

## ◆ OFFICIAL ELIGIBILITY GUIDE

# RTA Public Driving Permit

## Eligibility Requirements for 2026

A complete, regulation-backed reference for taxi drivers, limousine chauffeurs, ride-hailing operators, school bus drivers, and all commercial passenger transport applicants in Dubai.

<b>Document Type</b>	Eligibility Reference Guide
<b>Jurisdiction</b>	Emirate of Dubai, UAE
<b>Issuing Authority</b>	Roads & Transport Authority (RTA)
<b>Applicable Year</b>	2026
<b>Permit Category</b>	Public Driving Permit (PDP)

Note: This document is an educational summary based on publicly available RTA regulations and Administrative Resolution No. 516 of 2022. For binding decisions, always verify current requirements directly with the Roads & Transport Authority at [rta.ae](http://rta.ae).

## Introduction

If you intend to drive passengers commercially in Dubai — whether as a taxi driver, limousine chauffeur, ride-hailing operator, school bus driver, or tourism transport specialist — you cannot operate on a standard UAE driving licence alone. The Roads & Transport Authority (RTA) requires a separate authorization known as the **Public Driving Permit (PDP)**, also referred to as the Professional Driver Permit.

This guide outlines every eligibility requirement an applicant must meet in 2026 to qualify for the PDP, with practical detail on each criterion. Use it as a pre-application checklist before approaching your sponsoring company or visiting an RTA service center.

## What Is the Public Driving Permit?

The Public Driving Permit is an official RTA-issued authorization that allows a driver to legally carry passengers for commercial purposes within the Emirate of Dubai. It is issued separately from the standard UAE driving licence and is renewed annually following successful re-verification of the holder's medical fitness and traffic record.

### Common PDP Categories

Category	Used For
Taxi Driver Permit	Drivers working with Dubai Taxi Corporation or franchise taxis
Limousine Chauffeur Permit	Car-with-driver / luxury chauffeur services
Ride-Hailing Permit	Uber, Careem, Hala, and similar platforms
School Bus Driver Permit	Transport of students for licensed schools
Tourism Driver Permit	Desert safari, city tours, hotel transfers
Corporate Driver Permit	Private drivers employed by registered companies

# Eligibility Requirements for 2026

To qualify for a Public Driving Permit in Dubai in 2026, an applicant must satisfy all of the following criteria. RTA does not accept partial qualifications — every requirement below is mandatory unless explicitly noted otherwise.

## 1. Age Requirement

The applicant must be between **21 and 65 years** of age at the time of application. Applicants below 21 are not eligible regardless of driving experience, and applicants above 65 are typically excluded from new applications. Existing permit holders crossing 65 may face additional medical scrutiny at renewal.

## 2. Valid UAE Driving Licence

The applicant must hold a valid UAE driving licence in the appropriate vehicle category (light vehicle, heavy bus, etc.) matching the vehicle they intend to drive commercially. Foreign licences are not accepted — converted or originally issued UAE licences only.

## 3. Valid Residence Visa & Emirates ID

A valid UAE residence visa and Emirates ID are mandatory. Tourist or visit visa holders are not eligible for PDP application. The visa must be sponsored by the same entity that will sponsor the driver permit — typically the fleet company, taxi franchise, or limousine operator the applicant will work for.

## 4. Medical Fitness Certification

The applicant must pass a medical fitness test conducted at an RTA-approved hospital or medical center. The examination typically covers:

- Vision and hearing assessment
- General physical fitness evaluation
- Screening for cardiovascular conditions
- Screening for diabetes (if uncontrolled)
- Neurological condition checks (epilepsy, etc.)
- Drug and substance screening

## 5. Foundation Training Course Completion

Applicants must complete and pass the RTA Foundation Training Course relevant to their category. Course content typically includes Dubai traffic laws, route knowledge, customer service standards, defensive driving techniques, and emergency procedures. Course duration ranges from 2 to 5 days depending on the permit category.

## 6. Clean Traffic and Criminal Record

RTA verifies the applicant's traffic file and may request a police clearance certificate. Outstanding fines, recent serious traffic violations (such as reckless driving or driving under the influence), or unresolved criminal matters will lead to application rejection. All fines must be cleared before submission.

## 7. Sponsorship by an RTA-Approved Entity

Independent applications are not accepted for new applicants. The applicant must be sponsored by an RTA-approved franchise, fleet operator, limousine company, or registered commercial transport entity. Self-sponsorship is only possible if the applicant owns a registered commercial transport business with the appropriate trade licence.

## 8. Employment Documentation

Applicants must provide a valid employment contract or appointment letter from the sponsoring company, along with a No Objection Certificate (NOC) confirming the employer's consent to the permit application.

## Eligibility Summary at a Glance

The table below provides a quick-reference summary of all PDP eligibility requirements for 2026. Use it as a pre-application checklist.

#	Requirement	Status / Detail
1	<b>Age</b>	21 to 65 years
2	<b>UAE Driving Licence</b>	Valid, matching vehicle category
3	<b>Residence Visa</b>	Valid, sponsored by employer entity
4	<b>Emirates ID</b>	Valid and unexpired
5	<b>Medical Fitness Certificate</b>	RTA-approved center, recent issue
6	<b>Foundation Training Course</b>	Completed and passed
7	<b>Traffic Record</b>	Clean, all fines paid
8	<b>Sponsoring Entity</b>	RTA-approved company
9	<b>Employment Contract / NOC</b>	Provided by sponsor
10	<b>Police Clearance</b>	Required for tourism / school bus categories

## Required Documents Checklist

Prepare every document below before submitting your application. Missing documentation is the single most common cause of PDP application delays.

