
Changes to Driving Licence Medical Certificates and Driving Licence Medical Standards: Vision, Epilepsy and Diabetes

A Guide

Part1: Introduction

This Guide

This guide has been produced by Driver and Vehicle Standards to provide information and guidance on the changes to the rules around medical standards related to driving and the requirements to provide a medical certificate either on application or whilst holding a driving licence issued in Jersey.

This guide focuses on the changes relating to **Vision, Epilepsy** and **Diabetes**.

For further details contact dvsinfo@gov.je

Background

On Saturday 5th October 2024, amendments to Jersey's legislation concerning driving licence medical certificate requirements and standards, will come into force.

These changes will in the main align Jersey's medical standards with those of the UK and the European Union, enhancing road safety and standardising knowledge requirements for the medical community.

These changes may affect drivers who apply for, hold, or renew their driving licence after that date.

Amongst other changes, the new arrangements will specifically affect drivers who have issues with Vision or have Epilepsy or Diabetes.

The Introduction of group 1 and 2 licences

Medical standards that licence applicants and holders need to meet, vary depending on the type of vehicle categories that they are applying for or can drive. Currently medical standards for licences that include categories C or D (heavy goods and large passenger vehicles) differ from other licences.

Following these changes, medical standards will refer to either a **'group1'** or **'group 2'** licence, with each group containing the following licence categories:

Group 1 ‘Leisure’ licences, comprising of vehicles which are more leisure in nature and are therefore not subject to the same medical standards as group 2. Group 1 licence categories are, A1, A, B1, B, BE, f, h, k or p.

Group 2 ‘Vocational’ licences, comprising of vehicles whose size and weights are larger and therefore require more complex handling and manoeuvring or are used more frequently, and therefore drivers are subject to more stringent medical standards. Group 2 licence categories are C1, C, D1, D, C1E, CE, D1E or DE.

Those who may be affected by the change

In general, those likely to be affected most by the changes includes:

Those with certain Licence Categories

- Those who drive ‘group 2’ vehicles, which includes medium or heavy goods, and passenger carrying vehicles with more than 8 passenger seats will be subject to additional medical requirements. A medical will be required on initial application, however drivers over 45 years of age will now require a medical every 5 years (beforehand 10 years), and then annually once 65 years of age or over (remains unchanged).

Note: This will include drivers who passed their car driving test in Jersey in 1997 or before, who were given what are now group 2 categories as part of that licence.

Those with Medical Conditions (see further information below)

- **Vision:** Field of vision will now be considered as part of the standards in addition to the current simple number plate check and revised visual acuity requirements.
- **Epilepsy and Seizures:** Those affected by Epilepsy and Seizures are subject to revised restrictions when applying for and whilst holding a driving licence.
- **Diabetes:** Those affected by Diabetes who are treated with insulin or other hypoglycaemic drugs must declare their condition and may need to meet certain conditions when applying for whilst holding a driving licence.

As before this change, all licence holders are required to self-declare medical conditions at initial issue and renewal of a driving licence. The medical conditions also relate to the period that the licence is in force; relevant medical issues that could impair a licence holder’s ability to drive should be reported to the Parish on an ongoing basis.

Licence validity Periods

Having introduced the concept of group 1 and group 2 licences, the validity periods for driving licences will be amended based on those groups.

Group 1 licence will usually be valid for 10 years.

Group 2 licences will usually be valid for 10 years, until the applicant is 45, when it becomes 5 years, and then 1 year once the driver is 65 or over.

These changes will also allow the Issuing Authority (Parish Connétable) to issue a licence for a period less than stated above where the applicant has a relevant medical condition and it is felt appropriate to limit the validity of a licence.

When a medical certificate is required

A medical certificate will be required when:

- a) the applicant has declared on the licence application that they are or have suffered from a relevant medical condition, or
- b) the application is for a group 2 category, or
- c) the applicant is over the age of 45 and is applying for a group 2 category

Medical conditions whilst holding a licence

As before this change, during the life of the licence, licence holders must tell the Parish if:

- a) they develop a 'relevant' medical condition or disability that is likely to affect them for more than 3 months; or
- b) a condition or disability has got worse since the licence was issued.

In such circumstances the Parish Connétable can require the licence holder to have a medical with a Jersey registered medical practitioner to confirm whether or not they can continue to hold a licence.

Having a medical certificate completed

The medical certificate must be completed by a Jersey registered medical practitioner and the GP or consultant may be the most appropriate person to complete it given their knowledge of the applicant. The medical certificate form (GP1 and GP2) will be used to guide the medical.

At the medical, the medical practitioner may examine the applicant and complete a medical certificate form and declare whether they are fit to drive or not.

