

Passenger service vehicles

Vehicle requirements

Passenger service vehicles (PSVs) are:

- small passenger service vehicles with 12 seats or less, including the driver
- large passenger service vehicles with more than 12 seating positions

PSVs are vehicles used in an operation where carrying passengers is an integral part of the business. The most obvious passenger service vehicles are buses, taxis and shuttles. Increasingly private vehicles are being used to provide a passenger service (eg app-based services). These vehicles may be considered a passenger service vehicle and need to meet requirements.

What is a passenger service?

A passenger service is principally *carrying passengers in a motor vehicle for hire or reward* including when the vehicle is hired out and a driver is provided. Vehicles capable of *carrying 13 or more people* are also considered to be passenger services whether for hire or reward or not. This includes private and rental vehicles where exemptions do not apply.

For more information about exempt services see Factsheet 18 *Volunteer drivers and exempt passenger services* or call us on 0800 822 422 to discuss your specific circumstance.

Refer to The Land Transport Act 1998 and its amendments for a detailed definition of a passenger service.

What requirements does my vehicle need to meet?

All PSVs have to meet the requirements of the Land Transport Rule: Passenger Service Vehicles 1999 (the PSV Rule).

The purpose of the PSV Rule is to ensure that all PSVs meet general safety requirements and vehicle standards. It covers in detail, for example, emergency exit requirements and measures to prevent overloading. Areas included are:

- entrances and exits (doors and doorways)
- aisles (space, steps and ramps)
- seating (passenger and drivers seats, access and vision)
- emergency exits (location, signs and design)
- safety features (vehicle body, fire-fighting, baggage, signage and more)
- stability and structural strength (including roof-racks)
- special equipment for persons with disabilities (including wheelchair hoists and ramps)
- certificate of loading (maximum number of passengers and maximum loaded weight).

The PSV Rule covers both light PSVs (those with a gross vehicle mass of 3500 kilograms or less) and heavy PSVs (those with a gross vehicle mass over 3500 kilograms).

The PSV Rule specifies the legal requirements for PSV design and construction (eg structural strength and roll-over protection, audible reversing alarms and safety requirements for special equipment such as wheelchair hoists and ramps when present).

If you want to operate a PSV, we strongly recommend you read the PSV Rule. If you don't read it you may face some unexpected requirements and therefore expenses. Copies of the PSV Rule are available in some libraries and in bookstores that sell legislation. The rule is also available on our website (www.nzta.govt.nz).

Certificates of fitness

PSVs have to be inspected to make sure they meet the requirements of the PSV Rule before they can be operated. A list of agents who provide inspections can be found on the Transport Agency website: www.nzta.govt.nz/certificate-of-fitness.

The initial inspection to make sure the vehicle is up to the required level of safety before it can be registered is called entry certification and will also cover the loading of the vehicle. The certificate of loading must be displayed on the vehicle at all times. The on-going regular checks are certificate of fitness (CoF) inspections. All PSVs must have a current CoF.

When a vehicle is entry certified it must meet two sets of requirements. The first are the vehicle standards and other safety requirements that apply to any vehicle of its class. The second are the requirements in the PSV Rule.

If you want to start using your own vehicle as a taxi or another type of passenger service vehicle, it will already be registered, but it will still have to undergo a change-of-use certification. The vehicle will also need to meet CoF and PSV Rule requirements.

The PSV Rule includes some requirements for specialist certification. For instance, the roll-over strength requirement and the safety of any equipment for people with special mobility needs must be checked by specialist certifiers appointed by the NZ Transport Agency.

Operating a passenger service

If you want to operate a passenger service, making sure your vehicle complies with the PSV Rule is just one part of the process. In the interests of public safety there are requirements for the vehicle, and a range of different requirements for you, too. You will need a small or large passenger service licence and the driver needs a passenger (P) endorsement on their licence. The endorsement process includes a police check of infringements, pending court cases and criminal convictions both in New Zealand and abroad.

More information on operating a passenger service can be found in the following factsheets or on the Transport Agency website (www.nzta.govt.nz/commercial-driving)

Factsheet 2 *Worktime and logbooks*

Factsheet 21 *Small passenger service drivers: rights and responsibilities*

Factsheet 42 *P endorsements for carrying passengers*

Factsheet 47 *Transport service licences*

Factsheet 70 *Heavy vehicle driver licences*

Factsheet 78 *Passenger Services*

Your nearest Transport Agency office also has information on transport service licences.

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.