

# P endorsements

## for carrying passengers

To 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 not need a P endorsement. Check *Volunteer drivers and exempt passenger services* (Factsheet 18).

### Vehicles

#### Small passenger service vehicle

A small passenger service vehicle has 12 seats or less, including the driver. For example, a taxi, shuttle, app-based service, private hire service. You also need a P endorsement if you’re a dial-a-driver and drive the customer’s vehicle.

To drive a small passenger service vehicle you need:

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

You’ll need to choose a **unique identifier** for your driver ID card. This should be an easy to remember name with up to 8 alphabetic characters.

#### 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
- a current licence for the type of vehicle you’re driving. For example, a class 2 licence for a bus with a gross vehicle mass of 10,000kg
- **a large passenger service licence, or work for someone who holds one.**

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

### Why

To make sure people are safe when using a passenger service, NZTA checks the background of anyone applying for an endorsement to carry passengers – see *Fit and proper person check*.

### What you need

- You must have held a full New Zealand car licence (class 1) for at least 2 years – see *Licensing requirements*.
- If you’ve lived overseas, you’ll need to provide foreign documentation – see *Foreign documentation*.
- You’ll need a medical certificate, unless you’ve given us one in the last 5 years – see *Medical certificate requirements*.
- You’ll need a current passport, New Zealand driver licence, or other form of acceptable ID listed on Factsheet 20: *Identification for driver licensing*.

### How to apply

1. Download and complete the application form. [www.nzta.govt.nz/form-DL20A](http://www.nzta.govt.nz/form-DL20A)
2. Take the completed form and the above documents to a driver licensing agent. Find an agent at [www.nzta.govt.nz/agents](http://www.nzta.govt.nz/agents)
3. Pay the application fee.
4. The agent will take your photo and signature.

### Cost

Type	Term	Application fee	Vetting fee	Total
Small	1 year	\$213.90	\$9.70	<b>\$223.60</b>
	5 years		\$48.50	<b>\$262.40</b>
Large	1 year	\$203.10	\$9.70	<b>\$212.80</b>
	5 years			

### What happens next

Your application is sent to NZTA for processing. We’ll also do the fit and proper person check.

To find out how long your application will take to process, go to [www.nzta.govt.nz/processing-times](http://www.nzta.govt.nz/processing-times).

If you haven’t met some of the requirements, your application will take longer to process.

If you give us your email address, we’ll send you updates on your application status and a link to track your application progress online.

## Application details

### Licensing requirements

To get a P endorsement, you must have held a current full New Zealand car licence (class 1) for at least 2 years.

An overseas licence doesn't qualify, but you may be able to apply for an exemption to recognise overseas driving experience.

To find out more go to [www.nzta.govt.nz/driver-licence-exemption](http://www.nzta.govt.nz/driver-licence-exemption)

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

### Fit and proper person check

To make sure people are safe while using passenger services in New Zealand, we check and monitor the background of all passenger service drivers. This is part of our ongoing commitment to road safety and improving driving standards on our roads.

The background check (vetting) includes:

- transport-related offences – especially safety
- serious behaviour problems
- past complaints about your work in a transport service
- not paying fines for transport-related offences
- criminal offending in New Zealand or overseas, including charges and convictions for violence or sexual offences, drugs or firearms offences, or organised criminal activities.

Once you have your endorsement, we use real-time data to make sure you continue to meet our fit and proper person criteria.

### What if I've had a serious criminal conviction?

You can't hold a P endorsement if you have convictions for some serious criminal offences and were sentenced to more than 12 months in prison.

Serious offences include:

- murder – including attempt, conspiracy or attempting to hire for murder
- sex crimes – including indecent assault
- violent crime – including wounding, shooting or violent robbery
- kidnapping and abduction
- any offence committed outside New Zealand which would result in conviction if the offence was done in New Zealand.

Go to [www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1998/0110/latest/DLM434566.html](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 or keeping a passenger endorsement.

The NZ Police website also has detailed information about these convictions.

If you've been sentenced to 12 months or less for a specified serious offence you may still be able to hold a P endorsement.

If you have any concerns about the fit and proper person check, we recommend you seek independent advice before you submit your application.

### When can the check be done?

You must apply for your passenger endorsement at a driver licensing agent first. Then we start the fit and proper person check.

### Immigration status

You don't need to provide evidence of your immigration status to NZTA.

For more information about working in New Zealand go to [www.immigration.govt.nz/new-zealand-visas](http://www.immigration.govt.nz/new-zealand-visas)

## Foreign documentation

You must provide documents from each country (outside of New Zealand) you have lived in for more than 12 months at a time, since the age of 14.

You'll need:

- police records of any criminal convictions you have

OR

- confirmation that you have no criminal convictions.

### Document requirements

The documents must be from the relevant authority (police, embassy, consulate, or other approved government agency) from the relevant countries.

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, there could be delays in processing 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. NZTA can't get these documents for you.

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

### Provide the documents with your application

You must provide certified copies with the form when you apply at the agent. **If you don't, your application won't be accepted.**

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.

## Endorsement length

You can choose whether you want your endorsement to last for 1 year or 5 years. The application fee is the same no matter which term you choose.

