

## MEDICAL REPORT – NOTES

### APPLICATION FOR HACKNEY CARRIAGE OR PRIVATE HIRE DRIVER'S LICENCE



The Council requires a new applicant for either a hackney carriage or private hire driver's licence to show proof of satisfactory medical fitness. Once licensed, the Council will continue to ask for proof of fitness at specified ages, or at any other reasonable time. Generally speaking, medicals must be produced on first application, then at the age of 45, 50, 55, 60 until 65. After this age medicals will be required annually.

You must attend your own GP/practice who will have immediate access to your medical records. Your medical examination must be to the Group II vocational Standard.

All fees associated with a medical examination are payable direct by the applicant or licence holder. The Council is not responsible for fees or charges levied.

If the medical evidence is such that we cannot support your application, we may refer you to the Council's medical referee for an independent assessment and/or also the Licensing Committee of the Council for consideration of your case on individual merit.

#### **A What you have to do**

- 1. Please read carefully the notes on the reverse of this page as the medical standard for licence holders are more stringent than for ordinary car drivers**
- If, after reading the notes, you have any doubts about your ability to meet the medical standards, consult your Doctor and/or Optician **before** you arrange for this medical report to be completed. In the event of your application being refused, the fee you pay your Doctor is not refundable.
- The notes below ("Medical Standards for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Drivers") may help you.
- This report, together with your licence application, must be received by the Borough Council within 4 months of your Doctor signing the report. Failure to submit both forms together will lead to difficulties and delay in processing your application.
- In future, if you develop symptoms of a condition that could affect safe driving (see the notes at section C below), you must inform the Borough Council's Licensing Team immediately.
- Please ensure that you have completed all the sections and that the surgery practice "stamp" has been used where indicated

#### **B What your Doctor has to do**

- Please arrange for your patient to be seen and for a full examination to be undertaken.
- Please complete **pages 1 to 6 inclusive and all of section 10** on page 8 of this report, having regard to the most recent BMA "Notes for Guidance" for Doctors conducting these examinations. The most recent edition of the Medical Commission for Accident Prevention's booklet "Medical Aspects of Fitness to Drive" (1985 edition) should be consulted in association with the latest edition of the Driver & Vehicle Licensing Agency's publication "At a Glance Guide to the Current Medical Standards of Fitness to Drive" (available on the DVLA's website at: [http://www.dvla.gov.uk/at\\_a\\_glance/content.htm](http://www.dvla.gov.uk/at_a_glance/content.htm)).
- Applicants who may be symptom free at the time of the examination should be advised that, if, in future, they develop symptoms of a medical condition which could affect safe driving, and a hackney carriage or private hire driver's licence is held, Test Valley Borough Council's licensing team must be informed immediately.

## C Medical Standards for Hackney Carriage or Private Hire Drivers

Standards for hackney carriage or private hire drivers, as vocational drivers, are higher than those for ordinary car drivers. In line with recommended good practice, Test Valley Borough Council will expect licensed drivers to meet the Group 2 vocational driver standards. Specific medical conditions which will be a bar to obtaining or holding a hackney carriage or private hire driver's licence are as follows: -

### 1. Epilepsy or liability to epileptic attacks

A diagnosis of epilepsy or spontaneous epileptic attack(s) requires 10 years free of further epileptic attack without taking anti-epilepsy medication during that 10-year period. For conditions that cause an increased liability to epileptic attacks, the risk of attacks must fall to that of the general population. Test Valley Borough Council will refuse or revoke the licence if these conditions cannot be met.

### 2. Diabetes

Drivers with insulin-treated diabetes may apply for a Private Hire or Hackney Carriage Drivers Licence provided a medical report from a hospital consultant specialising in diabetes confirms that **1)** You have had no hypoglycaemic events requiring the help of another person in the last 12 months. **2)** You must have full awareness of the symptoms of hypoglycaemia. **3)** You must be able to show an understanding of the risks of hypoglycaemia. **4)** You must regularly check your blood sugar/glucose levels at least twice daily and at times relevant to driving. This must be done using a blood sugar/glucose meter with a memory function to measure and record blood glucose levels. **5)** You must keep a fast acting carbohydrate in your vehicle at all times when driving. **6)** You will be required to attend an examination every 12 months with a consultant specialising in the treatment of diabetes. You must have at least 3 months of blood sugar/glucose readings available on the memory of your blood sugar/glucose meter for the consultant to inspect. **7)** You must have no other medical condition which would make you a danger when driving using a vocational entitlement. **8)** You will be required to sign an agreement to comply with the directions of the doctors treating your diabetes and immediately report any significant change to your condition to the DVLA and the Licensing Section. Please refer to the section 4 "Other Medical Conditions" below.

