STATUTORY RULES OF NORTHERN IRELAND

2026 No. 119

ROAD TRAFFIC AND VEHICLES

The Motor Vehicles (Driving Licences) (Amendment No. 2) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026

Made - - - -	*18th June 2026*
Coming into operation -	*1st August 2026*

The Department for Infrastructure(**a**) makes the following Regulations in exercise of the powers conferred by Articles 17(2), 19C(2) and 218 of the Road Traffic (Northern Ireland) Order 1981(**b**) and now vested in it(**c**).

Citation and commencement

1. These Regulations may be cited as the Motor Vehicles (Driving Licences) (Amendment No. 2) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026 and shall come into operation on 1st August 2026.

Amendment of the Motor Vehicles (Driving Licences) Regulations

2.—(1) In regulation 5 of the Motor Vehicles (Driving Licences) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1996(**d**) (competence to drive classes of vehicles), after paragraph (11) insert—

"(12) A person who holds a relevant full licence authorising the driving of vehicles included in category B, other than vehicles in former sub-category B1, sub-category B1 or sub-category B1 (invalid carriages), and has held that licence for an aggregate period of not less than two years, may drive—

(a) a zero-emission vehicle of a class that would be included within category B but for its maximum authorised mass exceeding 3.5 tonnes, provided that it is not a mobile project vehicle and has a maximum authorised mass—

(i) not exceeding 4.25 tonnes, excluding any part of that weight which is attributable to specialised equipment intended for the carriage of disabled passengers, and

(ii) not exceeding 5 tonnes otherwise;

(b) a zero-emission vehicle and trailer combination which has a maximum authorised mass not exceeding 7 tonnes, comprising—

(i) a zero-emission vehicle referred to in sub-paragraph (a), and

(**a**) Formerly the Department for Regional Development; see section 1(6) and (11) of, and Schedule 1 to, the Departments Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 (2016 c. 5 (N.I.)). Pursuant to section 1(9) of that Act, the Department of the Environment is dissolved

(**b**) S.I. 1981/154 (N.I. 1); Article 17 was amended by paragraph 10 of Schedule 1 to S.R 1996 No. 426 and Article 19C was inserted by Schedule 1 to S.I. 1991/197 (N.I. 3)

(**c**) See Article 8(1)(b) of, and Part 2 of Schedule 5 to, the Departments (Transfer of Functions) Order (Northern Ireland) 2016 (S.R. 2016 No. 76)

(**d**) S.R. 1996 No. 542 to which there are amendments not relevant to these Regulations

(ii) a trailer which has a maximum authorised mass not exceeding 3.5 tonnes,

provided he has passed the prescribed test in respect of category B+E.

(13) For the purposes of this regulation—

(a) when a person drives a zero-emission vehicle of a kind specified in paragraph 12(a) or (b) which is a "medium-sized goods vehicle" or "other motor vehicle" for the purposes of Article 17 of the Order (disqualification of persons under age), that Article has effect as if, for the age specified in the Table in that Article in respect of medium-sized goods vehicle" and "other motor vehicle", there were substituted the age "19"; and

(b) "zero-emission vehicle" means a vehicle without an internal combustion engine, or with an internal combustion engine that has emissions of CO^2 of zero grams per kilometre.".

Sealed with the Official Seal of the Department for Infrastructure on 18th June 2026

L.S.

Chris Hughes
A senior officer of the
Department for Infrastructure

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Regulations)

These Regulations amend regulation 5 of the Motor Vehicles (Driving Licences) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1996 ("1996 Regulations") to permit the driving of zero-emission vehicles in certain circumstances in excess of the maximum authorised mass that would otherwise apply.

The Regulations allow a person who has held a category B licence for an aggregate period of not less than two years to drive a zero-emission vehicle designed and constructed for the carriage of no more than 8 passengers in addition to the driver with a maximum authorised mass not exceeding 4.25 tonne, or 5 tonnes for a zero-emission vehicle fitted with specialist equipment intended for the carriage of disabled passengers.

As is currently the case those category B licence holders may tow a trailer with a MAM not exceeding 750kgs provided that the zero-emission vehicle and trailer combination does not exceed a MAM of 5 tonnes.

The Regulations also allow a person who has held a category B licence for an aggregate period of not less than two years to drive a zero-emission vehicle and trailer combination provided that the maximum authorised mass of the trailer does not exceed 3.5 tonnes and the vehicle and trailer combination do not exceed a maximum authorised mass of 7 tonnes and provided that he has passed the prescribed test in respect of category B+E.

To ensure that minimum age requirements are consistent the Regulations modify the minimum age requirements for drivers of the zero-emission vehicles in question so that they are in line with those for category B vehicles while taking into account the requirement to have held the category B licence for an aggregate period of not less than 2 years.

An Explanatory Memorandum has been produced and is available from Driving, Vehicle and Road Safety Policy Division, Department for Infrastructure, James House, 2-4 Cromac Avenue, Belfast BT7 2JA or online alongside this Statutory Rule at http://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisr

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£6.40

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/id/nisr/2026/119

ISBN 978-0-33-802658-3

