



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 recommended you read **the Hackney Carriage & Private Hire Licensing Policy** which can be found here <https://hart.gov.uk/taxis>

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 your 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

Licence fees – subject to revision

1. **Hackney Carriage** (which allows you to drive both types of Vehicle) Three year £232.00

2. **Private Hire** Three year £232.00

Additional fees – subject to revision

Disclosure and Barring Service £44.00

DVLA Licence check £15.00

Medical Assessment £33

The full licence fee, together with the DBS, the DVLA licence check 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 either of the following organisations:

The Blue Lamp Trust

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

Telephone 0300 777 0157

Web: www.bluelamptrust.org.uk Go to 'Business Driver Training', then 'Taxi Driver Assessments'.

2. 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 £44.00 which we collect on behalf of the DBS, please read the guidance leaflets before completing the application form. You are encouraged to join the Update Service, information is also contained within this pack.

3. 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 £30 is charged to you. Medicals are repeated every 5 years or more frequently if advised by the Council's independent medical advisor.

4. 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.

5. 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.

6. DVLA Licence Check

You are required to sign a mandate for the release of your driving licence history from DVLA. This is to verify the information shown on your current licence and to provide details of all previous convictions; you are responsible for the fee incurred. This procedure complies with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998.

7. 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:

www.workingintheuk.gov.uk or 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.

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

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