



Additional benefits, discounts and offers

This information is intended for people with Mesothelioma who are receiving a disability benefit and/or have a Blue Badge. If you have not yet had welfare benefits advice please contact Sarah Thomas on 07585 539498 or email sarah.thomas@newcastlecab.org.uk

There are many additional benefits, exemptions, concessions and discounts that are on offer to people with a disability or long term illness, including Mesothelioma.

Most of the benefits and exemptions have a clear eligibility criteria and you will need to be receiving certain disability benefits or be in possession of a Blue Badge to qualify.

Some discounts and concessions will specify that you need to be “registered disabled” without making it clear what this means. There is no such thing as a register for disabled people. A copy of your disability benefit award letter from the DWP is usually accepted as proof, if you are asked, or you could show a copy of your Blue Badge or Disabled Person’s Bus Pass, if you have one.

The eligibility criteria shown in this leaflet is not comprehensive and has been edited for relevance to people diagnosed with Mesothelioma.

Scheme conditions and availability can change without prior notice.

Information correct July 2020.

Travel and Transport

Please see the [Travel & Transport overview](#) to check if you are eligible for these offers.

Vehicle Tax Exemption

If you are eligible you can apply for an exemption from paying vehicle tax. The vehicle must be registered in the disabled person's name or their nominated driver's name. It must only be used for the disabled person's personal needs. It cannot be used by the nominated driver for their own personal use.

You can only have one vehicle tax exemption at any one time.

You claim the exemption when you apply for vehicle tax.

For more information visit www.gov.uk and search: *Tax your vehicle*

Vehicle Tax Reduction

If you are eligible you can get a 50% reduction in vehicle tax. The vehicle should be registered in the disabled person's name or their nominated driver's name.

You claim the reduction by making an application to the DVLA.

For more information visit www.gov.uk and search: *Financial help if you're disabled*

Motability Scheme

If you are eligible the Motability Scheme can help you with leasing a car, powered wheelchair or scooter.

The mobility part of your disability benefit will go directly to the Motability Scheme each month to pay for your lease. How much of your benefit will go towards your vehicle will depend on which one you choose. A vehicle can be leased for three years and includes insurance, breakdown assistance, servicing and repairs.

For an information pack please call 0800 093 1000 or visit www.motability.co.uk

Tyne Tunnel Toll Exemption

If you are entitled to a vehicle tax exemption (for disability) or have a Blue Badge you qualify for a Tyne Tunnel (TT2) exemption permit.

To apply for a 12 month permit you can download an application form at www.tt2.co.uk/tolls/toll-exemption-accounts/ or call 0191 262 4451

If you don't have a permit and need to use the Tyne Tunnel please press the assistance button at the toll booth and tell them you have a Blue Badge, they will waive you through.

Toll and congestion charge concessions are available throughout the UK but in some cases you have to apply in advance. A list is available at <https://www.gov.uk/toll-concessions>

Tyne and Wear TaxiCard

The TaxiCard scheme can help people with mobility difficulties travel independently. If you are eligible for the scheme you will receive a card credited with an annual amount of £225 to pay towards taxi fares with approved taxi companies.

The journey must start and/or finish in Tyne in Wear but there are no other restrictions on when and how you use the card.

TaxiCard is an annual scheme and there are two opportunities to join each year, usually in February and August. To request an application form visit www.nexus.org.uk/taxicard or call 0191 20 20 747

Disabled Persons Railcard

If you are eligible you can get a 1/3 off adult rail fares for travel on the National Rail network in Great Britain. If you are travelling with another adult they will also get 1/3 off their rail fare.

There are no time restrictions on the Disabled Persons Railcard. A one-year railcard costs £20, a three-year railcard costs £54.

You can apply online at www.disabledpersons-railcard.co.uk or call 0345 605 0525

Disabled Person's Bus Pass

If you are over State Pension age in England you automatically qualify for a free bus pass. If you are under State Pension age you can apply for a Disabled Person's Bus Pass.

Each local council sets the eligibility criteria for a Disabled Person's Bus Pass but, for guidance, if you receive Personal Independence Payment (enhanced rate mobility) or Disability Living Allowance (higher rate mobility) you will have good grounds for an application.

