

## Assessment Guidance Notes

When assessing an application you cannot put any one question in isolation, there are a number of factors as to whether or not a person is eligible for a badge. This is a guide in how to assess each question. The information supplied by the applicant can be informative and not informative. Also you need to see if the applicant has provided **Medical evidence** in support of their application which will assist you in making your decision. In assessing an application you should bear in mind at all times that it is how their mobility is affected by their condition/disability that will determine if he/she will be eligible for a badge. Also if you are in doubt discuss the decision with your colleagues and /or the manager. Another port of call will be that you can refer an application to the GP.

### SECTION C1 – ASSESSED ELIGIBILITY

**Q1.** What is/are your medical condition/disability and explain how this affects your mobility? If sight impaired please complete this section to explain how it affects your mobility?

**ANSWER:** In replying to this question a person may list a certain medical condition that affects their ability to walk such as;

- COPD,
- Heart problems,
- Arthritis,
- Bone disease,
- Stroke,
- Parkinsons Disease,
- MS etc.

(If there is a condition given that you are unsure of you can use the Google Search Machine and/or Medical Dictionaries). When assessing this condition you have to bear in mind the person is demonstrating that they have a permanent and substantial disability which means he/she is unable to walk or has very considerable difficulty in walking. Conditions such as asthma, Crohn's disease/incontinent conditions and Myalgic Encephalomyelitis (M.E) are not in themselves qualification for a badge however the applicant may be eligible if this condition affects their ability to walk.

**Q2.** Is this condition/disability? Permanent/Temporary

**ANSWER:** If the applicant indicates that their condition/disability is **permanent** then you would bear this in mind for them to be awarded a badge.

If the applicant indicates that the condition/disability is **temporary** then you would not be inclined to issue them a badge.

**Q3.** How many years have you had the condition(s) /disability?

If the applicant states that they have had their condition(s)/disability for less than 6 months then they are not eligible for a badge.

**Q4.** How does the condition(s) /disability you have described affect your ability to walk? Excessive pain, Excessive breathlessness, Extreme weakness, tiredness or stress, Unable to be left alone e.g. needs physical support of another person. Other (please describe in the space below)

**ANSWER: Excessive pain** reported by the applicant when walking, or as a consequence of the effort of walking. Pain is subjective, and some people have higher pain thresholds than others.

Consideration may need to be given to cross-referencing an applicant's reported experience of pain with information they provide about their permanent and substantial disability, details of medication they take, coping strategies they have adopted and any courses of treatment designed to help them manage their pain.

**Any breathlessness** reported by the applicant when walking, or as a consequence of the effort of walking. The applicant's reported breathlessness may need to be cross-referenced with details of diagnosed medical conditions known to cause breathlessness (e.g. emphysema)

An applicant may experience excessive pain or breathlessness at the time of walking, or later – **however when assessing the application what counts is that it is a direct result of their attempt to walk.**

When assessing this question you need to take into consideration if they have advised in question 1 a condition that has them in **excessive** pain e.g;

- arthritis,
- Ankylosing Spondylitis( Back pain),
- Intervertebral disc disorders,
- chronic pain syndromes, etc.

Does it cause **excessive** Breathlessness e.g;

- Cardiomyopathy,
- Chronic Bronchitis (COPD),
- Shortness of Breath (SOB) etc.

Does their condition leave them with **extreme** weakness, tiredness or stress e.g;

- fibromyalgia,
- acute myeloid leukaemia,
- MS,
- chemo,
- stroke etc.

**Unable to be left alone**, if this has been ticked you cannot make a decision on this alone you will need to see how they describe their assistance in the rest of Section C1, do they need assistance from another individual in order to be able to walk a distance.

Depending on how the applicant answers this question you must take into consideration what the person has said in all of Section C1.

**Q5.** What is the maximum distance you can walk without using a walking aid, experiencing severe discomfort or needing help from another person?

**ANSWER:**

- **Eligible – less than 100m/110 yards**
- **Not Eligible - More than 100m/110 yards**

**Q6.** Do you use any of the following and how often?

**ANSWER:** This question refers to the use of mobility aids. A person may or may not need to use a mobility aid.

If they choose one or more aids then how often they have to use the aid will give you an indication of their ability to walk.

