



Coronavirus Update 28 – Removal of Plan B measures in England and Consolidation

This Notice follows the [Government announcement](#) that the measures put in place under Plan B in England will all be lifted from Thursday 27 January 2022.

Government guidance is regularly updated and you can keep up-to-date with the latest information [here](#). We will continue to issue [TPH Notices](#) to provide updates to licensees if significant changes occur.

This Notice also consolidates relevant information from [previous TPH Notices](#) and supersedes [TPH Notice 21/21](#) (Coronavirus Update 27).

Removal of Plan B restrictions

The Government has confirmed that the measures put in place under Plan B in England will be fully removed following the success of the booster programme. This means:

- People are no longer advised to work from home
- Organisations are able to choose whether to require NHS COVID Passes
- Face coverings are no longer mandatory under Government regulations
- [Public health guidance](#) remains in place, suggesting individuals should continue to wear a face covering in crowded and enclosed spaces, where you may come into contact with people you do not normally meet

For more information please [visit the gov.uk website](#).

Face coverings

Face coverings are no longer mandatory under Government regulations. However, public health guidance suggests that individuals should continue to wear a face covering in crowded and enclosed spaces, where they may come into contact with people they do not normally meet.

Transport for London (TfL) has retained conditions of carriage requiring all customers using any TfL service or station to wear a face covering unless they are exempt.

TfL expects and recommends that passengers wear a face covering at all times when in a taxi or private hire vehicle (PHV) unless they are exempt.

TfL continues to expect taxi and PHV drivers to wear a face covering at all times when in a licensed vehicle unless they are exempt. This is to keep both drivers and passengers safe.

COVID-19 vaccination

The NHS says COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective and they give you the best protection against COVID-19.

Alongside the NHS, the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, has called on any Londoner who has not yet been vaccinated, or who is eligible to receive the booster jab but has not yet taken it up, to do so as soon as possible.

You can book your vaccination [online](#).

COVID-19 Booster Vaccination

The Prime Minister has encouraged those who have not yet done so, to arrange their COVID-19 booster vaccination.

The NHS advises a COVID-19 booster vaccine dose helps improve the protection you have from your first two doses of the vaccine. It helps give you longer-term protection against getting seriously ill from COVID-19.

Further information on COVID-19 booster vaccinations and how to book your booster appointment can be found on the [NHS website](#).

Consolidated information from previous Notices

This Notice contains information in three sections: [Section 1 – All licensees](#); [Section 2 – Vehicle licensing](#); and [Section 3 – Private Hire Vehicle \(PHV\) operators and taxi booking companies](#).

Section 1 – All licensees

Wear a face covering

As stated above, TfL expects and recommends that all passengers wear a face covering at all times when in a taxi or PHV, unless they are exempt.

TfL continues to expect taxi and PHV drivers to wear a face covering at all times when in a licensed vehicle, unless they are exempt. This is to keep both drivers and passengers safe.

Guidance for managing a passenger not wearing a face covering

Drivers should assess the risk to their own safety and can request that a passenger wear a face covering while in the licensed vehicle.

A driver also has the discretion to refuse to carry a passenger if they refuse to wear a face covering without a valid reason, like one of the former exemptions:

- children under the age of 11

- people who cannot put on, wear or remove a face covering because of a physical or mental illness or impairment, or disability
- where putting on, wearing or removing a face covering will cause severe distress
- if someone is speaking or providing assistance to someone who relies on lip reading, clear sound or facial expressions to communicate

What happens if a passenger isn't wearing a face covering when they get in the taxi/PHV?

In these circumstances, please explain that passengers are expected to wear face coverings when travelling in a taxi or PHV, unless they are exempt. This measure is for their safety.

Can a taxi or PHV driver refuse to undertake a job if a passenger refuses to wear a face covering?

Yes. In these circumstances, drivers should request that a passenger wears a face covering while in the vehicle and can refuse to carry a passenger if they do not wear a face covering, unless they are exempt.

