

P endorsements

for carrying passengers

The information in this factsheet is effective from 1 October 2017.

Who needs a passenger endorsement?

If you carry passengers for hire or reward you need a passenger (P) endorsement.

You also need a P endorsement if you drive a large passenger service vehicle, even if you're not being paid for it.

Volunteers and some others may be exempt from holding a P endorsement. See Factsheet 18: *Volunteers drivers and exempt passenger services* to check.

Small and large vehicles

Small passenger service vehicle

A small passenger service vehicle has 12 seats or less, including the driver.

For example, taxi, shuttle, app-based service, private hire service. You also need a P endorsement if you drive for a dial-a-driver service and are driving the customer's vehicle.

To drive a small passenger service vehicle you need:

- a current P endorsement, and
- a current driver identification (ID) card, and
- a current licence for the type of vehicle you're driving. For example, if you're driving a car or van, you need a class 1 licence, and
- **to hold a small passenger service licence, or work under someone who holds a small passenger service licence.**

Large passenger service vehicle

A large passenger service vehicle has more than 12 seats.

To drive a large passenger service vehicle you need:

- a current P endorsement, and
- a current licence for the type of vehicle you're driving. For example, if you're driving a bus with a gross vehicle mass of 10,000kg, you need a class 2 licence, and
- **to hold a large passenger service licence, or work under someone who holds a large passenger service licence.**

You don't need to have an ID card to drive large passenger service vehicles.

If you're not sure if you need a P endorsement, call us on 0800 822 422 to check.

See Factsheet 47 *Transport service licences* for more information about small and large passenger service licences.

Why do I need an endorsement?

The public need to know they are safe when using a passenger service. The Transport Agency checks the background of anyone applying to be endorsed to carry passengers, including criminal history, traffic offences and medical health.

What do I need to apply?

- You must have held a full New Zealand car licence (class 1) for at least two years (see page 2)
- If you've lived outside New Zealand, you'll need to provide foreign documentation (see page 2)
- You'll need a medical certificate (unless you've provided one to the Transport Agency in the last five years, see page 3)
- If you're not a New Zealand citizen or permanent resident, you'll need a work permit or visa approving work in New Zealand in the appropriate field (see page 2)
- You'll need a current passport or New Zealand driver licence, or another form of acceptable evidence of identity listed on Factsheet 20 *Identification for driver licensing*.

How do I apply?

1. Complete the application form. You can download the application form at www.nzta.govt.nz/form-DL20A.
2. Take the completed form and the above documents to a driver licensing agent (these are selected branches of the Automobile Association and Vehicle Testing New Zealand, go to www.nzta.govt.nz/agents to find your closest agent).
3. Pay the application fee.
4. The agent will take your photo and signature.

How much does it cost to apply?

| | Endorsement to drive small passenger service vehicles | | Endorsement to drive large passenger service vehicles | |
|-------------------|---|-----------------|---|-----------------|
| | 1 year | 5 years | 1 year | 5 years |
| Endorsement | \$73.00 | \$254.90 | \$64.40 | \$246.30 |
| Vetting fee* | \$9.70 | \$48.50 | \$9.70 | \$9.70 |
| Total cost | \$82.70 | \$303.40 | \$74.10 | \$256.00 |

* If you only drive a large passenger vehicle, the police check is done once every five years

What happens next?

Your application will be sent to the NZ Transport Agency to be processed, and for the fit and proper person check to be performed.

- If you've provided all the necessary information with your application and all the endorsement requirements have been met, please allow 10 working days for your application to be processed.
- If some information hasn't been provided yet, or if some requirements haven't been met, your application will take longer to process.

Application details

You must have held a full licence for two years

To get a P endorsement, you must have a current New Zealand full car licence (class 1) that you've held for at least two years.

Holding an equivalent overseas licence doesn't meet this requirement. If you've held an overseas licence, you may be able to apply for an exemption to get your overseas driving experience recognised. Go to www.nzta.govt.nz/driver-licences/exemptions for more information.

If you're planning to drive a heavy passenger service vehicle, make sure you have the right class of driver licence. For example, for a vehicle with gross weight of 10,000kg you'll need a class 2 licence.

Fit and proper person check

To make sure the public are safe while using passenger services, the NZ Transport Agency checks the background of anyone applying for an endorsement to carry passengers. This ensures all applicants are assessed to the same standard and all members of the public can expect to be safe while using the service.

This background check (vetting) includes:

- transport-related offences, especially relating to safety.
- history of behavioural problems.
- past complaints about a transport service you may have operated.
- history of persistent failure to pay fines for transport-related offences.
- criminal convictions (in New Zealand or overseas, see *Foreign documentation*), including charges and convictions relating to violence or sexual offences, drugs or firearms offences, or offences involving organised criminal activities.

