



Coronavirus – update 14

This Notice provides an update following confirmation that London is now under Tier 3 restrictions, as part of the Government’s regional approach to tackling coronavirus transmission.

The Notice also contains information on the festive period (travel arrangements and family bubbles), the latest Department for Transport (DfT) guidance, an update on driver assessment and vehicle licensing centres, the coronavirus support initiative and details of financial support that is available to licensees.

This Notice supplements, and should be read in conjunction with, TPH Notices [19/20](#), [18/20](#), [17/20](#), [16/20](#), [13/20](#), [11/20](#), [10/20](#), [09/20 \(Consolidation\)](#) and [08/20](#), all of which contain information and practical advice for licensees relating to coronavirus, including important information on prioritising mental and physical wellbeing, personal and vehicle hygiene as well as face coverings.

Licensees should also continue to familiarise themselves with updated [Government](#) and [NHS](#) guidance and advice. Specific [guidance for taxi and private hire services](#) is also provided, on the wearing of face coverings, maintaining a two metre distance and the use of contactless payment where possible.

Tier 3 restrictions

From 00:01 on Wednesday 16 December, all 32 London boroughs and the City of London are subject to [Tier 3 restrictions](#).

Key changes from the restrictions in Tier 2 include:

- you must not meet socially indoors or in most outdoor places with anybody you do not live with, or who is not in your support bubble;
- hospitality settings, such as bars, pubs, cafes and restaurants are closed – they are permitted to continue sales by takeaway, click-and-collect, drive-through or delivery services;
- accommodation such as hotels, B&Bs, campsites, and guest houses must close;
- indoor entertainment and tourist venues must close;
- you should avoid travelling outside of your area, including for overnight stays other than where necessary, such as for work, education, youth services, to receive medical treatment, or because of caring responsibilities. You can travel through other areas as part of a longer journey.

Full details of the restrictions can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/local-restriction-tiers-what-you-need-to-know>

Current Government advice for taxi and private hire vehicles providing services in Tier 3 areas is they can continue to operate as normal.

As the rate of transmission of the virus is rising, we urge drivers to remain vigilant and to continue to follow Government guidance.

As set out in previous TPH Notices, taxi and private hire drivers are expected to wear face coverings **at all times** when in their taxi or private hire vehicle. This remains the case, unless you have a valid exemption. This is an important safety measure to protect licensees, passengers and wider society and is now even more important in the context of the rising number of coronavirus cases.

To support licensees and to keep them and passengers as safe as possible we recently launched a coronavirus support initiative, including the distribution of 1.5 million face masks and 30,000 bottles of Dettol hand sanitiser.

Coronavirus support initiative

To help ensure the safety of licensees and passengers, we are currently providing complimentary packages of face masks, hand sanitiser and stickers with coronavirus-specific information to be displayed in vehicles.

Full information regarding the resources available is detailed in [TPH Notice 19/20](#).

We are publishing information on where licensees can collect these materials on our coronavirus-dedicated webpage: <https://tfl.gov.uk/info-for/taxis-and-private-hire/existing-licensee/coronavirusinformation-for-licences>

Vehicle cleaning video

As part of this coronavirus support initiative, we have produced an informative video that provides guidance on how to clean your vehicle after each passenger has been safely dropped off and at the end of your shift. The short video can be viewed [here](#).

All licensed taxi and private hire drivers should take a few minutes to familiarise themselves with the video and follow these steps to ensure the highest possible safety standards are being met.

Further information on vehicle cleanliness and general advice on keeping safe during the pandemic can also be found at: www.tfl.gov.uk/infofor/taxis-and-private-hire/existing-licensee/coronavirus-information-for-licences

In line with these initiatives we continue to encourage all licensees to continue to observe the Government's personal hygiene and cleaning protocols, in particular – Hands. Face. Space:

- hands – wash your hands regularly and for 20 seconds
- face – wear a face covering in indoor settings where social distancing may be difficult, and where you will come into contact with other people

- space – stay two metres apart from people you do not live with where possible, or one metre with extra precautions in place (such as wearing face coverings or increasing ventilation indoors)

Christmas period – travel arrangements and household bubble extension

Between 23 and 27 December, people will be able to form an exclusive 'Christmas bubble' composed of people from no more than three households.

The guidance states that people should travel to meet those in their Christmas bubble and return home between the 23 and 27 December. The Government has warned that transport routes may be busier than normal, encouraging the public to plan their journey and check for disruption before travelling to help keep everyone safe. They have issued advice for those planning to travel during this period, encouraging the public to:

- plan, and avoid the busiest routes, as well as busy times
- keep their distance when travelling, where possible
- wash or sanitise hands regularly
- wear a face covering on public transport in England unless exempt

Full details can be found here:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/making-a-christmas-bubble-with-friends-and-family/making-a-christmas-bubble-with-friends-and-family

Details of TfL services and when they will and won't (when demand for TPH services may be greater) be operating over the festive period are provided [here](#) and [here](#).

Latest Department for Transport guidance

The DfT has a dedicated page containing coronavirus guidance for drivers, PHV operators and owners of taxis or private hire vehicles.

It has provided specific guidance on actions that can be taken to protect against coronavirus, including how to carry out a COVID-19 risk assessment, as well as best practice when picking up passengers, ending the journey and preparing the vehicle for the next passenger. The full guidance can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-taxis-and-phvs>

The DfT has also provided some freely available assets to promote their [Safer Transport Guidance](#) which can be found [here](#).

Driver assessment and vehicle inspection centres remain open

All driver assessment and vehicle licensing inspection centres will remain open, with appropriate safety measures in place including: social distancing markers, hand sanitiser stations, personal protective equipment for staff and limits on contact between staff and customers who will be asked to wear face coverings.

Full information on our taxi and private hire vehicle (PHV) licensing priorities during the coronavirus pandemic can be found in [TPH Notice 18/20](#).

Financial support

Further to the information provided in [TPH Notice 17/20](#), the Government has announced a series of financial support packages to those affected by the coronavirus restrictions. Following the second national lockdown the Government increased the support available to the self-employed.

If you have previously claimed a grant via the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS), the online service to see if you are eligible for a third grant is now available.

To make a claim for the third grant your business must have had a new or continuing impact from coronavirus between 1 November 2020 and 29 January 2021, which you reasonably believe will have resulted in a significant reduction in your profits.

The third taxable grant is worth 80% of your average monthly trading profits, paid out in a single instalment covering 3 months' worth of profits, and capped at £7,500 in total. If you are eligible, you must make your claim for the third grant on or before 29 January 2021.

For full information on the financial support available, to check your eligibility and to make an application, visit the [gov.uk website](#).

Mental Health and Wellbeing

People can find Christmas a difficult time and this year may be even more difficult, if they cannot spend it with family, do the things they would normally do or are facing financial hardship.

This year has been incredibly challenging and worrying and we continue to encourage licensees to prioritise their mental and physical wellbeing. It is important to be self-aware and spot any early warning signs of feeling mentally unwell and to seek help and support at the earliest opportunity.

The following support services are available to all licensees and some now offer coronavirus-specific advice:

- GOV.UK – [Find out what support you can get if you're affected by coronavirus](#)
- [Rethink Mental Illness](#)
- [Mind](#)
- [Citizen's Advice](#)
- [CALM](#)
- [Stress Management Society \(SMS\)](#)

Please also visit our dedicated [Taxi and Private Hire Health and Wellbeing webpage](#) for further information, advice and guidance and details of financial support that is available to licensees.

Please do stay safe and well.

Graham Robinson

**General Manager
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18 December 2020

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