

GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS AND FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs in appendix)

The following guidance notes along with the Appendix should be included with all application forms.

These Guidance Notes and FAQs can be made available in other formats upon request.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS AND CATEGORY SPECIFIC GUIDANCE

Restrictions on access times, number of permits allowed, supporting documents and various other requirements differ between categories. To ensure that you follow the correct procedure for the type of permit, please check the relevant permit category below:

Residents' access

Long-term permits may be issued for residents' access.

Dwellings having vehicular access from streets or roads outside the restricted zone shall not be eligible for a residents' access permit.

Supporting Documents:

- Proof of ownership or usage of vehicle (*see appendix*); **and**
- Proof of residency (*see appendix*).

Church access

Long-term permits may be issued for church access.

Applications may be considered from individuals (e.g. ministers, elders, etc.) involved in church work, which requires them to use a vehicle on a daily or weekly basis for the conveyance of goods and / or equipment to and from the church / church hall.

The church premises must be accessed solely from a road / street within the restricted zone.

A maximum of three access permits may be issued to a church, with the option of including two additional vehicle registrations on each permit.

Supporting documents:

- Proof of ownership or usage of vehicle (*see appendix*); **and**
- Proof of need for the permit in the form of a typed letter on headed paper from the church confirming that vehicle access is required.

Off-street car parking access

The parking facility must be accessed solely from a road / street within the restricted zone.

Applications for access for off-street parking for residential properties shall be considered under residents' access.

Supporting documents:

- Proof of ownership or usage of vehicle (*see appendix*); **and**
- Proof of usage of car park in the form of:

a) a typed letter on headed paper, signed by the car park owner or representative confirming that the applicant is entitled to use the car park and requires access to it on a daily basis; or

b) a copy of a contract or agreement between the applicant or applicant's employer and the owner of the car park, signed by the car park owner or representative confirming that the applicant uses the car park on a regular basis.

Banking access

Long and short-term permits may be issued for access into a restricted zone to visit banks.

Applications shall only be accepted: -

- where the bank is within the restricted zone (e.g. postcode, street name, etc), and
- from individuals who bank over £5,000, and / or a high percentage of coins, per visit.

Long-term permits may be issued where an individual or business requires access to the bank at least once a month.

Short-term permits may be issued for one-off occasions e.g. depositing funds or proceeds from fundraisers, charity events, etc.

A maximum waiting time of 15 minutes shall be imposed on vehicles displaying a banking access permit in the restricted zone.

Where two or more vehicles alternate on a regular basis to visit the bank (for security reasons), then the registrations of all vehicles, up to a maximum of 3, may be submitted with the application form for inclusion on the permit.

Supporting documents:

- Proof of ownership or usage of vehicle (*see appendix*); **and**
- Proof of banking over £5,000 and / or a high percentage of coins per visit. A letter from the bank confirming this and the frequency of lodgements shall be required. Long-term permits shall only be issued where access to the bank is required at least once a month.

Business access

Long-term permits may be issued to wedding car companies or undertakers / funeral homes. A maximum of three access permits may be issued to a wedding car company or undertaker / funeral home, with the option of including two additional

vehicle registrations on each permit. A valid reason must be submitted with the application form for requesting additional registrations on a permit:

Supporting documents:

- Proof of ownership or usage of vehicle (*see appendix*); **and**
- Proof that access is required. A letter from the company should confirm that access is required to:

a) Their own premises, where these premises are accessed through the restricted zone (proof of address required);

b) A residence whose only vehicular access is through the zone; or

c) A church, where the desired vehicular access is through the zone.

The term residence includes buildings such as residential / care homes for the elderly and hospitals / hospices.

Essential maintenance / repairs to buildings access

Short-term permits may be issued for essential maintenance (usually one-off items) and essential repair work on buildings.

Permits may only be issued where: -

1. The location of the work is within the restricted zone; and / or
2. The only access is from a road / street within the restricted zone.

Only essential vehicles shall be granted access.

A maximum of three access permits may be issued to each firm, with the option of including two additional vehicle registrations on each permit.

Supporting documents:

- Proof of ownership or usage of vehicle (*see appendix*);
- Verification of access hours requested and destination in the form of a typed letter on headed paper signed by the employer; and

- Proof of need to carry out work in the form of:

- a) a copy of a contract or agreement between the applicant and the employer, signed and dated by the employer; or
- b) where no formal contract exists, a typed letter on headed paper signed and dated by the employer confirming that the applicant is employed to carry out essential maintenance or repairs on the named premises.

Access for Blue Badge holders

This category does not apply to restricted zones within Belfast City Centre. An exemption applies within Belfast which allows a motor vehicle lawfully displaying a Blue Badge unrestricted access to Donegall Place, Castle Place and parts of Castle Street and High Street without an authorisation permit. On all other streets within the Belfast City Centre restricted zone, vehicular access is prohibited for Blue Badge holders.

- In other areas Blue Badge holders may be eligible for long-term permits to access services and / or facilities.
- Access permits for Blue Badge holders shall allow access for a 2-hour period one afternoon per week or two 1-hour periods per week.
- An applicant shall specify the reason for access (e.g. shopping, dentist, doctor) along with approx. location.
- The applicant shall also specify their required times of access on the application form.
- Applicants who put forward a strong case for access to more than one restricted zone may be considered for a second permit. However, a separate application should be made to the relevant Issuing Office.

