

Tel No: 01732 227004
Ask for: Mrs. Leeann Leeds
Email: licensing@sevenoaks.gov.uk
My Ref: Medical tender
Your Ref:
Date: 13th January 2012

Dear Sirs

Medical Examinations for Applicants of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Driver Licences.

Sevenoaks District Council is the Licensing Authority for all matters appertaining to Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicles within the Sevenoaks District. Within the legislation a council may require an applicant for a driver's licence in respect of a Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicle to be subject to an examination by a registered medical practitioner as to his/her fitness to be the driver of such a vehicle.

In 1997 Sevenoaks District Council adopted a policy which was revised and is effective from 3rd January 2012. Within the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire policy it is a requirement for new applicants and all drivers on licence renewal (every three years) to be subject to a medical examination. In addition those licensed drivers who are over 65 years of age or reach the age of 65 years during the validation of a licence are required to be medically examined yearly.

The time has now come again for Sevenoaks District Council to review its existing method of obtaining medical examinations for licence applicants. I have been instructed to write to all Medical Practices within the Sevenoaks/Swanley/Edenbridge/Westerham areas to see if any Group Practice wishes to be considered to carry out these examinations for a period of three years commencing on 1st April 2012.

For the purpose of consistency in examinations and continuity with Sevenoaks District Council, it is part of the policy that examinations are carried out by one set of doctors only working from the same Medical Practice. In the past, both to cope with the numbers of applicants, and also to provide a consistent approach it has been found desirable that at least two doctors are available at a Practice to carry out the required examinations as well as, or including, the availability of a female doctor if required by an applicant.

It is a requirement of the policy that a person is certified as fit to drive a licensed Hackney Carriage or Private Hire vehicle for a period of three years. If, because of a

medical condition, a doctor feels a shorter length of time is more appropriate than this is acceptable.

Sevenoaks District Council requires any medical examination to take into consideration the fact that 'taxi' drivers should be considered as Group II vehicle drivers, as advised by Department for Transport, and Group II fitness criteria is issued by Drivers Medical Group at DVLA, Swansea in its 'For Medical Practitioners – at a glance a guide to current Medical Standards of Fitness to Drive'.

In addition when applying Group II standards, the fact that 'taxi' drivers' hours of work are not regulated, as are other drivers in this group, should not be overlooked. It is because of this that in addition to guidance from the DVLA guidelines it might, in certain cases be advisable to seek guidance elsewhere.

The success of such a policy is the liaison between the person authorised to grant licences and the Medical Practice. Therefore Licensing Officers would expect availability of contact with the Practice carrying out the examinations at any reasonable time to discuss matters and for this Sevenoaks District Council would pay a retainer fee.

It would be the responsibility of the applicant to arrange and make payment for the medical examination.

To be successful in being appointed for the next three years Sevenoaks District Council would require the Practice to confirm the following:

1. That they are prepared to carry out a medical examination to Group II levels on licence applicants and other requested examinations by Sevenoaks District Council on licence holders as advised by the Drivers Medical Group which are necessary to achieve the medical standard through to be appropriate for a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire driver.
2. That a medical questionnaire provided by Sevenoaks District Council to applicants and drawn up in consultation with the approved Medical Practice will be completed by applicants for licences prior to any medical examination and brought with them to the examination.
3. That the results of the examination would be sent to Sevenoaks District Council as a matter of urgency in pre-paid envelopes by a 'notification' drawn up in consultation with the approved Medical Practice
4. What the cost of an examination, the cost of a medical review (described under) and the cost of a retainer fee would be; all of which would be held for a period of three years.

At the present time there are approximately 381 licensed drivers, the majority of which will be renewing their licences over the three year period referred to. I would anticipate a further, approximately 60 new applicants all of whom would require examinations. This would give a total of 441 medical examinations required in that period.

From time to time Sevenoaks District Council might require a licensed driver to be subject to an additional medical examination. Such an examination would be required as a matter of urgency and would be paid for by Sevenoaks District Council at the full cost of the accepted fee agreed. In addition where a licensed driver, either because of a medical condition, or because of age is required to have further medicals within the three year

period of his/her licence then the cost of this medical known as a 'review' would also be paid for by Sevenoaks District Council at the pre-determined fee.

Refusal to grant, or the suspension or revocation of a licence is the responsibility of the person authorised at Sevenoaks District Council to grant licences. A person who has a licence application refused or a licence suspended or revoked has a right of appeal to a Magistrates' Court. If an application is certified as medically unfit to drive a Hackney Carriage or Private hire Vehicle then the doctor certifying the person as unfit should be prepared to attend Court to justify their decision should the person appeal.

I am writing to ascertain whether you wish to be considered for selection as Sevenoaks District Council's appointed Medical Practice. Should you wish to be considered please reply to me by 17th February 2012 at Licensing Partnership, PO Box 182, Sevenoaks, Kent. TN13 1GP.

If you do not wish to be considered at this time or at any future time please would you also let me know. If you require any further information regarding this matter please do not hesitate to contact the Licensing Partnership.

Yours faithfully,

Mrs. Leeann Leeds
Licensing Team