

Transport for London Taxi Licensing

How to obtain a taxi licence (Guidance Notes)



On behalf of Transport for London (TfL), NSL has contractual responsibility to undertake the licensing inspection of London's taxis. The licensing inspections will be carried out at a number of vehicle inspection centres located strategically across the London area. Each inspection centre is equipped with the required vehicle testing equipment, which will deliver the licensing standards prescribed by the Conditions of Fitness 2007 (as amended) and the London Cab Order 1934 as amended in 2007 provisions. On completion of each licensing inspection, you will either be issued a taxi licence/plates or, in the event of failure, a computer generated Vehicle Inspection Report (VIR) will be produced, giving details of the reasons for failure.

Please read these guidance notes carefully as they will help ensure your taxi passes first time

Registered keeper

The registered keeper (owner) of a London taxi may apply to the Taxi & Private Hire Directorate (TPH) for a London taxi licence. Registered keeper means, the person or entity registered by Driver & Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) as being legally responsible for the taxi. The taxi licence, once granted, will be issued in the name of the registered keeper (licensee).

NB. The registered keeper may choose to nominate a person or an entity to act as an agent on their behalf when making an application and/or presenting the vehicle for inspection.

Taxi proprietors

Taxi owners that are not a licensed taxi driver or an existing taxi proprietor will be required to undergo a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.

Making an application for a taxi licence

To make an application for a new taxi licence or renewing an existing taxi licence, you can either book on-line via tfl.gov.uk/tph or call the vehicle contact centre on **0343 222 5555** and have to hand:

- The vehicle registration certificate (V5c); and
- A credit debit/card.

When making your application you will have the opportunity to book an inspection at one of the six inspection centres strategically placed across London. The appointment can be re-arranged providing more than 24 hours notice is given prior to the inspection date.

NB. For those taxis with a current licence, a notification will be sent reminding the owner that a renewal inspection is due. This appointment must take place within 28 days of expiry.

Keeping your appointment

You should aim to be at the inspection centre 10 minutes before the allocated appointment. **Please be aware your application fee may be forfeited:**

- if you are late and cannot be seen;
- if you cancel the appointment without giving 24 hours notice before the date of the inspection (excluding weekends & bank holidays);
- if you fail to turn up for the inspection; or
- if you re-arrange the inspection appointment without giving 24 hours notice.

Required documents

When presenting a taxi for the licensing inspection, the person presenting the taxi **must** bring with them the following **original** documents for inspection.

- Vehicle Registration Certificate (V5c) or (AFRL) certificate*
- EEC Certificate of Conformity for new taxis;
- Certificate of Insurance;
- MOT certificate confirming the vehicle passed an MOT test not more than 14 days prior to the date of the licensing inspection (count back fourteen (14) days from the date of the licensing inspection)**
- The existing taxi licence including plates (if applicable);
- Emission equipment - fitment sign off declaration where applicable;
- Vehicle Excise Licence (tax disc);

- Certificate of Taximeter Installation issued within 30 days of licensing inspection;
 - Any relevant document relating to the taxi, as appropriate including any modification certificate.
- *NB.** AFRL means the new Vehicle Automotive First Registration & Licence (AFRL) scheme certificate issued by the selling dealership.
- **If** the vehicle has reached it's 12 month anniversary from the date of registration it will be necessary to have an MOT

The new taxi licensing regime requires all vehicle owners to ensure their vehicles have passed two standard (Class 4) MOT tests per year. The first MOT test must be issued no more than 14 days prior to the taxi licensing inspection and the second MOT test is to be issued six months from the date the taxi licence is granted. The six-monthly MOT tests help to ensure that taxi and private hire vehicles remain safe and road worthy for passengers and other road users throughout the term of the vehicle licence

If the taxi is new then it is exempt from the requirement to undertake an MOT test for the first 12 months from the date of first registration.

Inspection criteria

The licensing inspection will comprise of a full mechanical inspection, and will include an inspection of:

- Documents
- European Whole Vehicle Type Approval
- Driver compartment and controls
- Passenger compartment
- Luggage compartment
- Obligatory lamps
- Engine Compartment
- Condition of Bodywork and Paint
- Road Tyres & Wheels
- Under vehicle inspection
- Exhaust emission abatement system
- Taxi meter and Associated Fittings
- Wheelchair Access, Securing Equipment
- Steering Manoeuvrability
- Aftermarket Equipment Fixture and Fittings

NB. The inspection will apply MoT standards for assessing the mechanical components unless otherwise specified in which case, the manufacturers standards will apply.

Changes to the taxi

Any changes to the original construction of the taxi such as modification, adaptation, fixtures and fittings must be approved by TPH. All requests for approval must be directed to the TPH Vehicle Policy Manager before embarking on the changes. Any changes to the taxi without approval will cause the taxi licence to be refused.