What if the passenger gets in the vehicle and then removes their face covering?

In these circumstances, please explain that passengers are expected to wear a face covering at all times when in the vehicle, unless they are exempt.

What if the passenger becomes aggressive?

If the passenger becomes aggressive or refuses to pay drivers should contact the police on 101 or 999 if that is considered justified because of the passenger's conduct. Please note that the driver cannot demand that the passenger remains in the vehicle until the police arrive.

Personal hygiene

The Government is clear that COVID-19 remains a serious health risk and that you should stay cautious to help protect yourself and others.

Simple steps can be taken to keep safe:

- Let fresh air in if you meet indoors. Meeting outdoors is safer
- You are expected to wear a face covering on TfL services, in TfL stations and when in a taxi or private hire vehicle
- Get tested and self-isolate if required
- If you haven't already, get vaccinated or get a booster vaccination

Licensees are expected to continue to take the following personal hygiene precautions as a minimum:

- Wash or use hand sanitiser on your hands regularly
- Keep a bottle of hand sanitising gel in your vehicle. It is recommended this be a minimum 60 per cent alcohol
- Wash your hands or use sanitising gel after handling cash
- Do not touch your face
- Be aware of the surfaces you and others touch
- Drivers should avoid using the recirculated air option for the car's ventilation system when carrying passengers and instead use the car's vents to bring in fresh air from outside or lower the vehicle's windows
- If conditions allow, the car windows should be kept open
- Passengers should be encouraged to use contactless payment or to pay online wherever possible

When interacting with passengers our guidance to taxi and PHV drivers remains:

- To seat passengers as far away from the driver as possible, ideally in the rear passenger-side seat
- Passengers should not sit in the front passenger seat in PHVs
- Licensees should ask passengers to handle their own personal bags and belongings during pick-up and drop-off

Medical assessments

We recognise that there may be delays in obtaining medical information from GPs and specialist medical practitioners due to the coronavirus pandemic. We continue to take a pragmatic approach wherever possible.

We are assessing the need to provide a medical assessment on a case-by-case basis, closely assessing the individual circumstances of each driver.

If you are due to provide a medical assessment and are unable to secure an appointment, please contact us at TPHLicensing@tfl.gov.uk. We will assess your individual circumstances and advise on the next steps.

Driver assessment centres (Topographical, SERU, ELR and Knowledge of London)

Topographical, SERU and ELR assessments for PHV drivers and Knowledge of London appearances for taxi driver applicants continue at our driver assessment centres with measures in place to reduce the risk to staff and candidates.

Vehicle Hygiene

We would like to remind licensees of our short, informative video that provides guidance on how to clean licensed vehicles after each passenger has been safely dropped off and at the end of your shift.

The video can be viewed here: <https://youtu.be/V3ogeV8ucvE>

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

Contacting TPH Licensing

For driver and operator licensing questions please see the following list of email addresses for each type of enquiry.

Please include your application or licence number in the subject field of your email.

Please only use the relevant email address below and refrain from sending emails to multiple email addresses. This will help us to resolve your enquiry as quickly as possible.

- **Medical information** – If you have been asked to provide any medical information please contact TPHLicensing@tfl.gov.uk
- **Driver renewal application enquiries** – To ask a question about your taxi or private hire driver renewal application, please contact TPHRenewals@tfl.gov.uk
- **Online driver renewal assistance** – For help with your online driver renewal application, please contact TPHOnlineEnquiries@tfl.gov.uk. Please include a telephone number within your email as it may be necessary for one of our team to call you to resolve your issue.
- **Change of address for drivers** – To inform us of your address change, please contact TPHAddress@tfl.gov.uk. Please allow 10 working days for the receipt of your updated licence.
- To notify us about any **change in personal circumstances**, including medical health, convictions, cautions or charges, please contact TPHLicensing@tfl.gov.uk
- **Private hire operator queries** – To ask a question about your application or any other aspect of being a licensed operator, please contact TPHOperators@tfl.gov.uk

- To contact us about **any other type of enquiry** related to licensing, please contact TPHLicensing@tfl.gov.uk
- For **vehicle licensing queries**, please contact TPHenquiries@nslservices.co.uk

Contact details

All licensees are required to ensure their contact details (postal address, email and telephone) provided to TfL are up to date. This enables us to provide you with important regulatory information.