If **frequently** is chosen then you could consider this as an indication that they need assistance and therefore there is a need for a badge.

If it is only occasionally then you would be more inclined to question the use of the aid and that the applicant may on occasion be able to mobilise without the use of the mobility aid.

**Q7.** Were your mobility aids? Prescribed by a healthcare professional, Provided by Social Services, Other (please describe in the space below)

**ANSWER:** If the mobility aid has been prescribed by a healthcare professional or social services then this person will have been assessed and therefore regarded as been reliant on the aid to be mobile.

If it has been purchased privately then the person has self assessed their mobility and therefore may not necessarily need to have the aid in order to get around. Therefore consider rejecting.

**Q8.** Please tick the statements that apply to you and provide further details in the spaces.

- Waiting for surgery or treatment in relation to your condition/disability,
- Recovering from surgery or treatment in relation to your condition/disability,

- Managing your condition/disability since you have been advised it is not expected to improve any further.

**ANSWER:** If the applicant ticks that they are awaiting surgery or treatment and/or recovering from surgery or treatment you would be inclined to possibly consider if along with other questions there is a need to reject or refer this applicant to the GP.  
**(Assessment Guidance)**

**Q9.** Are you able to walk outside without help?

**ANSWER:** If the applicant ticks **Yes** then you would take into consideration how far they had previously stated they could walk and also you must take into consideration what level of help they have said. A person with severe restriction would normally need physical assistance from another person in getting around. The use of a walking aid may help prevent falls but it may not improve physical walking ability. The person would not require guidance or supervision outdoors.

If the applicant ticks **No** then you would have take into consideration if it is possible that their mobility is not so severe that they need help but once again you must look at the distance they have stated they can walk.

**Q10.** In minutes, how long can you walk without stopping?

**ANSWER:** If the applicant gives you so many minutes you can use the following as a guide as to whether or not they are entitled to a badge.

The average person can walk in a minute:

Brisk pace - >90 metres per minute,

Normal pace - 61-90 metres per minute,

Slow pace - 40-60 metres per minute,

Very slow pace - <40 metres per minute.

If an applicant **cannot** walk 40 metres (44 yards) in a minute (a pace of less than 0.67 metres/second), including any stops to rest, then this is an extremely slow pace which is likely to make walking very difficult when considered in isolation.

**(Assessment Guidance)**

If an applicant **can** walk 40 metres (44 yards) in less than a minute (a pace of 0.67 metres/second or more), including any stops to rest, then the speed at which they walk is not likely to make walking very difficult when considered in isolation. The applicant *may* still be considered eligible if they demonstrate very considerable difficulty in walking through any other factors. For example, if an applicant is only able to walk for less than one minute in total then walking is likely to be very difficult for them.

**Q11.** Are you able to continue after a short rest?

**ANSWER:** If an applicant ticks **yes** you need to consider the distance that they have given in question 10 as this will assist you in deciding as to whether they are entitled to a badge. Also if they are able to continue after a short rest then the longer the distance the less likelihood they are entitled to a badge

If an applicant ticks **No** this would be a strong indicator that their mobility is greatly restricted however you also have to look at their answers to Q1, 5, and 10.

**Q12.** In minutes, including stops, how long are you able to walk in total before becoming breathless?

**ANSWER:** If the applicant indicates that they become breathless when walking for more than three minutes then it will be an indication that they should be considered to be eligible for a badge.

If they have stated more than three minutes then there would be less likelihood for a badge.

**Q13.** Do you use oxygen administration equipment?

- Daily,
- Regularly (4 or more days a week),
- Occasionally(1-3 days a week).

**ANSWER:** The use of equipment when suffering from breathlessness is an indicator as to how severe the condition is. The more often a person needs to use oxygen administration equipment the more likely they should be considered to be awarded a badge.

