

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
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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.

The local area hackney licence is a very specific licence relating to a small local area of operation only. Please use Form LAH1 and see the companion note, Guide for Obtaining a Local Area Hackney licence.

All vehicle requirements are detailed in the Initial Suitability Inspection Manual, available at www.nationaltransport.ie

IMPORTANT: Do not purchase a vehicle for use as an SPSV unless you are sure that it will meet the required standards. . Please read the Initial Suitability Inspection Manual carefully before purchasing any vehicle.

What you will need

There are three stages in applying for and obtaining a licence for an SPSV.

Stage	You will need
Initial application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A vehicle that is suitable and properly equipped for operation as an SPSV in the category for which you are applying ■ A completed Form VL1 ■ For modified vehicles the relevant Technical Assessor’s Full Report ■ The appropriate fee
Booking your Initial Suitability Inspection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A Conditional Offer from the Authority ■ An NCT Roadworthiness Certificate for the vehicle ■ An insurance policy covering the use of the vehicle as a small public service vehicle ■ A valid electronic tax clearance certificate
Initial Suitability Inspection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>If you are applying for a wheelchair accessible taxi licence:</i> a regulation roof sign, a taximeter and printer and regulation taxi door branding.

Vehicle requirements

- **Age:** A wheelchair accessible taxi or wheelchair accessible hackney must be less than 6 years of age at first licensing. No age limit currently applies to limousines.
- **Roadworthiness:** An NCT roadworthiness certificate 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.
- **Tinted windows:** Vehicles are not permitted to have dark windows adjacent to a licensed seating position or a wheelchair space. This applies to all licence categories apart from limousines, dark means less than 70% light transmission.

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- Wheelchair accessible **taxis** must have a regulation roof sign and a taximeter connected to a printer. These can be installed only after you have received a Conditional Offer from the Authority – see below.

Modified Vehicles

- All Wheelchair accessible vehicles** are modified vehicles and the integrity of the vehicle must 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. Note that full supporting test data is required.
- Some **limousines** are modified vehicles (including stretched limousines and kit (historic replica) cars). In most cases Technical Assessor's Report is required; 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. To complete this form:

Section 1	Fill in your name and contact details.
Section 2	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).
Section 3	Fill in the vehicle registration number and tick the Yes/No boxes to indicate the type of licence you are applying for. Note that an application cannot be considered unless the Irish vehicle registration is provided here. 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 the relevant Technical Assessor's Report (and supporting test data where required).
Section 4	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 thereafter.
Section 5	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.
Section 6	Tick the boxes to confirm that you are enclosing the appropriate fee (bank draft or postal order made payable to the National Transport Authority) 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
Local Area Hackney	€5	€45	€50

Submit the form along with the fee and Assessor's Report and test data as relevant to:

SPSV Licensing Section
PO Box 436
City North Business Park
Tuam Road
Galway

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 remaining steps in the licensing process. The conditional offer provides a provisional licence number enabling the programming of a taximeter and manufacture of a roof sign (wheelchair accessible taxi) and arrangement of insurance for reward.

Documents required to complete the licensing process

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 after successful completion of your NCT.

To book an NCT roadworthiness test, call the NCTS booking line on 01 4135960.

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 the policy must be in your name. The Authority will validate your **original** insurance certificate at the Initial Suitability Inspection.

Tax clearance

An electronic tax clearance certificate must be maintained with Revenue at all times. 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 electronic tax clearance certificate must match *exactly*. If the name on the electronic 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 J. Murphy	No
	James Murphy	Yes

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 vehicle registration number calibrated for the vehicle.

Booking your Initial Suitability Inspection

Book your Initial Suitability Inspection by calling 0761 064 000.

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 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.
Vehicle Registration certificate	You should keep your vehicle registration certificate at hand in case it is required.
Vehicle ownership	To obtain a vehicle licence, you must own the vehicle to be associated to the 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	<p>You will need your insurance expiry date and be able to declare that you are insured to operate an SPSV.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>If your disc is out of date on the day of inspection your vehicle will fail its inspection.</p> <p>It is the responsibility of the vehicle licence holder to provide insurance for the vehicle.</p> <p>Your name on your insurance should match your name on your licence.</p>
WAV register update	<p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Times of operation • Area of operation • Drivers <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 User Manual in respect of a wheelchair accessible vehicle
- Copy of Assessor's Report/test data
- 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.