Available Guidance

Guidance issued by the UK Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) can be found here:

[Assessing fitness to drive: a guide for medical professionals](#)

Part 2: Vision

Current legislation concerning vision standards

Applicants and holders of Jersey issued driving licences are currently required to be able to read at a distance of 20.5 metres in good daylight (with the aid of glasses or contact lenses if worn) a series of 6 letters and figures of the same size and arrangement as those prescribed for the registration mark (number plate) of a motor car.

Additionally, applicants or holders of a driving licence that includes categories C or D (lorry, bus or coach) are required to meet the following acuity standards:

- With abnormal sight in 1 or both eyes, visual acuity of at least 6/9 in the better eye and 6/12 in the other eye and, if corrective lenses are worn, the uncorrected acuity in each eye is at least 3/60
- with sight in only 1 eye, visual acuity in that eye is no worse than 6/9.

Changes for drivers with vision issues once these amendments come into effect

Once these changes come into effect, all applicants and licence holders will be required to read a number plate from 20 metres.

Vision standards will also include for all licence applicants and holders:

- visual acuity
- field of vision.

with different standards depending on which categories are included in the licence (Group 1 only, or Group 2)

Group 1 ‘Leisure’ licences (Car or Motorcycle):

The visual acuity and field of vision standards for Group 1 will be as follows:

- a visual acuity of at least 6/12 (wearing corrective lenses if necessary)
- visual field of 120 degrees horizontally, with at least 50 degrees left and right
- visual field extension of at least 20 degrees above and below the horizontal plane
- be free of any significant visual field defect within the central radius of 20 degrees.

Group 1 licence holders who do not meet the vision field standards may be assessed as fit to apply for or hold a driving licence, if they meet the following requirements:

- they meet the group 1 visual acuity standard
- the visual field defect has been present for at least the last 12 months
- the visual field defect was caused by an isolated event or by a non-progressive condition
- there is no other condition or pathology present that is regarded as progressive and likely to affect the visual field
- there is clinical confirmation of full functional adaptation
- the applicant has sight in both eyes
- there is no uncontrolled diplopia
- there is no other impairment of visual function, including glare sensitivity, contrast sensitivity or impairment of twilight vision.

and that the parochial authority is satisfied that the relevant medical condition is not likely to cause the applicant to be a source of danger to the public when driving a motor vehicle authorised by the licence.

Group 2 ‘Vocational’ (Minibus, Bus, Coach, or Lorry):

The visual acuity and field of vision standards for Group 2 will be as follows:

- have sight in both eyes
- not have uncontrolled diplopia
- a visual acuity of at least 6/7.5 in the better eye and at least 6/60 in the other eye.
- Corrective lenses may be worn to meet the acuity requirements provided it is well tolerated or have a power not exceeding 8 dioptries
- visual field of 160 degrees horizontally, with at least 70 degrees left and right
- visual field extension of at least 30 degrees above and below the horizontal plane
- be free of any significant visual field defect within the central radius of 30 degrees
- there is no other impairment of visual function, including glare sensitivity, contrast sensitivity or impairment of twilight vision.

Part 3: Diabetes

Current legislation concerning drivers with diabetes

Currently drivers who are treated with insulin are not permitted to hold a driving licence which includes categories C or D (lorry, bus or coach). Other drivers with diabetes are generally assessed as fit to drive provided their condition is well managed and that they are not considered to be a danger to the public whilst driving.

Changes for drivers with diabetes once these amendments come into effect

Once these changes come into effect drivers will need to declare that they have diabetes treated with insulin or another medication which carries a risk of inducing hypoglycaemia to their Parish Hall, either at application for a licence (initial or renewal) or if they develop the condition whilst holding a driving licence, following which a medical certificate will be required.

The standards that drivers need to meet in relation to their condition depend on the categories that their licence includes (group 1 only, or group 2).

Group 1 ‘Leisure’ licences (Car or Motorcycle):

Drivers that hold only group 1 categories that have diabetes treated with insulin or another drug which carries a risk of inducing hypoglycaemia, will be permitted to driver provided they:

- have had no more than **one** hypoglycaemia event whilst awake requiring the assistance of another person with in the last 12 months, and none within the last three months.
- do not have impaired awareness of hypoglycaemia
- have a medical completed by a Jersey registered medical practitioner, during which complete a declaration that they understand the risks of hypoglycaemia and how to control it, to monitor their blood glucose levels and undertake to attend medical appointments as advised to them, if they are treated with insulin
- satisfy the parochial authority that they are not likely to be a source of danger to the public.

