

## Applying for an SPSV licence

If you want to operate a vehicle as a taxi, hackney or limousine, you must have a small public service vehicle (SPSV) licence for that vehicle. These licences are issued by the National Transport Authority to applicants who meet certain conditions and whose vehicles meet the required standards.

The Authority is currently accepting applications for SPSV licences for the following categories of vehicle only:

Wheelchair accessible taxi	Wheelchair accessible hackney	Limousine	Local area hackney (see separate Guide)
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The specific requirements for wheelchair accessible vehicles are described separately in Information Guide G9 – New Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle Licences. These requirements are *in addition to* those described in this document.

**IMPORTANT:** Do not purchase a vehicle for use as an SPSV unless you are sure that it will meet the required standards.

## What you will need

There are three stages in applying for and obtaining a licence for an SPSV and you will need different things at each stage.

Stage	You will need
Initial application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ A completed Form VL1</li> <li>■ A vehicle that is suitable and properly equipped for operation as an SPSV in the category for which you are applying</li> <li>■ The appropriate fee</li> </ul>
Booking your Initial Suitability Inspection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ A Conditional Offer from the Authority</li> <li>■ An NCT Roadworthiness Certificate for the vehicle</li> <li>■ An insurance policy covering the use of the vehicle as a small public service vehicle</li> <li>■ A Certificate of Tax Clearance confirming that your tax affairs are in order</li> </ul>
Initial Suitability Inspection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <i>If you are applying for a wheelchair accessible taxi licence:</i> a regulation roof sign, a taximeter and printer; regulation door branding and an appointment with Legal Metrology for verification of the meter.</li> <li>■ <i>If you are applying for a licence for a wheelchair accessible vehicle:</i> a Technical Assessor's full Report – see Information Guide G9.</li> <li>■ <i>If you are applying for a licence for a limousine and the vehicle has been modified from its original specification:</i> a Technical Assessor's full Report .</li> </ul>

## The vehicle

The vehicle must meet a number of requirements, as set out below:

- **Age:** A new wheelchair accessible taxi or wheelchair accessible hackney must be less than 6 years of age. No age limit currently applies to limousines.
- **Roadworthiness:** An NCT roadworthiness certificate must be issued for the vehicle no more than 90 days before the date of the Initial Suitability Inspection. (Note: An NCT certificate is not required for a vehicle that is less than 90 days old **and** that has travelled less than 3,000 kilometres.)
- **Suitability:** The vehicle must meet the requirements for operation as an SPSV in the category specified on the licence application. The *Initial Suitability Inspection Manual*, which is available on the Authority's website, gives details of the items that are inspected to verify the vehicle's suitability.
- **All vehicles** must have the required safety equipment.

(continued overleaf)

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- **Tinted windows:** Vehicles are not permitted to have dark windows adjacent to a licensed seating position or to a wheelchair space. This applies to all licence categories apart from limousines, and will be checked by the licensing inspector as part of the initial suitability inspection. Dark means less than 70% light transmission.
- **Wheelchair accessible vehicles** must meet the conditions outlined in Guide G9 and be verified by a qualified Technical Assessor, who must complete a Technical Assessor's full Report to certify that the vehicle meets all the required standards. This report must be dated no more than 60 days before the date of the Initial Suitability Inspection – see Information Guide G9.
- Wheelchair accessible **taxis** must have a regulation roof sign and a taximeter connected to a printer installed. These can be installed only after you have received a Conditional Offer from the Authority – see below.
- Vehicles licensed as **limousines** must be suitable for prestigious or ceremonial use. It must comply with all the requirements for limousines set out in the *Initial Suitability Inspection Manual*. *If a modified vehicle then the Technical Assessor's full Report and supporting test data is required. There are limited derogations in certain cases, e.g. older vehicles, please contact the Authority if in doubt.*

### Completing the VL1 form

Form VL1 – Application for a New Small Public Service Vehicle Licence is available from the Authority, and can be downloaded from the Authority's website, [www.nationaltransport.ie](http://www.nationaltransport.ie). To complete this form:

<b>Section 1</b>	Fill in your name and contact details.
<b>Section 2</b>	Tick the box associated with the type of licence for which you are applying, and write in the total fee that you are enclosing with your application (see below).
<b>Section 3</b>	Fill in the vehicle registration number and tick the Yes/No boxes to indicate the type of licence you are applying for.  If you are applying for a wheelchair accessible vehicle licence, or for a limousine licence in respect of a modified vehicle, tick the box to confirm that you have a Technical Assessor's full Report (and supporting test data) that is less than 60 days old.
<b>Section 4</b>	If the licence is for a wheelchair accessible vehicle then you need to fill in the operational details here. They will be confirmed when you book the Initial Suitability Inspection and you can of course update them.
<b>Section 5</b>	Read the terms and conditions set out in section 5, and then sign and date the declaration to confirm that you understand and accept them.
<b>Section 6</b>	Tick the boxes to confirm that you are enclosing the appropriate fee (cheque, bank draft or postal order made payable to the National Transport Authority) and a copy of your Vehicle Registration Certificate with your application.

The fees payable are as follows:

Licence type	Licence fee	Initial Suitability Inspection fee	Total payable
Limousine	€1,000	€45	€1,045
Wheelchair Accessible Taxi	€125	€45	€170
Wheelchair Accessible Hackney	€125	€45	€170

**Submit the form along with the fee and any Assessor's Report to:**

SPSV Licensing Section  
PO Box 773  
Togher  
Cork

### Your conditional offer

The Authority will process your application and respond within 5 to 10 working days. If the application is successful, the Authority sends you a conditional offer letter. The conditional offer is valid for 90 days, during which you must complete the other steps in the licensing process.

