

Concessionary Travel

Method Statement

Eligibility: Companion (+1) enhancement



Eligibility criteria

The England National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS) does not make provision for a carer to travel with a passholder free of charge.

However, it is open to the Council to provide an enhancement to the pass, which allows free travel for a carer accompanying a Warwickshire passholder. The eligibility criteria for this enhancement are determined by the council

A WCC Companion (+1) enhancement, or add-on, was introduced from 1 January 2024, following a decision by WCC Cabinet.

Companion (+1) add-on – WCC policy

An applicant will be eligible for the companion add-on if they are over the age of 11, qualify for an ENCTS bus pass under the current scheme AND one of the following applies to them:

1. They are registered severely sight impaired (blind) or entitled to be registered as such.
2. They need to be accompanied or supervised 24 hours a day due to their disability e.g. challenging behaviours, an unstable or unpredictable medical condition, or severe cognitive or mental impairment
3. They have a physical disability which means they are unable to get on or off the bus without the assistance of another person.

These are known as the three 'reasons', to differentiate them from the eligibility criteria which form part of the statutory ENCTS scheme.

The bus driver operating the vehicle e.g. lowering a ramp or operating a low floor bus, is not included in the description of 'assistance of another person', as they are operating the vehicle rather than acting as a carer or companion.

The companion (+1) add-on entitles the disabled pass holder to have one carer or companion with them who can also travel free of charge. A pass is of the same design as a standard concessionary bus pass but also has an identifying symbol '+1' in the top right-hand corner if the passholder has this enhancement.

Companions can travel with the pass holder at any time that the passholder is entitled to travel. A companion CANNOT use the pass without the pass holder.

A companion is a carer who is with you because you cannot manage on your own. This can be any of the following, and it does not need to be the same person every time;

- family member, or
- friend, or
- someone who is employed e.g. staff from a care home, or directly employed carer

It doesn't have to be the same person for each journey.

Although the concessionary bus pass allows free travel for the pass holder throughout England, the companion can only travel free when the journey starts in Warwickshire, and the companion and the pass holder must get on and off the bus at the same point.

The pass holder does not have to have a companion travelling on the pass with them e.g. the carer may have their own pass, or someone who is registered blind may be travelling alone.

It is possible for someone to meet the companion enhancement criteria but not qualify for an ENCTS pass. This is due to the ENCTS eligibility criteria which are set down in legislation, and which are outside the control of the Council.

Companion (+1) enhancement - Issuing a pass

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

- they are resident in Warwickshire, and
- they are over the age of 11, and
- one of the three reasons applies to them.

Companion (+1) enhancement - Evidence which can be used

Evidence which can be provided to help show eligibility for the Companion (+1) enhancement includes;

Reason 1: Registered blind (severely sight impaired) or entitled to be registered

- CVI form showing registration as severely sight impaired (blind)
- BD8 form showing registration as severely sight impaired (blind)
- Registration card from a UK local authority – severely sight impaired (blind)
- Warwickshire Registration number if you registered as severely sight impaired (blind)

Evidence for Reason 1 does not need to be dated recently

Reason 2: Need to be accompanied or supervised 24 hours a day due to their disability

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| • Higher rate Attendance Allowance | People over state retirement age can claim this if they need: “help or supervision throughout both day and night, or a medical professional has said you’re nearing the end of life” |
| • Higher rate Care Component of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) | This is paid for a child if they need: “help or supervision throughout both day and night, or they’re nearing the end of life (for example, because of a life-limiting illness)”. We will accept this for an applicant aged between 11 and 18. |
| • Completed CT-COMP2 form | To be acceptable, this needs to include sufficient information about 24-hour care |
| • Completed CT-F1 form | To be acceptable, this needs to include sufficient information about 24-hour care |
| • Completed CT-F3 form | To be acceptable, this needs to include sufficient information about 24-hour care |

Evidence for Reason 2 needs to be dated within the last 12 months.

Reason 3 : Has a physical disability which means they are unable to get on or off the bus without the assistance of another person

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Completed CT-COMP3 form | To be acceptable, this needs to include sufficient information to demonstrate that Reason 3 applies to the applicant. |
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Companion (+1) enhancement - Evidence which is not acceptable

| | Document | Reason for rejection |
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| All Reasons | Evidence the applicant is younger than 11 years old | Does not qualify. |
| Reason 1 | Evidence showing registration as sight impaired (partially sighted) | Does not qualify |
| Reason 2 | PIP award | There is nothing in the PIP award which indicates that someone needs 24 hour care.* |
| Reason 3 | PIP or DLA evidence | This does not tell us about your ability to board a bus. |

***PIP awards and Reason 2**

From July 2025, PIP awards are no longer accepted as evidence for the companion (+1) pass. A COMP2 form, or other evidence of 24 hour care, will be necessary if applying under Reason 2. Anyone who has applied using a PIP award as evidence for Reason 2 will be contacted and asked to supply further evidence.

Reasons for issuing the +1 add-on were confirmed by WCC Cabinet in January 2025 and remain unchanged. This change just relates to the evidence needed to show that a Reason applies to an applicant.

Initially we accepted PIP awards as evidence in cases where someone was applying because they require 24 hour care. We looked at a combination of 12 points for planning and following a journey (or 8 points for communicating), and the enhanced rate for daily living. However, this created a loophole where people who do not require 24 hour care were able to apply under Reason 2 because they had the necessary PIP award. This is the reason for the change.

N.B. PIP is still accepted as evidence of eligibility for a bus pass without the +1 add-on under Category C (without speech) and category D (Ability to walk).