You can apply via your local council website or visit www.gov.uk and search: *Apply for a disabled person's bus pass*

Metro Gold Card

If you have a Disabled Person's Bus Pass, or standard Concessionary Travel Pass, you can buy a Metro Gold Card which gives you a year's travel on the Tyne and Wear Metro, Shields Ferry and Northern Rail services between Newcastle and Sunderland.

If you live in Tyne and Wear the Gold Card costs £12 , if you live outside of Tyne and Wear it costs £24. You can purchase the Metro Gold Card at any Metro station ticket machine.

More information is available at <https://www.nexus.org.uk/metro-gold-card>

Leisure & Entertainment - National Offers

Cinema Card

The CEA Card enables a disabled person to receive a complimentary ticket for a companion when they visit a participating cinema. You will still need to pay for your own ticket.

Participating cinemas chains include Odeon, Vue, Cineworld and the Tyneside Cinema.

To be eligible you must be in receipt of Attendance Allowance, Personal Independence Payment or Disability Living Allowance (any rates).

The card costs £6 per year. You can apply at <https://www.ceacard.co.uk/apply>

National Trust Essential Companion Card

With an Essential Companion card you can bring one or two carers or companions with you, free of charge, to National Trust properties. If you're not a National Trust member you will still need to pay for your own entry. The card is not essential to get the free entry for companions but it does make it simpler and quicker.

To get an Essential Companion card call 0344 800 1895 or email enquiries@nationaltrust.org.uk

Local National Trust properties include Lindisfarne Castle, Cragside and Gibside.

English Heritage Free Entry for Assisting Companions

English Heritage provides free entry for assisting companions of a disabled member or visitor. They don't ask for any proof of disability and the companion does not have to be the same person each time you visit. If you are not an English Heritage member you will still have to pay for your own entry.

Local English Heritage sites include Tynemouth Priory & Castle, Belsay Hall and Barnard Castle.

Leisure & Entertainment - Local Offers

Many visitor attractions, sporting and entertainment venues offer concessions for disabled people and their carers but don't always advertise them. Don't be shy, next time try asking **"Are there any concessions for disabled people or carers?"**.

Local Examples

Newcastle United offer all eligible disabled supporters a discount of at least 50% on standard ticket prices plus free entry for carers.

Beamish Museum offers free entry for the companion or carer of a disabled visitor.

WWT Washington Wetland Centre offers discounted entry for disabled visitors and essential helpers go free.

Home & Housing

Disabled Facilities Grant

You may be eligible for a grant from your local council if you need to make significant changes to your home, for example, installing a stairlift or a downstairs bathroom, due to your disability.

How much you can get depends on your household income and any savings you have. The maximum grant available in England is £30,000. Depending on your income, you may need to pay towards the cost of the work.

You must either own your property or be the tenant and intend to live in the property during the grant period.

You can apply through your local council. Priority status should be given to applicants with Mesothelioma. Please make the local council aware of your diagnosis when you apply.

For more information visit:

<https://www.gov.uk/disabled-facilities-grants>

Council Tax Disabled Band Reduction Scheme

If you have an extra bathroom, kitchen or other room that you need due to your disability you may be eligible for a reduction in your Council Tax valuation band.

You can apply through your local council. For more information visit <https://www.gov.uk/apply-for-council-tax-discount>

VAT Free Goods & Services

If you have Mesothelioma you should not be charged VAT on certain purchases of specialised goods and services, for example, aids and equipment or building alterations and adaptations, if they are needed because of your condition. The goods or services must be for your own personal or domestic use.

These goods and services are often referred to as “zero-rated” , “VAT-free” or “eligible for VAT relief”.

You should also not be charged VAT on the installation, repairs or maintenance of the goods or services.

It is recommended that you clarify whether or not the goods or service is VAT-free before committing to the purchase.

Your supplier or tradesperson may ask you to sign a declaration that you meet the conditions to get the goods or service VAT-free.

If you think you have been incorrectly charged VAT you should ask your supplier or tradesperson for a refund. HMRC cannot directly refund VAT to you.

Further information including more examples of qualifying goods and services is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/vat-relief-on-certain-goods-if-you-have-a-disability>