

BLUE BADGE FACTSHEET

Q What is a Blue Badge?

A A blue badge is a nationally recognised badge that drivers or passengers with disabilities, who have severe mobility problems, can display in their vehicle to allow them to park close to a destination so that they can access goods, services and facilities more easily.

It gives you free parking, (however there may be time limits), in places such as on-street disabled bays, at parking meters and at pay and display machines. You can also park on yellow lines for up to three hours unless there is a ban on loading or unloading in force. The badge is automatically valid on the street but does not automatically apply to off-street car parks, such as those at supermarkets and hospitals, or privately owned roads, such as those at airports.

The scheme is administered by your Local Authority and all badge applications must be made through them.

Q Who can get a blue badge?

A You are automatically eligible for a badge if you:

- Get the Higher Rate of the Mobility component of the Disability Living Allowance (DLA) **OR**
- Live in England and have been awarded 8 points or more in the 'moving around' activity of the Personal Independence Payment (PIP), or the 'moving around' activity of the Mobility component of the DLA **OR**
- Live in Scotland or Wales and have been awarded 8 points or more in the 'moving around' activity or 12 points in the 'planning and following journeys activity' of the personal independence payment (PIP) **OR**
- You are registered blind (severely sight impaired).

You might also qualify for a badge if you have a *permanent and substantial disability* (one which is likely to last all your life) which severely affects your ability to walk. If you're applying for a badge for this reason you will need to show that you have this disability, and that it means:

- You are unable to walk **OR**
- you can't walk very far without experiencing severe problems such as excessive pain and breathlessness; or the effort of walking is causing your health to deteriorate.

Your local authority will use how much your permanent disability affects your ability to walk to decide whether you are eligible for a badge. They may ask you to undergo a mobility assessment with a medical professional, such as physiotherapist or an occupational therapist, to help them decide.

Q Are you a driver with severe disabilities in your arms?

A You may be eligible for a badge if you drive regularly, have a severe disability in both arms, and are unable to operate, or have considerable difficulty operating all, or some types of, parking meter.

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To qualify you will need to show that you meet all of the following:

- That you drive a vehicle regularly
- That you have a severe disability in both arms

AND

- That you are unable to operate, or have considerable difficulty operating all, or some types of, on-street parking machines.

Most drivers with disabilities in both arms drive a vehicle with adapted steering, and only those with the most severe disabilities in both their arms are eligible for a badge under this rule. It does not apply to people who have difficulty carrying parcels or shopping; or to people who travel solely as a passenger.

Q How do I get a blue badge?

A Get in touch with your Local Authority

Contact your local authority directly for enquiries or information about the administration of the Blue Badge scheme, and to ask for an application form. You can find their address and telephone number in your local phone book or at www.gov.uk/apply-blue-badge under 'find your local council'.

Just ask for the section that deals with blue badges and they will make sure you get everything you need.

Q What about Hidden Disabilities?

A With effect from 30 August 2019 those people with hidden disabilities, including autism, mental health conditions will soon have access to a Blue Badge, removing the barriers they may face to travel.

- Cannot undertake a journey without there being a risk of serious harm to their health or safety or that of any other person (such as autism)
- Cannot undertake a journey without it causing them very considerable psychological distress.
- Have a very considerable difficulty when walking (both the physical act and experience of walking).

Apply on line

You can also apply on line in England at :- www.gov.uk/apply-blue-badge

If you live in Wales apply at :- www.gov.uk/apply-blue-badge and information can be found on www.cymru.gov.uk

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If you live in Scotland apply at :- <http://www.bluebadgesscotland.org>

If you live in Northern Ireland apply at :- <http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/services/apply-or-renew-blue-badge-online>

To apply for, or renew your Blue Badge you will need:

- One passport-sized and passport standard photo, clearly showing your full face, taken within the month before the date of your application
- Your National Insurance Number
- Proof of ID and residency
- Full details of your current Blue Badge if you are renewing.

Always inform your badge provider of any changes required to your data - such as your name, address or circumstances.

Q Where can I get further information?

A Information is available from a number of sources

Initial Enquiry Support Service

For further information on the Blue Badge Scheme contact the Initial Enquiry Support Service:

- Email enquiries: bluebadge@northgate-is.com
- Telephone (England): 0844 463 0213
- Telephone (Scotland): 0844 463 0214
- Telephone (Wales): 0844 463 0215
- Telephone (Northern Ireland) 0300 200 7818

Useful Information

For information on applying for your Blue Badge and/or renewing your Blue Badge
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/blue-badge-scheme>

To find out whether you can get a blue badge (If you have upper limb issues see pages 8- 9)
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/blue-badge-can-i-get-one>

For the Rules on how to use your badge, such as where you can use it, try this link – it's useful for both new users and those needing a refresher. <https://www.gov.uk/where-registered-disabled-drivers-can-park>

Other supportive organisations

Disabled Motoring

<http://www.disabledmotoring.org/>

This Disabled Motoring link is excellent for further information and pdf downloads of guides to using your badge in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland: <http://www.disabledmotoring.org/blue-badge/apply-for-a-blue-badge>

Disability Rights UK

<http://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/how-we-can-help/publications/get-motoring>

Q What support can I get from the Trust

- A** To discuss any problems you have in applying for or renewing your Blue Badge call the Health & Wellbeing team on 01480 474074 or email hello@thalidomidetrust.org

In some cases, the Thalidomide Trust may be able to offer a standard letter of support to individuals who should be entitled to a badge and whose application has been refused by their Local Council. However we can only support those who rightfully qualify.