

Guidance Notes for Disability-Related Bus Pass Applicants

Bus Pass Conditions

A disability-related concessionary bus pass is available to residents:

- whose sole or principal residence is in Gloucestershire,
- who are over the age of 5 and
- who qualify for the scheme as set out below.

This bus pass allows you free bus travel on Mondays to Fridays between 9.30am and 11pm and at any at weekends and on Bank Holidays. Early travel before 9.30am is also available on some infrequent routes. Further details are available:

- Online www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/buspasses
- By calling 01452 426265
- By writing to the Blue Badge & Concessionary Bus Pass Team at:
Gloucestershire County Council, Block 1, 1st Floor, Shire Hall, Gloucester, GL1 2TP.

The pass will entitle you to free off-peak travel anywhere in England; however you will need to check with the relevant local authority for their conditions of travel as these will differ. The bus pass is not valid for journeys wholly within Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland. However it is valid on direct buses between Gloucestershire and Chepstow or Monmouth, and also between Chepstow and Bristol.

Most bus passes will be issued for the duration of your disability, subject to a minimum period of one year. Where evidence of a permanent disability is provided the pass will be issued for up to five years, or the expiry date of your automatic eligibility proof as described below. Unless stated otherwise, evidence should be no more than one year old.

Eligibility

Automatic proof of disability

To be eligible for a disability related bus pass one of the following proofs must be provided:

- A valid Blue Badge. You will need to provide your registration number so that we can check this with our records.
- In receipt of Higher Rate Mobility Component of Disability Living Allowance or in receipt of Personal Independence Payment (PIP), with a score of at least eight points on account of inability to walk, or to communicate orally without support.
- In receipt of War Pensioner's Mobility Supplement
- A letter from the Department of Transport stating that under Part III of the Road Traffic Act 1988, you have been refused or had your licence withdrawn on medical grounds pursuant to section 92 of that Act. Or a letter from a medical specialist stating that an application for a driving licence would be refused on these grounds. This does not apply if your licence was withdrawn or refused due to the persistent misuse of drink or drugs.
- Certificate of Vision Impairment signed by a Consultant Ophthalmologist



D1-D8 Forms for medical assessment of your disability

- If you **cannot** provide one of the Automatic Acceptance Proofs listed above a medical assessment must be provided instead. A medical assessment should be carried out by your specialist using one of the Gloucestershire County Council's **forms D1 to D8**. We will not accept an assessment from your GP. Please see the *Application Form* for more details.
- Ask your consultant or health care specialist to complete and sign the relevant form and then return it to you. The **forms D1 to D8** are included within *Your Free Bus Travel Pack*.

Proof of address

To be eligible for a disability-related bus pass you must provide **one** of the proofs listed in the *Application Form*. The address provided must be your sole or principal residence and be in the county of Gloucestershire.

Temporary Residence

A concessionary bus pass may be issued for a period of one year with no automatic renewal if you can demonstrate your primary residence is within Gloucestershire, for example attending a specialist school or resident at a care home. After one year you can renew your pass subject to satisfying all other criteria. However if you move away from Gloucestershire you must return your concessionary bus pass to the Concessionary Bus Pass team. You can apply for a new pass from the local authority in which you take up residence.

Companion pass

If you are unable to travel alone due to your disability you may be eligible for a companion bus pass. This will allow you to be accompanied by any person over 16 years of age, free of charge, within Gloucestershire. Whilst you are entitled to free travel anywhere in England within permitted off-peak times, your companion will only be entitled to free travel on journeys that start in Gloucestershire. If you travel outside of the Gloucestershire county border your companion may have to pay for their own travel. To qualify for this you need to ask your doctor to complete the **C1 form** - Application for Concessionary Companion Pass. Eligibility is considered in terms of the severity of disability and not the applicant's age.

How to apply

To apply for a disability-related bus pass you must provide the following documents:

1. **Application Form** for a Disability-Related Concessionary Bus Pass
2. A **proof of address**. Please see the list in your Application Form
3. Either an automatic **proof of disability** or a **D1-D8** medical assessment form.
4. A **photo**. If you are submitting your application at a library, the staff there will take your photo for you. If you are submitting your application by post you will need to provide a recent, colour, passport-sized photograph.

If you are applying for a Companion Pass, you will also need to provide a **Companion Bus Pass Application form**. This will need to be completed and signed by your doctor or Specialist/Consultant.



You can submit your application:

1. By post to:

The Blue Badge & Concessionary Bus Pass Team,
Gloucestershire County Council,
Block 1, 1st Floor
Shire Hall,
Gloucester
GL1 2TP

We recommend you send your application and supporting evidence by recorded delivery post if they are either valuable or difficult to replace. Any documents you provide will be posted back to you as soon as your application has been processed.

2. At a library:

Please make an appointment by calling 01452 426265 at a time when the library will be open. You will be put through to the library of your choice.

