Disability Sheffield
The Centre for Independent Living

Disability Sheffield Information Service

Blue Badge Factsheet

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Applying for a Blue Badge

The Blue Badge scheme provides a national range of parking concessions for disabled people with severe mobility problems who have difficulty using public transport. The scheme is designed to help disabled people to travel independently, as either a driver or passenger, by allowing you to park as close to your destination as possible.

Do I qualify for a Blue Badge?

Successful badge applications are either **automatic** or **discretionary**, depending on the nature of your condition.

If you're not automatically eligible you will be **independently assessed** as part of the application process.

You **automatically** qualify for a blue badge **if** you receive any of the following benefits:-

- Higher Rate Mobility Component of the Disability Living Allowance
- The mobility component of Personal Independence Payment (PIP) and you scored at least 8 points in relation to the 'moving around' activity in the PIP assessment, or at least 12 points in the mobility activity for planning and following journeys
  (If you were on higher rate mobility component of DLA, but you had to claim PIP instead and didn't get enough points to be eligible for a blue badge, you can continue to use your badge until it expires)
- War Pensioners Mobility Supplement

You also qualify if you are:-

- Registered Blind **or**
- You drive a vehicle regularly, have a severe disability in both arms and you are unable to operate or have considerable difficulty in operating, all or some types of parking meter **or**
- You have a child under the age of two and need to travel with bulky medical equipment or be close to a vehicle for emergency medical treatment because of your child's medical condition.

I have difficulty walking but don't get the above benefits - can I still apply?

Yes you can apply under the **discretionary** 'walking disability criteria'

You will need to show that:

- you cannot walk
- you are unable to walk very far without experiencing severe discomfort
- the physical effort needed to walk could damage your health
- your condition is permanent and substantial

In the past your GP could provide an assessment of your ability to walk but this is no longer accepted by the Department of Transport and a system of independent assessment has been introduced.

Extension of Criteria for People with a Hidden Disability

People with 'hidden disabilities', including autism and severe mental health conditions can now apply for a Blue Badge following changes to the eligibility criteria from the end of August 2019.

The Blue Badge scheme already means people with physical disabilities can park closer to their destination than other drivers, as they are less able to take public transport or walk longer distances.

The new criteria extends eligibility to people who:

- cannot undertake a journey without there being a risk of serious harm to their health or safety or that of any other person (such as young children with autism)
- cannot undertake a journey without it causing them very considerable psychological distress
- have very considerable difficulty when walking (both the physical act and experience of walking)

While the new criteria should give clear and consistent guidelines on Blue Badge eligibility for the whole of England, not everyone with non-physical disabilities will qualify for a badge. The relevant local authority decides if an applicant meets the eligibility criteria, as is currently the case.

Who to contact and how to apply

You have a choice. You can apply for or renew a Blue Badge online from the nationally operated service.

You can also apply for a Blue Badge from the Customer Services team at First Point, Howden House but your actual Blue Badge will be produced and issued from the nationally operated service and sent direct to your home.

However you apply there is a charge of £10 to cover the costs of administration, production and postage. The badge is valid for three years.

Customer Services Team
First Point, Howden House, 1 Union Street, Sheffield S1 2SH.
Opening hours : Mon-Friday 8am to 6pm (excluding Bank Holidays)
Tel: **(0114) 273 4567** (Monday to Friday 8.45am to 5.15pm)

The service does not have an email address but you can make an enquiry online on Sheffield City Council's 'Contact Us' page

Sheffield City Council has an 'Apply for a Blue Badge' page

The page includes information on how to apply, application processing times, where you can park and documents such as the Blue Badge policy and an application form to download.

If you qualify under the **automatic criteria** all you need to do is take a completed application form to Howden House with the following documents (and payment of £10):-

- proof of address (either a Utility Bill, Council Tax Bill, Rent Book, Driving License, Bank Statement, Pension Book or medical card
- confirmation of Identity (either your passport, driving license, birth or adoption certificate or UK Identity card)
- 2 recent passport sized photos of the Blue badge Holder (Only **standard ID photographs** will be accepted for applications, such as a passport photograph).
- evidence of proof of benefit e.g. a copy of a letter confirming your mobility award or mobility supplement or a Vehicle Excise Duty Exemption Certificate

If you are applying under the **discretionary walking disability criteria** you will need to complete and hand in or send an application form to Sheffield City Council's Customer Services team. Your application will not be processed on the same day.

The Customer Services team will contact you by phone and a physiotherapist will ask you questions about your ability to walk. You may then need to go for an independent assessment by a physiotherapist. There is no charge for the assessment.

Blue Badge Rights and Responsibilities

It is your responsibility as the badge holder to make sure that you use the badge correctly and you must not allow other people to use it if they are not entitled to do so. For example a friend or relative using your badge, when you're not with them, could result in a fine of up to £1,000, and permanent removal of your badge

If the details on the front of the badge become unreadable then the badge must be returned to the address it was issued from, so that it can be re-issued.

You will be sent a booklet by the Department of Transport detailing your rights and responsibilities, which is available online below:

Useful Links and Documents

Citizens Advice : Applying for a Blue Badge

Department of Transport :

- Can I get a Blue badge?
  A guide from the Department for Transport for people living in England

- Blue Badge Rights and Responsibilities in England
  Document explaining the blue badge scheme, how it works in England, and a user's rights and responsibilities.

- List of Government documents relating to the Blue Badge scheme

Disabled Motoring UK : Blue Badge

Disability Rights UK : Blue Badge Scheme

GOV.UK : Driving with medical conditions, Blue Badges and transport for disabled people

What do you think of this factsheet?

If you would like to comment on this factsheet or provide additional information from your own experience please let us know and we would be happy to consider adding to or amending the factsheet. We welcome any comments to help us improve our service. Our contact details are:-

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Disclaimer

No recommendation is given or implied by providing these details. Whilst every effort is made to ensure accuracy we cannot accept responsibility for any errors or omissions. Please note that the inclusion of groups or individuals on the factsheet does not mean that they have been vetted or are recommended by SCIL Disability Information Service or Sheffield Centre for Independent Living . Details may change so it is important you check the information provided to make sure they are accurate and suitable for your own requirements

June 2024