

Croydon Council – Fact Sheet for residents applying for a Disabled Persons Freedom Pass

Eligibility Criteria – Severe Learning Disability

NOTE – this category is for Freedom Pass applications only

A learning disability is different for everyone. The degree of disability can vary greatly, being classified as mild, moderate, severe or profound. In all cases, a learning disability is a lifelong condition and cannot be cured. The learning disability would have been present from an early age.

To be eligible your learning disability must be one that has been defined by an appropriate medical professional as 'a state of arrested or incomplete development of mind which includes significant impairment of intelligence and social functioning'.

Your disability must be severe have had a lasting effect on your development.

Such a condition:

- will have been present at an early age
- causes a significant impairment of intelligence and social functioning. This could be:
 - a reduced ability to understand new or complex information,
 - difficulty in learning new skills, and
 - may also include an inability to cope independently.

Learning disability v Learning difficulty

A learning disability is different to a learning difficulty. The two terms are not synonymous.

A “learning difficulty” refers to **any** condition which results in a child having greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age, which prevents or hinders the child from making use of ordinary educational facilities. Such conditions could include (list not exhaustive):

- profound hearing impairment,
- dyslexia (reading),
- dyspraxia (affecting physical co-ordination),
- attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)
- and Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

A person with a learning disability may also have one or more learning difficulties.

Eligibility under this criterion must be a learning disability and not a condition solely considered to be a learning difficulty.

Evidence you could provide:

- A copy of the latest/last version of your Educational Health and Care Plan (EHCP)
- Medical evidence to support your application to show you meet the above criteria

Notes on providing evidence to support your application:

Documents supplied must:

- be relevant to the eligibility criteria you are applying under
- show your name and address

For example:

- EHCP
- a letter of diagnosis
- evidence of specialist consultations etc.
- letters from other professionals involved with you

You can now get access to your medical records by visiting www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/about-the-nhs/how-to-get-your-medical-records/

Please do not ask your GP to write a letter on your behalf. We will not be able to consider this. We cannot accept appointment letters as proof, please do not send these.

Other relevant advice:

There are a number of conditions and neurological disorders that often involve or cause some type of learning disability, including Down's syndrome, meningitis, epilepsy or cerebral palsy.

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

Autism is a lifelong developmental disability (which may cause difficulties with learning and is not a learning disability) that affects how people perceive the world and interact with others. This disorder generally relates to social functioning, rather than intelligence, and people with a diagnosis are often high functioning, and have average or above average intelligence. You would not, therefore, be eligible solely on the basis of an ASD diagnosis.