

Supported Travel Team Eligibility Criteria

Blue Badge

The following information explains the eligibility criteria for issue of a Blue Badge, as outlined by the Department for Transport guidance and legislation. The Blue Badge scheme is available to eligible disabled people irrespective of whether they travel in a vehicle as a driver or passenger.

Automatic Criteria – Eligible Without Further Assessment

(a) A person who is Blind (not partially sighted)

Evidence required: Certificate of Vision Impairment (CVI) signed by a Consultant Ophthalmologist, BD8 form or registration with Local Authority.

(b) In receipt of the Higher Rate Mobility Component of Disability Living Allowance (DLA)

Evidence required: Award letter from Department for Work and Pensions stating that you receive the higher rate mobility component of Disability Living Allowance. This must be dated within last 12 months. If you do not have an award letter dated within the last 12 months you can get one from the Department for Works and Pensions on 0800 121 4600.

(c) People who score 8 points or more under the ‘Moving Around’ section of Personal Independence Payments (PIP)

Evidence required: Complete award letter (all pages) from Department for Work and Pensions stating that you receive 8 points or more under the ‘Moving Around’ section of Personal Independence Payments. This must be dated within the last 12 months and provide the award end date. If you do not have an award letter dated within the last 12 months you can get one from the Department for Works and Pensions on 0800 121 4433.

(d) People who have been awarded Descriptor “E” (You cannot undertake any journey because it would cause overwhelming psychological distress) under the Planning & Following a Journey section of Personal Independence Payments (PIP).

Please note that only descriptor “E” under Planning and Following a Journey is automatic qualification for the Blue Badge under this criterion

Evidence required: Complete award letter (all pages) from Department for Work and Pensions stating that you receive Descriptor “E” (10 points) under the ‘Planning & Following a Journey’ section of Personal Independence Payments. This must be dated within the last 12 months and provide the award end date. If you do not have an award letter dated within the last 12 months you can get one from the Department for Works and Pensions on 0800 121 4433.

Note: People applying under (b) (c) or (d) whose award is for a limited period of time (i.e. not indefinite or ongoing) will only be eligible for the scheme for that period if less than 3 years.

(e) In receipt of the War Pensioner's Mobility Supplement.

Evidence required: Award letter from Service Personnel and Veterans Agency (SPVA) stating that you receive the War Pensioners Mobility Supplement. A letter can be ordered from the SPVA on 0800 169 2277.

(f) A person who has been awarded a lump sum benefit at tariffs 1-8 of the Armed Forces and Reserve Forces (Compensation) Scheme and has certification of having a permanent and substantial disability which causes inability to walk or very considerable difficulty in walking.

Evidence required: Award letter from the SPVA confirming the level of your award and which also states that you have been certified as having a "permanent and substantial disability which causes inability to walk or very considerable difficulty in walking". A letter can be ordered from the SPVA on 0800 169 2277.

Assessed Eligibility Subject to Further Assessment

Walking Difficulties

If you have a disability, or have suffered an injury, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on your ability to walk, but you are not in receipt of any of the above benefits, we can assess your eligibility for the scheme using the following guidance. People with temporary disabilities e.g. a broken leg, will not qualify.

To meet this criterion, you need to have a permanent and substantial disability that means you cannot walk or which makes walking very difficult. This means that you experience great difficulty walking and that the distance you can walk is significantly limited. Other factors are also considered such as walking speed, gait, balance, pain and breathlessness. The carrying of bags or parcels is not considered.

The following statements outline the levels of disability we would expect to see in someone who qualifies for a Blue Badge:

1) The applicant cannot walk

- Being unable to walk means that they cannot take a single step.
- The applicant needs to show that, because of their permanent and substantial disability, they cannot put one foot in front of the other.
- Walking involves always having one foot on the ground.

2) The applicant has very considerable difficulty in walking

The applicant will need to show that, as a result of their permanent and substantial disability, they are unable to walk very far without experiencing severe difficulty. Several factors may be relevant to determining this, as follows:

- **Excessive pain** experienced when walking, or as a consequence of the effort of walking.
- Any **breathlessness** reported by the applicant when walking, or as a consequence of the effort of walking. Respiratory rates will be observed during a mobility assessment.
- The **distance** an applicant is able to walk without excessive pain or breathlessness.
- The **speed** at which the applicant is able to walk.
- The **length of time** that the applicant is able to walk for.

- The **manner** in which the applicant walks. The applicant's posture, rhythm, coordination, balance and stride are all considered in terms of the effect they have on their ability to walk.
- An applicant's use of **walking aids**. The fact that a walking aid is or is not used may be relevant to the decision but does not alone determine whether or not a Blue Badge is issued.
- The applicant's **outdoor walking ability**. In this we consider the person's ability to negotiate different types of pavement or road, including any degree of incline or decline.

