

Free bus travel

If you or someone you care for has epilepsy, you may be able to get a free bus pass (**National Entitlement Card/NEC**), giving you free travel on most buses across Scotland.

This factsheet explains if you qualify for and how to get a **disabled person's NEC** because of your epilepsy. We have also included additional information about getting a NEC on other grounds, such as age. This might be helpful if you or someone you care for does not qualify for a card because of their epilepsy.

Adults – 16 years and over

If you have had one seizure in the last 12 months and are receiving treatment for epilepsy, you are entitled to a **disabled person's NEC**, which entitles you to free bus travel on most buses across Scotland.

How to apply

1. Many local authorities now allow **online applications** via the online portal www.getyournec.scot.

This website will tell you what documents you need to have to hand before starting the online process including proof of identity, proof of address, and proof of entitlement.

Contact your local authority to find out if they will accept online applications. You can find a list of local authority contact numbers on the [‘how to apply for or renew your national entitlement card’](#) page on Transport Scotland’s website.

2. If you cannot apply online, you will need to **apply in person**. You will need **form NCT001** for an in person application. This is available from your [local authority](#). You will also need to have proof of entitlement because of your epilepsy (such as form NCT003, see below).

Before you submit your application in person, check out the National Entitlement Card’s website at www.nec.scot/proofs to find out what you can use as proof of address and proof of identify. You will also need to take one recent passport size photograph with you.

Proof of entitlement

You will need to show that you are entitled to apply for your NEC because of your epilepsy for both online and in person applications.

1. The easiest way is by completing **form NCT003** (available from Epilepsy Scotland), a form specifically designed for people with epilepsy. This form confirms that you receive treatment for epilepsy, have had one seizure within the last 12 months and would be refused a driving licence on medical grounds if you applied for one. It will need to be signed by your consultant, GP or Epilepsy Specialist Nurse.

Please note that some GPs will charge a fee for signing this form, however, your epilepsy specialist nurse or consultant will usually sign this without charging an admin fee.

We can post or email you this form. Contact our freephone helpline 0808 800 2200 or email us at contact@epilepsyscotland.org.uk. You can also privately message us on our social media channels to request this form.

2. Your local authority may also accept a **letter from the DVLA** confirming you have surrendered your licence or have had your licence revoked or refused on medical grounds. This letter needs to have been issued within the last 12 months.
3. You may also be able to use a **DWP or Social Security Scotland benefits award letter**, as proof of entitlement. This letter needs to have been issued within the last 12 months and confirm the benefit(s) you receive and for how long you've been awarded the benefit(s).

Benefits which entitle you to apply for the free bus pass include:

- Disability Living Allowance (DLA) at the higher rate of the mobility component

- DLA at the higher or middle rate of the care component
- Personal Independence Payment (PIP)
- Adult Disability Payment (ADP)
- Attendance Allowance
- Child Disability Payment (CDP) at the highest or middle rate of the care component
- CDP at the higher rate of the mobility component
- Short Term Assistance (while you challenge a decision about the higher rate of the mobility component or the highest or middle rate of the care component of CDP)

4. You can also get a disabled person's NEC if you are a **Blue Badge** holder. You can use your Blue Badge or your latest V11 vehicle licensing reminder from the DVLA as proof of entitlement, when you apply for your card.

To find out if you qualify for a Blue Badge, check out the [Blue Badge page](#) on the Scottish Government website.

Companion/ 'plus one' card

Some people with epilepsy qualify for a companion also known as a 'plus one' card. This allows another person to travel with you free of charge. You need to be in receipt of certain benefits to qualify for this. These include:

- Disability Living Allowance (DLA) at the higher or middle rate of the care component
- Personal Independent Payment (PIP) at the standard or enhanced rate of daily living component

- Child Disability Payment (CDP) at the highest or middle rate of the care component
- Short Term Assistance while you challenge a CDP decision about the highest or middle rate of the care component
- Adult Disability Payment (ADP) at the standard or enhanced rate of the daily living component
- Attendance Allowance

Children/young people aged 5 to 15

Any child or young person, aged between 5 and 15, can apply for a disabled person's NEC if they are in receipt of qualifying benefits.

How to apply

Before you apply, check if your local authority accepts online applications. You can find a list of local authority contact numbers on the [‘how to apply for or renew your national entitlement card’](#) page on Transport Scotland's website. For more information on the online application process, please visit the online portal www.getyournec.scot.

If you cannot apply online, you will need to apply in person and will need to request form NCT001 from your local authority.

Proof of entitlement

A child/young person aged 5-15 will need to show that they are in receipt of

qualifying benefits, which include:

- Disability Living Allowance (DLA) at the higher rate of the mobility component, or at the higher or middle rate of the care component
- Child Disability Payment (CDP) at the higher rate of the mobility component, or at the highest or middle rate of the care component
- Short-term Assistance while you challenge a CDP decision about the higher rate of the mobility component, or the middle or highest rate of the care component

If a child/young person has a **Blue Badge** this can also be used as proof of entitlement, when applying for an NEC. For more information on this scheme, check out the [Blue Badge page](#) on the Scottish Government website.

