

APPLYING TO BE A TAXI OR PRIVATE HIRE CAR OPERATOR

Do I need a licence to operate a taxi or private hire car?

Yes. An operator's licence is required for the operation of a vehicle as a taxi or private hire car.

What is a taxi?

A taxi is a vehicle licensed for carrying passengers. The driver of a taxi can pick passengers up from the streets and can ply for hire in a public place. A taxi must have an illuminated roof sign bearing the word "taxi" and be fitted with a taximeter.

What is a private hire car?

A private hire vehicle is also licensed for carrying passengers. However, all fares must be pre-booked. A private hire car driver cannot pick passengers up from the streets or ply for hire in public places. A private hire operator operating within Perth City Centre must be fitted with a taximeter.

How many passengers can I carry?

A taxi or private hire car can be licensed to carry up to 8 passengers.

Can an operator also drive their taxi or private hire car?

A taxi or private hire operator who wishes to drive their vehicle also needs a licence to act as a taxi/private hire car driver.

Are there exemptions?

Yes. Vehicles do not need to be licensed whilst being used in connection with a funeral or a wedding or being used for carrying passengers under a contract for its exclusive hire for a period of not less than 24 hours. For example, extended touring holiday when a hired car with a driver are available to a holidaymaker throughout a holiday period.

Are there any restrictions on the vehicles that can be used as taxi or private hire cars?

A taxi or private hire vehicle must be no more than ten years old from the date of first registration. After that the vehicle must be replaced.

Are Taxi and Private Hire Cars examined?

Yes. Taxi and private hire cars have to undergo and pass regular MOTs as follows depending on the age of the vehicle:

- Vehicle 3 years old or less – 1 MOT a year
- Vehicles between 3 years and 7 years old – 2 MOTs a year
- Vehicles between 7 years old and 10 years old (12 years for a WAV) – 3 MOTs a year.

~~an annual inspection unless the vehicle is over the age of 7 years when it shall, be required to undergo 2 inspections per year, carried out by or on behalf of the Council.~~

Why do I need a licence?

The licensing system is in place to ensure public safety. Every person who applies for a licence is assessed to see if they are “fit and proper” to have a licence.

Who can apply?

An individual, company or partnership can apply.

Right to Work

Your right to work in the UK will be checked at an interview, you will be contacted to attend our office at 2 High Street, Perth, PH1 5PH as part of your licence application. This may include staff at the Licensing Department, Perth and Kinross Council checking your immigration status with the Home Office. You must therefore provide a document or document combination that is stipulated as being suitable for this check. **Please see Appendices A and B below for a list of acceptable documents and more information.**

What do I have to do if I wish to substitute my vehicle for another vehicle?

You must complete a Substitution Form which can be found on our website at www.pkc.gov.uk. You must print this form off, complete, pay and hand the form in to Licensing, Pullar house, 35 Kinnoull Street, Perth, PH1 5GD. Please ensure that your insurance and V5 document are in the same name as per Condition 4 of the Taxi and Private Hire Car Operator's Licence prior to submission. You will also require an MOT dated within 4 weeks prior to the date of substitution.

Is there an age limit?

No.

How do I apply?

An application form must be completed. Please complete the form fully. The application form must be accompanied by the fee.

You can send us your completed application or hand it into Pullar House, 35 Kinnoull Street, Perth, PH1 5GD.

When do I apply for a renewal of my licence?

An application form must be completed and submitted before the expiry of your current licence.

How long does a licence last?

A licence will generally last for one year.

How much does it cost?

The application fee for a Taxi Operator Licence is £74 (WAV), £144 (ULH) and £297 (car) and a Private Hire Operator is £63 (WAV), £122 (ULH) and £250 (car). **Additionally, you will be required to pay for the new plates & brackets - £40 for a Taxi and £60 for a Private Hire vehicle.** Please note fees change annually.

How can I pay?

Perth & Kinross Council accept cards, cash and cheque payments. Cheques should be made payable to Perth and Kinross Council. Card payments can be made over the phone (01738 475180 between 9am and 1pm weekdays) or in person at Pullar House. Cash payments can be made at a cash desk at Pullar House. Please do not send cash in the post.

How long does it take for me to get a licence?

By law we have 6 months to deal with an application. However, we aim to deal with applications in around **6 weeks**. We cannot start to process your application until we have everything we need from you. Please use the checklist on the application form to make sure you have sent us everything.

If we receive objections or information about you from the police, or if you need to go for a medical then it will take longer to deal with your application. Licensing staff will try to give you an idea of how long things are likely to take.

I have applied for a licence – what happens now?

Your application is entered into our database. We then send your information to Police Scotland. We allow them 28 days to consider your application.

You will get an acknowledgement letter together with a receipt in respect of the licence fee submitted.

You will be invited to attend an interview with Perth & Kinross Council Licensing Department to evidence your right to a licence.

Why do you send my application to the police?

Everyone who applies for a licence is assessed to make sure they are suitable to hold a licence. Part of that assessment involves looking at whether you have criminal convictions or whether the police hold other information about you which might suggest that you are not suitable. This is an important safeguard in protecting the public as many licence holders are in positions of trust or in jobs where public safety is very important.

What happens once we have all of the information we need?

Once we have received responses and your compliance notice, we can then decide whether to grant your licence. If there are objections, representations or other information received whereby the Licensing Department are unable to grant your licence, then your application will be sent to the Licensing Committee.

What is the Licensing Committee and why would I need to attend?

The Licensing Committee is made up of Councillors. You will be invited to attend the Licensing Committee if your application could not be dealt with by staff within the Licensing Department. This is usually due to an objection or representation being received from the police.

The Committee only meets every 6 weeks. We have a separate leaflet about going to the Committee which you should read if you are asked to attend.

Why would a licence be refused?

The law allows us to refuse your application in certain circumstances. A decision to refuse a licence will only be made by the Licensing Committee, not the Licensing Department.

The most common reason for refusing to grant a licence is that the person is not suitable, or “fit and proper” to have a licence.

Can the Council attach conditions to a taxi or private hire car licence?

Yes. The Council has a set of conditions for taxi and private hire car operators and may impose any conditions on the grant of a licence which they consider reasonable. If a licence is granted, you will be notified of the conditions which must be observed at all times. You are entitled to seek variation of any of the conditions once a licence has been granted.

Do I receive a full refund if I am refused a licence?

No as your licence has been fully processed.

If I am not from the UK can I still get a licence?

Yes. However, if you have not lived in the UK for at least 10 years you will need to get a Certificate of Good Conduct or Criminal Record Certificate from your country of origin. This is so we can make sure we have the same information about your criminal record as we have for people who have lived in the UK for 10 years. You should contact your Embassy or Consulate to find out how to do this. If the information you get is not produced in English then you will need to arrange for it to be translated. You will have to meet the cost of getting this information, along with the cost of any translation.

Who should I contact if I have any further queries relating to taxi operator or private hire car operator licences?

Telephone 01738 475180 between 9am and 1pm weekdays or e-mail civiclicensing@pkc.gov.uk

Where should I send my completed application?

Corporate and Democratic Services – Legal and Governance Services
Perth and Kinross Council
Pullar House
35 Kinnoull Street
Perth
PH1 5GD