

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

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher rate Attendance Allowance 	People over state retirement age can claim this if they need help during both the day and the night.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher rate Care Component of DLA 	This is paid for a child who has daytime and night-time care needs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PIP Enhanced rate for Daily living PLUS 12 points for 'Planning and following a journey' 	Someone with 12 points cannot follow the route of a familiar journey without another person, an assistance dog or an orientation aid. The enhanced rate for daily living also indicates that they have high care needs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PIP Enhanced rate for Daily living PLUS 12 points for 'Communicating' (may also be referred to as 'Communicating verbally' or 'Speaking, hearing, and understanding what is said') 	Someone with 12 points cannot express or understand verbal information at all even with communication support. The enhanced rate for daily living also indicates that they have high care needs.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PIP Enhanced rate for Daily living PLUS 8 points for 'Reading and understanding signs, symbols and words' 	Someone will receive 8 points if they cannot read or understand signs, symbols or words at all. The enhanced rate for daily living also indicates that they have high care needs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed CT-COMP2 form 	To be acceptable, this needs to include sufficient information about 24-hour care
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed CT-F1 form 	To be acceptable, this needs to include sufficient information about 24-hour care
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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

<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
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 which does not have Enhanced rate for Daily living	Someone who does not have the Enhanced rate for daily living is unlikely to need care 24/7
Reason 3	PIP or DLA evidence	This does not tell us about your ability to board a bus.
