Passenger Transportation Board
MOVING FORWARD, TOGETHER

Application process

Taxi

Ride-hail (TNS)

Inter-city bus

Limo and shuttle

You must apply to the Passenger Transportation Board (Board) to:

- Get a licence (special authorization) to operate these services: taxi, ride-hail, limousine, shuttle, or inter-city bus
- Change your existing special authorization licence (e.g. add or change a service or vehicle, transfer a licence, get a temporary operating permit (TOP) or change rates)

Click one of the four links above to start your application, or read below for more information on the application process.

To apply for, or make changes to, a passenger transportation licence (with general authorization) for charter, tour or sightseeing buses, go to the Registrar of Passenger Transportation.

The Passenger Transportation Regulation specifies vehicles and services that don't require a licence to transport people.

The Board and the Registrar of Passenger Transportation (Registrar) are separate bodies with distinct responsibilities under the Passenger Transportation Act.

The Registrar accepts your application and determines whether it is an application for a general authorization (GA) or special authorization (SA) licence. The Registrar makes decisions on general authorizations, but the Board makes decisions on special authorizations.

If your application is for a special authorization, the Registrar will check to see that your application is complete and that you have met safety requirements. If it is complete, the Registrar then sends your application to the Board for a decision. If the Board decides to licence your operation, the Registrar will issue your licence.

If your application is incomplete, the Registrar or Board will contact you and request that you provide missing information within a specified time frame.

If the due date is missed, the Board may dismiss your application or make a decision with the evidence it has. If your application is dismissed, you will lose the $200 application fee and need to resubmit a complete application package.

You cannot operate a passenger transportation service until your application is approved and you have completed the licensing requirements.

How the Board makes a decision

Board considerations

Application decisions are made by Board members. Staff do not make decisions on applications.

When making a decision on your application, the Board must consider the factors set out in section 28(1) of the Passenger Transportation Act. The Board decides each case on its own merit.

To approve an application, the Board must also be satisfied that applicants have shown they would meet the requirements of the Act and regulations, including those relating to drivers and vehicles. If the Board approves the application, it will set the licence terms and conditions.

Applicant fitness

The first test is applicant fitness. If you do not prove to the Board that you are fit and proper, and capable of providing the service, the Board will stop reviewing and refuse your application.

The Board considers applicant fitness matters in two parts:

- Are you a fit and proper person to provide the proposed service?
- Are you capable of providing that service?

Public need and sound economic conditions

If you meet the fitness test, the Board will consider public need and sound economic conditions when deciding on your application.

The Board may use records, information, or reports that it has reviewed or produced, or that you have provided to demonstrate the following:

Public need: The Board must consider whether there is a public need for the service that you are proposing. You must give the Board information and evidence that shows that people would use your service throughout the proposed area. You may also tell the Board why you are asking for a specific number of vehicles.

Sound economic conditions: The Board must consider whether your application, if approved, would promote sound economic conditions in the passenger transportation business in British Columbia.

The Board aims to balance public need for available, accessible and reliable commercial passenger transportation services with overall industry viability and competitiveness. The Board considers this issue from a wide-ranging perspective, which includes consideration of harm to other industry participants.

Information and evidence

Board members make decisions based on information and evidence that relates to your application. You will be able to comment on information that the Board uses or produces.

This information and evidence may include:

- Information you submit with your application.
- Information that is available to the public (e.g., information on your website, information on the Board website, etc.).
- Records, information, or reports that the Board reviews, obtains or produces.
- Information provided by Submitters to your application.
- Your replies to submissions and comments on records, information, or reports.
- Information from a public hearing.
- Information and evidence used by the Board to assess your fitness.

Fitness

Learn more about your obligations as a licensee and the requirements you will be assessed on.

The Board's Fit and Proper and Capable policies describe how the Board has interpreted these terms and some of the factors it may consider when assessing fitness.

