

The North Lincolnshire Council Driving Assessment for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Drivers

You need a licence from your local authority to drive a Hackney Carriage Vehicle (HCV) or Private Hire Vehicle (PHV).

In accordance with North Lincolnshire Council's Licensing Policy, where a new applicant for a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire Vehicle Drivers Licence shows that they have six or more points on their DVLA driving licence, or have been banned from driving in the last three years for totting up, or five years for serious road traffic offences, that applicant will be required to undertake the Driving Assessment (Taxi Driver) Test before a licence will be issued.

You are required to pass a Hackney Carriage/Private Hire driving assessment before they will consider granting you a licence.

Assessments are carried out by North Lincolnshire Council examiners. The assessment is more demanding than the learner drivers test, and contains elements that relate specifically to driving a HCV/PHV.

This guide explains how to book your taxi assessment with North Lincolnshire Council, and what the test involves. It also explains what to do if you want to change or cancel a test booking.

Driving assessments and general requirements for getting a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire Drivers' Licence - General requirements

Before you can apply for a HC/PH vehicle driver licence, you must:

- Be able to work legally in the UK
- Have held a full UK or EU driver's licence for at least 12 months

Other requirements for getting your licence include passing:

- A Disclosure Barring Service Certificate
- A Medical
- A Knowledge test

The Licensing department within North Lincolnshire Council will be able to provide more information on the requirements and fees. Other licences may be required – for advice, you should contact Licensing on 01724 297750 or email licensing@northlincs.gov.uk.

How to book your taxi or private hire vehicle assessment

Booking your test

Driver assessments are carried out by the North Lincolnshire Council test centre.

To book the assessment you will need your driver number from one of the following licences:

- A full UK or Northern Ireland photo card licence
- A full British old style paper licence
- A recognisable full European Union (EU) licence and UK paper counterpart

You can book your assessment over the phone, by emailing karen.willerton@northlincs.gov.uk

Cancelling or rescheduling your test

You can reschedule or cancel a test:

- By phone

Providing you give the assessor three clear working days' notice – Saturdays count as working days – you can:

- Move or change your test
- Cancel your test

What the Private Hire/Hackney Carriage driving assessment involves

The standard of the Hackney Carriage/Private Hire driving assessment is set at a level suitable for full driving licence holders. It is more demanding than the learner test.

Before the assessment, you are advised to:

- Take lessons with a professional driving instructor
- Read the Highway Code
- Familiarise yourself with the content of the assessment

The eyesight test

At the start of your practical assessment, you will be asked to read in good daylight a vehicle registration number fixed to motor vehicle with letters and figures 79.4 millimetres high at a distance of 20.5 metres (20 metres for a new-style number plate). You can use glasses or contact lenses if you wear them.

If you fail the eyesight test, you will be unable to take the driving part of the assessment. However, you will be able to continue with the wheelchair section if appropriate.

The practical assessment

The practical assessment will last for about 35 to 40 minutes, depending on traffic. Some elements are specific to taxi driving, such as:

- A taxi manoeuvre
- The requirement to stop in a safe position as if picking up or dropping off passengers

The driving assessment will include approximately ten minutes of independent driving where you will be asked to drive without examiner guidance. You can read about independent driving and how it will be assessed.

To pass the assessment, no more than nine errors are permitted. Serious or dangerous errors will result in failure of the assessment.

You will be assessed on:

- Awareness and anticipation
- Effective planning of prevailing road and traffic conditions
- Correct use of speed
- Observation and mirror use
- Control of the vehicle
- Passenger safety and comfort

The assessment will include:

- A taxi manoeuvre where you will be asked to turn your vehicle to face to opposite direction.
- Approximately ten minutes of independent driving.
- Stops at the side of the road if a passenger is getting in or out of the vehicle.
- Related 'cabology' questions. Examples may include the dimensions of your vehicle, tyre pressures and what to do if a passenger leaves property in your vehicle.
- Questions from the Highway Code and Identification of a number of traffic signs and road markings.

Your assessment may include (if you have a wheelchair accessible vehicle):

- An emergency stop
- A wheelchair exercise (if you requested the enhanced assessment – see information below)

The wheelchair exercise for taxis and private hire vehicles

If you have requested the enhanced assessment, it will include a wheelchair exercise for which you need to provide a wheelchair accessible vehicle.

You will need to demonstrate:

- The ability to safely load and unload the wheelchair in your vehicle
- That you can secure and unsecure the wheelchair using the brakes
- Fasten the seatbelts or safety harness
- Secure any wheel belts or clamps fitted to your vehicle

What happens at the end of the Hackney Carriage/Private Hire drivers' assessment

When you pass your taxi assessment, you will receive:

- A copy of your assessment
- Offer of a debrief from the examiner

When you pass your wheelchair assessment, you will receive:

- A copy of your assessment
- Offer of a debrief from the examiner

If you fail the assessment, you must wait a minimum period of three clear working days before you retake. Saturday counts as a working day.

Fees for taking the taxi assessment

You may have been asked to pass the driving assessment by the Licensing Division before you can be granted a licence. Your practical assessment fee will vary depending on the type of assessment required. Please contact the test centre for details of the fee to be charged.

Contact Details

Address (Licensing):

Licensing Department
PO Box 42
Church Square House
Scunthorpe
North Lincolnshire
DN15 6XQ

Tel: 01724 297750

Address (Test Centre):

Fleet Workshop & Offices
Plot 22
Grange Lane North
Scunthorpe
North Lincolnshire
DN16 1BT

Tel: 07812 739665