



Coronavirus (COVID-19) – Update 3

Further advice for taxi and private hire licensees

This Notice supplements [TPH Notice 03-20](#) (19 March 2020) and [TPH Notice 04-20](#) (24 March 2020). This Notice is being issued following Government guidance on the status of taxi and private hire vehicle (PHV) drivers, confirmation of a six-month exemption from MOT testing for cars, vans and motorcycles and an announcement on a Self-Employed Income Support Scheme.

Critical Worker Status

We, alongside taxi and private hire trade representatives, sought clarification from the Government on the status of taxi and PHV drivers.

The Department for Transport (DfT) has confirmed that:

Taxis and private hire vehicles can continue to work. But the advice is absolutely clear – people should stay at home if possible. That is the way to save lives and protect our NHS. The public should avoid travel unless absolutely essential. The only reasons to leave our houses are set out in the [government guidance](#).

Clearly, if absolutely necessary, to travel by taxi or private hire vehicle, best efforts should be used to follow the guidance as far as is practically possible, including washing your hands as soon as you get home.

Taxi and private hire drivers should not generally be considered Critical Workers. Those undertaking Home to School transport or the transport of ‘extremely vulnerable’ people may be considered Critical Workers on a case-by-case basis.

We expect all licensees that fall within the [vulnerable category](#) to follow Government advice and continue to self-isolate.

MOT testing exemption

On 25 March 2020 the DVSA confirmed that:

- Due to the unfolding COVID-19 situation, cars, vans and motorcycles due for their MOT from 30 March 2020 will have their MOT extended by 6 months
- This will continue until confirmed otherwise
- Vehicles must be kept in a roadworthy condition
- Drivers can be prosecuted if they drive an unsafe vehicle

Further details of this announcement are provided here:

www.gov.uk/government/news/vehicle-owners-to-be-granted-mot-exemption-in-battle-against-coronavirus

Temporary taxi and private hire vehicle licensing arrangements for new and renewal licences

In our most recent [TPH Notice 04-20](#), published on 24 March 2020, we announced a temporary closure of all six vehicle inspection centres while we considered the statement from the Government and appropriate arrangements for taxi and PHV licensing inspections during the Coronavirus pandemic.

To ensure the safety and welfare of our staff and taxi and PHV licensees, we are implementing a number of changes with immediate effect. These changes are being made in light of the exceptional circumstances.

The changes will enable taxi and private hire drivers to continue to work, however we remind licensees to be mindful of the [Government advice](#) that people should stay at home if possible:

- Taxi or PHV vehicle licences which have expired or are due to expire between 23 March 2020 and 30 June 2020 (inclusive) will remain licensed for a period of six months pending the full resumption of vehicle inspections and a decision by TfL on the grant of a new licence.
- The six-month period will be applied from the date the vehicle licence is due to expire. For example, if a vehicle licence is due to expire on 15 April 2020, it will remain licensed until 15 October 2020.
- Any vehicle licence that expired on or after 23 March and for which a booking was made for an inspection can continue to work. We will be providing written confirmation to all affected licensees shortly.
- We will contact all affected vehicle licensees within 14 days to provide further information on any next steps. Licensees need not take any action at this time.
- Vehicle licensees that will be affected by the above and do **not** wish to remain licensed for a further six-month period, please contact us at your earliest convenience on 0343 222 5555.
- We have limited capacity available at some inspection centres to license a taxi or PHV that is new to licensing. Applicants can apply by contacting us on 0343 222 5555 and we will consider each application on a case-by-case basis. Given the limited amount of resource that is available to process new applications, we ask that vehicles are only put forward for licensing in exceptional circumstances, to carry out critical work.
- Inspection appointments will be pre-booked only.
- We intend to continue the taxi delicensing scheme and new temporary arrangements will also be put in place to enable inspections to continue. We will communicate directly with vehicle owners who have submitted an application regarding these arrangements.

The above changes will be kept under review, taking into consideration the most up-to-date public health advice from the Government.

Any further changes will be communicated via future TPH Notices.

More information on these changes will be published on our website shortly:

www.tfl.gov.uk/tph.