Please bear in mind when assessing the answers to questions 12 and 13 what the applicant has actually stated in reply to question 1, they may say yes in question 12 but not actually have a condition/disability that relates to the applicant's suffering from breathlessness

**Q14. (a) Are you certified as sight impaired (partially sighted)?**

**ANSWER:** If an applicant ticks **yes** then you need to assess what they have also stated in question 1 and how this affects their mobility.

**Q14. (b) If Yes do you regularly drive?**

**ANSWER:** If an applicant ticks **yes** then they are not entitled to a badge.  
**(Assessment Guidance)**

If an applicant ticks **no** but have said they are partially sighted and have confirmed their mobility is affected then they may be entitled to a badge. **(Assessment Guidance)**

## **SECTION C2 – SEVERELY SIGHT IMPAIRED (BLIND)**

An applicant will be issued a badge if they can provide evidence that they have the Certificate of Visual Impairment (A655). If they cannot provide this evidence is it a case that they will not be issued a badge? **(Assessment Guidance)**

## **SECTION C3 – PLANNING AND FOLLOWING A FAMILIAR JOURNEY**

If an applicant applies under the above category then there are a number of factors to consider. Applicants that apply under this category are asked to provide evidence and this may help in making a decision

If they advised they have high rate care and if some of the points they have raised refer to;

- needing accompanied by an adult,
- impulsivity,
- levels of inattention,
- hyperactivity,
- no awareness of danger,
- run of very easily

These are factors that would contribute to them been entitled to a badge.

**(Assessment Guidance)**

You will also note that there is reference on the application form to the person receiving '12 points under the planning and following of a familiar journey for the mobility component of PIP'. This would mean that this person is entitled to a badge.

**(Assessment Guidance)**

## **SECTION C4 – APPLICANTS WHO ARE UNDER THE AGE OF THREE**

The applicants can answer yes to both or either of the questions.

You should consider what they have stated in question 1.

If they state what type of equipment e.g:

- ventilators,
- suction machine,
- oxygen administration equipment, or a piece of equipment you are not familiar

As regards question 2, again what medical condition have they referred to eg;

- Tracheostomies,
- severe epilepsy/fitting

Also consider evidence given and if that will assist in making a decision. Then if you are satisfied that they meet the criteria then you can issue a blue badge

## **SECTION D – APPLICANTS WITH IMPAIRMENTS IN BOTH ARMS**

If an applicant applies under the above criteria you will need to consider whether the applicant meets **all** of the criteria in question 1 of this section i.e;

1. Drives a vehicle regularly
2. Has a severe disability in both arms, and
3. Are unable to operate or have considerable difficulty in operation of all or some types of parking meter.

If their vehicle is adapted they will have insurance documents to confirm this – this is useful evidence. Again medical evidence will assist in making a decision but if all criteria are met then an applicant would be entitled to a badge. **(Assessment Guidance)**

Where the applicant does not have an adapted vehicle, only drivers with the most severe disabilities in both of their arms (i.e. who cannot operate a parking meter) should be considered eligible. This may cover disabled people with, for example: a limb reduction deficiency of both arms; bilateral upper limb amputation; muscular dystrophy; spinal cord injury; motor neurone disease; or a condition of comparable severity. **(For Guidance purposes)**

Blue Badge Application – Appeals Process

There is a two stage appeals process for applicants who have been refused a Blue Badge.

1. The first stage of the process is a request for re-assessment. This should be sent directly to the Blue Badge Unit. The re-assessment is carried out by the Office Manager, based in the Blue Badge Unit.
2. If the request for reassessment is successful the fee will be requested and a badge will be issued upon receipt of the payment. The Office Manager will update Blue badge database.

3. If the request for reassessment is unsuccessful the Office Manager will write to the application outlining the decision not to issue a badge. At this point the applicant will be advised of their right to request a review of the decision. Reviews are carried out by the Blue Badge Manager, based in Co Hall, Omagh.
4. The review is the final stage of the appeals process. If successful, the process at step 2 is followed. The Blue Badge Manager will update Blue badge database
5. If the review is unsuccessful the Blue Badge Manager will write to the application outlining the decision not to issue a badge. The Blue Badge Manager will update Blue Badge data base. The system will not allow any further review of the application