Group 2 ‘Vocational’ (Minibus, Bus, Coach, or Lorry):

Drivers who hold group 2 categories that are treated with insulin or another drug which carries a risk of inducing hypoglycaemia, will be permitted to driver provided they:

- have had **no** hypoglycaemia events whilst awake requiring the assistance of another person with in the last 12 months
- do not have impaired awareness of hypoglycaemia, or an inability to detect the onset of it because of an absence of some warning symptoms
- have been treated with insulin for a minimum of four weeks, during which time driving is not permitted
- when treated with insulin, undergo a medical examination with a **specialist in diabetes**, who must provide a report that the driver has a history of responsible diabetic control and has minimal risk of impairment due to hypoglycaemia

- in the case that the treatment is with another medication which carries a risk of inducing hypoglycaemia, the examination and report can be completed by a registered medical practitioner
- Have a medical certificate completed by a Jersey registered medical practitioner, during which complete a declaration that they understand the risks of hypoglycaemia and undertakes to:
 - monitor their blood glucose levels at least twice daily and at times relevant to driving (for an applicant treated with insulin, using a device that incorporates an electronic memory)
 - comply with directions regarding their treatment for diabetes given by the registered medical practitioner
 - follow the advice of the registered medical practitioner.

General advice

Regardless of a driver's treatment type, the following should be considered:

- Keep fast-acting carbohydrates within easy reach while driving
- Attend an annual examination with a diabetes specialist
- Maintain at least 6 continuous weeks of blood glucose meter readings for inspection by the consultant or registered medical practitioner.

Further Information

Further information about driving with diabetes can be found here: [DVLA information on insulin treated diabetes and driving](#)

The DVLA also publish guidance material to medical professional which may be of interest: [DVLA assessing fitness to drive](#)

Part 4: Epilepsy

Current legislation concerning drivers with epilepsy

Currently for drivers other than categories C or D (lorry, bus or coach), legislation permits the issuing of a licence provided the applicant has not had an epileptic attack within the last year or that any attacks during the preceding 3 year period, occurred only whilst asleep.

Drivers who have had a single epileptic attack since the age of 5 are not permitted to driver either category C or D.

Changes for drivers with epilepsy once these amendments come into effect

Once these changes come into effect drivers with epilepsy will be able to drive subject to fulfilling certain conditions which vary by which group of licence categories are to be held.

Group 1 ‘Leisure’ licences (Car or Motorcycle):

Drivers that hold only Group 1 categories that have had an isolated seizure or suffer from epilepsy will need to meet the following conditions:

Isolated seizure

An isolated seizure within five years of making a licence application is relevant, and therefore the applicant will need to meet the following conditions:

- be free of seizures for 12 months where there is increased risk of suffering an isolated seizure because of an underlying causative factor, or six months where there is no underlying causative factor
- undergo a medical examination by a registered medical practitioner and complete the required medical certificate
- sign a declaration that they will follow medical directions regarding treatment for an isolated seizure and any underlying causative factors
- satisfy the Parochial Authority that they are not likely to be a source of danger to the public.

Epilepsy

Applicants that have had two or more isolated seizures within five years of making a licence application is relevant, and therefore will need to meet the following conditions:

- be free of unprovoked seizures within 12 months, except for permitted seizures (see below)
- undergo a medical examination by a registered medical practitioner and complete the required medical certificate
- sign a declaration that they will follow medical directions regarding treatment for epilepsy including directions for regular medical check-ups
- satisfy the parochial authority that they are not likely to be a source of danger to the public.

Permitted seizures are either:

- a seizure after an adjustment to medication, where the previous medication, which was effective for at least 6 months, is reinstated for at least 6 months with no further seizures
- a pattern of seizures occurring only during sleep, which have occurred for at least 12 months
- a pattern of seizures occurring during sleep for at least three years, where there is a history of seizures whilst awake, but not within the last three years
- a pattern of seizures that occur whilst awake that have no influence on consciousness or the ability to act for at least 12 months.

Group 2 ‘Vocational’ (Minibus, Bus, Coach, or Lorry):

Drivers that hold group 2 categories that have had an isolated seizure, suffered from epilepsy, or been prescribed medication for epilepsy will need to meet the following conditions:

- have not had an isolated seizure or prescribed medication to treat epilepsy within the last 5 years
- have not had two or more unprovoked seizures or prescribed medication to treat epilepsy within the last 10 years
- have undergone a medical examination by a specialist in neurology, licenced to practice under the medical Act 1983 of the UK, who has provided a report stating that the applicant has not been prescribed medication to treat epilepsy, or has not had an isolated seizure within five years, or two or more within 10 years.
- satisfy the parochial authority that they are not likely to be a source of danger to the public.

Further Information

Further Information about driving with epilepsy or after having had an isolated seizure can be found at:

[Epilepsy and driving - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

[Driving rules for epilepsy - Epilepsy Action](#)

[Driving and epilepsy - quick guide | Epilepsy Society](#)