- Valid Emirates ID (original and copy)
- Valid passport with residence visa page
- Valid UAE driving licence
- Recent passport-size photographs (white background)
- Medical fitness certificate from RTA-approved center
- No Objection Certificate (NOC) from sponsoring employer
- Foundation training course completion certificate
- Employment contract or appointment letter
- Police clearance certificate (for tourism / school bus categories)
- Receipt of paid application fees

## Who Is NOT Eligible for the PDP?

Applicants under 21 or over 65 years of age

Holders of tourist, visit, or transit visas

Drivers with unpaid traffic fines or active violation cases

Applicants without a valid UAE driving licence

Applicants with recent serious offences (DUI, reckless driving, etc.)

Drivers without a sponsoring RTA-approved company

Applicants who fail the medical fitness test

Drivers with a suspended UAE driving licence

## Additional Requirements by Category

Beyond the core eligibility list, certain PDP categories impose extra conditions. Confirm these before applying for your specific permit type.

### Limousine Chauffeur Permit

- Sponsoring company must hold a valid RTA limousine operator licence
- If bringing your own vehicle, it cannot be older than 5–7 years
- Vehicle must be RTA-registered as a limousine class vehicle
- English language proficiency strongly recommended for international clients

### Tourism Driver Permit

- Police clearance certificate is mandatory
- Knowledge of major Dubai attractions and routes is tested
- Multilingual proficiency is highly valued
- Safari category requires additional 4x4 driving certification

### School Bus Driver Permit

- Enhanced background and criminal record verification
- Specific child-safety training module required
- First-aid certification typically required
- Stricter medical assessment, including vision and reaction time tests

### Ride-Hailing Permit (Uber / Careem / Hala)

- Vehicle must meet platform-specific age and condition standards
- Vehicle must be RTA-registered as a limousine class vehicle
- Fleet company typically applies for the permit on the driver's behalf
- Self-sponsorship possible only with registered fleet partnership

## Permit Validity & Renewal Eligibility

The Public Driving Permit is typically valid for **one year** from the date of issue. Renewal is not automatic — the permit holder must meet a fresh set of conditions each year:

- Pass an annual medical fitness re-test at an RTA-approved center
- Maintain a valid UAE driving licence
- Continue employment with the sponsoring entity (or transfer to a new sponsor)
- Maintain a clean traffic record over the previous permit year
- Pay the applicable renewal fee
- Have an unexpired Emirates ID and residence visa

**Recommended: begin the renewal process at least 30 days before your permit expires to avoid any gap in your**

## Top Reasons PDP Applications Get Rejected

Understanding why applications fail is the fastest way to make sure yours doesn't. Based on documented RTA practice, the following issues account for the majority of rejections in 2026:

Reason	How to Avoid
<b>Outstanding traffic fines</b>	Clear all dues before applying
<b>Pending criminal cases</b>	Resolve all legal matters first
<b>Failed medical fitness test</b>	Address health issues; retake test if needed
<b>Sponsor / visa mismatch</b>	Ensure visa sponsor matches permit sponsor
<b>Expired UAE driving licence</b>	Renew driving licence before PDP application
<b>Incorrect licence category</b>	Match licence class to vehicle you'll drive
<b>Incomplete foundation training</b>	Attend all sessions; do not skip
<b>Missing or expired documents</b>	Use the document checklist on page 4

## Penalties for Operating Without a Valid PDP

Carrying paying passengers in Dubai without a valid Public Driving Permit is a serious regulatory offence. Consequences include:

- Heavy fines starting from AED 3,000 (and higher for repeat offences)
- Vehicle impoundment by Dubai Police or RTA inspectors
- Suspension of the offender's standard UAE driving licence
- Disqualification from future PDP applications for a defined period
- Possible visa cancellation in serious or repeat cases
- Reputational damage with future employers in the transport sector

## Pre-Application Final Checklist

Before you contact your sponsoring company or visit an RTA service center, run through this final check. If you can tick every item, you are application-ready.

- I am between 21 and 65 years of age
- My UAE driving licence is valid and matches my intended vehicle category
- My residence visa and Emirates ID are valid and not expiring soon
- All my outstanding traffic fines are paid
- I have a confirmed sponsoring employer who is RTA-approved
- I have completed (or am ready to complete) the foundation training course

- I have arranged my medical fitness test at an RTA-approved center
- I have all required documents organized and accessible
- I understand the renewal cycle and annual medical requirement
- I have read this guide in full and verified current details on [rta.ae](https://www.rta.ae)

---

## Disclaimer & Source Information

This document is an independent educational guide based on publicly available information from the Roads & Transport Authority (RTA) of Dubai, including Administrative Resolution No. 516 of 2022 and subsequent RTA communications. Regulations, fees, and procedures may change without notice. For binding decisions and the latest official requirements, always consult the RTA directly through:

- Official website: [www.rta.ae](https://www.rta.ae)
- Customer Happiness Centers across Dubai
- RTA Dubai mobile application
- RTA contact center: **8009090**