

## Changing your vehicle

This Information Guide deals with the regulations and procedures involved in changing the vehicle associated with an SPSV licence. Changes of vehicle are permitted, provided the replacement vehicle meets certain conditions, which are explained in this Information Guide.

In summary, there are three steps involved:

1. Ensure that the replacement vehicle is suitable and properly equipped for operation as an SPSV in the category to which the licence applies.
2. Make sure you have the relevant documents in order.
3. Make an appointment and submit the vehicle for an Initial Suitability Inspection at one of the Authority's Vehicle Licensing Centres.

### The replacement vehicle

The replacement vehicle must meet a number of requirements, as set out below:

- **Roadworthiness:** An NCT roadworthiness certificate must be issued for the vehicle no more than 90 days before the date of the Initial Suitability Inspection. (Note: An NCT certificate is not required for a vehicle that is less than three months old *and* that has travelled less than 3,000 kilometres.)
- **Suitability:** The vehicle must meet the requirements for operation as an SPSV in the category specified on the licence (taxi, wheelchair accessible taxi, hackney, wheelchair accessible hackney, and limousine). The *Initial Suitability Inspection Manual*, which is available on the Authority's website, gives details of the items that are inspected to verify the vehicle's suitability. They include:
  - Taxis and wheelchair accessible taxis must have a regulation roof sign and a taximeter connected to a printer installed. The meter needs to be calibrated for the vehicle and verified by the Legal Metrology Service. The meter does not have to be verified prior to the Initial Suitability Inspection, but if it is not you must retain the verification appointment letter in the vehicle until the meter is verified and sealed.
  - Wheelchair accessible taxis and hackneys must have the required specialised access equipment, such as ramps.
  - All vehicles must have the required safety equipment.
- **Age:** The replacement vehicle must satisfy age requirements, as follows:

Standard taxis and hackneys	Must be less than nine years old.
Taxi licences that have been acquired by transfer from a different person since 7 June 2010	In general, the replacement vehicle must be no older than the vehicle it replaces, but see 'Calculating the age of a vehicle' on the next page for more information.
Limousines, wheelchair accessible taxis, wheelchair accessible hackneys	No age restriction currently applies.

- **Size:** Since 1 January 2012 the replacement vehicle on a standard taxi or hackney licence will have to meet requirements for luggage capacity and interior dimensions.

The Authority has produced a model report for many vehicles indicating whether or not they meet the size requirements. These model reports are available on the Authority's website. Before you purchase a vehicle for use as an SPSV, you should check the model report for the vehicle, or, if there is no model report, contact the Authority for advice.

- **Wheelchair accessible vehicles:** Since 1 January 2012 replacement vehicles on licences for wheelchair accessible taxis and wheelchair accessible hackneys must meet new standards that are significantly different from those previously in force. A Technical Assessor's Report is required verifying that the seat installations in the vehicle have been formally tested. Before purchasing a vehicle, you should check with the vehicle converter that it will meet the requirements.
- **Limousines:** The replacement vehicle must be suitable for prestigious or ceremonial use. If it is under 30 years of age, the engine must be larger than 1900cc.

### Calculating the age of a vehicle

The age of the vehicle is calculated from the *exact date* on which it was first registered (day, month and year). If the vehicle was imported, the age is calculated from the date on which it was originally registered in its country of origin. You must check this date (on the Vehicle Registration Certificate) before applying for a change of vehicle on your licence – the year shown on the vehicle’s number plate is not a sufficiently accurate indicator of the vehicle’s exact age.

The easiest way to check if your vehicle meets the age requirements on renewal is to use the National Transport Authority’s Vehicle Age Checker. You can access this by visiting <http://vehicleage.nationaltransport.ie/>

### Age of vehicle on transferred licences

If you hold a licence that was transferred into your name after 7 June 2010, one of the conditions of the transfer was that the vehicle associated with the licence must be less than three years old. In such a case, if you wish to subsequently change the vehicle on that licence, the replacement vehicle must be no older than the vehicle it replaces. However, for the purpose of applying this rule, the vehicle associated with the transferred licence at the time of transfer is taken to be *exactly three years old* on that date. This is to avoid creating a disadvantage for an operator who associates a newer vehicle with a licence. For example:

Date of transfer of licence:	1 September 2011
Actual age of vehicle on transfer date, calculated from date of first registration:	1 year 10 months
Nominal age of vehicle at licence transfer for change of vehicle purposes:	3 years
Date of change of vehicle:	1 March 2012 (6 months after date of transfer)
Actual age of vehicle, calculated from date of first registration:	2 years 4 months (1 year 10 months plus 6 months)
Nominal age of vehicle for change of vehicle purposes:	3 years plus 6 months
Maximum age of replacement vehicle, calculated from date of first registration:	3 years 6 months

Note: the above dates are purely for the purpose of illustration

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The nominal age of the vehicle is carried forward with the replacement vehicle, so that, for example, in the above illustration, in any subsequent change of vehicle, the replacement vehicle would be treated as if it were three years and six months old at the time it was associated with the licence, even though it might actually have been registered more recently.

### When is the best time to change the vehicle on an SPSV licence?

When you change the vehicle associated with an SPSV licence, you are issued with a full 12-month licence from the date of the change of vehicle. No rebate is allowed for unexpired time on the licence for the vehicle replaced. The Authority therefore recommends that, in order to minimise your costs, you should if possible change your vehicle close to your renewal date.

### A good example:

Date licence is due for renewal:	1 December 2010
Replacement vehicle bought and equipped. NCT passed. All documentation in order.	
Initial Suitability Inspection booked for:	1 November 2010
Initial Suitability Inspection passed.	
Period of validity of licence on replacement vehicle:	1 November 2010 to 31 October 2011
Unexpired time on old licence	<b>1 month</b>

### A less cost-efficient example:

Date licence is due for renewal:	1 June 2011
Replacement vehicle bought and equipped. NCT passed . All documentation in order.	
Initial Suitability Inspection booked for:	1 November 2010
Initial Suitability Inspection passed.	
Period of validity of licence on replacement vehicle:	1 November 2010 to 31 October 2011
Unexpired time on old licence	<b>7 months</b>

**Note:** the above dates are purely for the purpose of illustration

## Temporary changes of vehicle

If, for example, your vehicle needs to be repaired following a collision, and you change the vehicle on your licence to another vehicle and change it back to the original vehicle within an eight-week period, the Authority waives the second change-of-vehicle fee. You will still, however, be responsible for the cost of the NCT roadworthiness tests and the Initial Suitability Inspections. Please contact the Authority if you require further information.

## What to do with the vehicle being replaced

Before you dispose of the vehicle that you are replacing on the licence, you should:

- Remove the roof sign – this can be used on the replacement vehicle once the change of vehicle process has been completed;
- Remove the meter and printer – these can be used in the replacement vehicle, but they must first be calibrated specifically for the replacement car and verified by the Legal Metrology Service; and
- Remove the tamper-proof discs from the front and rear windows of the vehicle – you **must** bring these with you for the Initial Suitability Inspection of the replacement vehicle.

## Required documents

### NCT

An NCT roadworthiness certificate must be issued for the vehicle no more than 90 days before the date of your Initial Suitability Inspection. Using your vehicle registration number the Authority will check your NCT result directly with the Department of Transport at time of booking. You should allow a minimum of 48 hours for the Department's records to be updated.

To book an NCT roadworthiness test, call the NCTS booking line on 1890 927 177. (Note: An NCT certificate is not required for a vehicle that is less than three months old *and* that has travelled less than 3,000 kilometres.)

### Insurance

You must obtain insurance for the vehicle that covers its use as a small public service vehicle. You must bring details of your insurance with you to your Licence Renewal Assessment. The Authority will check your insurance cover directly with the relevant insurance provider.

### Tax clearance

A tax clearance certificate can be obtained from your local Revenue office or by visiting [www.revenue.ie](http://www.revenue.ie), or by contacting your accountant. Using your PPSN, the Authority will check your tax status with Revenue at the time of booking your appointment. You should allow a minimum of 48 hours for Revenue's records to be updated. The name on your licence application and the name on the tax clearance certificate must match *exactly*. If the name on the tax clearance certificate is not the same as that on the licence, you should contact the Revenue Commissioners.

Name on licence application	Name on tax clearance certificate	Suitable for licensing?
James Murphy	Jim Murphy	No
	James Murphy Jnr	No
	James Joseph Murphy	No
	Séamus Ó Murchú	No
	James J. Murphy	No
	James Murphy	Yes

## Booking your Initial Suitability Inspection

1. Ensure that your vehicle meets the requirements for Initial Suitability Inspection and that you have the necessary documents, as outlined above.
2. Book your Initial Suitability Inspection by calling 1890 927 977 ensuring that you have all necessary documentation to hand.
3. Present the vehicle for inspection.

