



Concessionary Travel on Local Buses in Wales

Categories of Disabled People

Clarification on proof of eligibility requirements for disabled persons and companions.

All applicants must provide proof of eligibility and proof of permanent residence.

In any application for a concessionary travel pass, applicants are responsible for proving their entitlement by providing the documentary evidence as set out below.

Eligibility is considered “automatic” (i.e. not requiring further assessment) where a person has been awarded one of the following State benefits: -

- The Higher Rate Mobility Component of the Disability Living Allowance (HRMCDLA), or
- The War Pensioner’s Mobility Supplement (WPMS), or
- An award under Tariffs 1-8 of the War Veterans Compensation Scheme (AFCS), or
- A Personal Independence Payment award having scored eight or more points on the “Moving around” activity.

Blind or Partially Sighted

Blind – means having a high degree of vision loss (i.e. seeing much less than is normal or perhaps nothing at all).

Partial sight – is a less severe loss of vision. Partially sighted people can see more than someone who is blind, but less than a fully sighted person.

A person can be registered as blind or partially sighted with their local Council. For this to happen, a consultant ophthalmologist (eye specialist) must have completed a form and submitted it to the blind or partially sighted person’s local Social Services Department. Registration is voluntary.

In order to qualify for a free bus pass, applicants must supply documentary evidence that they are registered blind or partially sighted with their local Social Services Department or that they are eligible to be registered (but have declined to do so).

Proof of eligibility required:

ONE of the following:

- Certificate of Vision Impairment (CVI), signed by a Consultant Ophthalmologist (eye specialist)

- Letter from a GP, Specialist Social Worker, Rehabilitation Officer, Consultant Ophthalmologist or other eye specialist e.g. optometrist

Profoundly or Severely Deaf

Hearing loss is measured in decibels, dBHL (Hearing Level). People are generally regarded as having a severe hearing loss if it reaches 70-95 dBHL, and a profound loss if it exceeds 95+ dBHL

There is no statutory registration system for deaf people, but many will be registered voluntarily with their local authority Social Services Department. It is advisable to check with Social Services, but please note that it is not compulsory to register.

Applicants must supply documentary evidence that they are registered as profoundly or severely deaf with their local Social Services Department or that they are eligible to be registered (but have declined to do so).

Proof of eligibility required:

- Letter from a GP, Specialist Social Worker or Aural Specialist
- An audiological report or a report from an aural specialist

Without Speech

Applicants must supply documentary evidence that they are unable to communicate orally in any language or that they are unable to make clear, basic oral requests or ask specific questions to clarify instructions (e.g. "Does this bus go to the High Street?").

Proof of eligibility required:

- Letter from a GP, Social Worker, Speech Therapist or other medical specialist e.g. ear, nose and throat.
- Disability may be self-evident

Disability or Injury

Applicants must supply documentary evidence that they have a disability or have suffered an injury, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to walk.

Proof of eligibility required:

ONE of the following:

- Documentary evidence confirming that the applicant is in receipt of the Higher Rate Mobility Component of the Disability Living Allowance (DLA);
- A Personal Independence Payment award having scored eight or more points on the "Moving around" activity.

- Documentary evidence that the applicant receives War Pensioners Mobility supplement;
- Letter from a GP, Occupational Therapist or an Independent Medical Adviser confirming that the applicant has a degree of disability equivalent to that required to qualify for Higher Rate Mobility Component of DLA or Personal Independence Payment award (having scored eight or more points on the “Moving around” activity).

Where the applicant is not in receipt of one of the benefits mentioned above (as possible examples), the applicant is responsible for providing medical evidence to support the claim that their walking ability is permanently and substantially impaired.

No arms or long-term loss of use of both arms

Applicants must supply documentary evidence that they are unable to use their arms to carry out day to day tasks.

Proof of eligibility required:

ONE of the following:

- Disability may be self evident
- Letter from a GP, Occupational Therapist, Disability Assistant, Social Worker or other medical specialist

Learning Disability

Applicants must supply documentary evidence that they have a learning disability, that is, a state of arrested or incomplete development of mind which includes significant impairment of intelligence and social functioning.

Proof of eligibility required:

ONE of the following:

- Documentary evidence that the applicant is a resident within a residential home registered for people with a learning disability (placement arranged by Flintshire Social Services)
- Documentary evidence that the applicant is living in a Community Living project with support arranged by Flintshire Social Services;
- Documentary evidence that the applicant is in receipt of an Independent Living Fund (ILF) Award;
- Documentary evidence that the applicant is registered with the Social Services Department as learning disabled or eligible to be registered as learning disabled if such a register does not exist e.g. letter from a Social Worker, Specialist Community Nurse or independent Medical Consultant.

Unable to drive owing to medical reasons

Applicants must supply documentary evidence that they would, if they applied for the grant of a licence to drive a motor vehicle under Part III of the Road Traffic Act 1988, have the application

refused pursuant to section 92 of the Act (physical fitness), otherwise than on the grounds of persistent misuse of alcohol or drugs.

