

Concessionary Travel

Method Statement

Eligibility: Category A – Blind or partially sighted



Eligibility criteria

The England National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS) is a national scheme which is administered in Warwickshire by the WCC. The eligibility criteria have remained unchanged since at least 2011 when WCC took over the scheme from the District and Borough Councils.

As the eligibility criteria are set down in legislation, WCC has no power to alter them, and is unable to issue ENCTS passes to anyone who does not meet the criteria.

An applicant for a pass must live in Warwickshire – this means their sole or principal residence must be within the county.

In addition, applicants for a Disabled Person's Bus Pass must show that they have one or more of the seven qualifying disabilities, as set out in the Transport Act 2000 and accompanying government guidance.

This document outlines how eligibility criteria will be applied in Warwickshire.

Category A

Section 146 of the Transport Act 2000 includes a person who is **"(a) is blind or partially sighted"** as a disabled person who would qualify for a bus pass.

The current (April 2013) Department for Transport Guidance on eligibility says;

"(a) is blind or partially sighted"

33. 'Blind' means having a high degree of vision loss i.e. seeing much less than is normal or perhaps nothing at all. 'Partially sighted' is a less severe loss of vision. Partially sighted people can see more than someone who is blind, but less than a fully sighted person. Blind and partially sighted people can register with their local council. The register is held by the social services or social work department, or by a local voluntary agency, and is confidential.
34. For registration purposes, the term 'blind' now becomes 'severely sight impaired (blind)' and partially sighted becomes 'sight impaired (partially sighted)'. The formal notification required to register as "severely sight impaired" or "sight impaired" is a Certificate of Vision Impairment (CVI), signed by a Consultant Ophthalmologist (eye specialist). However, registration is voluntary. The individual should have a copy of their CVI and should be encouraged to register, if they have not already done so, as they may be entitled to various other benefits too.
35. In general terms a person can be registered as severely sight impaired (blind) if they cannot see (with glasses, if worn) the top letter of the eye test chart (used by doctors and opticians) at a distance of 3 metres or less. Some people who can read the top letter of an eye test chart at 3 metres, but not at 6 metres, may still be eligible for registration as blind

if their field of vision is also severely restricted. Only being able to read the top letter at 3 metres is sometimes referred to as 3/60 vision: the person can see at 3 metres what a person with normal vision can see at 60 metres.

36. A person can be registered as sight impaired (partially sighted) if they have a full field of vision but can only read the top letter of the eye test chart at a distance of 6 metres or less (with glasses, if worn). However, if they can read the next three lines down at the same distance, but the field of vision is either moderately or severely restricted, they may still qualify for registration.

37. The Department advises that concessionary travel passes should be issued to people whose sight is so impaired that they would be able to register as severely sight impaired (blind) or sight impaired (partially sighted). Local authorities may, where a person is not on the local authority register, require evidence from an eye specialist, for example an optometrist, that the applicant would qualify to be registered as severely sight impaired (blind) or sight impaired (partially sighted). Advice on how to register can be found on the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) website at:
<http://www.rnib.org.uk/registrationcard>

Further guidance, issued in 2011, specifies how service personnel and veterans can be assessed for eligibility where they have received an award under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS). This says;

AFCS injuries that meet the concessionary travel disability eligibility criteria

1.3 There are a wide range of injuries under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS). Where the description of an injury is considered to be equivalent to having one of the seven disabilities named in the Transport Act 2000 the applicant may be considered automatically eligible for a disabled concessionary travel pass.

1.4 The AFCS Injuries table at Annex A provides details of those injuries that in the view of the Department for Transport meet the existing disability eligibility criteria for the concessionary travel scheme.

WCC will therefore issue passes to individuals who can demonstrate

Category A - Issuing a pass

WCC will therefore issue passes to individuals who can demonstrate that ;

- that they are entitled to be registered as blind (severely sight impaired)
- that they are entitled to be registered as partially sighted (sight impaired)

If vision is impaired, but the customer is not entitled to be registered as blind or partially sighted, then it may still possible to issue a bus pass if the visual impairment means that they would be refused a driving licence. See Category G for further information.

Category A – evidence which can be used

Evidence which can be provided to help show eligibility under category A includes

- A registration number issued by one of the following:
 - Warwickshire Vision Support, or
 - Warwickshire Association for the Blind, or
 - Warwickshire County Council
- Registration card showing registration as severely sight impaired (Blind) or sight impaired (Partially sighted) issued by any local authority in England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland.
- Certificate of Visual Impairment (issued from 2003 onwards)
- Form BD8 (issued up until 2003)
- Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS) award with one of the following injuries;
 - Table 5 – Amputations
 - Item 2: Loss of both eyes or sight in both eyes and loss of either both legs (above or below knee), or both arms (above or below elbow)
 - Table 7 - Senses
 - Item 1: Total deafness and loss of both eyes, or total deafness and total blindness in both eyes, or total deafness and loss of one eye and total blindness in the other eye.
 - Item 2: Loss of eyes
 - Item 3: Total blindness in both eyes
 - Item 4: Loss of one eye and total blindness in the other eye.
 - Item 6: Loss of one eye and permanent damage to the other eye, where visual acuity is correctable to 6/36
 - Item 8: Severe binocular visual field loss

The Warwickshire register is managed by Warwickshire Vision Support (also known as Warwickshire Association for the Blind), on behalf of Warwickshire County Council.

Category A – Evidence which is not acceptable

<i>Evidence</i>	<i>Reason for disregarding</i>
NHS Appointment letter	This does not give enough evidence of a qualifying disability
Standard eye test or report from an optician	An optician is not qualified to diagnose some as sight impaired or severely sight impaired, though they may refer someone to an ophthalmologist for that purpose.
