



# Northumberland

## County Council

### **Blue Badge Guidance Notes**

**The quickest and easiest way to apply is online at <https://www.gov.uk/apply-blue-badge> you can upload your evidence and photograph when you make your application online.**

Only complete the paper application form if you are unable to apply online. Forms should be posted to: The Blue Badge Department, Northumberland County Council, Wansbeck Square, Ashington, Northumberland, NE63 9XL.

When completing the application form you may find these guidance notes helpful. Remember to supply the appropriate documents to confirm: your address, your identity and evidence of eligibility.

**We may have to return any incomplete applications and will be unable to issue your blue badge if you do not provide the evidence that proves you meet the eligibility criteria.**

**The fee for the issue of your Blue Badge is £10.00 and will only be taken once your application has been successful. Please do not send payment with your application form.**

**If your application is successful, we will contact you by telephone to request payment.**

You can either:

- Make a telephone payment when we call you, this is the quickest option and will ensure your badge is with you as soon as possible
- Post us a cheque payment made payable to Northumberland County Council, once we have contacted you to confirm your application has been successful. Please make sure you write your name, address and Blue Badge reference number on the back of your cheque.

If you have any queries about your application please call us on: 0345 600 6400 and select the Blue Badge option.

## Section 1 Information about you

This section asks for your personal details including; name, date of birth, National Insurance number, address, telephone number and email address.

There is a question for those who already have a Blue Badge which is due to expire shortly. The expiry date should be in the relatively near future, as two badges will not be valid for one applicant at the same time.

### Proof of Identity and Address

If the applicant is under the age of 16 or is not liable to pay Council Tax, photocopies of other proof of residency can be submitted, such as bank statements, Child Benefit award letter, Child Tax Credit award letter. They must be dated within the last six months.

Proof of identity will be in the form of a photocopy, please do not send original documents in the post:

- Birth or adoption certificate
- Marriage/Civil partnership/Dissolution or Divorce certificate
- Passport
- Driving licence (must be current)

One form of identity is required to be submitted with your application.

You are required to provide proof of your identity and address.

Proof of address can be in the form of a photocopy of your most recent Council Tax or utility bill bearing your name and address. They must be dated within the last six months. You will **not** have to submit your Council Tax or utility bill if you have ticked the appropriate box which gives your consent for us to find proof of your address by cross-checking Council Tax records.

### Photograph

The photograph is a key feature in reducing abuse of the scheme and enabling effective enforcement. We can refuse to issue a badge if we have reason to believe that the applicant is not who they claim to be.

Please enclose one passport-style photograph of the person applying for a Blue Badge.

The photograph you send us must be:

- a true likeness of the applicant
- colour
- taken within the last 6 months
- 45 mm high x 35 mm wide
- A close up of your head and shoulders
- Undamaged; not torn, creased or marked
- Taken with your eyes open (no sunglasses or tinted glasses, and no hair across the eyes)
- Of you facing forward, looking straight at the camera
- With a neutral expression and your mouth closed
- Taken of the full head, without any covering, unless it is worn for religious beliefs or medical reasons

Photographs of children five years and under must show a clear image that is a true likeness of the child. Babies under one year old do not need to have their eyes open.

Please ensure that the applicant's full name is on the back of the photograph.

## Section 2 – Applicants who qualify without further assessment

You may automatically qualify for a Blue Badge if you fall within one or more of the following categories:

- Are severely sight impaired (blind)
- Receive the higher rate of the mobility component for Disability Living Allowance
- Are in receipt of Personal Independence Payment (PIP) and have scored 8 or more points in the moving around section part of the mobility assessment
- Receive the War Pensioners' Mobility Supplement
- Receive a qualifying award under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme
- Terminally ill and hold a DS1500 report - we have a shortened form for applicants applying under this category
- Are in receipt of Personal Independence Payment (PIP) and Score 10 points in the specific descriptor E in the planning and following a journey part of the mobility assessment :

***“you cannot undertake any journey because it would cause overwhelming psychological distress”***

If you do not score in the above descriptor and do not meet any of the other criteria in this section you will not automatically qualify for a Blue Badge and you will need to be considered under the “subject to further assessment” criteria. You will need to complete the relevant parts of the application form, sections 3 and 4.

**If you qualify without further assessment in one of the categories above you will need to provide the appropriate documentation to prove you are eligible.**

### 2.1 Severely Sight Impaired (Blind)

If you are registered severely sight impaired (blind) with Northumberland County Council Social Services department, and you give us permission to, we will be able to check their records to confirm this.

If you are not on our register we will need a copy of your Certificate of Visual Impairment (CVI) signed by a Consultant Ophthalmologist.

The CVI was formerly known as the 'BD8' form and we can accept either of these as proof of your eligibility.

### 2.2 Higher Rate Mobility Component of the Disability Living Allowance

If you receive DLA - High Rate Mobility you will have received an award notice letter and you can submit this as evidence if it is dated within the last 12 months.

You will also receive an annual uprating letter, stating your entitlement and this letter can be used as proof if your award is more than 12 months old.

