

Information for Hire Car Drivers and Applicants for Hire Car Licences Attending a Medical Assessment

Why is this medical assessment necessary?

As licensing authority, the council has determined that hire car drivers should have their medical fitness to drive assessed against the Group 2 standards applied by DLVA. This standard requires drivers between the ages of 45 and 65 to undergo a medical examination to determine their fitness to drive at 5 yearly intervals. Over the age of 65 drivers are required to be medically assessed annually. In addition, the council may require that younger drivers be medically assessed depending on their response to the health questions on the application form. After the initial medical assessment, the doctor may require you to be assessed more regularly if necessary. You may also be referred for an additional medical assessment if there has been any change in your medical history since your last medical assessment.

You can view the standards in the document entitled "Assessing fitness to drive: a guide for medical professionals" published by DVLA which is available to view at

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/assessing-fitness-to-drive-a-guide-for-medical-professionals>

How long does an appointment last?

Most appointments last around 25 minutes. Please ensure you arrive at least 15 minutes before your appointment time. If you arrive late you will miss your appointment.

Applicants for new licences

It is council policy that new applicants for hire car driver's licences must be certified fit to drive a hire car for a minimum period of one year. If you are a new applicant you should discuss your medical history and the application of the Group 2 standards with your GP prior to submitting your application as additional tests may require to be arranged by your doctor before you can be certified as fit to drive a hire car. You should bring any additional information which your doctor obtains to the medical assessment.

It may be that due to your medical history the doctor is unable to certify you as fit to drive for a full year. This could be because they require further medical information or the results of tests. If this is the case, you will be issued with a certificate indicating that you are unfit to drive hire cars. You will be asked to sign a document to confirm the outcome of the medical assessment. If you are not certified as fit to drive a hire car, you should discuss this with your own GP and it may be that additional tests can be arranged, and you can reapply for a licence at a later stage. Please contact the Licensing Team if you wish to discuss this.

Who will I see?

You will be seen by a council appointed medical examiner (doctor) who is an independent practitioner regulated by the General Medical Council. The doctor will be aware of the

standards required to be met in terms of the “Assessing fitness to drive: a guide for medical professionals” published by the DVLA, and will independently determine your fitness to drive during this assessment.

Where you are an existing licensed driver and your fitness to drive cannot be determined within the assessment, the doctor may need to communicate with other medical professionals with your consent, e.g. your GP or a consultant, to gain further information and another medical assessment may need to be arranged within a few months.

Is there anything I need to bring with me?

- If you wear glasses or contact lenses for driving, you should bring these with you along with a copy of your most recent eye prescription from your optician.
- If you have been prescribed any medication you should also bring the items with you.
- Existing licence holders must bring their hire car ID badge and taxi or private hire car driver's licence with them. Licences are printed on yellow or pink card. ID badges have your licence number on them. Emailed copies of documents cannot be accepted. If you do not have your licence you should apply for a duplicate immediately.
- Applicants for new licences should bring either their passport or their DVLA photocard driving licence with them.
- Medical assessment questionnaire from Optima Health if you have been sent one to complete

If you do not bring all of the above items with you the examination cannot take place and you will be charged a fee for the wasted appointment. The fee will also be charged if you cancel or fail to attend the appointment on time. For existing drivers this may result in your licence being suspended. For new applicants there will be a significant delay in the processing of your application.

Further medical assessments will not be arranged until the fee has been paid.

Reception staff will require you to hand them your ID badge and hire car driver's licence (if you are an existing licence holder). Your documents will be returned to you after the assessment if you are certified as fit to drive. Reception staff will also check that you have brought all your medication and glasses/contact lenses and eye prescription if you wear glasses or contact lenses for driving. Applicants for licences will require to produce their ID documents to reception staff.

Please contact the Licensing Team immediately if you will be unable to bring all the above items with you to the appointment.

After you have spoken to reception staff you should take a seat in the waiting area until you are called by the doctor.

You may be required to complete a medical assessment questionnaire prior to the appointment. A copy of this will be emailed to you in advance of the appointment by the provided by the Licensing Team. Please print this out, fill it in and take it with you to the appointment.

What will happen during the assessment?

The doctor will undertake a few tests, namely: -

- Assess your height and weight,
- Test your eyesight and consider your prescription,
- Measure your blood pressure
- Physical examination as appropriate

Following these tests, the doctor should be able to inform you whether you have been passed as “fit” to drive, or whether further information or tests are required.

You will be asked by the doctor to sign the certificate issued by them which will state how long the certificate will last for.

If you have been certified as fit to drive you should note how long a period you have been certified as fit for and ensure that you undergo another medical examination prior to the expiry of the certificate. You will normally receive 3 months’ notice of the expiry of your certificate from the Licensing Team unless your certificate is granted for a short period.

If after these tests the doctor considers that you do not meet the criteria for driving a hire car they will certify you as currently unfit to drive. If you are a licence holder and have been certified as unfit the doctor will explain that you can no longer operate as a hire car driver with immediate effect and will issue you with an information sheet to explain why this is necessary and to advise you what you should do next.

If you have been referred to see the doctor for any other issue, then the appointment content may vary. The doctor will explain any other procedure at the time of the appointment. A GP or specialist report may be required, and you may be asked during the appointment to provide consent for your GP or a specialist to be contacted.

What happens to the result of my assessment?

The result of your assessment will be provided to the Licensing Team within the council. If you are an applicant for a new hire car driver’s licence you will be contacted by the Licensing Team following the assessment regarding your application.

What will it cost?

The cost of the medical examination is covered by your application/licence fee. However, if you cancel the appointment, fail to attend the appointment, or the assessment cannot be carried out because you have not brought all of the documentation and items listed above you are liable to pay a fee in relation to the wasted appointment. Any further appointment cannot be arranged until this fee has been paid. Details of the current fee can be viewed on the council’s hire car webpages.

For existing licence holders if your certificate of fitness expires as a result of the assessment not being able to be undertaken as planned, your hire car driver’s licence will be suspended until you have been issued with a further certificate of fitness.

Data label: PUBLIC

What if I still have questions?

The doctor examining you will be more than happy to discuss any questions you may still have – just let them know at your appointment.

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You can contact the Licensing Team by e-mailing us at licensing@westlothian.gov.uk or by calling 01506 281632 if directed to our voicemail please leave a message and we will call you back