Taximeters

All taxis presented for licensing are required to be fitted with a current taximeter installed by an approved taximeter installer. The taximeter and the operating devices must be sealed by the installer and certificated to confirm that the equipment is TPH compliant. The certificate issued must be produced at the licensing inspection. Should the certificate not be presented, the application for a taxi licence will not be granted.

Advertisement

Advertisements and signage affixed to a London licensed taxi must comply with the TPH advertising and official signage guidance documents. Electronic advertising devices and media solutions attached to and/or carried in the taxi must seek prior approval from the TPH. All advertising must display an external alpha numeric identifier.

Any advertisement or signage affixed to a London licensed taxi that contravenes any legal requirements, obligations or responsibilities may cause the taxi licence to be revoked or suspended.

Communication devices

All radio equipment fitted to the vehicle must be fitted securely and safely and in accordance with the MPT 1362 Code of Practice (as amended) for the installation of radio and related ancillary equipment in land based vehicles and the TPH guidelines.

Any two-way radio equipment must be of a type approved by the Office of Communications (Ofcom). Before fitting any radio equipment, approval must be first obtained from TPH.

Duration of taxi licence

A taxi licence will be issued for a maximum period of 12 months unless there are particular reasons as to why it should be issued for a shorter period.

Emission standards

The air quality initiatives for taxis include the following age limits:

- A 15 year rolling age limit for taxis unless exempted
- All newly licensed taxis must, as a minimum, meet the relevant minimum standards for emissions (currently Euro 5 standards)
- Details of the exemptions available can be found on our website at tfl.gov.uk/tph.
- Details of the taxi Euro standards can be obtained from the vehicle manufacturer or from the selling dealership. Those taxis not manufactured to Euro 5 standards, can undergo a retro fit exhaust abatement system installed by the manufacturer nominated fitting agent. Further information can be obtained from the TPH or by visiting the TfL website.

Alternative fuel conversions

The acceptable fuels are Liquid Petroleum Gas (LPG), Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) and Biomethane.

Alternative fuel systems must have prior approval from TPH.

Where a taxi has been converted or modified to one of the alternative fuels listed above evidence must be produced at the inspection to show that the conversion has been carried out by an agent approved by the manufacturer. All LPG/CNG gas conversions must be approved and registered with the UK/LPG Association and the vehicle registration details must appear on their electronic database.

Only vehicles converted from diesel to one of the three alternative fuels will be eligible to apply for exemption

Vehicle owners are advised to contact the TPH first before making a licence application if there is any doubt that their taxi does not meet any of the criteria.

Refunds

Taxis which fail their licensing inspection, and subsequently, the re-test, will have the “grant of licence” portion of the fee refunded. No refund will be given to that part of the fee relating to the licence application.

Congestion charge exemption

Once licensed, the vehicle will qualify for exemption from congestion charging from the date the licence was issued. The taxi will continue to be exempt providing the taxi licence remains in force. Vehicles which fail a licensing inspection are only exempt from the congestion charge on the day of the inspection.

Privacy Notice

Transport for London (TfL), its subsidiaries and service providers will use your personal information for the purpose of administering the licensing and inspection regime for taxis and private hire vehicles.

Your personal information will be properly safeguarded and processed in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998.

TfL may validate information relating to yourself and/or your vehicle with a number of other organisations including the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA), the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency (VOSA) and the Motor Insurers' Bureau (MIB).

You may appoint a third party to manage the vehicle inspection process on your behalf, and where this is the case, you understand that:

- i) they may pass information about you and/or your vehicle to TfL for the purpose of the vehicle inspection
- ii) they may receive the results of any validation checks carried out at TfL's request and
- iii) TfL may share other information about you and/or your vehicle with them where necessary for the inspection process.

In certain circumstances, TfL may also share your personal information with the police and other law enforcement agencies for the purposes of the prevention or detection of crime.

Inspection Centres

(West) Heston

20A Airlinks Industrial Estate
Spitfire Way
Heston
TW5 9NR

(East) Crayford

Unit Q1, Acorn Industrial Park
Crayford
Kent
DA1 4AL

(Central East) Canning Town

1 North Crescent
Canning Town
E16 4TL

(North) Enfield

Unit 2 Watermill Centre
Edison Road
Enfield
EN3 7XF

(South) Coulsdon

Unit B5 Redlands
Ulswater Crescent
Coulsdon
CR5 2HT

(Central West) Staples Corner

Unit 2 Aquarius
Staples Corner
Priestly Way
NW2 7AN

Contact Numbers

-  Vehicle Licensing Enquiries
-  Driver and Operator Licensing Enquiries
-  TPH Enquiries

0343 222 5555

0343 222 4444

tph.enquiries@tfl.gov.uk

Taxi and Private Hire

<http://www.tfl.gov.uk/tph>

 24 hour travel information
020 7222 1234

 Textphone
020 7918 3015

 Website
www.tfl.gov.uk