### **2.3 Personal Independence Payment (PIP) scoring 8 or more points – moving around section**

Personal Independence Payment scoring 8 or more points in the moving around section, you will have received an award notice letter showing this and you can submit this as evidence if it is dated within the last 12 months.

You will also receive an annual uprating letter, stating your entitlement and this letter can be used as proof if your award is more than 12 months old.

#### **2.3.1 Personal Independence Payment (PIP) – scoring 10 points in the specific points descriptor**

Personal Independence Payment (PIP) where you score 10 points in the following specific descriptor E in the planning and following a journey part of the mobility assessment:

***“you cannot undertake any journey because it would cause overwhelming psychological distress”***

You will have received an award notice letter showing this and you can submit this as evidence if it is dated within the last 12 months.

You will also receive an annual uprating letter, stating your entitlement and this letter can be used as proof if your award is more than 12 months old.

### **2.4 Benefit under the Armed Forces and Reserve Forces (Compensation Scheme)**

If you are in receipt of a lump sum benefit within tariff levels 1-8 (inclusive) and have been certified by the SPVA as having a permanent and substantial disability which causes inability to walk, or very considerable difficulty walking, you will have received an award letter from the Service Personnel and Veterans Agency.

Your award letter will confirm that you are in receipt of tariffs 1-8 under the Armed Forces and Reserved Forces (Compensation Scheme) Order 2011 and should also state that you have been certified as having a “permanent and substantial disability which causes inability to walk or very considerable difficulty in walking”.

We need a copy of this letter, however, if you have lost it you can get a copy by contacting the SPVA on their free-phone enquiry number: 0800 169 22 77.

### **2.5 War Pensioner’s Mobility Supplement (WPMS)**

If you are receiving the WPMS you will have received an award letter from the Service Personnel and Veterans Agency (SPVA) and you can submit this as evidence if it is dated within the last 12 months. You will also receive an annual uprating letter, stating your entitlement and this letter can be used as proof if your award is more than 12 months old.

If you have lost it you can get a copy by contacting the SPVA on their free-phone enquiry number: 0800 169 22 77.

### **Section 3 – Applicants with walking difficulties who are subject to further assessment**

This section is to be completed if you have a permanent and substantial disability or condition (e.g. a condition that is likely to last the duration of your life) which means you cannot walk or which means that you have very considerable difficulty walking.

### **Section 4 – Applicants with non-visible (hidden) conditions who don't automatically qualify under section 2**

This section is to be completed if you have medical conditions that are non-visible (hidden) or a disability causing you to severely struggle with journeys.

You will need to complete all questions in section 4. You will need to provide us with evidence from a healthcare professional confirming the conditions to support your application, the information you are able to provide will assist us when considering your application.

### **Section 5 – Disability that affects both arms**

This section is intended to cover disabled drivers who, because of a severe disability in both of their arms, are unable, or find it very difficult, to use on-street parking equipment.

You will only qualify under this criterion if you:

- Regularly drive an adapted or non-adapted vehicle; and
- Have a severe disability in both arms; and
- Are unable to operate, or have considerable difficulty operating, all or some types of parking meter or pay and display machine.

Please note that you will only qualify under this section if you meet ALL of the above.

If you drive an adapted vehicle please provide the insurance documents which contain statements to this effect. If you have had your adapted vehicle registered with the DVLA your driving licence will contain codes that refer to the modifications made to the vehicle. These can be found on the reverse of your photocard driving licence (under category 12, information codes) and in the 'codes' sections on the front of the counterpart driving licence.

The following driving licence codes are relevant to this criterion:

- 40 – adapted steering
- 79 – restricted to vehicles in conformity with the specifications stated in brackets

### **Section 6 – Applicants who are under the age of three**

This section is for children under the age of three who fall under either or both of the following criteria:

- Children under the age of three years who have a medical condition which means that they must always be accompanied by bulky medical equipment which cannot be carried around with the child without great difficulty; or

- Children under the age of three years who have a medical condition which means that they need to be kept near a vehicle at all times, either for treatment, or for transportation to a location where treatment can be performed.

A parent or guardian must apply on behalf of a child under the age of three.

Examples of bulky equipment referred to in the first bullet point are:

