Blue Badge Guidance Notes

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.

When your form is complete or if you require assistance to make an application, you can call into one of our customer information centres listed below, where we can help complete your form, take your photograph for free, photocopy your evidence for you and forward it to the Blue Badge Team on your behalf.

Alternatively, you can post your completed form, evidence and photograph to:
The Blue Badge Team, Northumberland County Council, Wansbeck Square, Ashington, Northumberland, NE63 9XL

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

You can either:
- Make a telephone payment when we call you.
- Post us a cheque payment made payable to Northumberland County Council, once we have contacted you to confirm your application has been successful
- Call into one of the Information Centres and make a payment once we have contacted you to confirm your application has been successful:

Customer Information Centres
Alnwick - Greenwell Lane, Alnwick, NE66 1HB
Ashington - Wansbeck Square, Ashington, NE63 9XL
Bedlington – Bedlington Library, Glebe Road, Bedlington, NE22 6JX
Berwick – Walkergate Building, Walkergate, Berwick-upon-Tweed, TD15 1DB
Blyth – Blyth Library, Bridge Street, Blyth, NE24 2DJ
Cramlington – Concordia, Cramlington, NE23 6YB
Hexham – Queen’s Hall, Beaumont Street, Hexham, NE46 3LS
Morpeth – Royal Sovereign House, Manchester Street, Morpeth, NE61 1AF
Seaton Delaval – Library, Astley High School, Elsdon Avenue, Seaton Delaval, NE25 0BW

If you have any queries about your application please call us on: 0345 600 6400
Section 1 – Information about you
All applicants should complete this section.

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

All fields should be filled in.

If you are applying for a Blue Badge on behalf of someone under the age of 16, you will need to provide their Child Registration Number which can be found on Child Benefit documentation.

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
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 in Section 1, which gives your consent for us to find proof of your address by cross-checking Council Tax records.

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 of:
- your birth/adoption certificate
- marriage/divorce certificate
- valid driving licence
- passport

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

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 name is on the back of the photograph and that you complete Section 7.2 of the application form to confirm that the photograph is a true likeness.

Section 2 – Applicants who qualify without further assessment
People who may be issued with a badge without further assessment are those who are more than two years old and fall within one or more of the following descriptions:
- Terminally ill and hold a DS1500 report
- Receive the Higher Rate Mobility Component of the Disability Living Allowance (HRMCDLA) and are in receipt of Personal Independence Payment (PIP) and have scored 8 or more points in the moving around section
- Registered severely sight impaired (blind)
- Receive a War Pensioner Mobility Supplement (WPMS)
- Awarded a lump sum benefit at tariffs 1-8 of the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme and certified as having a permanent and substantial disability which causes inability to walk or very considerable difficulty walking.

You will need to provide the appropriate documentation to prove you are eligible.

Evidence

2.1 Terminally ill and hold a DS1500
Under certain circumstances, if you have a terminal illness you may be able to claim for certain benefits under ‘special rules’. A short medical report about the ill person’s condition must be sent in with the application form. This report is called DS1500. The ill person or their representative should ask their doctor or specialist for a DS1500 report. The DS1500 report will be based upon what is currently known about the ill person’s condition. It is not necessary to see the doctor to obtain the report, a nurse or doctor’s receptionist can be asked to arrange for the report to be issued. Alternatively please provide a photocopy of a covering letter from a healthcare professional involved in your care. A healthcare professional is considered to be someone who is involved in your care and treatment that is not a relative. In most cases this will be a Consultant, MacMillan Nurse, Physiotherapist, Care Manager or Social Worker. Please note this list is not exhaustive. If you are applying under this criteria you DO NOT need to provide us with a photograph.
2.2 Higher Rate Mobility Component of the Disability Living Allowance/PIP (scoring 8 or more points – moving around section)

If you receive DLA - High Rate Mobility or Personal Independence Payment (scoring 8 or more points in the moving around section) 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 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.

2.4 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

2.5 Benefit under the Armed Forces and Reserve Forces (Compensation Scheme)

If you are in receipt of a lump sum benefit within tariff levels1-8 (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
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.

Medical conditions such as autism, psychological/behavioural problems, asthma, Crohn’s disease/incontinent conditions and Myalgic Encephalomyelitis (M.E.) are not in themselves a qualification for a badge. People with these conditions may be eligible under this criterion, but only if they are unable to walk or have very considerable difficulty walking, in addition to their condition.

You must firstly indicate on the application form which of the medical conditions or disabilities (3.1) and/or joint conditions or disabilities (3.2) you have.

Evidence

3.1/3.2 Medical and/or Joint conditions or disabilities
You will need to provide us with a document from a healthcare professional confirming the medical and/or joint conditions or disabilities that you have stated on the application form.
A healthcare professional is considered to be someone who is involved in your care and treatment that is not a relative. In most cases this will be a Consultant, Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist, Optometrist, Care Manager or Social Worker. Please note this list is not exhaustive.
You may attend a clinic for your condition or disability, if so, a copy of a recent clinic letter would be suitable evidence.
If you do ask a healthcare professional to write you a letter to support your application they may charge you a fee to provide this.

