

Change in Age of Eligibility

1. I reach the age of 60 after 6th April 2010. When will I get my bus pass?

From 6th April 2010, the age of eligibility for concessionary travel for women will be pension age and for men it will be the pensionable age of a woman born on the same day.

The state pension age for women is rising by five years over a period of ten years. The age of eligibility will rise incrementally, that is, in stages, between 2010 and 2020. The earliest age for men and women to get bus passes will therefore rise gradually, from 60 on 5 April 2010 to 65 on 5 April 2020. The Government decided that this would be the fairest method, rather than introduce a one-off rise which would leave those currently close to retirement age facing a full five-year delay.

The age of eligibility for the state pension is scheduled to rise by two months every one month. This means the earliest date on which you can get your bus pass will depend on which month you were born in and will not fall on your birthday. The table below sets out when those approaching the age of 60 will become eligible for their concessionary bus pass.

| Period within which date of birth falls | Day become eligible for concessionary bus pass |
|---|--|
| Before and including 5th April 1950 | Date of 60th birthday |
| 6th April 1950 to 5th May 1950 | 6th May 2010 |
| 6th May 1950 to 5th June 1950 | 6th July 2010 |
| 6th June 1950 to 5th July 1950 | 6th September 2010 |
| 6th July 1950 to 5th August 1950 | 6th November 2010 |
| 6th August 1950 to 5th September 1950 | 6th January 2011 |
| And so on... | |

There is also a ready reckoner tool which enables people affected by the pension age changes to see at what age they become eligible for their state pension and associated benefits. You can find this on the DirectGov website at:

<http://pensions.direct.gov.uk/en/state-pension-age-calculator/home.asp>

For the purposes of working out the date of eligibility for the bus pass using this tool, you should enter your gender as female. The date of state pension age calculated will

be the date on which you become eligible for the concessionary bus pass. However if you are male, this will not necessarily be the same date on which you become entitled to the state pension.

2. Are you taking my bus pass away from me?

Absolutely not. For people who have already reached the age of 60 or are due to do so before 6th April 2010 there will be no change whatsoever. Even if you have not already taken up your entitlement to a bus pass, you will be unaffected by the changes if your 60th birthday is before 6th April 2010.

3. Will I have to wait until I'm 65 to get my bus pass?

You will only have to wait until you are 65 to get a bus pass if you were born after 5th April 1955. See the 'When will I get my bus pass question' above for details on how to calculate when you will be eligible for a bus pass.

4. Why have working age men been entitled to a bus pass in the past?

The purpose of the concession has always been to provide greater freedom and independence to older people in their retirement. Until 2002, eligibility for the concessionary bus pass was linked to the state pension age, meaning women became eligible at 60 and men at 65.

However, in 2000 this difference was challenged as discriminatory in the European Court of Human Rights. The Government pre-emptively took the decision to lower the age of entitlement for men and in 2002 new legislation was passed that equalised the age of eligibility for both sexes at 60. However, this meant that, for the first time, concessionary bus travel was made available to older people of working age. With the difference in state pension age for men and women set to disappear between 2010 and 2020, it is appropriate to re-establish the link with pension age and remove the anomalous position of working age citizens receiving free bus passes.