### 3. Eyesight

All applicants must be able to read in good light with glasses or corrective lenses if necessary, a number plate at 20.5 metres (67 feet) or 20 metres (65 feet), where narrower characters are displayed (50 mm wide). The characters displayed on all new and replacement number plates manufactured from September 2001 are 50 mm in width instead of 57 mm. and, if glasses or contact lenses are required to do so, these must be worn while driving. In addition: -

Visual Acuity

#### (i) Applicants must have: -

- ◆ \* a visual acuity of at least 6/9 in the better eye; and
- ◆ \* a visual acuity of at least 6/12 in the worse eye; and
- ◆ \* If these are achieved by correction the **uncorrected** visual acuity in each eye must be no less than 3/60.

An applicant who held a Test Valley hackney carriage or private hire driver's licence before 1<sup>st</sup> January 1997 and who has uncorrected visual acuity of less than 3/60 in only one eye may be able to meet the required standard.

An applicant who held a hackney carriage or private hire driver's licence before 1<sup>st</sup> March 1992 but who does not meet the standard in (i) above **may** still qualify for a licence. Please contact the licensing team if you require further information.

#### (ii) Normal binocular field of vision

The second E.C. Directive requires a normal binocular field of vision for Group 2 Drivers

#### (iii) Monocular vision

Drivers who have monocular vision will not meet the Group 2 standard.

#### (iv) Uncontrolled symptoms of double vision (diplopia)

Uncontrolled symptoms of double vision preclude licensing. As monocular vision is a bar, the treatment for double vision with a patch will not meet the Group 2 standard.

**Please note that a failure to meet the epilepsy, diabetes or eyesight requirements will normally result in the refusal of an application.**

#### **4. Other Medical Conditions**

**In addition to those medical conditions mentioned above, an applicant or licence holder is likely to be refused if they are unable to meet the national recommended guidelines in cases of:-**

- ◆ \* Within six weeks of myocardial infarction, an episode of unstable angina, CABG or coronary angioplasty.
- ◆ \* Angina, heart failure, or cardiac arrhythmia which remains uncontrolled.
- ◆ Implanted cardiac defibrillator.
- ◆ \* Hypertension where the blood pressure is persistently 180 systolic or more or 100 diastolic or more.
- ◆ \* A stroke or TIA within the last 12 months.
- ◆ Unexplained loss of consciousness with liability to recurrence.
- ◆ \* Meniere's and other sudden and disabling vertigo, within the last 12 months, with a liability to recurrence.
- ◆ Insuperable difficulty in communicating by telephone in an emergency.
- ◆ \* Major brain surgery and/or recent severe head injury with serious continuing after effects.
- ◆ \* Parkinson's disease, multiple sclerosis or other chronic neurological disorders likely to affect safe driving.
- ◆ \* Psychotic illness within the past three years.
- ◆ Serious psychiatric illness.
- ◆ If major psychotropic or neuroleptic medication is being taken.
- ◆ \* Alcohol and/or drug misuse within the last 12 months or alcohol and/or drug dependency or use in the past three years.
- ◆ \* Dementia.
- ◆ Any malignant condition, within the last 2 years, with a significant liability to metastasise to the brain.
- ◆ \* Any other serious medical condition likely to affect the safe driving of a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle.

#### **5. Tiredness: Sleep Disorders**

Up to one fifth of accidents on motorways and other monotonous roads may be caused by drivers falling asleep at the wheel.

Many accidents are attributed to "driver inattention" but once vehicle faults, traffic offences, poor road or weather conditions, alcohol and specific medical causes are excluded, closer inspection suggests driver sleepiness may be the cause. Evidence for this includes the apparent failure to respond to traffic and road conditions generally and, in particular, the absence of signs of emergency braking.

Driver sleepiness may be caused by modern life styles preventing adequate rest. It may be made worse by shift working combined with the monotonous nature of certain types of driving. Alertness fluctuates naturally throughout the day. Driving between 02:00 and 07:00 increases the risk of a sleep related accident. Most people also tend to be less alert during the mid-afternoon or after a heavy meal. All drivers need to address these problems responsibly.

However, some medical conditions may cause excessive sleepiness. These will greatly increase any normal tendency to sleepiness.

The commonest medical cause is **Obstructive Sleep Apnoea Syndrome (OSA)**. This condition occurs most commonly, but not exclusively, in overweight individuals, particularly those with a large collar size. Partners often complain about the snoring and notice that sufferers seem to have irregular breathing during sleep. Sufferers of OSA rarely wake from sleep feeling fully refreshed and tend to fall asleep easily when relaxing.

OSA is one of the few medical conditions that has been shown to increase significantly the risk of traffic accidents. However, once diagnosed, there is very effective treatment available, normally through specialist centres.

The greatest danger is prior to diagnosis, when the significance of the symptoms is not appreciated. A road traffic accident may be the first clear indication of the condition. All drivers, especially professional drivers, and doctors need to be much more aware of the risks of sleepiness from this treatable cause.

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