Section 3a – Mobility Assessment

You should only complete this section if you have any of the Medical and/or Joint condition or disability listed in Section 3.

Please do not complete this section if you
• Answered yes to any of the questions in Section 2.
• Are applying because you have a disability in both arms
• Are applying for a child under the age of 3
• Are applying for an Organisational Blue Badge

In the Mobility Assessment section (3a) of the application you are asked to tell us about your walking ability, the walking aids you use, how far you can walk before you feel severe discomfort, and the way in which you walk.

Your condition (3a.1)
In this section we need you tell us how long your condition is likely to last, whether it is over 12 months or not. If you don’t know how long your condition is likely to last, please tell us this.
**General Walking Ability (3a.2)**
In this section there are a range of statements about general walking ability. You must tick the statement that best describes your own general walking ability. If you use walking aids, please describe your general walking ability with the use of these aids. Please tick only **ONE** of the statements listed.

**Walking aids (3a.3)**
This section asks for you to describe the type of walking aids that you use. Please tick only **ONE** of the walking aids listed. If you use more than one walking aid please tick the **ONE** you most frequently use.

**How far can you walk? (3a.4)**
This section asks you to tell us how far you estimate you are able to walk before you feel severe discomfort.

If you can walk at all, we need you to give an estimate of the maximum distance you can walk before you feel severe discomfort, and the time that it takes you to walk this distance.

It can be difficult to accurately work out the distance you can walk, but there are several things that can help you:
- Ask someone to walk with you and pace the distance that you walk and record the time that it took you to walk that distance.
- The average adult step is just under one metre. For example, if the person walking with you took 100 steps, you would have walked 90 metres.
- A size 9 shoe is about a third of a metre
- The average double-decker bus is about 11 metres long
- A full sized football pitch is about 100 metres long.

**Don’t forget to time how long it takes you to walk as far as you can before you feel severe discomfort.**

You may have had a mobility assessment in the last 12 months which covered your walking ability and you can give details of this in section 7a (any further information). This information could be very useful to us.

**The way in which you walk (3a.5)**
In this section you need to describe the way in which you walk.

There are a range of statements to describe the way in which you walk, please tick the statement that best describes you. Please tick only **ONE** of the statements listed.
Section 4 – Applicants with a disability in 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

Evidence

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<th>Disability in both arms</th>
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<td></td>
<td>You will need to provide us with a letter from a healthcare professional confirming your disability or medical condition.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>If you drive an adapted vehicle, please do not forget to include a copy of your insurance documents, or your driving licence, confirming the adaptations.</td>
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Section 5 – 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.

**Evidence**

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<th>5</th>
<th><strong>Under the age of three</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>You will need to provide us with a letter from a healthcare professional involved in your child’s treatment (for example your paediatrician) giving details of confirming your child’s medical condition and the type of medical equipment they need.</td>
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Section 6– 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 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

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 disabled people who would meet one or more of the eligibility criteria for an individual Blue Badge; and
- Has a clear need for an organisational 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.

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.
Evidence

6 Organisational Blue Badges
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 7– Further information, declarations and signatures

This section must be completed by ALL applicants.

Further Information (7.1)
Please complete this if there is anything else you can add that you think is relevant in support of your application.

You may have had a mobility assessment in the last 12 months which covered your walking ability and you can give details of this in section 7a (any further information). This information could be very useful to us.

Mandatory declarations (7.2)
This section contains the mandatory declarations that you must answer about the information you have provided, and about the application process.

Please read each statement and place a tick in each white box to indicate that you have read, understand and agree with each of the declarations.

Not ticking one of these boxes and signing the declaration may mean we are unable to issue you with a Blue Badge.

Optional declarations (7.3)
This section contains optional declarations about the information you have provided and the application process.

Please carefully read and tick the following optional declarations that you consent to.

Ticking these boxes will help improve the service we can offer you.
Checklist of documents (7.4)
Please ensure that you have enclosed all of the relevant documents for the sections of this application form that you have completed.
We have provided a checklist below to help remind you of what you need to enclose.
We will not be able to progress your application until we receive the relevant documents.

Your signature (7.5)
Your signatures are required against the mandatory declarations (7.2) and the optional declarations (7.3) you have made.
We will not be able to progress your application if you have not signed your application.

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

Telephone 0345 600 6400
Fax 01670 620098
Text phone 01670 542999
Text Relay 18001 0345 600 6400
Email bluebadges@northumberland.gov.uk

When you have completed your form and gathered your evidence please return it to your nearest Customer Information Centre or post to:
The Blue Badge Team
Northumberland County Council
Wansbeck Square
Ashington
Northumberland
NE63 9XL

If you have any queries about your application please call us on: 0345 600 6400