Companion/ 'plus one' card

A child/young person aged between 5 and 15 will be entitled to a companion/plus one card if they are in receipt of:

- Disability Living Allowance (DLA) at the higher or middle rate of the care component
- Child Disability Payment (CDP) at the highest or middle rate of the care component
- Short-term Assistance while you challenge a CDP decision about the highest or middle rate of the care component

You will need a letter from the DWP or Social Security Scotland issued within the last 12 months to show the child/young person's entitlement to a companion card.

If a child/young person does not qualify for a disabled person's NEC under the above criteria, or does not require a companion card, the easiest way to apply for free bus travel is via the Young Person's (under 22s) Free Bus Travel Scotland Scheme. There is more information on this scheme on page 9.

Other required documents

You will need to provide proof of identity and proof of address for a child/young person. For a complete list of acceptable documents, please check out the '[proofs](#)' page on the National Entitlement Card website. You can, for example, use a letter from the child/young person's school, college or university as proof of address.

Children under 5

Any child under 5 travels free on Scotland's buses anyway. A child under 5 can, however, still qualify for a companion card if they are in receipt of:

- Disability Living Allowance (DLA) at the higher or middle rate of the care component
- Child Disability Payment (CDP) at the highest or middle rate of the care component
- Short-term Assistance while you challenge a CDP decision about the highest or middle rate of the care component

This allows a parent/carer to travel free of charge when taking a child under five, for example, to and from health appointments. Apply online at

www.getyournec.scot or phone your local authority for details of the in person application process.

Other reduced or free fares

A disabled person's NEC can also be used in many local authorities to access free or reduced fare travel on public transport such as subway, trams and rail. Check with your local authority what your NEC entitles you to. Some may only allow free travel on public transport other than buses if the NEC has been issued by their local authority.

For example, you need to have your NEC issued by Edinburgh City Council in order to travel for free on Edinburgh's trams. Contact your local authority to find out more.

Residents of the Western Isles, Orkney and Shetland who are eligible for the disabled person's NEC are also entitled to two free return ferry journeys to the mainland each year.

Renewing your NEC

The disabled person's NEC has an expiry date and will usually be issued for one year, and sometimes for three years. Before you can renew your card, you will need to prove you are still entitled to the disabled person's NEC, listed in previous chapters.

For adults, aged 16 and over, you need form NCT003 (available from Epilepsy Scotland), or another proof of entitlement listed above.

For children, up to the age of 15, you cannot use form NCT003, and you will need to provide other means of proof such as a DWP or Social Security Scotland letter confirming receipt of qualifying benefits, see above.

Please note local authorities may have their own process for renewing a disabled person's NEC. Check the concessionary travel section on your local authority's website or phone your local authority from this [list of numbers](#) to find out more.

Your local authority may no longer send you an automatic renewal reminder. Get in touch with your local authority around five weeks before your card expires and find out how to renew your card. You may be able to renew your card online at www.getyournec.scot.

Other ways to access free bus travel

If you or someone you care for does not qualify for a disabled person's NEC, there may be other ways of accessing free bus travel. For full details, check out the [concessionary travel page](#) on the Transport Scotland's website.

Young person's National Entitlement Card

Children/young people aged between 5 and 21, can now apply for a

National Entitlement Card under the ‘Young Persons (under 22s) Free Bus Travel Scotland’ scheme coming into force 31 January 2022.

Applying for the Young Person’s NEC does not require proof of eligibility, i.e. proof of your epilepsy, or award of qualifying disability benefits. The card is issued based on age alone.

For many children/young people with epilepsy, this might be a quicker way of getting free bus travel than applying for a disabled person’s NEC.

To access free bus travel, a child/young person needs to either apply for a new Young Scot NEC or NEC with the valid free travel logo. Please note that if you or someone you care for has an existing Young Scot card or NEC card (issued for reasons other than disability), you will need to re-apply for the new card.

If a child/young person has a disabled person’s NEC, this will remain valid, and there is no need to apply for a replacement card as this is issued under the disabled person’s travel scheme.

For more information on this new scheme and how to apply, visit the Young Person’s (under 22s) Free Bus Travel page on the [Transport Scotland’s website](#), or the Young Scot card page on the [Young Scot’s website](#).

Please note, if you or a child/young person you care for requires a companion card, you cannot use the Young Persons Free Bus Travel Scotland scheme.

Aged 60 and over

You can also apply for a NEC if you are aged 60 or over, without having to meet the eligibility criteria for a disabled person's NEC. This might be helpful if you, for example, no longer qualify for a disabled person's NEC because you have been seizure free for one year or more.

For more information on how to apply, visit the '[60 plus or disabled page](#)' on Transport Scotland's website.

Our resources are always free. If you would like to support our work, please text FACTS to 70085 to donate £3. Texts cost £3 plus one standard rate message.



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