- Compliance information received from the Registrar of Passenger Transportation.
- Information available through the provincial court registry (Court Services Online).
- Investigation reports from the Registrar of Passenger Transportation and any comments received from you.
- Your business plan.
- Your financial information.
- Written submissions from other people, First Nation councils/nations or local governments, unless it is confidential.
- Data collected from limousine, ride-hail, taxi and other passenger directed vehicle operators in an area.
- Information provided to demonstrate public need and sound economic conditions.

Publications and submissions

Using information in your application, Board staff draft and email you a summary of your application. The summary includes the proposed terms and conditions for the passenger transportation licence you are applying for.

Once you confirm that the application summary is correct, the Board publishes it on the website. The Board will accept written submissions from anyone who either supports or objects to your application by the submission deadline identified in the application summary published on the Board's website.

You will receive a copy of all submissions and comments. You have seven days to send a reply to the Board. After the submission and response period ends, the Chair of the Board appoints a panel of one or more Board members to review and decide on your application.

Urgent public need

Sometimes there is an urgent need for passenger transportation services. In this situation, the Board will process applications based on "urgent public need." This is an exception to regular processing.

Fitness

When a taxi, ride-hail, limo and shuttle or inter-city bus operators applies for a passenger transportation licence, they show the Board that they are:

- a fit and proper person to provide the proposed service; and
- capable of providing the service

Public need and sound economic conditions

If an applicant meets the fitness test, the Board will consider public need and sound economic conditions when deciding their application.

Business plans

Applicants must submit a business plan when applying for a new passenger transportation licence or when applying to transfer a licence.

Financial information

The Board uses financial information to determine if an operator is capable of providing the passenger transportation service they are proposing.

Licence changed or transferred

Operators must apply to the Board to make any changes or amendments to their licences:

- Taxi
- Ride-hail
- Inter-city bus
- Limo, shuttle and other passenger directed vehicles

Operators (transferors) can also apply to transfer their passenger transportation licence to another operator. Both the transferor and the transferee must hold a passenger transportation licence with special authorization.

Request a decision reconsideration

There is no right to appeal Board decisions. The Board may reconsider, vary or rescind a decision in only two circumstances:

- Information has become available that was not available at the time the decision was made

- There has been an error in procedure

Issuing your licence

Decisions are emailed to applicants and the Registrar's office, then published on the Board's website. If your application is approved in whole or in part by the Board, and the Registrar is satisfied that the applicant meets the requirements, the Registrar will issue a passenger transportation licence with special authorization for:

- Passenger directed vehicle (limousine, shuttle bus or taxi)
- Transportation network service (TNS) (ride-hail)
- Inter-city bus

Vehicle licence fees

When your application is approved you must licence the vehicles in your fleet. The Registrar will advise you of the payment process.

The Registrar must issue the licence before your service can start. Your licence is valid for one year from the date of issue unless otherwise specified by the Board. Renewals are under the authority of the Registrar and licensees must apply to renew their licence every year.

Data requirements: Passenger directed vehicle and ride-hail (TNS) licensees must adhere to the terms and conditions in their licence regarding data requirements and submit trip data to the Registrar of Passenger Transportation.

Submit any changes to your company information to the Registrar of Passenger Transportation.

This might include changes to:

- Your operation's legal name, sole proprietor, partners or company CEO or local general manager
- Your business mailing address/physical location of records
- Signing authorities

Confidentiality

The Board keeps the following types of information confidential:

- Private financial information (e.g. personal net worth statements)
- Private business details (e.g. contracts, customer account information, detailed expansion processes
- Information from criminal record checks that is not public and other personal information (e.g. information that you disclose about any unlawful activity or bankruptcy)

Other information submitted with an application may be made public. Board decisions are public. The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act may apply to information in your application package.

Related topics:

- Apply to transfer a licence

- Fitness
- Preparing a business plan
- Providing financial information
- Public need and sound economic conditions
- Request a decision reconsideration
- Urgent public need
- Operating with a licence