

Taxicard Application Form - Guidance Notes

The Taxicard scheme provides subsidised kerb-to-kerb transport in participating black cabs (taxis) and private hire vehicles (minicabs) for people who have serious mobility or visual impairments and who find it very difficult or impossible to use mainstream public transport such as buses and the tube. The scheme is for those with long-term physical disabilities (including sight and breathing problems), not short-term situations such as broken legs etc. If you think you may qualify, please read the following guidance notes carefully to assist you with the completion of the application form. It is important that all relevant sections are completed fully to ensure that your application is dealt with quickly. All questions are compulsory unless otherwise specified.

A failure to complete the application form fully or to provide the required proofs may lead to your application form being returned to you. This will result in delays to the process and you will incur additional postage costs.

Please try as far as possible to keep your answers within the boxes provided as this makes it easier to process your application. The application form is 10 pages in total so please ensure you complete the whole of it.

Sections 1 - Personal/Contact details - Where there are boxes on the form please place a tick in the relevant box.

- Print all text in black ink and in capital letters.
- Enter your full name, address and postcode.
- Please only complete this form if you are a resident of the London Borough of Hounslow.
- It is helpful to give a mobile phone number and e-mail address as well as a land-line number to enable London Councils and Computer Cabs (who operate the scheme) to contact you if necessary.
- We will need your National Insurance number, which can be found on payslips or letters from the Pensions Service/Department for Work and Pensions/HM Revenues and Customs.

Section 2 – Automatic qualification - If you are in one of the categories **1-4** below you will qualify automatically for a Taxicard.

1. Higher Rate Mobility Component of the Disability Living Allowance - You must enclose a photocopy of your most recent award letter from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). Letters are sent to out on an annual basis. The letter must show your full name and address and state whether any award is indefinite or time limited. If you cannot produce a letter you should obtain a replacement from the DWP by calling 03457 123 456 (if born before 08/04/1948) or 0345 605 6055 (if born on or before that date). Please note that Disability Living Allowance is **not** the same as Attendance Allowance, which is awarded for personal care in the home rather than mobility.

2. A score of 8 points or more in the 'Moving Around' category of the Mobility Component of PIP (Personal Independence Payment) - You must enclose a photocopy of your entitlement letter from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), dated with the last 12 months. You must include every page and it must show your full name and address and state whether any award is ongoing or time limited. If you cannot produce the letter you should obtain a replacement from the DWP by calling 0345 850 3322.

3. War Pension Mobility Supplement or a lump sum in Categories 1-8 of the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS) - You must enclose a photocopy of your entitlement letter from Veterans UK (previously the Service Personnel and Veterans Agency). If you cannot produce the letter, you can obtain a replacement by calling 0800 169 2277 or www.veterans-uk.info. Please note that not all lump sum payments under AFCS mean that you qualify, and that you must also have been certified as having 'a permanent and substantial disability which causes inability to walk or very considerable difficulty walking'.

4. Registered Severely Visually Impaired or Blind - You must enclose a photocopy of your evidence of registration with Hounslow Council - Certificate of Visual Impairment (CVI) – or BD8 form. Evidence of registration may be obtained by calling Hounslow Council's Sensory Deprivation Team on (020) 8583 3100.

General - If you do not qualify via the criteria in section 2 you must complete the form as fully as possible. Sometimes a decision can be reached using just the form and supporting evidence, on other occasions we might request further information or require that you attend an assessment clinic. Please note that the London Borough of Hounslow uses independent mobility assessors, and does not charge for this service. If you need a clinic assessment you will be contacted directly to arrange one. They are held on a regular basis at the Civic Centre on Lampton Road, TW3 4DN. A wheelchair is available on request.

If your form is received without the required documentation it will be returned to you.

Section 3A – B Transport services - It will help to assess your eligibility if you indicate whether you use the different transport services listed. You will need to state whether you have a disabled or an older person's Freedom Pass. Please note that being a Freedom Pass holder does not bar you from qualifying for a Taxicard.

Section 3C – Disabled Persons Parking Badge (Blue Badge) - It will help to assess your eligibility if you indicate whether or not you have a Blue Badge. If you do have one you need to:

- indicate which local authority issued it
- provide the serial number
- enter the expiry date

We will then be able to cross reference this with our Blue Badge records.

Section 4 – Your health and mobility - Please supply as much detail as you can about your health and mobility difficulties and how they affect your ability to use public transport. You should also indicate whether you have these problems all the time or some of the time.

Sections 5 – Getting around outside - Please detail any problems you have in standing and walking outside of your home. If you are able to walk you should estimate as closely as you can how far you can walk. There is space to give further details if you wish regarding mobility difficulties you have outside of your home.

Section 6 – Activities of daily living - Please provide details of any problems you experience carrying out daily activities in your home, due to your physical condition.

Section 7 – Healthcare professional/social services officer - Please give details of your GP or other healthcare professional who knows about your mobility problems. We may contact them to get more information. If for any reason you do not have a healthcare professional we

can contact, but have a social worker who knows about your mobility difficulties you can supply their details instead.

Section 8 – Wheelchair/Mobility scooter use – Please complete if applicable.

Section 9 - Proof of identity and residence - You must provide one colour photograph (Section 10a) one proof of identity (Section 10b) and one proof of residence (Section 10c) from the lists on the application form. Your form cannot be processed without this and will be returned to you. Any photo must be in colour, less than 3 months old, and clearly show your face against a neutral background. The word 'current' for proof of address means for that tax year or the one currently in use.

Do not send original documents unless you are happy for us to keep them.

Section 10 – Communication – Please indicate if you require any assistance for if we need to contact you.

Section 11 – Ethnic Monitoring - Both London Councils and Hounslow Council consider all applications fairly, regardless of applicants' gender, race, colour or religion. By monitoring the ethnicity of our service users, we can identify whether we are providing equal access to all groups of people. All information will be kept confidential in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

Section 12 – Declaration - By signing this section you are admitting that you have read and understood the declarations as listed. London Councils may wish to contact you to consult you about your views, or provide information about other services or initiatives. Please indicate if you are happy for them to do this. All information will be kept confidential in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. Even if you say no, either ourselves or London Councils retain the right to write to you with any important information you will need to know about your membership of the scheme. You must sign and date the form or have it signed and dated by someone else on your behalf if you are unable to sign it yourself.

Applications will not be accepted if they are unsigned and will be returned to you.

Taxicard terms and conditions of use:

Please note you must not:

- Allow anyone else to make trips using your Taxicard.
- Use anyone else's Taxicard.
- Use the scheme to send packages (or have anything delivered) unless you accompany them.
- Make journeys to and from a hospital if you are entitled to free travel under the 'Healthcare Travel Costs Scheme' or any other similar scheme (check with the hospital first).
- Make journeys to and from work if you are receiving payment from the Employment Services Agency's assistance with taxi fares to work scheme.
- Allow the card to be swiped other than at the start or end of your journey.

Your journey must either start or finish within the area covered by the 31 London Boroughs and the City of Westminster or the City of London.

Any abuse of the rules of the scheme will not be tolerated and may result in your Taxicard being withdrawn.