

**An appointment is required before you attend the Council Offices:-**

Weymouth: Monday 09:00 to 13:00 and 14:00 to 16:00

South Walks House, Dorchester: Friday 09:00 to 13:00 and 14:00 to 16:00

Please contact: The Licensing Team via 01305 838028 to make an appointment.

All forms (less the DBS (formerly known as CRB)) and conditions of licence are available at [www.dorsetforyou.com](http://www.dorsetforyou.com)

**Hackney / Private Hire**

The basic difference between hackney carriages and private hire is that hackney carriages are permitted to work from the various ranks in the town and can also be hailed in the street. Private hire vehicles are only available by prior booking through a private hire office and are not allowed to be hailed in the street. In order to help to distinguish between the two types of vehicle hackney carriages have yellow licence plates to the rear of their vehicles and private hire have blue licence plates.

**DRIVER LICENCES**

Any person wishing to drive a licensed hackney carriage or private hire vehicle must first obtain the relevant licence to drive such vehicle(s) from the Council. These licences are issued by virtue of the powers vested in the Council by Part 2 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976. Prior to being granted a licence the applicant is required to initially:-

**(a) Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check (previously known as CRB)**

We will arrange for an online DBS Application which we advise you of using an email address. Please check your email inbox and respond to any instructions. You will register and then indicate which documents you will be providing when they are brought in for verification with a licensing officer.

If you already have an Enhanced CRB/DBS check with another organisation and it is less than 6 months old, we may be able to accept it here.

Whilst there are statutory guidelines laid down as to the “rehabilitation periods” of various offences the Council reserves the right to refuse an applicant if they have a long / persistent history of offending (depending on the type of offence committed). An amendment to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act in 2002 enables us to consider spent convictions and will show all convictions as well as cautions, reprimands and warnings held at national level.

Once licensed a check will be required every three (3) years.

**(b) Completion of the Safeguarding Training**

This will be undertaken in the first year of your licence, details will be sent to you after you have been Licenced.

**(c) Check of DVLA Driving Licence**

As of 8<sup>th</sup> June 2015 the paper counterpart to the photocard driving licence will no longer be issued by DVLA.

Any new [penalty points](#) (endorsements) will only be recorded electronically, and will not be printed or written on either photocard licences or paper driving licences.

DVLA's free [View Driving Licence service](#) lets you see what details are on your licence, including what vehicles you can drive and any penalty points you may have.

**ALL new drivers and when a driver renews a licence** they will be required to ensure they bring with them to their appointment the following which will enable licensing to check their driving licence details directly with DVLA:-

- *Photocard or old style paper driving licence*
- *National Insurance number*
- *Postcode*
- *Utility bill or bank statement for proof of address*

*OR A code (which is only valid for 72 hours) obtained via [www.gov.uk/government/news/driving-licence-changes](http://www.gov.uk/government/news/driving-licence-changes)*

If the applicant is unable to provide the above details they will be required to complete a mandate and pay £6.75 which will then enable us to check their driving licence details with DVLA.

Applicants must have held a FULL UK/EU motor car driving licence for at least 12 months

**Please make an appointment to submit these forms, when the below additional forms and information will then be given to you. N.B. These checks can take approximately 3 – 8 weeks to complete.**

**Additional requirements are:-**

**(d) Driving Ability Assessment**

Undertake a driving ability assessment. These tests are carried out by independent driving instructors via Dorset County Council (Tel: 01305 778704). The instructor will test the applicant's correct use of brakes, gears, mirrors, etc and will assess whether their overall driving ability / standard is acceptable.

### **(e) Medical Examination (Medical Forms held by this office)**

Undertake a full medical examination to Group 2 Vocational medical standards (which is the same for coach and lorry drivers, etc). A certificate of fitness **must be completed by your own GP or a GP from the same surgery** with access to your medical records.

This Certificate needs to be completed on:-

- (a) First application for a licence;
- (b) Application for renewal more than 12 months after expiry of the previous licence;
- (c) Every 8 years after first application up to age 45, at age 45, every 5 years up to the age of 65, at age 65 and every year thereafter;
- (d) At other times when required / requested e.g. after a relevant medical operation or prolonged period of ill health.

