

Private Hire Vehicle Conditions

Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976

1. The vehicle licence will remain in force for a period of one year after payment of the relevant fees and satisfactory test by the Council's officially approved garage.
2. **Vehicle Specification and Age Policy**
 - a) Subject to paragraph 2c below, no vehicle shall be licensed other than in accordance with the current age policy of 7 years for first licensing, and not licensed after 10 years as a maximum age if first licensed by the Council after April 2002.
 - b) Every vehicle over 5 years of age on the anniversary of its first registration date must submit to 2 tests per annum.
 - c) Any vehicle submitted for first testing over 7 years of age and those over 10 years of age first tested by the Council after April 2002 must qualify within the exceptionally well maintained criteria to be licensed.
3. **Vehicle Specification Policy**
 - a) The vehicle must have a minimum of 4 doors.
 - b) The vehicle must have a nominal engine rating of not less than 1.3 litres.
 - c) The vehicle must have rear seat accommodation with a minimum length along the front outside edge of each seat of 40 cm per seat.
 - d) Any vehicle with a ground to top of sill measurement on any door of 40 cm or over must provide a suitable means of access and egress if required.
 - e) The vehicle must have sufficient space for luggage commensurate with the numbers of passengers it is authorised to carry.
 - f) No luggage may be carried on the roof unless carried in an approved enclosed securely fitted device or secured to factory fitted roof rails.
 - g) If the vehicle is an estate car then, whilst carrying luggage, a grille or securely fitted net or manufacturer's properly fitted parcel shelf must be fitted to prevent the luggage coming into contact with passengers in the event of an accident.
 - h) No permanent material alterations or changes in the vehicle specification, design or conditions shall be made without the approval of the Council whilst the vehicle licence is in force. Seats may be removed temporarily to facilitate comfort of passengers, but no seats may be added.
 - i) All seats must be either forward or rearward facing.
 - j) The vehicle must be right hand drive.

4. Maintenance

- a) The vehicle and all its fittings and equipment shall at all times when it is in use or available for hire be kept in a clean, tidy, efficient and safe condition.
- b) The body trim and bodywork must be uniform and free from any significant rust or damage. Non alloy wheels must be fitted with matching wheel trims.
- c) The paintwork must be a good match with no 'egg shell' finish or different shades or colours.
- d) The upholstery and carpets shall be kept clean and in good repair.

5. Identification Plates

- a) The plate identifying the vehicle as a licensed private hire vehicle shall be displayed in a conspicuous position on the outside rear of the vehicle.
- b) There shall be clearly displayed an interior plate visible to all persons conveyed in the vehicle showing the plate number and the maximum number of persons licensed to be carried.
- c) All plates and signs shall be removed or covered whilst the vehicle is being used for purposes other than for hire or reward.

6. Safety Equipment

- a) The vehicle shall carry an efficient fire extinguisher securely positioned in the vehicle and easily accessible for use in an emergency of at least 0.9 Kilo of type dry powder for cars and aqueous film forming foam (AFFF) extinguisher of 2.0 Kilos for people carriers, minibuses and similar vehicles over 4 passenger seats, complying with EN3 standard. The vehicle plate number shall be permanently marked thereon.
- b) A suitable first aid kit shall be carried and shall be held in such a position so as to be easily accessible for use in an emergency. The vehicle plate number shall be permanently marked thereon.

7. Taximeter

Any taximeter fitted to a private hire vehicle shall be calibrated to the current hackney rate and tested by the Council's approved testers.

8. Servicing

Every proprietor shall keep records of servicing frequency, including dates and mileages, and shall make those records available if required.

9. Signs and Notices

- a) There shall be no signs, notices, advertisements, marks, numbers, letters, figures or symbols displayed in or on the vehicle except as may be required by statutory provision or required or permitted by these conditions.

- b) Any sign must contain no words or numbers other than the name and address of the operator or the name under which he operates his business including telephone number.
- c) There may be displayed within the vehicle a table of fares approved by the Council.
- d) Any roof sign or notice shall not include the word 'taxi' or 'cab' or any words of similar meaning or appearance.
- e) A sign in words or picture indicating that passengers should refrain from smoking in the vehicle shall be clearly displayed.