Where the permit holder's preferred method of transport is taxi, the permit may be temporarily transferred to the taxi subject to the following limitations: -

1. The driver of the taxi must hold a valid taxi driver and PSV licence;
2. The permit shall only be valid when in use for the carriage of the disabled person; and
3. The hours of validity as stated on the permit will apply to the taxi.

Drivers with a disability **must** display their Blue Badge and access permit together when accessing the restricted zone, whether in a private vehicle or licensed taxi.

Supporting documents:

- Proof of disability in the form of a copy of a Blue Badge issued by the Department for Regional Development or production of the Badge in person at the local issuing office.

Community transport access

Long and short-term permits may be available to local community transport providers and other such groups who provide essential door-to-door transport services to persons having severe mobility impairment or who live in areas with limited public transport services.

Use of the permit shall be restricted to conveyance of goods hours as detailed in the relevant order (e.g. 17:00-11:00 or 18:00-11:00).

A maximum of three permits may be issued to each organisation.

Supporting documents:

- Proof of ownership or usage of vehicle (*see appendix*);
- Proof of the organisation's address shall be required in the form of a typed letter on headed paper, signed by a representative of the organisation confirming the address; **and**

- Proof of vehicle registration with Driver and Vehicle Licensing Northern Ireland under the small bus permit scheme.

Miscellaneous access

Miscellaneous permits shall be issued for short-term use only.

Supporting documents:

- Proof of ownership or usage of vehicle (*see appendix*); **and**
- Depending on the purpose of the permit, the Issuing Officer may ask for other supporting documents.

APPENDIX

HOW TO USE YOUR PERMIT – FAQs

WHAT FORMS OF PROOF OF RESIDENCY ARE ACCEPTABLE?

Where the issuing office requires proof of residency, the following may be accepted:

- Northern Ireland or Great Britain full driving licence or a Northern Ireland provisional licence, each bearing the photograph of the holder; or
- Passport; or
- Senior Citizen's SmartPass issued under the N Ireland Concessionary Fares Scheme; or
- Electoral identity card.

If none of the above indicates residency matching that of the application, then further additional proof shall be required in the form of a: -

- Current rent book; or
- Utility or rates bill issued within the last six months.

WHAT DO I NEED TO PRODUCE FOR PROOF OF VEHICLE OWNERSHIP OR USAGE?

Where the issuing office requires proof of ownership or usage of a vehicle, the applicant shall produce a current driver's licence together with one of the following: -

- The Registration Document;
- A copy of the vehicle insurance documentation;
- A copy of a hiring / leasing agreement, together with a letter from the employer where appropriate; or

- For company owned vehicles, a typed letter on headed paper & signed by the Company Secretary confirming that the vehicle is made available to the applicant for daily use.

HOW LONG IS MY PERMIT VALID FOR?

If you have been issued with a short-term permit, this will be valid for a maximum of 2 weeks. If you have been issued with a long-term permit it will be valid for a maximum of 12 months. The expiry date will be printed on the front of the permit.

CAN I USE MY PERMIT ON ANOTHER VEHICLE?

No. Permits are issued to specified vehicles only and, with the exception of disabled persons' access permits, shall not be transferable to vehicles not detailed on the permit.

CAN I USE MY PERMIT IN ANOTHER RESTRICTED ZONE?

No. Permits are issued for access to specified restricted zones and shall not be transferable from one zone to another.

DOES MY PERMIT ENTITLE ME TO PARK WITHIN THE ZONE?

No. Possession of a valid permit is not an entitlement to park within a restricted zone.

HOW SHOULD I DISPLAY MY PERMIT?

Permits shall be displayed on the inside surface of the windscreen or a side window facing the kerb, or place the permit on the dashboard area immediately below the windscreen so that the particulars recorded on the front of the permit are clearly visible to a person standing at the front or side of the vehicle.

WITHIN A PEDESTRIAN ZONE, REMEMBER;

- The pedestrian always has priority in the restricted zone;
- Vehicles driven in the pedestrian zone must be driven slowly and with due care and consideration of the pedestrian;
- Never leave a vehicle where it would cause an obstruction or danger to pedestrians or other vulnerable users; and
- Always obey local traffic signs at the entrance / exit to a restricted zone, and traffic signs and parking / waiting restrictions within the zone.

DO I NEED TO RENEW MY PERMIT?

Yes. You will need to apply for a renewal permit if:

- Your permit expires; or
- Your details change, e.g. name, address or vehicle details.

WILL ROADS SERVICE SEND ME OUT A NEW PERMIT ONCE MY CURRENT ONE RUNS OUT?

No. It is the sole responsibility of the permit holder to apply for a renewal permit.

WILL I RECEIVE A RENEWAL NOTICE?

No. Renewal notices will not be sent out to existing permit holders.

MY PERMIT HAS BEEN LOST OR STOLEN, WHAT SHOULD I DO?

You must inform the relevant Issuing Office immediately, where the Issuing Officer will advise you on how to apply for a replacement permit. If a permit has been mislaid and is subsequently found after the issue of a replacement, the original permit must be returned to the issuing office as soon as possible.

ARE THERE CIRCUMSTANCES WHERE MY PERMIT MAY BE REVOKED?

Yes. Permits may be revoked where:

- the applicant's circumstances no longer confer eligibility for a permit; or
- the permit is fraudulently used; or
- a replacement permit has been issued in its place.

CAN I APPEAL IF I AM REFUSED A PERMIT?

Yes. Appeals must be made to the Issuing Office within 2 weeks of an applicant receiving a refusal letter. Only written appeals shall be accepted.