

HOW TO APPLY FOR A PRIVATE HIRE OPERATOR LICENCE

IMPORTANT:

Before you apply you should check with the Councils Planning Department if planning permission is or is not required.

If you wish to discuss this matter or require further clarification of the requirements please contact the Councils Licensing Section – before you submit your application.

The Licensing Section will explain the full procedure for applying for a Private Hire Operators Licence and provide you with the application form and if required a Disclosure and Barring Services form (DBS form). All applications must be submitted through the Licensing Section.

For your information the link to the privacy notices under the General Data Protection Regulations for Legal Services, Licensing Section is:

<https://www4.halton.gov.uk/Pages/councildemocracy/privacynotices.aspx>

PLEASE NOTE: We will be checking your details against the NR3 Register. For more information please check the Council's Licensing Privacy Policy which can be found on our website.

You will be required to produce the following documentation in support of your application:

- Application form
- Fee
- DBS application form (Police check form)
- DBS Update Service reference code
- Identification documents
- Certificate of good conduct (if required)
- HMRC tax check code (if required)
- List of vehicles
- Planning permission/letter from the Planning Department

An explanation of the above follows in this document

Please familiarise yourself with the contents of the Council's Policy on Professional Standards which can be found on our website.

The Council will normally issue the Licence 24 hours from completion of the application process: this means when all outstanding matters have been completed and all documentation has been received by the Licensing Section. Once issued, the licence will be sent to you in the post.

APPLICATION FORM

Please ensure that you answer all questions on the form to avoid any delay in your application being processed.

The form will only be accepted if the declaration is signed and dated.

FEE

The application fee and DBS fee are payable at the time you submit the application. Payment can be made either by debit or credit card and a receipt will be provided to you.

Please note fees may be subject to increase in April of each year.

REQUIRED IF YOU DO NOT HOLD A SSD LICENCE WITH HALTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

DBS FORM (POLICE CHECK)

You are required to complete the Disclosure and Barring Services form (DBS form) to apply for a Police check. The form will be submitted by the Council on your behalf.

You will be required to disclose any convictions or cautions you may have had (however old they may be). For licensing purposes convictions can never become "spent" under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. If you fail to disclose any convictions or cautions on your application form then this will be deemed as you making a false declaration and will result in your application

either been withdrawn or referred to the Council's Taxi Licensing Sub Committee for a decision.

IF CONVICTIONS ARE REVEALED THEN YOUR APPLICATION WILL NEED TO BE CONSIDERED FURTHER AND COULD BE WITHDRAWN AND/OR YOU MAY BE INTERVIEWED BY THE LICENSING SECTION AND YOU MAY BE REQUIRED TO ATTEND BEFORE THE TAXI LICENSING SUB COMMITTEE.

When completing the DBS form you must:

- Use BLACK INK and CAPITAL LETTERS throughout
- Complete all sections marked in YELLOW – if you do not the form will be rejected by the DBS and consequently this will delay the application
- Whatever information you complete in the yellow sections of the form this needs to be supported by the original document – i.e. if you put passport details on the form you need to produce your original passport to us as we complete the evidence section confirming that we have seen all the original relevant documents.
- Write clearly and insert only one character in each box
- Keep your signature within the box provided

THE COUNCIL'S LICENSING SECTION HAS NO CONTROL OVER THE PROCESSING OF THE DBS FORMS. THE MORE IDENTIFICATION DOCUMENTATION WE CAN PROVIDE TO THE DBS THE MORE CHANCE THERE IS OF A QUICK RESULT.

IMPORTANT:

WHEN YOU RECEIVE THE CERTIFICATE FROM THE DBS YOU NEED TO PROVIDE IT TO THE LICENSING SECTION AS WE DO NOT RECEIVE A COPY. THE DOCUMENT WILL BE INSPECTED FOR LICENSING

PURPOSES AND WILL BE RETURNED TO YOU. (IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU KEEP THE CERTIFICATE FOR FUTURE REFERENCE, PLEASE SEE FOLLOWING UNDER DBS UPDATE SERVICE).

IF THE DBS RESULT REVEALS INFORMATION YOU FAILED TO DISCLOSE ON YOUR APPLICATION FORM THEN THIS WILL BE DEEMED AS YOU MAKING A FALSE DECLARATION AND WILL RESULT IN YOUR APPLICATION BEING REFERRED TO THE COUNCIL'S TAXI LICENSING SUB COMMITTEE FOR A DECISION. IF YOU ARE IN ANY DOUBT WHATSOEVER AS TO WHAT INFORMATION YOU NEED TO DECLARE ON THE APPLICATION FORM PLEASE CONTACT THE LICENSING SECTION WHO WILL ASSIST YOU.

DBS UPDATE SERVICE INFORMATION

Halton Borough Council, like other authorities, has adopted a policy requiring all licensed drivers to subscribe to the DBS Update Service.

The update service is an online subscription that allows you to keep your enhanced certificate up-to-date and allows Halton Borough Council to check a certificate online more frequently than every 3 years, for example every 6 months.

Instead of having to apply for a new certificate every 3 years you make a single payment (currently £13) to the DBS Update Service every year.

Details of how to subscribe to the Update Service can be found at the following link:

www.gov.uk/dbs-update-service

When you have received the certificate back from the DBS you will have **30 days from the date of the certificate** to register to the update service.

Once you have joined the service you will receive a confirmation email and a reference number. You **MUST** provide this number to the Licensing Section, only then will your licence be renewed.

If after 30 days you have not provided the confirmation email/reference number to the Licensing Section your SSD licence will be suspended until the information is received.