10. Numbers

- a) The proprietor shall not cause, suffer or permit to be conveyed in the vehicle a greater number of persons, exclusive of the driver, than the number specified in the licence.
- b) No child under 3 years of age shall be carried in the front seat unless seated within a child safety harness. A child over 3 years shall be deemed as occupying a passenger seat.

11. Animals

- a) Any guide dog, hearing dog or assistance dog must be carried in the vehicle at no extra cost unless the driver has an approved medical exemption certificate.
- b) Other domestic animals or pets may be carried at the discretion of the driver, must be suitably restrained, accompanied by an appropriate adult or carried, unless there is a reasonable excuse for not doing so.

12. Destination

The driver of a private hire vehicle shall not refuse or neglect, without reasonable excuse, to drive the vehicle to the destination he is so directed by the person hiring the vehicle.

13. Convictions/Changes

- a) The proprietor of the vehicle shall notify the Council within 14 days of the date of any convictions recorded against him, any fixed penalty imposed or any official police administered caution giving details of the circumstances of the case.
- b) The proprietor of any private hire vehicle shall notify any change of address or other particulars from those previously supplied to the Council, in writing, within 7 days of such change taking place.

14. Insurance

- a) During the currency of the licence the owner or operator shall keep in force in relation to the use of the vehicle as a private hire vehicle a policy of insurance in compliance with current legislation.
- b) A current policy of insurance must be produced within 7 days of expiry of the previous certificate unless a reasonable excuse is afforded for not doing so to the Council's licensing section.

15. Seat Belts

- a) Every licensed private hire vehicle shall have fitted on all forward and rearward facing seats a suitable belt or other restraining device being either a 3 point belt or lap belt only.
- b) Any child 3 years of age or over shall be deemed a passenger for the purposes of seat occupancy within the limitations of the licence requirements.

16. Accidents

The proprietor of any private hire vehicle shall report to the Council as soon as practicable, and in any case within 72 hours in writing on the appropriate form, any accident or vehicle damage materially affecting the safety, performance or appearance of the vehicle or the comfort or convenience of hirers.

17. Mobile Phones/Radio

- a) Whilst driving a private hire vehicle only a hands free telephone type unit may be used to transmit or receive information.
- b) If the vehicle is fitted with a domestic radio cassette or CD player, such appliance shall not be used so as to cause annoyance to other persons by reason of loud continuous music whilst the vehicle is on hire.

18. Suspension, Revocation, Non-Renewal of Licence

The vehicle licence may be suspended, revoked or not renewed for any cause which the Council considers to be reasonable which would include the vehicle being considered unfit for use as a private hire vehicle or any offence or non-compliance with the provisions of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976. The licence must be returned to the Council within 7 days if the licence is ever suspended, revoked or not renewed for any reason.

19. Transfer of Licence

If the proprietor of the vehicle wishes to transfer the licence to another person, he must first obtain the written consent of the Council which will not be unreasonably withheld.

20. Trailers

- a) Any trailer used for the conveyance of luggage shall first be submitted for testing at the same time as the vehicle.
- b) The trailer shall be fully covered for protection against wind and rain penetration and secured for the protection of the luggage carried.
- c) The trailer must be covered by a policy of insurance.
- d) The trailer must display a duplicate private hire plate to the rear.
- e) The trailer shall be of an approved type indicating:
 - i) unladen weight
 - ii) gross weight
 - iii) manufacturer's details
 - iv) suitably braked

21. Vehicle Replacement (Emergency Licensing)

When a licensed private hire vehicle is unserviceable due to road accident damage or major mechanical failure, a replacement vehicle may be used for a maximum of 7 days if the following criteria are met:

- a) the replacement vehicle has been subjected to an MOT test within the last 28 days;
- b) the replacement vehicle has a calibrated taximeter fitted, fire extinguisher and first aid kit;
- c) the replacement vehicle complies with the current age policy;
- d) the licensed vehicle is booked into the Council's authorised testing station and, owing to exceptional circumstances, cannot be completed within 7 days.

22. Change of Conditions

After due consultation the Council may at any time add, delete or alter any of the foregoing conditions and upon notice of them having been served upon the owner such additions, deletions or alterations shall as from the date stated in such notice be deemed to be incorporated in these conditions. Any notice required to be served by the Council under Paragraph 22 or under any legislation provision shall be deemed to have been properly served if sent by them by prepaid post to, or left at, the last known address.

These licence conditions are effective from 1 September 2002.