Under Section 92 of the Road Traffic Act 1988, the issue of a driving licence may be refused on the grounds of the applicant's medical fitness. Those who are currently barred from holding a licence are people with:

- Epilepsy (unless it is of a type which does not pose a danger - see below).
- Severe mental disorder.
- Liability to sudden attacks of giddiness or fainting (whether as a result of cardiac disorder or otherwise).
- Inability to read a registration plate in good light at 20.5 metres (with lenses if worn).
- Other disabilities which are likely to cause the driving of vehicles by them to be a source of danger to the public.

It is not a condition of entitlement under this category that the applicant should actually apply for and be refused a driving licence (which would be unduly burdensome for everyone involved).

People who persistently misuse drugs or alcohol are not covered by the definition of "disabled person" under the Act and are thus not entitled to concessionary travel.

For people with any of the disabilities listed above, the Council must be confident that a licence would be refused and should therefore be able to issue the travel pass automatically. For epilepsy the bar is not automatic and depends on the circumstances.

Proof of eligibility required:

ONE of the following:

- Documentary evidence confirming that the applicant is in receipt of the Higher Rate Mobility Component of the Disability Living Allowance (DLA)
- A Personal Independence Payment award having scored eight or more points on the "Moving around" activity.
- Documentary evidence that the applicant receives War Pensioners Mobility supplement;
- Documentary evidence that the applicant has had his/her driving licence refused or revoked on the grounds of the applicant's medical fitness (other than on the grounds of persistent misuse of alcohol or drugs).
- Letter from a GP or other medical specialist confirming that the applicant would, if he/she applied for the grant of a licence to drive a motor vehicle under Part III of the Road Traffic Act 1988, have the application refused pursuant to section 92 of the Act (physical fitness), otherwise than on the grounds of persistent misuse of alcohol or drugs.

Companions of disabled people

In these cases, a companion pass can be issued, subject to medical evidence of the disability, which allows the pass-holder to travel with a companion free of charge.

A severely disabled person may request a companion bus pass so that they would have the assistance of one companion free of charge when making a journey. Subject to medical evidence, a companion pass may be available to people with any of the following.

- Severe learning difficulties.
- Challenging behaviours, who need to be supervised at all times.
- Severe cognitive and mental impairments and disorders (including people who have no awareness of risk).
- A combination of severe visual and hearing loss that prevent independent mobility, or
- The need to use a wheelchair.

Please note that the effect of the disability need not be sufficient for the pass holder to require the help of a companion on every journey.

This means that the Council will issue two types of free bus pass. The first will be to disabled people who meet the general criteria (above) and to persons aged 60 or more years.

The second will be to disabled people who meet the general criteria and who are so severely disabled that it would be impossible for them reasonably to use public transport without the assistance of a companion (the effect of the disability need not be sufficient for the pass holder to require the help of a companion on every journey).

This second type of bus pass will extend the free travel concession to one person accompanying an eligible disabled person on any journey. Such passes are not issued to people over the age of 60 except where they are eligible by virtue of disability.

Proof of eligibility required:

- Documentary evidence confirming that the applicant is in receipt of the Higher Rate Mobility Component of the Disability Living Allowance (DLA) e.g. Letter from the Department for Work and Pensions

If you are not in receipt of the Higher Rate Mobility Component of the Disability Living Allowance, you may still qualify for a companion pass.

In order to qualify, we require documentary evidence confirming that the applicant already meets the general criteria for a standard disabled bus pass and ONE of the following additional pieces of information:

- Documentary evidence confirming that the applicant is in receipt of the Lower Rate Mobility Component of the Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or higher
- Documentary evidence confirming that the applicant is in receipt of the Middle or Higher Rate Care Component of the Disability Living Allowance (DLA)
- Documentary evidence confirming that the applicant is in receipt of Attendance Allowance
- Letter from a GP, Social Worker, Occupational Therapist, local Welfare Rights Officer or other medical specialist confirming that the applicant would, by nature of his/her disability, find it impossible to travel on public passenger transport services without the assistance of a companion

All documentary evidence and letters must be written on headed paper from the relevant organisation and signed and dated by the professional indicated.

The Council will not be liable for any expenses incurred by the applicant in obtaining and submitting documentation, including photographic and/or medical evidence if necessary, for the purpose of applying for a pass.

Flintshire County Council is under a duty to protect the public funds it administers. The Council may share information provided to it, with other bodies responsible for auditing or administering public funds in order to prevent and detect fraud.

Notes

In all cases, the disabled person must meet the overall definition of disability in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, i.e. the disability is permanent or has lasted or is likely to last at least 12 months and has a substantial adverse effect on the person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities.

In all cases, the applicant is responsible for ensuring that any fee levied to cover the cost of an assessment is met. Local authorities have no duty to reimburse medical practitioners or applicants for any such fees.

Useful Contacts

Flintshire Welfare Rights - 01352 703561

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