

## Consultation on how we decide if people should be able to get a Companion Card.

Easy read version



## Getting support with this form



Remember if you need support to understand some of the things in this report you can always ask your friends, family or Support Worker to help you.

## What is a Companion Card?



Sometimes people with a disability need somebody to support them to travel. This could be for things like;

- getting on or off a train or bus
- moving around



We call the person supporting somebody to travel a Companion.



A Companion Card allows a Companion to travel for free if they are supporting a person with a disability to use public transport. This means using the buses and the Metro.

## What are we asking people about?



We need clear rules about who can have a Companion Card.



We are looking at our rules again. We want to know what you think about our new ideas about how we decide who gets a Companion Card.



The most important benefit for people is the Personal Independence Payment.

We want the rules for getting a Companion Card to be like the rules for getting a Personal Independence Payment.



We know for some people this can be hard to understand. Remember if you need to you can always ask your friends, family or Support Worker to help you.

## Personal Independence Payment

Personal Independence Payment - PIP  
**DWP** Department for Work and Pensions



Personal Independence Payment is a benefit to help disabled people pay the extra costs of being disabled. Sometimes people call it PIP for short.



There are two parts to a Personal Independence Payment.

One part is the daily living part which looks at things like cooking, keeping clean and looking after your home.



The second part is about somebody's mobility – this includes things like how people move and how they use public transport.



The amount of money people get is based upon how much support people need for their daily living and their mobility needs.



People who need the most support get what is called an Enhanced Rate. This means they will get more money.



Other people who need less support will receive the Standard Rate.

## Changes



The changes Nexus is planning to introduce affects only future applicants. Existing Companion Card holders are not affected by these changes.



The reason why we are introducing these changes is that people with physical mobility difficulties have been prevented by current eligibility criteria from qualifying for the Companion Card.



In the future we will award the Companion Card by looking at “how people are at planning and following a journey “ and “how people are moving around”.



In the future both people with learning disabilities and physical problems will benefit from the Companion Card Scheme as long as they receive the Enhanced Rate of the Mobility Benefit in the Personal Independence Payment system.



In the future people with disabilities who are awarded the Enhanced Rate of the Mobility Benefit will qualify for the Companion Card.




In the future people with disabilities who are in receipt of the Standard Rate of the Mobility Benefit will not qualify for the Companion Card.




## We need to know what you think



We need to know what you think about our plans. This will help us to decide what changes we need to make.

 Home **Mails** Bus Ferry Rail **Concessions** Pp

You are here: Home » Consultation » Consultation » Planned changes to Companion Card eligibility criteria

 6 September 2018

**What are we consulting about?**  
This consultation is about proposed changes to the eligibility criteria for the Nexus Companion Card concessionary travel product. A Companion Card is used by people who may need to take a companion with them when making trips by public transport, and who meet the qualifying criteria. Companion Card holders can take a companion with them on their journey if they need to do so, free of charge.

**Why are we considering changes to the eligibility criteria?**  
We are proposing to change the criteria following a review of the scheme, to bring it into line with the criteria for elements of the Personal Independence Payment benefit (PIP).

Existing Companion Card holders will be unaffected by the proposed changes which will apply only to new applicants, should Nexus proceed with the changes following the outcome of the consultation process.

**What changes are we proposing?**  
Nexus has identified that the criteria it currently uses to assess eligibility for the scheme may prevent some people who have a need for the product from being issued with a Companion Card. To address this, we are proposing to alter the scheme criteria so that the concession can be targeted more effectively at the people who will gain most benefit from it.

The rationale for the change, and the implications for new applicants, are set out in the attached **consultation document** attached below. In summary, we are proposing to make it easier for people aged 16-64 to qualify for the product on the grounds of reduced mobility. This may have implications for other applicants, depending upon the benefits they receive. People in receipt of aggregated benefits (16+) will not be affected by the changes proposed.

**Your views**  
Before we make a final decision about any changes to the Companion Card criteria, we would first like to know what you think about our plans. A public consultation will be open from Monday 10 September to Sunday 2 December 2018. Please read the attached consultation document and provide feedback through our online survey. Alternatively you can contact us with any comments.

T: 0191 20 20 741  
E: [info@nexus.org.uk](mailto:info@nexus.org.uk)

Write to: Corporate Planning, Nexus, Nexus House, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 4AX.

**Downloads**

- Consultation on changes to Companion Card scheme

There is more information on our website:

<https://www.nexus.org.uk/consultation/item/planned-changes-companion-card-eligibility-criteria>

**Please fill in our questionnaire. You can ask somebody to help you.**

Please confirm who you are and who you represent.

Name:	Who do you represent? Yourself, an individual or an organisation?
-------	---

Q 1	In the future people with disabilities <b>who only receive the Enhanced Rate of Mobility Benefit <u>will be eligible</u> for a Companion Card.</b>
-----	--

Do you agree with this?

If not please give your reason below.

Q 2	In the future people with disabilities <b>who receive the Standard Rate of Mobility Benefit <u>will not be able</u> to have a Companion Card.</b>
-----	---

Do you agree with this?

If not please give your reasons below.

Q 3	<p>We will decide on if people can have a Companion Card by looking at:</p> <p><b>1: How people are at 'planning and following a journey'</b> <b>2: How people are at 'moving around'.</b></p> <p>We think these two ideas are enough to help us decide if people should have a Companion Card.</p> <p>Do you agree with this?</p> <p>If not please give reasons below.</p>

Please send your questionnaire for us back by **Sunday the 2 December 2018**.

You can contact us with your feedback

Telephone: 0191 2020747

Email: [policyconsultations@nexus.org.uk](mailto:policyconsultations@nexus.org.uk)

Or write to us at:  
Corporate Planning  
Nexus  
Nexus House  
Newcastle upon Tyne  
NE1 4AX