Taxi Driver's/Private Hire Car Driver's Licence Guidance Notes

Taxi Driver's/Private Hire Car Driver's Licence

A taxi driver's/private hire car driver's licence allows you to drive both taxis and private hire cars.

Applications

Each question on the form must be answered. If a question is irrelevant please mark it "not applicable" unless otherwise stated.

In addition, the documentation specified below must be enclosed with the application in relation to checks on identity, entitlement to work and previous convictions otherwise the application will not be accepted.

You must complete the name and address of the taxi/private hire car operator for whom you will be driving and/or the taxi/private hire car booking office from which you will be operating. Any changes during the course of the licence must be notified in writing to the Licensing Team.

For renewal applications, licence holders are solely responsible for ensuring their renewal application form is lodged timeously, ideally around 6 weeks prior to the expiry date of the licence. Failure to lodge the renewal application before the expiry date of the current licence will result in the licence lapsing. Applications will be accepted up to 28 days after the expiry date of the existing licence but only where the driver requests an extension and provides a valid reason why the extension is requested. Requests for an extension must be in writing or via email to licensing@west-dunbarton.gov.uk

Zones

West Dunbartonshire Council has 2 distinct taxi licensing zones. These are Clydebank and Dumbarton & Vale of Leven. In order to operate in either of these zones you will be required to pass the knowledge test relevant to that particular zone. You will also only be able to operate from a licensed taxi or private hire car for the area in which you have passed the knowledge test.

Applicants for the grant of a taxi driver's/private hire car driver's licence who have previously held a licence within the previous 3 years will not be required to sit the knowledge test.

Knowledge Test

Applicants applying for the grant of a taxi driver's/private hire car driver's licence will require to sit and pass a knowledge test prior to an application being accepted. You will be issued with a guidance note in relation to the knowledge test when you receive confirmation of the date and time that the test will take place. If you wish any further information on the knowledge test or if you wish to book a knowledge test you should contact the Licensing Team on 01389 738741 or by contacting us via email at licensing@west-dunbarton.gov.uk

DRIVING LICENCE

The front and back of your driving licence must be submitted along with your application form.. An application cannot be accepted for processing unless you have held a licence entitling you to drive in the UK for a continuous period of 12 months prior to making your application. If you are unable to recall any endorsements on your current licence you can obtain an accurate record via the website at https://www.gov.uk/view-driving-licence You will require your Driving Licence Number, National Insurance Number and Post Code of the address stated on your driving licence.

ENTITLEMENT TO WORK

For all applicants, evidence must be produced of their entitlement to work in the United Kingdom. This applies whether the application is for grant or renewal.

British citizens should provide their current passport with the application or a copy of their birth certificate. Birth certificates must have been issued within 12 months of date of birth; (Full or short form acceptable including those issued by UK authorities overseas, such as Embassies, High Commissions and HM Forces.)

For an EU national, their current passport must be provided with the application.

If neither a British citizen nor an EU national, their current passport and Biometric Residence Permit confirming an entitlement to work in the UK must be provided.

Please note that the licensing authority may also check your immigration status with the Home Office. Please note that your application will not be considered valid until all the necessary information and documentation has been produced. Please refer to List A and/or List B to establish which documents you will be required to produce.

IDENTITY – PROOF OF ADDRESS

All applicants must provide separate proof of their address to confirm the address stated on the application form. This can be in the form of a utility bill issued within the last three months, a Council tax bill for the current year, a Bank, Building society or Credit Union statement, a Mortgage statement issued within the last three months, a Council or Housing Association rent card or tenancy agreement for the current year or a Benefit book or original notification letter from Benefits Agency.

DECLARATION OF CONVICTIONS

Grant applications

For grant applications, any applicant who was born outside the UK or has been resident outside the UK for 6 months or more must produce documentation in relation to criminal record checks when submitting the application form.

- If the applicant was born out with the United Kingdom, a criminal record check must be provided from his or her country of origin. Applicants must also provide a criminal record check from any other country in which they have been resident for six months or more.

- If the applicant was born in the United Kingdom, but has lived in any other country or countries for six months or more, they must provide a criminal record check from those countries.