Disability acceptance criteria

Blind or partially sighted

In general terms a person can be registered as severely sight impaired (blind) if they cannot see (with glasses, if worn) the top letter of the eye test chart (used by doctors and opticians) at a distance of 3 metres or less. Some people who can read the top letter of an eye test chart at 3 metres, but not at 6 metres, may still be eligible for registration as blind if their field of vision is also severely restricted. Only being able to read the top letter at 3 metres is sometimes referred to as 3/60 vision: the person can see at 3 metres what a person with normal vision can see at 60 metres.

A person can be registered as sight impaired (partially sighted) if they have a full field of vision but can only read the top letter of the eye test chart at a distance of 6 metres or less (with glasses, if worn). However, if they can read the next three lines down at the same distance, but the field of vision is either moderately or severely restricted, they may still qualify for registration.

Evidence:

- A fully completed Gloucestershire County Council Form D3 or D4 must be completed and submitted in all cases UNLESS you have a Certificate of Vision Impairment signed by a Consultant Ophthalmologist stating that the applicant meets the criteria of Form D3 or D4.

Profoundly or Severely Deaf

Hearing loss is measured in decibels across the normal hearing spectrum, as dBHL (Hearing Level). People are generally regarded as having a severe hearing loss if it reaches 70–95 dBHL and a profound loss if it reaches 95+ dBHL. A person with loss of 70 dBHL or worse in their „best“ ear would be considered eligible for a concessionary bus pass.

Evidence:

A fully completed Gloucestershire County Council Form D2 must be completed and submitted in all cases

Without Speech

Included within this category are people who are unable to communicate orally in any language. Those people will be:

- Unable to make clear basic oral requests, for example, to ask for a particular destination or fare
- Unable to ask specific questions to clarify instructions, for example, „Does this bus go to the High Street?“

This category does not cover people who are able to communicate orally but whose speech may be slow or difficult to understand, for example because of a severe stammer or because English is not their first language.

Evidence:

- A fully completed Gloucestershire County Council Form D8 must be completed and submitted in all cases

Have a disability, or has suffered an injury which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to walk

To qualify under this category, a person must have a long term and substantial disability that prevents them from walking or makes walking very difficult. Considerations, such as difficulty in carrying parcels, are not taken into account. People who are considered unable to walk will be:

- Unable to take a single step.
- Reliant on swinging through crutches as the only way of getting about.
- Virtually unable to walk or, as a result of a physical disability, are unable to walk very far without experiencing severe discomfort. Discomfort can mean either pain or breathlessness. Extreme fatigue and stress may also be taken into account.

A person is considered „virtually unable to walk“ if they:

- Can only walk up to 64 metres without severe discomfort. It does not matter whether the severe discomfort occurs at the time of their walk or later.
- Can walk more than 64 metres without severe discomfort but at a very slow pace or in an excessively laboured manner. For example, if they can show that it takes them five minutes to walk 100 metres.

A person will also qualify under this category if the exertion required to walk would “constitute a danger to their life or would be likely to lead to a serious deterioration in their health”. For example, people with serious chest, lung or heart conditions and some people with haemophilia. People with epilepsy may qualify if it is shown that fits are brought about by the effort required to walk.

Use of a walking aid does not automatically determine that a person qualifies. For example, if a person can walk relatively normally with the use of an artificial leg without suffering sores or other discomforts from the prosthesis, then they should not be considered eligible. Alternatively, a person who can only swing through on crutches could be considered eligible, as they would be seen as having considerable difficulty walking (provided it is due to a long term disability and not due to legs being in plaster).

Evidence

- A fully completed Gloucestershire County Council Form D1 must be completed and submitted in all cases.
- Receipt of Higher Rate Mobility Component of Disability Living Allowance



Concessionary Bus Pass



Gloucestershire
COUNTY COUNCIL

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Does not have arms or has severe disability in both arms

This category includes people with 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.

It also covers people with deformity of both arms, and people who have both arms; if in either case they are unable to use them to carry out day-to-day tasks, for example, paying coins into a fare machine.

Evidence:

- A Gloucestershire County Council Form D7 must be completed and submitted in all cases.

Has a learning disability

That is, a state of arrested or incomplete development of mind that includes significant impairment of intelligence and social functioning.

A person with a learning disability has a reduced ability to understand new or complex information, a difficulty in learning new skills, and may be unable to cope independently. These disabilities must have started before adulthood and have a lasting effect on development. The person should be able to qualify for specialist services and he or she may have had special educational provision.

Evidence:

- A fully completed Gloucestershire County Council Form D5 must be completed and submitted in all cases
- Evidence of residency in a care home or attendance at a specialist school.

War veterans

Anyone receiving payments under the War Pensions Scheme or Guaranteed Income Payment under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme will be entitled to concessionary bus pass. Proof to be supplied.

Temporary impairment

A concessionary bus pass may be issued for a period of one year with no automatic renewal if a medical specialist is unable to confirm long term disability but is able to confirm that the condition is most likely to last for more than one year.

These Guidance Notes are part of **Your Free Bus Travel Pack** and includes an Application Form and the 'proof of disability' (D1-D8) and 'companion' (C1) forms. If you need a copy of this pack or you require this document in an alternative format, or language, please contact us:

Visit www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/buspass - for a printable version.
Email concessionarybuspasses@gloucestershire.gov.uk
Call the concessionary bus pass helpline on 01452 426265

