

## GUIDANCE NOTES

# NEW APPLICANTS HACKNEY CARRIAGE / PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE DRIVERS LICENCE



Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol  
**MERTHYR TYDFIL**  
County Borough Council

### Who can apply for a Hackney Carriage / Private Hire Drivers Licence?

Any person wishing to drive a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire Vehicle licensed within the County Borough of Merthyr Tydfil would be required to apply for a Hackney Carriage and/or Private Hire Vehicle Drivers Licence. A Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Drivers Licence is normally issued for a three year period.

Before making such an application you should take time to read these guidance notes to decide whether you meet the basic requirements to become a Hackney Carriage and/or Private Hire Driver.

### Do I qualify for a licence?

To qualify for a licence you must be deemed a fit and proper person to hold such a licence, have held a current full DVLA drivers licence for at least 12 months, be able to pass a medical examination to a DVLA group 2 standard, pass the Authority's knowledge test, pass a taxi assessment with either Blue Lamp Trust or Diamond Advanced Motoring, and be eligible to work in the UK.

### How do I apply?

To submit an application, you must provide the following documents:

- A completed application form;
- Your current DVLA driving licence ;
- Provide proof of identity including proof of eligibility to work in the United Kingdom;
- 1 coloured passport sized photograph;
- The application fee;
- Proof of identification to complete a Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) application.

All new applicants must also provide the following documents to complete their application:

- A Medical certificate to be completed by the applicants General Practitioner
- A pass certificate from Blue Lamp Trust or Diamond Advanced Motoring for the taxi assessment
- Criminal records check for all country/countries that the applicant has resided in for a period of over 6 consecutive Months.
- A DBS Certificate which you will receive through the post after making your online application in the offices.

### Proof of Eligibility to Work in the UK

All new applicants are required to provide proof of eligibility to work in the UK. This can be done in one of two ways:

1. By providing document(s) from this list <https://www.merthyr.gov.uk/media/3007/right-to-work-documents.pdf>
2. By providing their 'share code' to enable the Licensing Department to carry out a check using the Home Office online right to work checking service.

To demonstrate their right to work via the Home Office online right to work checking service, applicants should provide as part of the application process their 9-digit share code (provided to them upon accessing the service at <https://www.gov.uk/prove-right-to-work>) which, along with the applicant's date of birth, will allow the licensing authority to carry out the check.

An online check will not be possible in all circumstances because not all applicants will have an immigration status that can be checked online. The Home Office online right to work checking service sets out what information and/or documentation applicants will need in order to access the service. Applicants who are unable to obtain a share code from the service will be required to submit documents from the above link.

## **Tax Checks**

The Finance Act 2021 introduced tax checks as part of applications to renew licences for taxi and private hire drivers and private hire operators from 4<sup>th</sup> April 2022.

You will be required to complete a tax check with HMRC and provide the Licensing Department with a tax check code so that we can confirm that the tax check has been carried out if you are doing any of the following:

- Applying to renew your licence;
- Applying for the same type of licence you previously held, that ceased being valid less than a year ago;
- Applying for the same type of licence you already hold with another licensing authority.

If you have not previously held a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire driver licence, then you will have to sign a declaration to confirm that you have read the HMRC guidance on your tax responsibilities. You will then need to provide the tax check code on renewal.

The Licensing Authority legally cannot issue a licence without compliance with the above.

## **Criminal Records Check**

All applicants are required to complete a Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) check which will provide an enhanced criminal record check of the person's time in the UK.

The DBS application is made online at the Civic Centre during the application appointment. Please note to apply for a DBS we require proof of identification, a list of acceptable ID that may be provided can be found in this drivers application pack.

When the applicant has received their DBS certificate they are required to produce this to the Licensing Section. All Hackney Carriage & Private Hire Vehicle Drivers are required to undergo and produce a DBS certificate prior to all new and renewal applications.

Please note that once licensed as a Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Driver you are required to notify the Licensing Section within 7 days of any new motoring convictions including fixed penalties and any convictions for criminal offence and any cautions, reprimands or warnings.

### **Overseas Criminal Records Check**

All applicants that have spent a period of 6 or more consecutive months in another country must also provide a criminal record check from the country or countries that they resided in. The Licensing Authority will arrange for the check to be carried out but the applicant will have to pay the relevant fee.

### **Medical Certificate**

All new applicants must provide Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Councils "Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Driver Medical Certificate" completed by a General Practitioner (GP). The medical certificate must be received by the Licensing Section within 28 days of the date it was completed and signed by the GP.

The GP will be required to examine the applicant have access to their medical history when completing the form and declare if the applicant is medically fit to drive a Hackney Carriage and/or Private Hire Vehicle. The form must also be stamped by the surgery. Please note this certificate is not one which must be issued free of charge as part of the NHS and the applicant is responsible for paying any fees incurred.

The Council requires all applicants meet the Group II medical standards to be issued with a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire Vehicle Drivers Licence. More information on the DVLA's current medical guidelines can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/current-medical-guidelines-dvla-guidance-for-professionals>.

