Section 19 Permit Application Form Guidance

Updated: November 2026

This guidance is used for organisations who would like to apply for a Standard Section 19 Permit from Cumberland Council under the Transport Act 1985. It will help you complete the Application Form from our website **www.cumberland.gov.uk/communitytransport**. For further information and guidance, please ring the Voluntary Transport Officer on **07788 396194**.

A Section 19 permit can only be granted to a body concerned with education, religion, social welfare, recreation or other activities of benefit to the community. These permits are either 'standard permits' for vehicles which are 9 or more passenger seats (do not include the driver seat) adapted to carry no more than 16 passengers or 'large bus permits' for vehicles which are adapted to carry 17 or more passengers. If you are using a smaller vehicle (less than 9 passenger seats), separate fares must be charged. However, Cumberland Council only issues Standard permits (9 to 16 passenger seats). All other permits must be issued by the Traffic Commissioner.

A permit allows the holder to operate transport services for hire or reward without the need for a full public service vehicle (PSV) operator's licence, provided the services are neither carried out with a view to profit nor incidentally to an activity that is itself carried on with a view to profit.

Organisations cannot hold both a permit under the 1985 Act and an operator's licence under the Public Passenger Vehicles Act 1981.

A Section 19 permit enables an organisation to transport their members, or people whom the organisation exists to help. Vehicles cannot be used to carry members of the general public.

As a permit holder you have a responsibility to make sure that your services are operated within the law, with vehicles properly maintained and using drivers with the appropriate qualifications.

Contact Information

Your details are required to determine whether the organisation applying owns, hires or leases a vehicle in the Cumberland area (for Westmorland and Furness Council, please go to **www.westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk/communitytransport**). Standard or large S19 Permits outside the Cumberland area may apply direct to the Traffic Commissioner **Application for a standard or large bus permit (PSV372) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)**.

Please ensure the contact details will still be available for the 5-year term of the permit (these will be used to contact you when the permit expires).

The information you provide in the Application Form will only be used for the purpose for which it has been given and will not be used for additional purposes without your consent. All personal details will be processed in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) May 2018 and you have the right to see records relating to yourself and ask that they be amended where they are in accurate.

The information will be shared with the Traffic Commissioner.

Organisation Information

This information is used to establish whether you satisfy one or more of the criteria established in the 1985 Transport Act for eligibility to apply for a Section 19 Permit.

Application Information and Exemptions

This information is informative for Cumberland Council to understand how various forms of transport is provided throughout its area.

All organisations will ideally select both categories A and B, and any other relevant category ensuring the permit ensures a full range of passengers.

Only organisations which meet at least one of the following exemptions can apply for a Section 19 permit:

- **Non-commercial purposes** - An applicant should be satisfied that its overall purpose in providing road passenger transport and all of those services are exclusively non-commercial.
- **Main occupation** - In order to meet this exemption an applicant's road passenger transport operation must be ancillary or complementary to another activity, which must demonstrably be their main occupation.
- **Short distance** - Only applicants engaged exclusively in national transport operations and which have only a minor impact on the transport market because of the short distances involved can rely upon this exemption. Short distance is generally regarded as those services within a ten-mile radius or length, although longer distances can be considered in certain circumstances.

Other

All drivers must be competent at driving a minibus and have safety awareness. The Minibus Driver Awareness Scheme (MiDAS) is commonly used to meet the requirement for drivers to have basic vehicle and safety training. For more details of organisations who provide this training in Cumberland Council area, please get in touch.

Daily Vehicle Check (Minimum Expectation)

Cumberland Council expects permit holders to implement a basic daily vehicle safety check. This should include, but not be limited to:

Tyres – condition, tread depth, correct inflation, no visible damage

Lights & indicators – all working (including brake lights and hazards)

Mirrors & windows – clean, secure, unobstructed vision

Wipers & washers – operational and fluid levels adequate

Brakes – no warning lights; pedal feels normal

Steering – no unusual stiffness or noise

Horn – functioning correctly

Seatbelts – present, secure, and working

Doors & emergency exits – opening/closing correctly and unobstructed

Bodywork – no significant damage affecting safety

Fluid leaks – no visible oil, fuel, or coolant leaks

Dashboard warning lights – none indicating faults

Cleanliness & interior safety – no loose items that could cause injury

Accessibility equipment (where fitted) – lifts/ramps working properly

Fuel level – sufficient for the planned journey

A simple record (paper or electronic) should be completed to confirm checks have been carried out.

Declarations

You must make several declarations about your organisation, drivers and vehicles.
The DVSA or Traffic Commissioner may take these into account in any subsequent inspection or investigation. You must retain a copy of this application form for the duration of the permit.

In simple terms, you should be able to show:

- **Who your organisation is** → e.g. that you are a non-profit or eligible body (such as a charity or community group).
- **Why you provide transport** → that it supports your organisation's aims and is not for commercial profit.
- **How you operate** → that your transport is run in line with Section 19 rules (e.g. for members or eligible groups, on a cost-recovery basis, with appropriate drivers and vehicles).

Payment

The cost per permit is **£10.60** (from 1st April 2026) and agreed by the Executive annually.

To make the payment over the phone using a credit/debit card, please phone the number in the contact details.

If you choose to pay by cheque, please make the cheque payable to Cumberland Council.

If you choose to do a journal transfer, please organise this yourself using our cost centre, nominal & project **2623501 78601 BSOG**. Please note that this may delay the application until it arrives.

Faded permits are replaced free of charge (the current permits must be returned upon receiving the replacement permits).

Before you submit your information

The Traffic Commissioner needs to be satisfied that your organisation is eligible for a permit and therefore reserves the right to request additional information as required.

Giving false information or modifying the application form in order to obtain a permit is an offence and could lead to prosecution. It could also result in your vehicle(s) being impounded.

Completing your Application

Please complete the Application Form online, or print and complete the application form and complete it in black pen, returning it to the postal address/email address in the contact details.

Contact Details

Cumberland Council
Voluntary Transport Officer
PO Box 415
Carlisle
CA1 9GU

katy.wood@cumberland.gov.uk

07788 396194
0333 240 69 65 (option 1 then 5) charged at local rate