### Required document to complete of your conditional offer

#### NCT

An NCT roadworthiness certificate must be issued for the vehicle no more than 90 days before the date of your Initial Suitability Inspection. Using your vehicle registration number the Authority will check your NCT result directly with the Department of Transport at time of booking. You should allow a minimum of 48 hours for the Department's records to be updated.

To book an NCT roadworthiness test, call the NCTS booking line on 1890 927 177.

**Note:** An NCT certificate is not required for a vehicle that is less than 90 days old **and** that has travelled less than 3,000 kilometres.)

#### Insurance

It is the responsibility of the vehicle licence holder to obtain insurance for the vehicle. You must obtain insurance for the vehicle that covers its use as a small public service vehicle and in your name. The Authority will check your original insurance certificate at the Initial Suitability Inspection.

#### Tax clearance

A tax clearance certificate can be obtained from your local Revenue office or by visiting [www.revenue.ie](http://www.revenue.ie), or by contacting your accountant. Using your PPSN, the Authority will check your tax status online with Revenue at the time of booking your appointment. You should allow a minimum of 48 hours for Revenue's records to be updated. The name on your licence application and the name on the tax clearance certificate must match *exactly*. If the name on the tax clearance certificate is not the same as that on the licence, you should contact the Revenue Commissioners.

Name on licence application	Name on tax clearance certificate	Suitable for licensing?
James Murphy	Jim Murphy	No
	James Murphy Jnr	No
	James Joseph Murphy	No
	Séamus Ó Murchú	No
	James J. Murphy	No
	James Murphy	Yes

### Modified vehicles

#### Limousines

If the vehicle has been modified from its original specification (for example, a converted van, a vehicle fitted with additional or non-standard seating and/or seat belts, a stretched vehicle, or a kit car), you must obtain a Technical Assessor's full Report, and this must be dated within 60 days of the date of your Initial Suitability Inspection. A template for this is available from the Authority, and this template must be used. You will need the supporting test data from the original conversion company.

#### Wheelchair accessible vehicles

All applications for licences for wheelchair accessible vehicles require a Technical Assessor's full Report, complete with supporting test data. A template is available. Before buying a vehicle you should make sure that you can obtain the necessary documentation from the vehicle manufacturer or converter to support your application – see Information Guide G9.

### Roof sign, taximeter, printer & door signage (taxis only)

Wheelchair accessible taxis must display on both front doors the regulation taxi door signage, obtainable only from an Authorised Supplier (see website for details). A regulation roof sign is required, and a taximeter connected to a printer.

- The roof sign and door signage must include the Conditional Offer Number specified in your conditional offer letter.
- The meter needs to be programmed with the Conditional Offer Number and calibrated for the vehicle and verified by the Legal Metrology Service. The meter does not have to be verified prior to the Initial Suitability Inspection, but this must be done within a reasonable period thereafter.

### Booking your Initial Suitability Inspection

1. Ensure that your vehicle meets the requirements for Initial Suitability Inspection and that you have the necessary documents, as outlined above.
2. Book your Initial Suitability Inspection by calling 0761 064 000 ensuring that you have all necessary documentation to hand.
3. Present the vehicle for inspection.

### What do you need when making a booking?

Security questions	Security questions will be asked for all booking and licence-related calls. These will involve standard identification questions such as name, address, telephone number, date of birth and PPS number. This information will be taken from the details you provided on your VL1 Application Form.
Tax clearance	You must have valid tax clearance before booking your appointment. You should allow a minimum of 48 hours for Revenue's records to be updated.  You do not need to provide any additional information regarding your tax clearance when booking but you should keep your PPS number at hand in order to confirm this when requested.
NCT roadworthiness certificate	You must complete your NCT roadworthiness test and be issued with a certificate before making your appointment. You should allow a minimum of 48 hours for the Department of Transport's records to be updated.  You should keep your vehicle registration certificate at hand in case it is required.
Vehicle ownership	To obtain a vehicle licence, you must own both the licence and the vehicle associated to that licence, or hold the vehicle under a lease agreement or a hire-purchase agreement. You will be asked to declare vehicle ownership status at time of booking.
Insurance	You will need your insurance expiry date and be able to declare that you are insured to operate an SPSV.  Your insurance information may be shared with the Insurance Federation of Ireland and your insurance disc will also be inspected as part of your vehicle inspection.  If your disc is out of date on the day of inspection your vehicle will fail its inspection.  It is the responsibility of the vehicle licence holder to provide insurance for the vehicle.
WAV register update	If you are applying for a wheelchair accessible licence you must confirm the following, as per the information on the VL1 Form, when booking your inspection appointment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Times of operation</li> <li>• Area of operation</li> <li>• Drivers</li> </ul> <p>This information will be published in the Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle Register.</p>

### Requirements for your Initial Suitability Inspection

When you present the vehicle for Initial Suitability Inspection, you must bring with you:

- A copy of the Technical Assessor's full Report and supporting test data, if you are applying to have a wheelchair accessible vehicle or a modified limousine licensed, and leave that with the Inspector;
- A copy of the User Manual in respect of a wheelchair accessible vehicle;
- Your original insurance certificate and, if a fleet policy, the Schedule listing the vehicle by registration number.

### Operating the vehicle as an SPSV

If your vehicle passes the Initial Suitability Inspection and the documentation is in order, the Licensing Inspector records the details on the Register of Licensed SPSVs, and applies tamper-proof discs to the front and rear windows of the vehicle. You will be issued a licence certificate for the vehicle.

The vehicle may then be operated as an SPSV in the category to which the licence applies.

Operating an SPSV without a current licence and valid tamper-proof licence discs could result in a fine of up to €5,000.