

Taxi Policy v.10.0

Documented Changes

Following the publication of Department for Transport Statutory Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Standards, and receipt of the consultation responses (primarily from the taxi trade) of a Licensing survey. The following changes were made:

- 1) **(Administrative change)** General update of the whole document to reflect changes over time in how applications are received and processed (online).
- 2) **(Local change)** Increased the period of time a new applicant is required to have held a (DVLA) driving licence before making an application, from 1 year to 2 years.
- 3) **(Local change)** Added a cancellation policy with regards to payment of fees for tests where the applicant/licence holder fails to attend.
- 4) **(Local change)** Specified that where a driver goes to a medical professional other than his own GP for a Group 2 standards medical assessment, the person conducting the medical must have access to the patient's own medical history.
- 5) **(Local & Statutory change)** Made it a requirement that all licensed drivers must subscribe to the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) update service and increased the number of checks to be carried out from one every three years, to one every six months.
- 6) **(Statutory change)** Made it a requirement that for any new applicant or existing licence holder who has spent a period in excess of 3 months outside the UK, to provide evidence of their good conduct while overseas.
- 7) **(Statutory change)** Reduced the period of time in which a person must notify the Council of their arrest and release, charge or conviction, caution or fixed penalty motoring offence (more than 3 points), from 7 days to 48 hours.
- 8) **(Local change)** Emphasised that licence holders conduct which can be considered by the Council, is not limited to criminal convictions.
- 9) **(Local change)** Encouraged the professional development of licence holders obtaining relevant qualification.
- 10) **(Statutory change)** Added that the Council shall actively use the National Database of Revocations and Refusals (known as 'NR3') to record and retrieve information.
- 11) **(Local & Statutory change)** Added a 'penalty points scheme' for the effective enforcement of minor breaches and to highlight those who are persistently non-compliant.

- 12) **(Local change)** Added that in cases where a licence is surrendered, it does not remove the right of the Council to revoke the licence (to prevent any attempt by a licence holder to not have their information recorded on the NR3 register).
- 13) **(Statutory change)** Added the requirement for vehicle licence holders and private hire operators (where they are not also licensed drivers) to produce an annual Basic DBS certificate.
- 14) **(Local change)** Added that the Council will publish a list of Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles (WAV) making it an offence for the driver of those vehicles to refuse a wheelchair passenger (in accordance with the Equality Act 2010).
- 15) **(Local change)** Added a Recommendation regarding the Age and Emissions levels of licensed vehicles.
- 16) **(Statutory change)** Added a requirement for Private Hire Operators to provide their policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders and, a conditions requiring that they maintain a register of their booking and dispatch staff and the dates on which the operator assess their suitability by checking a Basic DBS certificate.
- 17) **(Statutory change)** Added restrictions on operators using PCV drivers / PSV vehicles for private hire.
- 18) **(Statutory change)** Added the joint authorisation of enforcement officers of neighbouring local authorities.
- 19) **(Local change)** Added a section on Technology (Apps), Communication (Driver Bulletin) and Recognition (Positive News from the trade).
- 20) **(Statutory change)** Strengthened the Convictions policy.
- 21) **(Local change)** Removed the restriction to carry a full-size spare wheel in Hackney Carriages and allowed for the carrying of the manufactures standard for dealing with a puncture (inflation kits / space saver).
- 22) **(Local change)** Added Recommended vehicle specifications to include, plate fixing brackets, minimum height requirements to allow for headroom of wheelchair passengers, vehicle age limit, vehicle emissions limits and cctv.
- 23) **(Local change)** Added a restriction on fixing plates/adverts on windows

- 24) **(Local change)** Made it a requirement to notify the Council of any change of telephone number or email address.
- 25) **(Local change)** Made it a condition not to use communication devices when the vehicle has been hired (preventing drivers talking on hands-free mobiles when they have a passenger, except in cases of emergency)
- 26) **(Local change)** Added specifications for the (optional) addition of a partition screen in private hire vehicles.
- 27) **(Local change)** Added Recommended vehicle specifications for private hire vehicles: non-removable door signs, fixing brackets, age limit, emissions limit, CCTV and wheelchair accessible.
- 28) **(Local change)** Added requirement for a notice to be displayed in Private Hire vehicles regarding the agreement of a fare prior to commencing the journey to mitigate fare disputes.
- 29) **(Local change)** Added the ability for advertisement on Private Hire vehicles but limited to: advertising the vehicle is for private hire pre-booked journeys, advertising the private hire company, advertising that the vehicle is wheelchair accessible.
- 30) **(Statutory change)** Added to conditions regarding the minimum records which must be kept by an operator, to include details of the staff accepting the booking and dispatching the vehicle.
- 31) **(Statutory & Local change)** Added a driver 'code of conduct'.
- 32) **(Local change)** Added condition on the wearing of a driver's badge.
- 33) **(Statutory & Local change)** Added a Taxi Licensing Board Hearing policy outlining the process, decision making and appeals.
- 34) **(Statutory change)** Added delegation of functions
- 35) **(Local change)** Added CCTV specifications to update existing spec to match those of neighbouring authority.