



### **Coronavirus Update 29 – Living with Covid plan**

This Notice follows the [Government announcement](#) on Monday 21 February 2022, that set out its [Living with Covid plan](#).

The Notice contains information for licensees on the Living with Covid plan, safer behaviours, face coverings and also consolidates relevant information from [previous TPH Notices](#). This Notice supersedes [TPH Notice 1/22](#) (Coronavirus Update 28).

We will continue to monitor Government guidance, including specific guidance for taxi and private hire services issued by the Department for Transport, and will update licensees as appropriate in the form of [TPH Notices](#).

#### **Living with Covid plan**

The Government's [Living with Covid plan](#) confirms that from Thursday 24 February it will:

- Remove the legal requirement to self-isolate following a positive test. Adults and children who test positive will continue to be advised to stay at home and avoid contact with other people for at least 5 full days and then continue to follow the guidance until they have received 2 negative test results on consecutive days.
- No longer ask fully vaccinated close contacts and those aged under 18 to test daily for 7 days.
- Remove the legal requirement for close contacts who are not fully vaccinated to self-isolate.

- End self-isolation support payments, national funding for practical support and the medicine delivery service will no longer be available.
- End routine contact tracing. Contacts will no longer be required to self-isolate or advised to take daily tests.
- End the legal obligation for individuals to tell their employers when they are required to self-isolate.

From Friday 1 April the Government will:

- Remove the current guidance on voluntary COVID-status certification in domestic settings and no longer recommend that certain venues use the NHS COVID Pass.
- Update guidance setting out the ongoing steps that people with COVID-19 should take to minimise contact with other people. This will align with the changes to testing.
- No longer provide free universal symptomatic and asymptomatic testing for the general public in England.
- Consolidate guidance to the public and businesses, in line with public health advice.
- Remove the health and safety requirement for every employer to explicitly consider COVID-19 in their risk assessments.

## **Face coverings**

The Government continues to advise people to wear a face covering in crowded and enclosed spaces, especially when they come into contact with people they do not usually meet, when rates of transmission are high.

From Thursday 24 February wearing face coverings will no longer be a Transport for London (TfL) condition of carriage on its services, but customers and staff will be strongly recommended to wear them if they are able to.

From Thursday 24 February TfL strongly recommends that taxi and private hire drivers, and passengers, wear a face covering at all times when in a taxi or private hire vehicle (PHV).

## **Safer behaviours**

In its [Living with Covid plan](#), the Government continues to advise people that there are safer behaviours they can adopt to reduce the risk of infection.

Individuals can still reduce the risk of catching and passing on COVID-19 by:

- Getting vaccinated
- Letting fresh air in if meeting indoors or meeting outside
- Wearing a face covering in crowded and enclosed spaces, especially where you come into contact with people you do not usually meet, when rates of transmission are high
- Trying to stay at home if you are unwell
- Taking a test if you have COVID-19 symptoms, and staying at home and avoiding contact with other people if you test positive
- Washing your hands and following advice to 'Catch it, Bin it, Kill it'.

Relevant hygiene advice from previous TPH Notices on personal and vehicle hygiene is provided below.

## **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**

#### COVID-19 vaccination

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

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

### 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](#).

### Wear a face covering

From Thursday 24 February TfL strongly recommends that taxi and private hire drivers, and passengers, wear a face covering at all times when in a taxi or private hire vehicle (PHV).

### Personal hygiene

Licensees are encouraged 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
- Licensees should ask passengers to handle their own personal bags and belongings during pick-up and drop-off

### 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.

### Front seat passengers in PHVs

Previously, our guidance has been that passengers should **not** sit in the front passenger seat in PHVs.

We continue to encourage passengers to sit as far away from the driver as possible, ideally in the rear passenger-side seat. However, on journeys with more passengers, the front passenger seat can be used.

### 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](mailto:TPHLicensing@tfl.gov.uk). We will assess your individual circumstances and advise on the next steps.

### 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](mailto: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](mailto:TPHRenewals@tfl.gov.uk)
- **Online driver renewal assistance** – For help with your online driver renewal application, please contact [TPHOnlineEnquiries@tfl.gov.uk](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:TPHOperators@tfl.gov.uk)
- To contact us about **any other type of enquiry** related to licensing, please contact [TPHLicensing@tfl.gov.uk](mailto:TPHLicensing@tfl.gov.uk)
- For **vehicle licensing queries**, please contact [TPHenquiries@nslservices.co.uk](mailto: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](mailto: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](#).

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 and we strongly recommend that applicants to wear a face covering at our assessment centres.

## **Section 2 – Vehicle licensing**

### NSL vehicle licensing inspection centres

Our vehicle licensing inspection centres continue to operate with appropriate safety measures in place. We strongly recommend that customers wear a face covering at inspection sites.

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, 8am – 5pm, 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](http://www.tfl.gov.uk/tph-policy).

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

### Face coverings

From Thursday 24 February we strongly recommend that taxi and private hire drivers, and passengers, wear a face covering at all times when in a taxi or private hire vehicle (PHV).

PHV operators and taxi booking platforms should recommend passengers wear a face covering.

Private hire operators and taxi booking platforms should recommend drivers to use face coverings 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

If a PHV operator wishes to resume offering ridesharing services, they can now do so.

Please do stay safe and well.

Graham Robinson

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

**23 February 2022**

*For previous Notices and additional licensing information, please visit [tfl.gov.uk/tph](https://tfl.gov.uk/tph)*