### What do you need when making a booking?

<b>Security questions</b>	Security questions will now be asked as standard for all booking and licence-related calls. These will involve standard identification questions such as name, address, telephone number, date of birth and PPS number.
<b>Tax clearance</b>	You must have valid tax clearance before booking your appointment. You should allow a minimum of 48 hours for Revenue's records to be updated.  You don't need to provide any additional information regarding your tax clearance when booking but you should keep your PPS number at hand in case it is required.
<b>NCT roadworthiness certificate</b>	You must complete your NCT roadworthiness test and be issued with a certificate before making your appointment. You should allow a minimum of 48 hours for the Department of Transport's records to be updated.  You should keep your vehicle registration at hand in case it's required.
<b>Insurance</b>	You will need your insurance expiry date and be able to declare that you are insured to operate an SPSV.  Your insurance information will be shared with the Insurance Federation of Ireland and your insurance disc will also be inspected as part of your vehicle inspection.  If your disc is out of date on the day of inspection your vehicle will fail its inspection.
<b>Contact details update</b>	You will be requested to update your contact details as required when making your booking.  The vehicle licence certificate is now posted directly to the licence holder's address so it is

	important you provide your most up-to-date information to receive this.
<b>WAV register update<sup>1</sup></b>	<p>If you have a wheelchair accessible licence you must provide the following when booking your Initial Suitability Inspection appointment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Times of operation</li> <li>• Area of operation</li> </ul> <p>This information will be published in the Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle Register.</p>
<b>Payment</b>	<p>You must pay the fee of €170 at the time of booking. This is made up of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ €125 to change the vehicle</li> <li>■ €45 for the Initial Suitability Inspection</li> </ul> <p>Payment may only be made by credit or debit card.</p>

## Modified vehicles

If the vehicle has been modified from its original specification (for example, a converted van, a vehicle fitted with additional or non-standard seating and/or seat belts, a stretched vehicle, or a kit car), you must obtain an Engineer's Report for the vehicle, and this must be dated within 90 days of the date of your Initial Suitability Inspection. The Engineer's Report must confirm that the modifications comply with all aspects of the Road Traffic Acts, Construction Equipment and Use regulations and, as applicable, regulations relating to vehicle standards made under the Taxi Regulation Act 2003 as amended. A template for this is available from the Authority, and this template must be used for the Engineer's Report. See *the replacement vehicle section* on page 1 and 2 for specific requirements relating to wheelchair accessible vehicles.

## Reactivating an expired licence

If your licence has expired, it can be reactivated at any time within five years of its expiry date, on payment of a reactivation fee of €375. This must be paid at the time of booking the Initial Suitability Inspection, so that the total cost of reactivating the licence and changing the vehicle on it amounts to €545.

## Requirements for your Initial Suitability Inspection

When you present the vehicle for Initial Suitability Inspection, you must bring with you:

- The Engineer's Report, or Technical Assessor's Report, if required; and
- The tamper-proof discs from the previous vehicle.

**If, for any reason, you are unable to return your tamper-proof discs, you should contact the Authority prior to the Initial Suitability Inspection, as the change of vehicle on your licence cannot be completed unless they are surrendered to the Licensing Inspector.**

## Operating the replacement vehicle as an SPSV

If your vehicle passes the Initial Suitability Inspection, the licence details are updated and the Licensing Inspector applies tamper-proof discs to the front and rear windows of the replacement vehicle. The vehicle may then be operated as an SPSV in the category to which the licence applies. Operating an SPSV without valid tamper-proof licence discs could result in a fine of up to €5,000.

**Further information for SPSV operators is available from the Authority's website at [www.nationaltransport.ie](http://www.nationaltransport.ie) or by phoning the Authority's industry assistance line on 0761 064 000**

<sup>1</sup> This requirement is provided for under the Taxi Regulation Act 2003 (Wheelchair Accessible Hackney and Wheelchair Accessible Taxi Licences — Contact Information and Record Maintenance) Regulations 2008 (S.I. No. 234 of 2008). Failure to supply this information is a breach of regulation which could attract a maximum penalty of €2,000.