In all cases, the criminal record checks provided must have been obtained within the six months prior to submitting the application and must be verified by the relevant UK based Embassy/High Commission where obtained from authorities out with the United Kingdom.

Previous Convictions

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exclusions and Exemptions) (Scotland) Order 2013 requires applicants for a taxi driver's/private hire car driver's licence to disclose both spent and unspent convictions on their application form.
Since September 2015 however certain spent convictions have become 'protected' which those applicants effected no longer have to disclose. For more information on protected convictions please visit http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2015/329/made.

Deciding whether a spent conviction is protected can be complicated therefore if you are in any doubt you are advised to seek legal advice.

If you are unsure as to the details or dates of any previous convictions which have to be declared on the application you should contact Disclosure Scotland, PO Box No. 250, Glasgow, G2 4JS. Tel No:- 0870 609 6006. Alternatively you can obtain a Data Protection Form from your local Police Office requesting a 'subject access' to your record.

Prior Refusal

If you have applied for and been refused a licence for a taxi driver's/private hire car driver's licence by West Dunbartonshire Council then, unless there has been a material change in circumstances, you cannot apply for the same kind of licence within one year of the date of refusal. This does not apply to applications for temporary licences. The application form also requires you to declare if you have been refused a licence for a taxi driver's/private hire car driver's licence by any other Council.

Application Fees

Full payment must be made when submitting the application. A full list of all the civic application fees is available on our website: West Dunbartonshire Council Licensing Fees 2025/26

No refund of application fees will be made for applications which are subsequently refused or withdrawn.

Processing your Application

When your application is lodged and the appropriate fee has been paid, a copy of your application will be sent to Police Scotland. They will carry out their own investigations and report back.

Legislation allows for consideration of the application within three months and a decision within a further six months.

If an objection, representation or police comment is received in relation to your application you will be sent a copy of the letter. Your application and letter of objection, representation or police comment will be referred to a meeting of the Licensing Committee. You will be notified of the location, date and time of the hearing and be given the opportunity of addressing the Committee.

Right of Appeal

If your application is refused, or granted conditionally, you are entitled to ask the Council within 21 days to give reasons for such refusal, or the imposition of such conditions, and thereafter (within 28 days of the Committee's decision) you are entitled to appeal to the Sheriff against the decision on certain grounds.

If there is an objection to your application and the application is subsequently granted, the objector can also ask the Council to give reasons for such grant and thereafter is (within 28 days of the Committee's decision) entitled to appeal to the Sheriff also. You may wish to seek independent legal advice in relation to any appeal.

Applicants for a temporary licence do not have the right of appeal.

Conditions of Licence

A copy of West Dunbartonshire's conditions for taxi driver's/private hire car driver's will be issued to you along with your licence if you are successful Licence holders should have a thorough understanding of these conditions and they should be retained as they form part of your licence.

Duration of Licence

Applications for the grant or renewal of a licence are for a period of one year.

Applications for the grant of a temporary licence are for a period of 6 weeks. If an application for the grant of a full licence is received on or before the expiry date of the existing temporary licence, the expiry date of the temporary licence is extended until a decision is made on the full application

MEDICAL DECLARATION

Driving Capabilities

The application form requires you to declare whether you suffer from any medical condition or disability which may affect your ability to drive and to declare whether you are receiving any medication associated with your condition which may affect your ability to drive.

The Council may request that an applicant or licence holder submit to a medical examination at any time, for the purposes of satisfying themselves that they are physically fit to drive a taxi or private hire car, by a medical practitioner nominated by the licensing authority.

If you have a medical condition which would prevent you from carrying a guide dog or assistance dog in your vehicle, you must also advise us of this on the application. You will then receive a form requesting a Notice of Exemption which you will be required to complete and return. If granted, you will be issued with a Notice of Exemption which will entitle you to refuse a hire where the passenger is accompanied by a guide dog or an assistance dog. You will not be entitled to refuse a hire of this kind without a Notice of Exemption in your possession.

Issue of Licence

Once you are in receipt of your licence and identification badge you must ensure that it is not altered, erased or defaced in any way. It should be kept clean and legible and must not be lent to or used by any other person. Should the licence or identification badge be lost or become defaced or illegible you must obtain a replacement from West Dunbartonshire Council on payment of the appropriate fee.