3) The effort of walking presents a danger to the applicant's life, or would be likely to lead to a serious deterioration in their health.

The applicant needs to show that they should not walk very far because of the danger to their health. This element is intended for people with serious chest, lung or heart conditions who may be physically able to walk normally. The serious deterioration does not need to be permanent, but it should require medical intervention for them to recover. They will need to show that any danger to their health is a direct result of the effort required to walk. People with epilepsy will need to show that any fits were brought about by the effort required to walk.

Severe Disability in Both Arms

If you drive regularly, 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, we can assess your eligibility using the following guidance. People with temporary disabilities e.g. broken arms, will not qualify.

If applying under this criterion you will need to meet and provide evidence of all of the following:

- Regularly drives an adapted or non-adapted motor vehicle, **and**;
- Has a severe disability in both arms, **and**;
- Is unable to operate, or has considerable difficulty in operating, all or some types of parking meter.

Most drivers with disabilities in both arms drive an adapted vehicle and should be able to provide insurance documents which contain statements to this effect. In addition, applicants who have registered their adapted vehicle with the DVLA will be able to present their driving licence which will contain codes that refer to the modifications made to the vehicle. Where the applicant does not have an adapted vehicle, only drivers with the most severe disabilities in both of their arms (i.e. who cannot operate a parking meter) should be considered eligible. This may cover disabled people with for example: a limb reduction deficiency of both arms; bilateral upper limb amputation; muscular dystrophy; spinal cord injury; motor neurone disease; or a condition of comparable severity.

Evidence required: Medical evidence such as medical report, or letter from GP or consultant **AND**

Evidence required: Copy of valid car insurance documentation, plus a copy of your driving licence containing the codes verifying that you drive an adapted vehicle (where relevant).

Children Under 3 Years of Age

Children under 3 years of age are likely to qualify if they meet either or both of the following:

- 1) On account of their condition, the child must always be accompanied by bulky medical equipment which cannot be carried around with the child without great difficulty; **and/or**
- 2) On account of their condition, the child 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 to a place where such treatment can be given.

Examples of children under 3 years of age likely to qualify under point (1) are those who need to be accompanied at all times by any of the following types of equipment:

- Ventilators
- Suction machines
- Feed pumps
- Parenteral equipment
- Syringe drivers
- Oxygen administration equipment or continuous oxygen saturation monitoring equipment
- Casts and associated medical equipment for the correction of hip dysplasia

Examples of children under 3 years of age likely to qualify under point (2) are set out below (this list is not designed to be exhaustive):

- Children with tracheotomies;
- Children with severe epilepsy/fitting;
- Children with highly unstable diabetes;
- Terminally ill children who can only access brief moments of outside life and need a quick route home.

Badges issued to children under 3 years of age will expire on the day after the child's third birthday.

Invisible (Hidden) Disabilities

If you are not in receipt of Personal Independence Payment (PIP) Descriptor "E" under Planning & Following a Journey (You cannot undertake any journey because it would cause overwhelming psychological distress) and you experience very considerable difficulty whilst walking, which may include very considerable psychological distress or be at risk of serious harm when walking; or pose, when walking, a risk of serious harm to any other person the OT/expert assessor can assess your eligibility for the Blue Badge scheme.

In the context of disabilities that are predominantly "non-physical" in nature, a risk of serious harm to self/others could manifest as one or more of the following behaviours:

- Becoming physically aggressive towards others, possibly without intent or awareness of the impact their actions may have;
- Refusing to walk altogether, dropping to the floor or becoming a dead-weight;
- Wandering off or running away, possibly without awareness of surroundings or their associated risks (e.g. nearby roads, car park environments);
- Disobeying, ignoring and/or being unaware of clear instructions;

- Experiencing very severe or overwhelming anxiety (e.g. through hypervigilance);
- Experiencing an overwhelming sense of fear of public/open/busy spaces;
- Experiencing serious harm or causing harm to others;
- Avoiding some/all types of journeys due to the kinds of experiences listed above.

(please note that this list is not exhaustive and is for guidance only)

The applicant would need to:

- Explain in their own words how their disability affects them whilst walking;
- Respond to closed experiential questions about how their disability affects them whilst walking;
- Identify any coping strategies they use, and how effectively these work in practice;
- Document any treatment or medication they receive to help them manage their condition;
- Identify the names and contact details of any health or social care practitioners involved in their diagnosis and ongoing treatment;
- Provide any relevant supporting evidence, for example such as: diagnosis letters, care plans, patient summaries, education health and care plans (EHC) or disability benefits;
- Explain how they experience very severe or overwhelming anxiety (e.g. through hypervigilance);
- Explain how they experience an overwhelming sense of fear of public/open/busy spaces;
- Explain why they avoid some/all types of journeys due to the kinds of experiences listed above.