IMPORTANT POINTS TO REMEMBER:

- You **must** renew your subscription each year - **this is your responsibility**.
The Licensing Section will not be sending out reminders
- Keep the original DBS certificate and reference number safe as this is required on each SSD renewal going forward
- If you forget to renew your subscription please contact the Licensing Section immediately
- **Failure to renew your subscription or to notify the DBS Update Service of changes to the payment card they hold on record for the annual fee will result in you being taken off the register**

If this happens a new DBS certificate will need to be applied for and you will not be able to work until you subscribe back onto the DBS Update Service and provide proof of the subscription to the Licensing Section.

IDENTIFICATION DOCUMENTS

Identification documents are required to ensure all relevant checks can be conducted on every applicant. The examples of acceptable documents are set by the DVLA, Disclosure & Barring Service and the UK Home Office, under the Immigration Act 2016.

IMPORTANT POINTS TO REMEMBER:

- You **MUST** submit original documents with your application.
- The documents will be inspected, photocopied and given back to you.
- The documents must show the correct spelling of your full name and show your current address (where applicable).
- Try to produce as many of the required documents as you can.

DOCUMENTS REQUIRED FOR THE DVLA

- Current valid UK driving licence

DOCUMENTS REQUIRED FOR THE DBS (Police check)

- Current valid UK passport or EU passport/identity card
- Current valid UK driving licence
- One official document confirming your address - the document must be less than 3 months old – (a Council Tax bill that is dated within 12 months is acceptable)
- A FULL birth certificate 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 your permanent National Insurance Number and your name issued by a Government Agency or previous employer

DOCUMENTS REQUIRED FOR THE HOME OFFICE

- Current valid or expired UK passport or EU passport/identity card
- Birth certificate
- An official document giving your permanent National Insurance Number and your name issued by a Government Agency or previous employer

If you were born outside of the UK and do not hold a current valid passport then please contact us to discuss this matter.

CERTIFICATE OF GOOD CONDUCT

If you have ever lived outside of the UK for a continuous period of 3 months or more (this includes holidays) you must contact the Consulate or the Embassy of that country and obtain a Certificate of Good Conduct.

When the information is received in addition to being in the native language of the country it must also be translated into English and certified as a true copy. The Certificate should be produced to the Licensing Section.

HMRC TAX CODE ONLY REQUIRED IF YOU HOLD A SSD LICENCE WITH HBC OR ANOTHER OTHER AUTHORITY

The Government has put in place new tax requirements for anyone applying for a licence to drive hackney carriages or private hire vehicles from 4th April 2022. This is supported by a new digital service, developed by HMRC. It helps people who drive hackney carriages and/or private hire vehicles to complete a new tax check.

Most people are registered to pay tax and this is about ensuring everyone pays the tax they should, creating a level playing field for the compliant majority. HMRC are working with industry bodies to make this as straightforward as possible. The check should take a few minutes every few years and is simply to confirm that someone is appropriately registered for tax.

You'll need to complete a tax check when you renew your licence as a Private Hire Operator or a driver of a taxi (hackney carriage) and or private hire vehicle.

Please refer to the Tax Check Factsheet at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/licence-application-tax-check-communications-resources/tax-check-factsheet> so you understand what is required as this will apply to all renewals and new applicants. Further information can be found via the Gov.UK website: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/changes-for-taxi-private-hire-or-scrap-metal-licence-applications-from-april-2022>.

LIST OF VEHICLES

You must provide a full list of all vehicles and drivers working under your system. We cannot accept an application without the accompanying list.

PLANNING PERMISSION

Applicants may require planning permission to operate from premises.

An applicant needs to check with the Council's Planning Department to ascertain if permission is required. If permission is required you must obtain the necessary permission and produce a copy of the permission to support the application.

If the Planning Department confirm that permission IS NOT REQUIRED, applicants must obtain written confirmation that it is not required from the Council's Planning Department and produce a copy of the confirmation to support the application.

DURATION OF LICENCE

A Licence will be issued for a standard duration of 5 years. If you wish to have the Licence for a shorter period you must provide your reasons in writing when you submit the application. Your request will be considered by the Licensing Section.

ADVERTISING YOUR COMPANY

Halton Borough Council has a policy to allow an Operator to advertise their business on the side of Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Vehicles provided certain criteria is met.

The policy states that only approved door signs can be fitted on vehicles and that they must be specifically fitted in a certain position on vehicles and that they cannot be magnetised.

Please see Private Hire Operators Licence Standard Condition 15 for further details.

Any outdoor advertisements of any kind i.e. banners, posters etc. in the Halton Borough area must be agreed by Officers of this Council from the Planning Department before they are put up/displayed.

Please note that physical advertising is a matter for the planning department. The licensing department only needs to get involved with these matters should the planning department take enforcement action against any person and/or company.

The planning officers can be contacted as follows:

Name: Andrew Evans

Email: andrew.evans@halton.gov.uk

Telephone: 0151 5117571

Name: Glen Henry

Email: glen.henry@halton.gov.uk

Telephone: 0151 5117584

RENEWAL OF THE LICENCE

When the Licence is due for renewal the Licensing Section will send you a reminder letter together with a renewal application form. This is a courtesy only – **it is entirely the responsibility of the Licence holder to submit the renewal application on time.**

For renewal applications the following will be required:

- Application form
- Fee
- DBS application form (Police check form)/DBS Update Service*
- Identification documents
- Certificate of good conduct (if required)
- HMRC Tax Code (required on renewal)
- List of vehicles

Planning Permission/letter from Planning will not be required on renewal.

If you hold a SSD Licence with the Council a DBS will not be required upon renewal. If you do not hold a SSD Licence a DBS will be required on every renewal.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact the Licensing Section:

Kim Hesketh 0151 511 8066

Danielle Collings 0151 511 8206

Sue Thornett 0151 511 8771

Email address: Legalservices@halton.gov.uk