Once an applicant has been granted a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire Vehicle Drivers Licence, they will then be required to provide a Medical Certificate when they are 45, 50, 55, 60, 65 and annually thereafter. Please note there are some medical conditions where a licensed driver may be required to provide more frequent Medical Certificates.

All licensed a drivers must inform the licensing authority within 14 days of any change to their medical fitness which may affect their driving abilities to carry out the duties of a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire Driver.

### **Knowledge Test**

All new applicants are required to pass this Authority's knowledge test. The knowledge test is split into the following sections:

- Local area knowledge
- Legislation and this Authority's conditions & bye-laws
- Safeguarding
- Literacy
- Numeracy

- An oral skills test

Applicants are advised to study all relevant literature in relation to the two sections on “Safeguarding” and “Legislation and this Authority’s conditions & bye-laws” prior to taking the test which can be found on MTCBC website.

Should an applicant fail the test on three occasions, they will not meet the application criteria and the application will be rejected. They must wait 6 months from the date of the last test before they can submit a new application and undertake the knowledge test again.

### **Taxi Assessment Driving Test**

All new applicants are required to pass a taxi assessment with one of the two providers approved by this Authority and are responsible for arranging their test which can only be booked online through their websites.

Further information and contact details for the providers can be found below:

#### **Diamond Advanced Motorists Ltd**

Website Address: [www.advancedmotoring.co.uk](http://www.advancedmotoring.co.uk)

Email: [help@advancedmotoring.co.uk](mailto:help@advancedmotoring.co.uk)

Telephone: 020 8253 0120

#### **The Blue Lamp Trust**

Website Address: [www.bluelamptrust.org.uk](http://www.bluelamptrust.org.uk)

Email: [info@bluelamptrust.org.uk](mailto:info@bluelamptrust.org.uk)

Telephone Number: 033 3700 0157

### **What Fee’s do I have to pay?**

The following fees are payable to the Licensing Section on submitting your application:

- New Hackney Carriage Driver Licence or New Private Hire Drivers Licence - £272
- Disclosure & Barring Service Application (DBS) - £55.50
- DVLA Driving Entitlement Consent Form D796 (DVLA Mandate) - £15
- Knowledge test - £25

Please note that applicants will also incur the following additional charges which they are responsible for paying directly to the providers:

- The private medical with the applicants GP;
- The taxi driving assessment test;
- An overseas criminal records check and translation costs (where applicable).

### **What Happens Next?**

All applicants for Hackney Carriage / Private Hire Vehicle Drivers Licence must be determined a fit and proper person to hold such a licence. For further information on our fitness criteria please refer to our ‘Policy on Determining the Suitability of Applicants and Licensees in the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Trades’ available from the Licensing Section.

This Authority uses the National Register of Taxi Licence Refusals and Revocations (NR3). This is a national database where refusals or revocations of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire driver licences are recorded. All new applicants and renewal applications are checked on NR3 to identify whether they have had a licence refused or revoked by another Authority.

Where an applicant has no criminal convictions, cautions, warnings, reprimands or driving offences, has completed all the required checks, passed their DSA test, knowledge test, produced a properly completed medical certificate and provided proof of eligibility to work in the UK, a licence should be granted.

Where an applicant has any criminal convictions, cautions, warnings, reprimands or other relevant information recorded on their DBS certificate, or driving offences recorded against their DVLA licence, or relevant information recorded on NR3, then the application may be referred to the Councils Licensing Sub Committee for determination. The applicant will be invited to attend the meeting and may be accompanied by a representative and/or legal representative to speak in support of their application. The Licensing Committee will then decide whether they consider the applicant a 'fit and proper person' to hold a licence and inform their decision in writing within five working days. This decision will be made in accordance with the Authority's Policy on Determining the Suitability of Applicants and Licensees in the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Trades.

## **CHANGES IN CIRCUMSTANCES**

You must disclose any change in your circumstances to the Licensing Officer immediately.

## **CONDITIONS**

Once you have been granted a licence by Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council it will be subject to the Council's conditions, pre-conditions and byelaws in respect of Private Hire Drivers & Hackney Carriage Drivers. If you breach any of these conditions or, in respect of Hackney Carriage Drivers the byelaws, the Council could suspend or revoke your licence and you could be prosecuted. Copies of the above are included in the drivers application pack.

## **ADDITIONAL BADGES**

If you are granted your Hackney Carriage or Private Hire Drivers Licence, you will be then be eligible to apply for your second drivers badges (Private Hire or Hackney Carriage Drivers Licence) at the reduced fee of £20.

## **FURTHER INFORMATION**

To make an appointment to apply for a licence, or for further information and advice please contact the Licensing Section on 01685 725000 **or by email** [Licensing@merthyr.gov.uk](mailto:Licensing@merthyr.gov.uk) **or in writing to:**

Licensing Section, Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council, Civic Centre, Castle Street, Merthyr Tydfil, CF47 8AN