNOWLEGE TEST YOU WILL ONLY BE REQUIRED TO RE TAKE THE PART OF THE TEST YOU HAVE FAILED BUT YOU WILL BE REQUIRED TO PAY THE FULL KNOWLEDGE TEST FEE**

### **Driving Standards Test**

It is important that each applicant for a driver licence issued by the Licensing Authority can also demonstrate that they are a competent and safe driver. The Licensing Authority will require that an applicant pass a driving standards agency test. This test is arranged when the applicant contacts the Driving Standards Agency (DSA). The test comprises of a practical driving standard test, answering questions on customer care and the Highway Code, and basic mechanical principles. If you are applying for a Combined or Hackney Drivers licence you will be required to take an additional test called the Wheelchair exercise. This test is to demonstrate that you can safely load a person travelling in a wheelchair into a Hackney Carriage. The applicant will need to provide a wheelchair accessible vehicle in order to take this test. Any test fee is payable to DSA in advance of taking a test. Full details of the pass requirements can be found in the DSA application pack.

### **Medical Fitness**

All drivers have to meet certain medical criteria. This is important as you will be transporting members of the public, and therefore must be medically fit to drive. The standard to be reached is that of group I of the DVLA medical fitness criteria. Licensed drivers must also continue to satisfy this requirement during their licence duration, and are required to undergo medical examination at certain intervals. Should a medical practitioner declare that you do not meet the standards required, the Council will not issue a licence. The Council does not perform medicals for potential or existing licence holders, and will not reimburse any expenses incurred in obtaining a medical certificate. New and existing licence holders may be referred to the general licensing sub-committee should concerns be brought to our attention regarding medical fitness.

Applicants considering obtaining a Hackney Carriage driver licence should carefully consider their medical fitness to do so, as drivers of such vehicles are required to take

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as passenger's members of the public who may be wheelchair users or other disabled sections of our community.

### **Driving Licences**

By law you must have held a full driving licence for at least a period of 12 months prior to applying for a licence to drive Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicles, entitling you to drive motorcars. Before accepting any application for a licence, you must ensure that the DVLA driving licence is in your correct address and free from defects.

If a potential Driver is from one of the EU countries and wants to take theory or practical driving test, they will firstly need to apply to the DVLA for a UK counterpart.

All candidates from none EU countries will have to apply to the DVLA for a UK provisional licence before being able to take any UK driving tests.

### **Non EU Applicants**

Applicants for a taxi licence are required to provide documentary evidence confirming their right to work in the UK.

Licences granted to drivers whose leave to remain in the UK is time-limited will only be granted a licence for the period in which they are entitled to work in the UK. In order for the licence to be renewed the driver will be required to produce further evidence to prove that they have the right to work in the UK.