



**The Blue Badge scheme** 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 severely disabled people to travel independently, as either a driver or passenger, by allowing them to park close to their destination. The national concessions only apply to **on-street** parking. They do not apply to off-street car parks, such as supermarket car parks, or privately owned roads, such as those you find at airports.

While the scheme operates throughout the UK, there are small variations in its application in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Contact details are as follows:

For details specific to Northern Ireland contact:  
Disabled Persons Badge Scheme Central Office  
Castle Barracks  
Wellington Place  
Enniskillen  
Co. Fermanagh  
BT74 7HN  
Tel: (028) 6634 3700  
Fax: (028) 6634 3730

For details specific to Scotland contact:  
Scottish Executive Development Dept.  
Transport & Local Roads Division  
Area 2E,  
Victoria Quay  
Leith  
Edinburgh,  
EH6 6QQ  
Tel: 0131 244 0860/0869

For details specific to Wales contact:  
National Assembly for Wales  
Transport Policy Division  
Cathays Park

Cardiff  
CF10 3NQ  
Tel: 02920 826501

## Do you automatically qualify for a Badge?

**1. People who automatically qualify for a badge:** A person is automatically eligible to apply for a badge if they are over two years old and meet at least one of the following criteria:

**a** receives the Higher Rate of the Mobility Component of the Disability Living Allowance;

**b** is registered blind; or

**c** receives a War Pensioners' Mobility Supplement.

**Explanation** *If you are applying for a Badge under the criteria listed at (a), (b) or (c) you will automatically qualify, provided you have the right documentation to support your application.*

## Do you have difficulty walking?

**2. People who may also qualify for a badge** Some people may also be eligible for a badge if they are more than two years old and **either**:

**a** have a permanent and substantial disability which means they cannot walk, or which makes walking very difficult.

**Explanation** *If you are applying for a Badge under this criterion you will need to show that:*

- *you are unable to walk; or*
- *you have a physical disability that means you are unable to walk very far without experiencing severe discomfort; or*
- *the physical effort needed to walk could damage your health.*

*People with a behavioural or psychological disorder will not normally qualify unless their impairment causes very considerable difficulty in walking all the time. Your local authority will probably ask for you to be assessed by a medical professional, such as a physiotherapist or occupational therapist.*

**Or;**

**b** drive a motor vehicle regularly, have a severe disability in both arms, and are unable to operate all or some types of parking meter (or would find it very difficult to operate them).

**Explanation** *To qualify for a Badge under this criterion you will usually be expected to drive a vehicle with an adapted steering on account of a severe disability in both arms (for example, double limb amputation). Alternatively you may have a disability that is just as severe (such as a thalidomide disability) in both upper limbs but drive a conventional vehicle. Only drivers with the most severe disabilities in both their arms will be eligible under this criterion. It will not apply to people who, for example, have difficulty carrying parcels or shopping.*

## Is the applicant under two years of age?

**3. Special rules for children under two** A parent of a child who is less than two years old may apply for a Badge for their child if the child has a specific medical condition which means that they:

**a** must always be accompanied by bulky medical equipment which cannot be carried around without great difficulty; and/or

**b** need to be kept near a vehicle at all times, so that they can, if necessary, be treated in the vehicle, or quickly driven to a place where they can be treated, such as a hospital.

**Explanation** A parent or guardian must apply on behalf of a child under the age of two.

*The list of bulky medical equipment referred to above may include:*

- ventilators;
- suction machines;
- feed pumps;
- parenteral equipment;
- syringe drivers; • oxygen administration equipment;
- continuous oxygen saturation monitoring equipment; and
- casts and associated medical equipment for the correction of hip dysplasia.

*A local authority will issue a badge if the equipment is always needed and cannot be carried without great difficulty.*

*Examples of highly unstable medical conditions that mean children who have them may need quick access to transport to hospital or home may include:*

- tracheostomies;
- severe epilepsy/fitting;
- highly unstable diabetes; or
- terminal illnesses that prevent children from spending any more than brief moments outside and who need a quick route home.

**Please note this list is not exhaustive.**

## Does your organisation transport disabled people?

### 4. Badges for organisations

Organisations that transport disabled people who would meet one or more of the above criteria may also be eligible for a badge. However, this is entirely at the discretion of the issuing local authority and any organisation that qualifies must follow the conditions for using it.

## Who do I contact to apply for a Badge?

### 5. How to apply for a badge

The Blue Badge scheme is administered by your local authority. You should contact them directly for inquiries or information about the administration of the scheme.

The Blue Badge is a two-sided card with space for a photograph of the badge holder on the back. You should send two recent photographs with your application. Sign the back of both photographs.

Photographs do not need to be taken in a photo-booth but they must be of roughly the same dimensions as passport-style photos and must show your face clearly.

If you live in England and think you may be entitled to a Blue Badge you should apply to your local authority (the address and telephone number will be in your local telephone directory or on the website **www.direct.gov.uk**, under 'find your local council').

If you contact your local authority by telephone, ask for the section dealing with Blue Badges. In some areas you can begin your Blue Badge application on the internet through your local authority's website.

***Explanation*** *Your local authority will decide if you are eligible for a Badge. If they decide that you are not eligible and you think that they did not take account of all the facts, you can ask them to consider your application again. You cannot appeal to the Department for Transport. A local authority may refuse to issue a Badge if they have reason to believe that the person applying for it is not who they claim to be or that the Badge would be used by someone else.*