The DVLA website contains useful information and medical guidelines on fitness to drive, the website address is [www.dvla.gov.uk](http://www.dvla.gov.uk).

### **(f) Knowledge Test**

Undertake a written knowledge test consisting of 40 multiple choice questions in respect of the Borough (Weymouth and Portland) and of the Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Conditions Booklet (copy to be supplied in advance of the Knowledge Test). Some areas covered include:

- (i) Locations of roads (i.e. in Broadwey, Preston, Southill);
- (ii) Locations of caravan sites and holiday parks;
- (iii) Whereabouts of public houses, private and registered clubs;
- (iv) Locations of churches, hospitals, public offices, schools, etc.
- (v) Conditions from the Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Conditions Booklet.

N.B. The areas of Chickerell, Granby Industrial Estate and the Littlesea Estate are NOT within Weymouth and Portland's area.

The applicant is expected to get a minimum of 30 correct in order to pass (75%). Applicants who are unsuccessful are given the opportunity to be re-tested and there is no restriction on the number of re-tests. However, each re-test is charged at the same rate as for the first attempt.

### **(g) Completed application form**

On completion of the above requirements, submit the relevant completed application form.

### **(h) Photograph**

Produce one (1) passport style coloured photograph.

### **(i) Immigration Check**

You must produce documents for right to a licence check; more details are available in the driver pack or online.

## **VEHICLE LICENCES**

The main criteria for the licensing of a hackney carriage/private hire vehicles is as follows:

### **(a) Age of Vehicle**

The vehicle must be less than six (8) years old on initial licensing including purpose built hackney carriages). There are occasional exemptions for limousines, etc and wheelchair accessible vehicles.

### **(b) MOT Certificates / Vehicle Inspections**

- i) ALL new vehicles for licensing require a FULL inspection carried out on initial application, regardless of age or MOT date (if applicable – see (ii) and (iii) below) at a VOSA registered garage of their choice (forms available on request from Licensing).
- ii) The law requires that licensed Hackney Carriage vehicles have an MOT when they are 12 months old and then annually. (RTA 1988, S47(3)).
- iii) Private hire vehicles which are under 3 years old are required to have a FULL inspection annually until 3 years old, when an MOT will be required as per normal VOSA requirements.
- iv) Vehicles which then become older than six (6) / eight (8) years whilst licensed then require a FULL Vehicle Inspection Certificate EVERY six (6) months in addition to an annual MOT.

### **(c) Passenger Capacity**

The minimum number of passengers for which a vehicle will be licensed is four (4) and the maximum number is eight (8). Vehicles with a passenger capacity above eight (8) are classified as PSV and cannot be licensed as either hackney or private hire vehicles.

Where one of the seats in the vehicle will be used for three passengers it must measure no less than 49.5 inches (1.257m) across (between the nearest interior fittings on either side).

### **(d) Vehicle Exterior**

There are currently no restrictions on the colour of a vehicle but the paintwork must be clean and in good condition.

### **(e) Vehicle Interior**

The interior must be clean and in good condition which will be subject to inspection and safety checks by an appointed Officer of the Council prior to licensing or re-licensing. All vehicles must be provided with a fire extinguisher and a first aid kit is recommended for personal use.

### **(f) Roof Signs**

Roof signs are exclusive to hackney carriage vehicles. Lettering on the sign should state "TAXI" and, if no separate sign is illuminated in the windscreen, "FOR HIRE". Lettering

must be no less than 1½ inches (3.81cm) in height and the sign must light up whenever the vehicle is available for hire.

**(g) Meters**

Hackney carriages must be fitted with a taximeter set to Weymouth and Portland Borough Council's Tariffs, private hire vehicles are not obliged to do so, although many do with company rates set therein. All meters will be installed and checked prior to licensing by the Council's appointed Meter Agents and, if satisfactory, will be sealed as accurate.

**Operator Licences**

A private hire vehicle can only be dispatched to a customer by a private hire operator. This is a person who holds an operators licence under Section 55 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 and is usually the owner of the company. If you wish to work for yourself, you will require an operator's licence.