When the term of your endorsement has finished, you must renew the endorsement if you want to keep working as a passenger service driver.

## Medical certificate requirements

Commercial drivers must be in good health. We want to make sure you won't cause an accident through health-related issues 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:

- give us an original *Medical certificate for driver licence* (DL9) completed by a New Zealand-registered health practitioner and not older than 60 days, or
- have given NZTA a medical certificate for a commercial licence within the last 5 years.

This can be completed by your usual doctor (GP), a registered nurse or nurse practitioner, or a specialist.

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

If you need a medical certificate, you must provide it when you apply for your endorsement at the agent. **If you don't, your application will not be accepted.**

### Getting a medical certificate:

- Ask your health practitioner to complete a medical certificate (DL9) for you. The certificate will either state you are safe to drive, or set out the conditions you must follow to drive safely.
- Your health practitioner will have copies of the form. NZTA has issued clear guidelines on which medical conditions are and are not acceptable.
- You're responsible for the cost of getting your certificate.

If your health practitioner is concerned about whether you're medically fit to drive, they may seek a second opinion from an occupational therapist or another specialist.

## Eyesight requirements

Good vision is essential to driving a vehicle safely. Your health practitioner 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 no more than 60 days old and issued by a New Zealand registered optometrist or health practitioner.

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 fail the eyesight check at an agent, 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 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.

## Track your endorsement application

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

Status	Meaning
Received	We've got your application, but we haven't started working on it yet. We'll 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"><li>• If your passenger endorsement is granted, we'll send you a new photo driver licence (and ID card if relevant) within 7-10 days.</li><li>• If your application is declined, we'll send you a letter explaining why, and what you can do.</li></ul>

## What happens once everything is complete?

If your application is granted, your new licence showing you hold a P endorsement will be sent to you. You must not carry passengers until you get your new licence.

If you don't meet the fit and proper requirements, we'll tell you in writing and give you a chance to explain before we make the final decision. If we decide to decline your application you can appeal our decision to the District Court.

## Renewing your endorsements

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

## Rights and responsibilities

Drivers with P endorsements have different rights and responsibilities than other drivers. Please read the following factsheets for more information:

- *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 about getting or holding a P endorsement for carrying passengers, please call us on 0800 822 422 for advice.

## Common countries you may need documentation from

Country	Contact Details	Average timeframe
Australia	Australian Federal Police <a href="http://www.afp.gov.au/our-services/national-police-checks">www.afp.gov.au/our-services/national-police-checks</a>	Approximately 20 working days
Canada	Royal Canadian Mounted Police <a href="https://rcmp.ca/en/criminal-records">https://rcmp.ca/en/criminal-records</a>	Approximately 6 months
Fiji	Fiji Police Force <a href="http://www.police.gov.fj/forms">www.police.gov.fj/forms</a>	Approximately 3 months
India	High Commission of India <a href="http://www.hciwellington.gov.in/services/">www.hciwellington.gov.in/services/</a>	Approximately 20 working days
Japan	Embassy of Japan in New Zealand <a href="http://www.nz.emb-japan.go.jp/itpr_en/ryoji-police-certificate.html">www.nz.emb-japan.go.jp/itpr_en/ryoji-police-certificate.html</a>	2 to 3 months
Philippines	NBI Clearance <a href="https://clearance.nbi.gov.ph">https://clearance.nbi.gov.ph</a>	Approximately 6 months
Samoa	Samoa High Commission Download form: <a href="https://samoa.org.nz/visa-passport/">https://samoa.org.nz/visa-passport/</a> Email to: <a href="mailto:consulgeneral@samoaconsulate.org.nz">consulgeneral@samoaconsulate.org.nz</a>	Approximately 3 months
South Africa	South African Police Service <a href="http://www.saps.gov.za/services/certificate.php">www.saps.gov.za/services/certificate.php</a>	Approximately 6 months
United Kingdom (including, Scotland, Wales, Ireland)	ACRO Criminal Records Office <a href="https://acro.police.uk/s/acro-services/police-certificates">https://acro.police.uk/s/acro-services/police-certificates</a>	Approximately 20 working days
United States of America	FBI <a href="https://www.fbi.gov/how-we-can-help-you/more-fbi-services-and-information/identity-history-summary-checks">https://www.fbi.gov/how-we-can-help-you/more-fbi-services-and-information/identity-history-summary-checks</a>	Approximately 6 months

For any other country that is not listed above please contact the Embassy or Consulate General of the relevant country.

For a list of embassies in New Zealand go to [www.mfat.govt.nz/en/embassies/](http://www.mfat.govt.nz/en/embassies/)

For some countries the time frame for getting these documents can take up to 6 months.



This factsheet is a general guide only. It doesn't replace legal advice, and your exact requirements will depend on current legislation.

Make sure you have the most up-to-date version of this factsheet by checking [www.nzta.govt.nz/factsheets](http://www.nzta.govt.nz/factsheets)



[www.nzta.govt.nz](http://www.nzta.govt.nz)



0800 822 422



NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi,  
Private Bag 11777, Palmerston North 4442