

# MINI BUS AND SPLITTER BUS DRIVING

## What is 'hire or reward'?

---

Where minibuses are operated as a core business activity for personal or commercial profit, this is deemed to be for 'hire or reward'. Hire or reward' encompasses any payment in cash or kind by (or on behalf of) passengers which gives them the right to be carried.

Some commercial businesses i.e private nursing homes and school nurseries etc, operate minibuses as a small part of their business activity. In these cases, because the business gets paid a fee by their clients to be residents of their home, or children in their care, which indirectly includes the use of the minibus, this would be classed as 'hire or reward'. Other examples of 'hire or reward' include where petrol money has been taken for taking children to school every day; or where courtesy coaches have been provided by a hotel as part of their amenities

If the minibus is to be used for 'Hire and Reward', then a Passenger Carrying Vehicle (PCV) - Category D Licence is required.

## Driving a mini-bus with nine seats or more, for hire or reward

---

In most circumstances you will need to obtain passenger carrying vehicle entitlement (PCV) which will involve a requirement to meet higher medical standards and take a further driving test. You will need to apply to your appropriate Traffic Commissioner and fulfil the necessary legal requirements. If you are being paid to drive a minibus for hire or reward under a PCV Operator's Licence, you can only do so if you have full Category D1 entitlement obtained through the passing of the theory and practical test for this class of vehicle irrespective of when you passed your driving test to drive a car.

However, up to two vehicles each carrying no more than sixteen passengers can be used for hire or reward under a **restricted** PCV Operator's licence by a person or company that is not in the business of carrying passengers in vehicles adapted to carry more than eight passengers i.e by a taxi firm, where use of this size vehicle is not 'regular'.

If you drive a minibus for an organisation under the [minibus or community bus permit scheme](#), you will not need to have the higher PCV entitlements. Application can be made to a voluntary organisation that is acting as an umbrella body or alternatively the Traffic Commissioner.

## PCV (PSV)

---

**previously known as a PSV - Public Service Vehicle)**

If you want a licence to drive a minibus, and you currently hold a valid full driving licence you will need to apply to the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) for a provisional entitlement to drive a PCV. You will need to complete the application form D2 and the medical report form D4. These are available

from the [DVLA form ordering service](#). The D4 has to be completed by a doctor (including a doctor's fee of £50-£70) and you will need to meet the PCV eyesight requirements. There are also requirements ie. being of good character and over 21 years of age.

The PCV (D1) driving test is conducted by the Driving Standards Agency and is similar to the test taken by coach drivers, only the vehicle you would drive is a minibus. The PCV minibus [theory test](#) costs £20.50 and from **April 2007** you should expect to be asked 60 questions in 70 minutes. The pass mark for the multiple choice part of the theory test is now 51 out of 60 . You can try out [practice papers](#) to get a feel of the type of question you can expect.

The PCV minibus practical driving test lasts 90 minutes and costs £76 on a weekday or £94 on a Saturday or in the evening. During the driving test the examiner will give you directions which you should follow. Test routes are designed to be as uniform as possible and will include a range of typical road and traffic conditions. More information is available on the [Transport Office](#) website.

From **September 2008** new legislation will require drivers with vocational licences (PCV D or D1 categories obtained by a separate test) to undertake additional regular training, called the Driver CPC, in order to keep their vocational licences valid. This training is to ensure that all bus and coach drivers understand their responsibilities and keep up to date with new laws and regulations.

## What are the rules on drivers' hours for minibuses.

Further information on both the EU and Domestic Drivers' Hours Rules is published by VOSA in (PSV 375) obtainable as above.

A vehicle which is being used on a Section 19 permit is still a public service vehicle and is subject to domestic drivers' hours rules when a person is driving in the course of his/her employment. Therefore if payment to the driver has taken place (unless it is out of pocket expenses) then domestic drivers' hours rules apply.

Domestic drivers' hours rules do not apply for the private use of a minibus or when permit vehicles are driven by volunteer (i.e. unpaid) drivers.

Obviously if a vehicle is being used as a PSV on a Regular Service (local/ non local) then the relevant domestic drivers' hours rules apply (or in the case of a route exceeding 50 km, EU Hours' Rules).

For PSV non-regular services when a minibus is being used for a non-regular national service, then domestic rules apply. For international services then the EU rules apply.

If a minibus is being used for international journeys (including private use) then EU drivers' hours rules apply.

This Guide is only intended for general help; **it is not a legal document**. Therefore you should seek your own legal advice if you have any doubts with these issues.