- **Ventilators** – drive air through a tube placed into the windpipe. They blow oxygen enriched air gently into the lungs through a tube that is passed through the mouth or nose, or via a tracheostomy.
- **Feed pumps** – deliver fluids via a nasogastric tube to the child’s stomach.
- **Suction machines** – are portable suction apparatus used for aspirating fluids and vomit from the mouth and airway by sucking the material through a catheter into a bottle using a vacuum pump (piston, diaphragm, or rotary vane), bacterial filter, vacuum gauge, trap for moisture (or any debris accidentally drawn into the mechanism), a reservoir for the aspirated material, and a suction catheter or nozzle.
- **Parenteral equipment** – services intravenous lines providing nutrition if a child is unable to take food or fluids through his or her mouth. The line can also be used for injecting medication.
- **Syringe drivers** - are used to deliver medication by intravenous injection (e.g. antibiotics), or by subcutaneous injection (e.g. insulin to control diabetes) this can be given by using a small pump known as a syringe driver. A syringe is attached to the syringe driver and the drug is released through a small needle.
- **Oxygen administration equipment** – consists of a tank and regulator with supply equipment for oxygen; mask or nasal prongs and tubing.
- **Continuous oxygen saturation monitoring equipment** – involves a device usually strapped to the child’s hand or foot. This shines light through the skin and monitors the amount of oxygen in the blood. It is used to monitor where a child may need access to oxygen.
- **Casts and associated medical equipment for the correction of hip dysplasia** – between birth and six months of age, a brace called a Pavlik Harness is often used to hold baby’s hips in position. The Pavlik harness is made from canvas with straps, Velcro and buckles. From six months and over a child is often placed in a Spica cast after surgery. A Spica cast can be either plaster or fibreglass and will encase the child from the chest down to cover one leg or both. In both cases the apparatus is likely to be deployed for a period of up to three months per hip.

Examples of highly unstable medical conditions that mean children who have them may need quick access to transport to hospital or home are:

- Tracheostomies;
- Severe epilepsy/fitting;
- Highly unstable diabetes; and
- Terminal illness that prevent children from spending any more than brief moments outside and who need a quick route home.

Please note that these lists are not exhaustive.

Please note that if you are issued with a Blue Badge, it must be returned to us on expiry or if it is no longer needed because the condition under which it was issued no longer applies.

## Section 7 Treatments, medication, associated professionals and documents

You will need to provide full details of any treatment you have had (or are having), any medication you are currently on and any documents you have from a medical professional to support your application.

The more information you provide along with supporting documents will assist us when considering your application.

If you do not provide all the supporting information we will need to contact you to ask you to supply this information, this could delay the processing of your application.

## Section 8 Organisational Blue Badges

This section is to be completed if you are representing an organisation applying for an organisation Blue Badge.

An organisational badge may be issued to organisations whose responsibility includes the care and transportation of disabled people and/or have hidden conditions and/or who would themselves meet the eligibility criteria for a badge should they apply individually. Eligible persons are defined as a person who is over the age of two years old and:

- Receives Higher Rate Mobility Component of the Disability Living Allowance; or
- Is registered severely sight impaired (blind); or
- Receives a War Pensioner's Mobility Supplement; or
- Receives a lump sum benefit under the Armed Forces and Reserved Forces (Compensation) Scheme within tariff levels 1-8 (inclusive) and has been assessed and certified as having a permanent and substantial disability which causes inability to walk or very considerable difficulty in walking; or
- Drives a vehicle regularly, has a severe disability in both arms and is unable to operate, or has considerable difficulty operating, all or some types of parking meter; or
- Has a permanent and substantial disability which causes inability to walk or very considerable difficulty walking
- Has a hidden (non-visible) condition

In addition, eligibility covers children under the age three who fall within either or both of the following descriptions:

- A child who, on account of a condition, must always be accompanied by bulky medical equipment which cannot be carried around with the child without great difficulty;
- A child who, on account of a medical condition, must always be kept near a motor vehicle so that, if necessary, treatment for that condition can be given in the vehicle or the child can be taken quickly in the vehicle to a place where such treatment can be given.

Organisational badges will therefore only be issued to an organisation which both:

- Cares for and transports people who are disabled/and or have a hidden condition who would meet one or more of the eligibility criteria for an individual Blue Badge; and
- Has a clear need for an organisation badge rather than using the personal Blue Badges of the people its transporting

In all circumstances, badges will be supplied to organisations or departments (e.g. Social Services Department) rather than to individual staff members.

All employees of the organisation who will be using the badge must be reminded that they must only use the badge for the purpose of transporting disabled people in their care who would meet one or more of the eligibility criteria for a badge. They must be reminded that if they use the badge to take advantage of the concessions when there are no passengers in the vehicle who are eligible for a badge they will face a fine of up to £1000 and other action may be taken.

Organisational Badges can optionally hold a digital image of the organisation's name/logo. These images can be in colour or black and white and should be submitted as a .JPG. The maximum size of the image should be 200kb.

The dimensions of the logo/image will be 274 pixels (wide) x 354 pixels (high) @ 200 dpi this equates to 1.37 inches wide by 1.77 inches high or 35mm wide by 45mm high.

If no logo image is supplied, a European Union flag will be printed in its place.



If you are applying for an organisational badge you will need to include:

A declaration on organisational letterhead confirming that the organisation does care for disabled people, who would meet one or more of the criteria, and that they will only be using the badge solely for the purpose of transporting those people.

If any of your vehicles are licensed under the Disabled Passenger Vehicle (DPV) taxation class, you must attach a copy of the tax disc(s).

## **Section 9 Declarations and signatures**

Please ensure you sign **one** of the three sections that is appropriate to you

- Applying for yourself
- Applying on behalf of somebody else
- Organisations

**If you need this information in Large Print, Braille, Audio, or in another format or language please contact us:**

**Telephone 0345 600 6400**

**Email [bluebadges@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:bluebadges@northumberland.gov.uk)**