It remains the responsibility of vehicle owners to ensure the roadworthiness of their vehicle(s) and to ensure that vehicles continue to meet all regulatory requirements at all times. Vehicles should be inspected before every journey to ensure they comply with the criteria in the [TfL Taxi and Private Hire Inspection Manual](#).

The Government has also provided advice on keeping your vehicle in good condition here: <https://www.gov.uk/check-vehicle-safe>

Compliance Officers will be carrying out targeted on-street checks during this period to ensure vehicles remain fit to be licensed and safe to carry passengers. Any vehicle found not to comply will be deemed unfit and therefore unable to continue to be used for service until it can be demonstrated to meet all regulatory standards.

Financial assistance, welfare and support

On 26 March 2020, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rishi Sunak, announced details of a Self-Employed Income Support Scheme, through which the Government will pay those adversely affected by Coronavirus a taxable grant worth 80 per cent of their average monthly profits over the last three years, up to the value of £2,500 a month.

Further details of the scheme are provided here:

www.gov.uk/government/news/chancellor-gives-support-to-millions-of-self-employed-individuals

Other resources are available providing details of financial support that the Government is currently offering, including:

- www.gov.uk/government/publications/support-for-those-affected-by-covid-19

- www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19/covid-19-support-for-businesses
- www.british-business-bank.co.uk/ourpartners/coronavirus-business-interruption-loan-scheme-cbils/

We recognise these are challenging and uncertain times and would encourage anyone struggling with their mental health and wellbeing or financial difficulties to seek help from the broad range of support available including:

SANE

www.sane.org.uk/home

Rethink Mental Illness

www.rethink.org/about-us

Mind

www.mind.org.uk/

Citizen's Advice Bureau

www.citizensadvice.org.uk/

The [Money Advice Trust](#), a national charity, is also available to provide advice on tackling debts and managing money. It offers free, independent and confidential advice on personal debt and provides a Business Debtline, the UK's only free dedicated debt advice service for people who are self-employed and other small business owners.

More information can be found at www.tfl.gov.uk/tph-wellbeing.

In recognition of the current situation, the London Electric Vehicle Company (LEVC) has announced that a three-month finance payment holiday initiative has been agreed by LEVC and Black Horse (finance).

TX drivers on any existing Black Horse finance contract can register their interest for a three-month suspension of repayments by completing their details at: www.levc.com/payment-holiday.

TfL driver licensing

We continue to prioritise critical activities to ensure the continuation of taxi and PHV driver licence renewals and following up on intelligence-based information.

As explained in [TPH Notice 04/20](#), due to the limited resources we have available during this time and the temporary closure of our topographical and Knowledge of London assessment centres, we are currently unable to process any new taxi and private hire drivers licence applications until further notice unless an assessment has already been completed and passed.

Secure English Language Test (SELT) provision

We have been informed by our approved SELT providers that, in light of Government and Public Health England advice, they have decided to suspend testing.

Further details are provided on the companies' websites:

- <https://seltbodyking.trinitycollege.co.uk/OEWeb/loadExamDtl.do>
- <https://takeielts.britishcouncil.org/united-kingdom>

Please contact Trinity or British Council directly to discuss your booking or if you are due a refund.

We are reviewing the current transitional arrangements in place for all drivers to provide confirmation that they meet the English language requirement by 30 September 2020. Further details will follow.

Lost Property

As a sensible precaution, in response to Government guidance, our Lost Property service has been revised.

Taxi drivers can continue to drop-off items found in their cabs to the Lost Property Office at Pelham Street; however we will only be able to accept these deliveries in the morning.

The Lost Property Office will continue to receive and store property but will be unable to process items for the time being. There will be no customer collections from, or access to, the Pelham Street office.

Similarly, the collection of unclaimed items by taxi drivers is on hold until further notice. We will advise once this process can resume.

Customers should continue to log reports for lost items via the TfL website: <https://tfl.gov.uk/lostproperty>.

We will continue to issue further updates as appropriate. Please do stay safe and well.

Graham Robinson



**Interim General Manager
Taxi and Private Hire
Transport for London**

30 March 2020

For previous Notices and additional licensing information, please visit tfl.gov.uk/tph