What if I have had a serious criminal conviction?

People convicted of some serious criminal offences and sentenced to more than 12 months in prison are not allowed to be endorsed to carry passengers. These serious convictions include:

- murder (including attempt, conspiracy or attempting to hire for murder etc).
- a sexual crime.
- violent crime (wounding, shooting, violent robbery etc).
- kidnapping and abduction.
- any offence committed outside New Zealand which would result in a serious criminal conviction if the offence was done in New Zealand.

Go to <http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1998/0110/latest/DLM434566.html> for a full list of serious offences under section 29A of the Land Transport Act 1998 that could prevent you from getting a passenger endorsement.

The NZ Police website and the following sections of the Crimes Act 1961 also have detailed information about these convictions: 144A, 144C, 173, 174, 175, 176, 188, 189(1), 191, 198, 199, 200(1), 201, 208, 209, 210, 234, 235, 236. See www.legislation.govt.nz for more information.

If you still have questions about whether you could be able to get a P endorsement, call us on 0800 822 422.

We'll undertake police vetting every year for small vehicle P endorsements or once every five years for large vehicles.

When can the check be done?

You must make your passenger endorsement application at a driver licensing agent first. Then we'll start the fit and proper person check.

How much does it cost?

The police vetting costs \$9.70 each time. This is included in your endorsement application fee.

If you have any concerns about the fit and proper person check, call us on 0800 822 422 before you submit your application.

Foreign Documentation

You'll need to provide official documents from each country you've lived in for more than 12 continuous months since the age of 14.

You'll need to provide:

- police records of any criminal history or complaints, and
- traffic records of any infringements or fines, OR
- confirmation that you have no police or traffic records.

Document requirements

The documents must include your most recent travel. They must be authorised by the relevant authority (embassy, consulate, or other approved government agency) in your country of origin AND in any other country you've lived in for more than 12 months at a time. In some countries, you may need to apply to separate agencies for traffic and criminal documents.

The documents should include your full name, date of birth, passport number and/or identity number. If we can't easily match the details on your foreign documentation to the details on your application, this could lead to delays in the time it takes to process your application.

If the documents aren't in English, they must be translated into English by an authorised translator.

Getting the documents

Getting these documents is your responsibility, and at your cost. This may affect the time taken for application processing. The Transport Agency has no influence over these factors.

See the table on page 4 for useful information about common countries and timeframes.

How to supply the documents

You can email the documents in PDF format to PVIO@nzta.govt.nz, mail certified copies to Licensing Assessments, NZ Transport Agency, Private Bag 11777, Palmerston North 4442, or provide certified copies with the form when you make your application at the agent.

Please note: if you send original documents they won't be returned, unless you provide a self-addressed pre-paid courier bag.

If you've already provided documents to Immigration New Zealand, you may be able to supply them again to us. If you don't have copies of the documents, contact Immigration New Zealand.

Immigration status

If you're not a New Zealand citizen or permanent resident, your work permit or visa must approve work in the appropriate industry before a passenger endorsement can be granted.

Please provide a copy of your work permit or visa with your application.

Endorsement length

You must choose whether you want your endorsement to last for one year or five years.

When the term of your endorsement has finished, you must renew the endorsement again.

Medical certificate requirements

It's important that commercial drivers are in good health. We want to ensure that you won't cause an accident through a health-related incident when you're responsible for the lives of passengers or driving large vehicles on public roads.

To show that you're in good health you must either:

- provide an original *Medical certificate for driver licence* (DL9) (not older than 60 days) that has been completed by a New Zealand-registered medical practitioner, or
- have previously provided the Transport Agency with a medical certificate for a commercial licence within the last five years.

You'll need to provide a medical certificate if you are turning 75 years of age or older, regardless of when you last provided a medical certificate.

You'll also need to provide a new certificate if you have developed a medical condition that could affect your driving, or a condition has worsened since presenting your last certificate.

Getting a medical certificate:

- Ask your doctor to complete a medical certificate (DL9) for you. The certificate will either state that you are safe to drive, or set out the conditions you must follow to drive safely
- Your doctor will have copies of the form. The Transport Agency have issued guidelines so it is clear which medical conditions are and are not acceptable
- You're responsible for the cost of getting your certificate. The cost varies from doctor to doctor.

If your doctor is concerned over whether you're medically fit to drive, it's common they'll seek a second opinion from an occupational therapist.

