

Taxi Licensing Newsletter April 2020

Following on from our newsletter in March we have been looking at ways to help you all through this difficult time. We know many of you are or have been self-isolating and not earning and those who are still working may have a reduced income.

We are being as flexible and pragmatic as we reasonably can on this and have introduced the measures 1 to 5 below to help you get through this.

These are temporary measures to help you and they are subject to change, depending on how the situation develops.

1.Driver and operator applications for new/renewal of licence.

Applications should be submitted electronically where possible, by e-mail to licensing@runnymede.gov.uk

If you are unable to e-mail applications, you can post them.

Your application, if e-mailed should include a scanned copy of the DBS and medical certificates, the originals can then be sent by post and we will return them to you.

Your licence and drivers' badge will be posted to you.

2. Drivers medicals.

We have been made aware that Doctors in some areas have stopped these due to other priorities associated with Covid-19.

As a result, some drivers have been unable to arrange their 5 or 1 yearly medical or have had a call from their Doctor cancelling the appointment.

The requirement for 5 or 1 yearly medicals may be temporarily relaxed for a period during this public health emergency. This follows the Governments temporary changes to the Group2 medical requirements. While it remains a matter for licensing authorities whether to issue or renew a taxi or private hire vehicle driver licence.

We would expect that you still make arrangements for your medicals.

In the event that your GP has temporarily stopped doing them or your appointment is cancelled we will allow an additional period of time for you to obtain a medical, normally 3 months. This would be revised of course should the situation not improve over the next few months.

Drivers will be able to renew a license, providing they do not have any medical conditions that affect their driving.

Drivers will be asked to sign a disclaimer stating that to their knowledge their health has not changed since their last medical.

Drivers with health issues will still need to declare these, and those with health issues that prevent them from driving safely will not have their licence renewed.

3. DBS checks

Ordinarily these checks would take place every 3 years or 6 monthly if registered for the update service. In cases where there is a lack of staff or restrictions on non-essential contact with persons the requirement for the DBS check would be temporarily relaxed and carried out at the first available opportunity. Drivers would be required to sign a disclaimer stating they had not been subject of any convictions etc since their last DBS check.

4. Vehicle plating

Applications should be submitted electronically where possible, by e-mail to licensing@runnymede.gov.uk

If you are unable to e-mail applications, you can post them.

We believe we will be able to continue plating's but only on certain days and between specific times only, we will update you on this the situation develops. We will of course do our utmost to keep you on the road.

5. Driver and vehicle licences

If you are planning to be off the road for some time, we can put your vehicle or drivers licence on hold until things are back to normal and you are ready to work again.

I am thinking of the scenario where you are self-isolating or not working etc, so when you are able to start again, we simply reactive the licence and adjust the expiry date by adding on the down time.

A few drivers have done this already so if it is an option for you then get in touch with us.

Some drivers have spoken to us and asked if they can pay the licence fee by instalment, unfortunately we are not set up for that but we can take 2 payments rather than one big payment thereby spreading the cost, you would be expect to pay the second half after 6 months of course.

6. Government Guidance

COVID-19 Guidance has been provided on the [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) pages, the following is a summary of what is available and other relevant updates.

Guidance for staff in the transport sector

The Department for Transport and Public Health England has issued guidance to transport sector workers: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-staff-in-the-transport-sector/covid-19-guidance-for-staff-in-the-transport-sector>

Social distancing in the workplace during coronavirus (COVID-19): sector guidance

The Dft are aware that the taxis and PHV trade are undertaking delivery work – please see the section on ‘Deliveries’ as well as ‘Transport businesses’. Measures contained in the section on ‘Use of private vehicles and car pooling’ would apply to the taxi and private hire vehicle sector e.g. maintain good ventilation.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/social-distancing-in-the-workplace-during-coronavirus-covid-19-sector-guidance#transport-businesses>

Insurance for undertaking deliveries

Association of British Insurers (ABI) motor insurance members have committed to support taxi and private hire drivers seeking alternative sources of income: licenced taxi or private hire drivers that had hire or reward insurance in place, as of 8 March,

will not need to contact their insurer to extend their your existing cover while driving this vehicle to carry parcels, medical supplies, household goods, groceries or takeaway meals during the Covid-19 restrictions.

The ABI's commitment will be in place until the end of the Covid-19 restrictions, or until 31 July 2020, whichever is sooner <https://www.abi.org.uk/products-and-issues/topics-and-issues/coronavirus-hub/motor-insurance/>

Face masks

The UK does not currently advise use of face masks outside of care settings, in line with [PPE guidance](#).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19/guidance-for-employers-and-businesses-on-coronavirus-covid-19>

Cleaning of non-healthcare settings

Public Health England have provided guidance on the cleaning of non-healthcare settings, this is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>