

# Transport for London Private Hire Vehicle Licensing

## How to obtain a Private Hire Vehicle licence (Guidance Notes)



On behalf of Transport for London (TfL), NSL has contractual responsibility to undertake the licensing inspection of Private Hire Vehicles (PHV). 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 Private Hire Regulations 2004. On completion of each licensing inspection, you will either be issued a PHV 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 vehicle passes first time**

### Registered keeper

The registered keeper (owner) of a Private Hire Vehicle may apply to the Taxi & Private Hire Directorate (TPH) for a PHV licence. Registered keeper means, the person or entity registered by Driver & Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) as being legally responsible for the vehicle. The PHV 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.

### Making an application for a PHV licence

To make an application for a new PHV licence or renewing an existing taxi licence, you can either book on-line via [tfl.gov.uk/tph](http://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 PHV's 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 Private Hire Vehicle for the licensing inspection, the person presenting the PHV **must** bring with them the following **original** documents for inspection.

- Vehicle Registration Certificate (V5c) or (AFRL) certificate\*
- 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 PHV licence including plates (if applicable);
- Emission equipment - fitment sign off declaration where applicable;

Any relevant document relating to the PHV, 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 PHV 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.

### Additional fittings

Any additional fixtures and fittings will be assessed to ensure compliance with road traffic legislation and TPH guidelines. The assessment will also ensure that the fitting does not pose a hazard to the safety of the driver, passenger or other road users. If a cable or webbing winch is fitted to the vehicle, a certificate of inspection valid for no more than 12 months must have been issued by a recognised company.

### Regulatory requirements

- **Vehicle Type**  
It must be a light passenger vehicle as defined by section 85 of the road traffic act 1988 and vehicles must be of M1 type approval
- **Vehicle to have right hand drive**  
The steering must be on the right hand side of the vehicle. Left hand drive vehicles require application for exemption through TPH

### Advertisement

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

Any advertisement or signage affixed to a PHV 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 PHV licence

A PHV 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 10 year rolling age limit for PHV's unless exempted
- All newly licensed PHV must, as a minimum, meet the relevant minimum standards for emissions
- Details of the exemptions available can be found on our website at [tfl.gov.uk/tph](http://tfl.gov.uk/tph).
- Details of the PHV Euro standards can be obtained from the vehicle manufacturer or from the selling dealership.

### 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 vehicle 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

Vehicles 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 QI, 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

0343 222 5555

 LTPH

0343 222 4444

 TPH Enquiries

[tph.enquiries@tfl.gov.uk](mailto:tph.enquiries@tfl.gov.uk)

## Taxi and Private Hire Link

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

## Policies and the law

<http://www.tfl.gov.uk/businessandpartners/taxisandprivatehire/26925.aspx>

## Mayors Air Quality

<http://www.tfl.gov.uk/businessandpartners/taxisandprivatehire/27007.aspx>

 24 hour travel information  
**020 7222 1234**

 Textphone  
**020 7918 3015**

 Website  
**[www.tfl.gov.uk](http://www.tfl.gov.uk)**