Eyesight requirements

Good vision is essential to driving a vehicle safely. Your doctor may check your eyesight when they issue your medical certificate. If they don't, you can prove that your eyesight is acceptable by:

- passing an eyesight check at a driver licensing agent, or
- presenting an original eyesight or medical certificate issued by a New Zealand registered optometrist or doctor (medical practitioner) (no more than 60 days old).

You may take the eyesight test while wearing glasses or contact lenses. Your licence will then have a condition that you must always wear these while driving.

If you try to pass the eyesight check at an agent and fail, then you must provide a satisfactory eyesight or medical certificate. Your application won't be completed (and you won't get a licence) until you've provided the certificate.

Sight in only one eye can dramatically affect your ability to judge distance. If you can only see out of one eye, or only have one eye, you must present an acceptable certificate stating that you're safe to drive.

What happens once everything is complete?

If you are cleared and your application is granted, your endorsement will be approved and your new licence will be made and sent to you.

If you're not cleared, you'll receive a letter explaining this and the process you may take to appeal the decision in the district court.

Use our online tracking tool at www.nzta.govt.nz/track-your-PVIO to view your application status:

| Status | What does this mean? |
|-----------------------|--|
| Received | We've got your application, but we haven't started working on it yet. We'll send you an email to let you know it's been received. |
| Gathering information | We're waiting for something. For example, we could be waiting for vetting information from the police, more information from a foreign country, or reviewing your medical certificate. We'll contact you if we need more information from you. |
| Processing | We've got all the information we need, and we're now assessing your application. |
| Completed | We've finished processing your application. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• If your passenger endorsement is approved, we'll send you a new photo driver licence (and ID card if relevant) within 7-10 days.• If your passenger endorsement is declined, we'll send you a letter explaining why, and what you can do. |

Renewing your endorsements

Some of the above steps are simplified or different if you are renewing your endorsement. Read Factsheet 61 *Renewing driver licence endorsements* for more information.

Rights and Responsibilities

Drivers with P endorsements have different rights and responsibilities than other drivers. Please refer to the following factsheets for information about small passenger service licences, vehicles requirements and your rights and responsibilities.

- *Factsheet 78: Passenger Services*
- *Factsheet 47: Transport Service Licences*
- *Factsheet 15: Passenger service vehicles*
- *Factsheet 21: Rights and responsibilities of small passenger service drivers*
- *Factsheet 02: Work time and logbooks*

More information

If you have any questions regarding getting or holding a P endorsement for carrying passengers, please call us on 0800 822 422 for advice.

Note: This information is provided as a general guide only, and does not cover everything in the law. It is not the source of the law.

| Common countries you may need documentation from | | |
|---|---|-------------------------------|
| Country | Contact Details | Average timeframe |
| Australia | Australian Federal Police www.afp.gov.au/what-we-do/police-checks/national-police-checks For Traffic Offence History please contact the State Authority | Approximately 20 working days |
| Canada | Royal Canadian Mounted Police www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en | Approximately six months |
| Fiji | Fiji Police Force www.police.gov.fj | Approximately three months |
| India | High Commission of India www.hicomind.org.nz | Approximately 20 working days |
| Japan | Consulate General Of Japan www.nz.emb-japan.go.jp | Approximately six months |
| Philippines | Land Transportation Office www.lto.gov.ph/ | Approximately six months |
| Samoa | Ministry of Police and Prison Email: consulgeneral@samoaconsulate.org.nz | Approximately three months |
| South Africa | South African Police Service www.sahc.org.au | Approximately six months |
| United Kingdom (including, Scotland, Wales, Ireland) | ACRO Criminal Records Office www.acro.police.uk DVLA (Traffic) https://www.gov.uk/view-driving-licence | Approximately 20 working days |
| United States of America | FBI https://www.fbi.gov/services/cjis/identity-history-summary-checks For Traffic Offence History please contact the State Authority | Approximately six months |

For any other country that is not listed above please contact the Embassy or Consulate General of the relevant country. Go to <https://www.mfat.govt.nz/en/embassies/> for a list of embassies in New Zealand.

For some countries the time frame for obtaining these documents can take up to six months.

The information in this factsheet is a general guide only. It is not the source of the law and should not be used in place of authoritative legal documents. Some factsheets are updated frequently and print versions can quickly become out of date. If the currency of the information you are reading is important, check the factsheet index on our website (www.nzta.govt.nz/factsheets) or call us on 0800 822 422.

Contact details

- Call our contact centre: 0800 822 422.
- Visit our website: www.nzta.govt.nz.
- Email us: info@nzta.govt.nz.
- Write to us: NZ Transport Agency, Private Bag 11777, Palmerston North 4442.