We urge all TPH licensees to check we have the most up to date contact details.

Please email any updated contact details – with your licence number in the subject heading – to TPHLicensing@tfl.gov.uk.

Further Resources

There is further information regarding COVID-19, including support resources that cover mental health support and wellbeing support on the [TPH Health and Wellbeing webpage](#) and the [TPH Coronavirus Information for Licensees webpage](#).

Section 2 – Vehicle licensing

NSL vehicle licensing inspection centres

Our vehicle licensing inspection centres continue to operate with appropriate safety measures in place.

The quickest and most efficient way to make a booking for a vehicle inspection remains the [online booking portal](#).

The online portal allows you to book or reschedule an appointment at your own convenience 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

However, we appreciate that some licensees prefer to book their inspection over the phone, so we are currently trialling phone lines remaining available over the weekend. Call 043 222 5555 to make a booking, 08:00 – 17:00, seven days a week.

Temporary screens in PHVs

The Department for Transport (DfT) has [published guidance](#) on safety screens in PHVs and has added an updated risk assessment guidance for drivers considering installing a safety screen in their vehicle in its [Coronavirus guidance for Taxis and PHVs](#).

Licensees who have already installed an **approved** temporary screen in their vehicle can continue to use it.

We have published a list of approved temporary screens [here](#) – that also confirms which vehicles the screens can be fitted in.

Temporary screen approval process

It is essential that any aftermarket equipment (e.g. temporary screen or partition) fitted in a licensed PHV meets appropriate safety standards and that only approved adaptations are made to vehicles. Any PHV drivers who wish to install a temporary screen in their vehicle need to follow the established process for seeking approval for temporary screens in PHVs, via industry leading automotive testing facilities at Millbrook and HORIBA MIRA.

Further information on temporary screens in PHVs can be found on our website: www.tfl.gov.uk/tph-policy.

Section 3 – Private Hire Vehicle (PHV) operators and taxi booking companies

Face coverings

From Thursday 27 January 2022, face coverings will no longer be mandatory under Government regulations. However, [public health guidance](#) suggests individuals should continue to wear a face covering in crowded and enclosed spaces, where you may come into contact with people you do not normally meet.

TfL has retained conditions of carriage requiring all customers using any TfL service or station to wear a face covering unless they are exempt.

PHV operators and taxi booking platforms should continue to inform passengers that they are expected to wear a face covering while in the taxi or PHV (unless they are exempt) as part of the booking process, to support drivers and to ensure the safety and comfort of both drivers and passengers.

We recommend that PHV operators and taxi booking platforms continue to provide this information to passengers as part of the booking process and via their other communication channels. This will ensure that passengers are aware of the expectation to wear a face covering (and any additional steps that are being taken to ensure they are as safe as possible) before they enter the licensed vehicle.

Private hire operators and taxi booking platforms should support drivers in using face coverings safely and provide communications advising them to:

- Wash or use hand sanitiser on their hands regularly
- Keep a bottle of hand sanitising gel in their vehicle. It is recommended this be a minimum 60 per cent alcohol
- Wash their hands or use sanitising gel after handling cash
- Do not touch their face

- Avoid using the recirculated air option for the car's ventilation system when carrying passengers and instead use the car's vents to bring in fresh air from outside or lower the vehicle's windows
- If conditions allow, the car windows should be kept open
- Passengers should be encouraged to use contactless payment or to pay online wherever possible

Ridesharing

Any PHV operator that has previously offered, or intends to offer, ridesharing services should continue to suspend these until further notice.

Please do stay safe and well.

Graham Robinson

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

26 January 2022

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