



Coronavirus (COVID-19) – Update

Further advice for taxi and private hire licensees

This Notice replaces [TPH Notice 02-20](#) (published 19 February 2020) and has been issued in response to a number of announcements made by the Government regarding Coronavirus (COVID-19).

We understand that these are challenging and uncertain times for everyone, including taxi and private hire licensees. Transport for London (TfL) staff are doing everything they can to maintain transport services and we appreciate everything the taxi and private hire industries are contributing to keeping London moving. We are working hard to maintain our licensing function with a priority placed on licence renewals and our ability to act on intelligence to ensure the safety of the travelling public. During this time we will be working with a reduced number of staff, so we would ask that you only contact us if it is essential.

On 16 March 2020, the Government announced a series of measures to continue its efforts to delay the spread of Coronavirus and Public Health England also updated its advice.

The key changes are as follows:

- Revised guidance for households with possible Coronavirus infection: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>.
- Social gatherings and crowded places should be avoided. This includes pubs, clubs and theatres.
- Pregnant women, people over the age of 70 and those with certain health conditions should consider this advice particularly important.

- People in at-risk groups (as above) will be asked within days to stay home for several weeks.

Public Health England is the lead agency and is providing regularly updated information to the public on Coronavirus, including the current situation in the UK and information about the virus and its symptoms. You can access the most up-to-date information [here](#) and [here](#).

What this means for you

As outlined above, the revised guidance for households with possible Coronavirus infection, including self-isolation is provided here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>.

It is essential that all licensees follow the advice from Public Health England. To continue to work as a taxi or private hire driver or leave the house when you have been advised not to would put you and those you come into contact with at risk.

All licensees are required to inform us of a material change to their medical status and this would include testing positive for Coronavirus. For the safety of licensees and the general public it will be necessary for us to temporarily suspend the licence of any driver that tests positive for Coronavirus. However, no action will be required by licensees to have their licence reinstated once this isolation period has ended and they can return to normal activities.

Preventative Measures

The Government is clear that the single most important thing each of us can do is continue to follow basic hygiene advice. This hygiene advice, on protecting yourself and preventing the spread of the disease, has not changed. It is important that you:

- Cough or sneeze into a tissue or the crook of your elbow
- Wash your hands regularly or, if you are unable to, use hand sanitiser
- Practice good hygiene

- If you feel unwell, stay at home and contact the NHS online by visiting <https://111.nhs.uk/service/covid-19>

This information can be viewed [here](#).

Public Health England continue to urge everyone to wash their hands regularly throughout the day: after using the toilet, before eating and when arriving at work or home. It is believed that the virus can be passed on through contaminated surfaces, which is why washing hands is so important.

We continue to follow the guidance of Public Health England and advise all licensees, including taxi and private hire drivers, to follow these simple and sensible steps at all times to prevent the spread of Coronavirus.

We also encourage licensees to take simple measures, such as regularly cleaning frequently touched surfaces in vehicles, e.g. door handles, window controls and seat belts, with sanitising wipes or spray to get rid of germs. We would also advise washing hands or using sanitising gel after handling cash. Taxi drivers should also regularly clean card payment devices. Licensees who share a taxi or private hire vehicle should regularly clean the steering wheel and instruments.

Contact details

All licensees are required to ensure the contact details (email and telephone) provided to Transport for London (Taxi and Private Hire) are up to date. This enables us to provide you with important regulatory information. In light of the current circumstances, we urge all taxi and private hire drivers, taxi and private hire vehicle owners and private hire operators to check we have the most up to date contact details. Please email any updated contact details – with your driver licence number in the subject heading – to tphlicensing@tfl.gov.uk

We would expect all private hire operators to fully cooperate with any enquiries they may receive from Public Health England or any other relevant agencies and ask that TfL is informed of details of any drivers that have tested positive for

Coronavirus. We would also ask that taxi app providers and radio circuits also take a similar approach to informing TfL.

Health, wellbeing and financial circumstances

As the licensing authority and regulator for London's taxi and private hire services, we take the health and wellbeing of licensees seriously. We recognise these are challenging and unsettling times.

If you are struggling with mental health issues, please seek medical help from the wide range of help and support services that are provided by appropriately trained healthcare professionals. We want licensees to feel empowered to seek professional support when necessary, for both their physical and mental health and we have created a [licensee health and wellbeing webpage](#) to raise awareness of some of the services, guidance and support that is available. This includes the [Money Advice Trust](#), a national charity helping people across the UK to tackle their debts and manage their money with confidence. It offers free, independent and confidential advice on personal debt and Business Debtline, the UK's only free dedicated debt advice service for people who are self-employed and other small business owners.

Other resources are available to find out about financial support that the Government is offering, including: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/support-for-those-affected-by-covid-19> and <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19/covid-19-support-for-businesses>

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: <https://www.levc.com/finance/payment-holiday/>.

Knowledge of London and Topographical testing

As a sensible precaution, in response to Government guidance, we are reviewing arrangements for undertaking these assessments. Applicants who have a booking may be contacted by us in the coming days to cancel the appointment.

Ridesharing

Again, as a sensible precaution in response to Government guidance, we have written to all private hire vehicle operators that offer ridesharing services and advise that, in the current circumstances, these services should be suspended. We have now received confirmation from these operators that ridesharing services have been suspended.

Further updates

While the above advice is current at the time of writing, please regularly check the Public Health England, Government and NHS websites for updated information.

We continue to liaise with trade representatives and large PHV operators and will provide further information to licensees, in the form of TPH Notices, as and when appropriate.

Graham Robinson



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

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