



The Motability Scheme

Motability was set up by the government in 1977 and has supplied more than 1.7 million cars and powered wheelchairs to disabled customers.

Motability was established to provide disabled people with safe, reliable and affordable cars. You can use this scheme to hire or buy a car or powered wheelchair or scooter if you have been awarded Disability Living Allowance (DLA) high rate mobility component (or War Pensioners' Mobility Supplement).

The award must usually be for long enough to complete the full length of the chosen agreement (see 'Disability Living Allowance - Length of award' below).

Where more than one person is eligible to apply, it may be possible to use both allowances towards the cost of one vehicle.

You can apply for a car as a passenger if you are eligible but don't drive. A parent or carer can apply on behalf of a child who is receiving an award. Proposed drivers must not have any serious driving convictions, disqualifications, or endorsements within the last five years. There are also some restrictions on drivers under 25 and those with provisional licences.

Motability also provides grants for driving lessons.

Motability offers a choice of:

- A new car on a three-year contract hire lease.
- A new or used car on hire purchase, over a term of two to five years.
- A new or used powered wheelchair, or scooter on hire purchase, over a term of one to three years.

Once you have chosen which scheme you wish to join, you must then agree to pay over all, or part, of your allowance to it.

By far the most popular choice is the contract hire scheme, which offers customers a new car from a list of approved manufacturers, on a three-year lease. All maintenance and servicing costs are included, together with comprehensive insurance and breakdown assistance.

You do not have to be the driver of the car. You can instead apply for a car as a passenger and nominate two other people as your drivers. You can also apply to the scheme if you have a child aged three or older, who is entitled to DLA high rate mobility component.

In order to help you choose a scheme that suits you Motability publish information about the pros and cons of different schemes, price guides, lists of dealers and guidance on choosing a car.



Driving Lessons

If you are aged between 16 and 24, and in receipt of the higher rate mobility component, you may be eligible for help towards the cost of driving lessons. Motability will not pay for either the theory or practical driving test.

Adaptations to cars

There is a range of car adaptations available including steering wheel knobs, hand controls for brakes and accelerators and wheelchair hoists. It is important to choose a car suitable for the adaptations you require so check with a Motability accredited specialist before ordering your car.

The cost of adaptations, plus fitting and removal, are not included in your lease. You will have to pay for these yourself, but in some cases Motability may be able to provide help towards the cost of the least expensive solution that would meet your mobility needs.

A Motability accredited specialist must carry out adaptations fitted to a Motability car. Your Motability supplier and their insurers need to be informed before you go ahead with the fittings.

Fuel

You will have to pay for the fuel you use, so it is worth calculating likely fuel costs before making a decision on which car to have. Car manufacturers publish details to guide you. The higher the miles per gallon figure, the further you can drive on the same amount of fuel.

Excess mileage cost

If you opt for a three-year contract hire lease, you are entitled to drive 45,000 miles over the three-year period of your agreement – 15,000 each year. When the car is returned, you will have to pay 5p per mile for any extra mileage used.

Exemption from road tax (Vehicle Excise Duty)

All vehicles on the road are liable to Vehicle Excise Duty, better known as road tax. You will be exempt from this charge (including the first registration fee) for one car if you get Disability Living Allowance high rate mobility component or War Pensioners' mobility supplement. The office handling your benefit should automatically send you an exemption form. You can then use the certificate as proof of exemption when applying for a 'tax exempt disc' from the Vehicle Licensing Agency.

Disability Living Allowance – Length of Award

To hire a new car, your high rate mobility component should usually run for at least 3 years. However, from October 2004, Motability adjusted the requirement of the scheme so that it is accessible to people whose award length falls short of the 3 year requirement for hiring a car. Motability can allow access to those in receipt of awards



with 12 months or more remaining. If a DLA award is not renewed to cover the full length of the chosen scheme, the car will need to be returned to Motability. This gives customers around three months between the cancellation of the allowance and the return-by date, during which the lease can be paid privately, so that there is time available to arrange an alternative car.

To buy on hire purchase, the mobility component needs to run for at least 2 years if you buy a used car, or at least 4 years if you buy a new car.

If you go into hospital, the general rule is that payment of both the care component and the mobility component stops after you've been in hospital for 28 days for adults or 84 days for children under 16. However, the mobility component can continue to be paid in hospital while you have a Motability agreement in force. You cannot renew a Motability agreement if you are in hospital, except under the wheelchair scheme provided the new agreement is entered into the day after the old one ends.

Requesting an extension of your mobility component award

The Department for Work and Pensions is responsible for awarding DLA. If you are unable to access the Motability Scheme because your award of the mobility component is not long enough and your mobility problems are unlikely to change or may get worse, you can ask for your award to be extended.

Great care needs to be taken when considering this option because it is always possible that an award may be reduced or lost altogether. If you receive the care component, a decision-maker could also decide to question your entitlement to that component as well. If you decide to ask for your award to be extended seek specialist advice from an advice agency or law centre first (see factsheet F15 Finding a local advice agency).

Useful contacts

For general enquiries about the Motability Car Schemes:

Motability Car Scheme:

Motability Operations
City Gate House
22 Southwark Bridge Road
London SE1 9HB

Telephone 0845 456 4566 (Minicom 0845 675 0009)
(Lines are open 8.30am to 5.30pm, Monday to Friday)

Motability Wheelchair and Scooter Scheme:

route2mobile
Montgomery House
Newbury Road



Enham Alamein
Andover
Hampshire
SP11 6JS

Telephone 0845 607 6260 (Minicom 01264 384 482)
Lines are open 8.00am to 6.00pm, Monday to Thursday, 8.00am to 5.00pm Friday

www.motability.co.uk

Direct Gov

Visit Directgov for more information including financial help and VAT relief
http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/DisabledPeople/MotoringAndTransport/Yourvehicleandlicencence/DG_10028000.

DVLA

Driver Vehicle and Licensing Agency (DVLA)
Customer Enquiries
Vehicle Enquiry Unit Centre
Swansea
SA99 1AR

Telephone 0870 240 0010
www.dvla.gov.uk

Driver Vehicle and Licensing Agency (DVLA) Northern Ireland
County Hall
Castlerock Road
Coleraine
BT51 3TA

Telephone 0845 402 4000
<http://www.dvlni.gov.uk/>

Disability Living Allowance

Disability and Carers Service
Warbreck House
Warbreck Hill
Blackpool
FY2 0YE

Telephone 0845 712 33456
<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/lifeevent/discare/index.asp>



Disability and Carers Service
Castle Court
Royal Avenue
Belfast
BT1 1HR

Telephone 028 9090 6182
<http://www.dsdni.gov.uk/index/ssa.htm>

War Pensioners' Mobility Supplement

Service Personnel and Veterans Agency
Norcross
Thornton Cleveleys
Lancashire
FY5 3WP

Telephone 0800 169 2277

Website: <http://www.veterans-uk.info/>