

Application Process for New Private Hire Operators

This checklist will guide you through the application process for obtaining your new Private Hire Operators Licence. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Licensing Department on 01962 848 188 or licensing@winchester.gov.uk

Step 1: Visit our website

Please visit our website and read the information provided about Private Hire Operators Licences, including the Statement of Licensing Policy, Criminal Convictions Policy and conditions of licence. <https://www.winchester.gov.uk/licensing>
If you have any questions about the information on our website, please get in touch with the Licensing Department before making an application.

Step 2: Make your application

Please complete the online application form at <https://www.winchester.gov.uk/licensing>
You will require a credit/debit card to make payment of the £227 application fee.

Step 3: Make an appointment

Once you have completed your application form, you must contact the Licensing Department within 14 days to make an appointment to see a Licensing Officer. At the appointment, you will discuss your application with the Officer and they will ask any questions they may have about the information on your application form.

You will need to bring the following documents to your appointment:

- Documents which prove your Right to Work in the UK
- Any other relevant certificates which may support your application

Step 4: Criminal Record Check

You are required to provide the Licensing Department with a basic Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate. Please obtain one of these through our approved provider, TaxiPlus: <https://www.taxiplus.co.uk/councils/winchester> You are also strongly advised to sign up to the DBS Update Service so that your DBS can be checked online periodically without the need to keep applying for a new one every year.

If you have been a resident of another country for six months or more after turning 18 years old, you are also required to obtain a Certificate of Good Character from that country. The process for each country is different, so we advise contacting the relevant Embassy for advice.

If you have any criminal convictions or cautions, please refer to the Statement of Licensing Policy for guidance on whether your application will be accepted at this time.

Step 5: Qualifications / Assessments

You are required to attend and complete a Safeguarding Awareness Course with the Blue Lamp Trust. A classroom-based safeguarding course must be completed. E-learning courses will not be accepted. Please book your course with the Blue Lamp Trust: <https://bluelamptrust.org.uk/safeguarding-classroom/>

Step 6: Operating Address

You must provide the Licensing Department with details of the premises from which you will make provision for bookings. This premises must be within the Winchester district. The Licensing Department reserves the right to request proof of right to occupy if it has doubts about the legitimacy of the address provided.

Where your premises is open to the public (i.e. a minicab office) then you must also provide the Licensing Department with evidence of public liability insurance with a minimum of £5,000,000 cover.

Step 7: Policies and Procedures

You must draft the following documents and provide the Licensing Department with copies prior to a licence being granted:

Complaints Procedure

You must provide the Licensing Department with a copy of your complaints procedure for dealing with customer complaints. This must include details of how complaints will be recorded, the time within which they will be responded to and who is authorised to respond to complaints.

Employing Ex-Offenders

Where you employ staff to take bookings and dispatch vehicles, you must provide the Licensing Department with a copy of your policy on employing ex-offenders. GOV.UK provides a sample policy online: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-sample-policy-on-the-recruitment-of-ex-offenders/sample-policy-on-the-recruitment-of-ex-offenders>

Step 7: Records of Staff Members

You must provide the Licensing Department with details of all staff employed to take bookings and dispatch vehicles. The following information must be supplied:

- Full name
- Date of birth
- Home address

Where staff members are not already hackney carriage or private hire drivers licensed by Winchester City Council, you must provide the Licensing Department with a basic Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate for each staff member. This must be provided to the Licensing Department within one month of the certificate being issued.

If you employ a new staff member or a staff member leaves, you must update your records with the Licensing Department.

Step 8: Records of Vehicles

You must provide the Licensing Department with a list of all vehicles that you will be operating, even if they work for other operators occasionally. The following information must be supplied:

- Make, model and colour
- Registration number
- Private hire vehicle licence number

Where new vehicles are added or removed to the fleet, you must update your records with the Licensing Department.