



Coronavirus Update 20

This Notice contains important information following the [Prime Minister's announcement on 22 February 2021](#) outlining the roadmap for easing national lockdown restrictions and also contains information on financial support available to licensees, the reopening of TPH assessment centres on 12 April 2021, the planned closure of NSL vehicle inspection sites in April and Department for Transport guidance on partition screens in PHVs.

This Notice supplements, and should be read in conjunction with, [TPH Notice 01/21 – Coronavirus Update 17 \(National Lockdown\)](#), [02/21 – Coronavirus Update 18 \(Consolidation\)](#) and [03/21 – Coronavirus Update 19](#).

Roadmap for Easing National Lockdown Restrictions

The Prime Minister has announced a [roadmap for leaving lockdown in the coming months](#). The roadmap outlines steps for easing restrictions out of national lockdown.

Before proceeding to the next step, the Government will examine the data to assess the impact of the previous step. It takes around four weeks for the data to reflect the impact of the previous step and the Government will provide a further week's notice to individuals and businesses before making changes.

The roadmap therefore sets out indicative, “no earlier than” dates for the steps which are five weeks apart. The roadmap seeks to balance health, economic and social factors with the very latest epidemiological data and advice.

Step 1 has two key dates:

8 March

- Schools and colleges are open for all students.
- Recreation or exercise outdoors with household or one other person. No household mixing indoors.
- Stay at home.
- Funerals (30 attendees maximum), wakes and weddings (6 attendees maximum)

29 March

- Rule of 6 or two households outdoors. No household mixing indoors.
- Outdoor sport and leisure facilities.
- Organised outdoor sport allowed (children and adults).
- Minimise travel. No holidays.
- Outdoor parent & child groups (up to 15 parents).

We will publish details of the further Steps in future TPH Notices.

The government has published some [guidance explaining the reopening of businesses and venues](#). Until then, everyone across the UK is reminded to observe current lockdown restrictions. Licensees are reminded to follow the government advice and check [gov.uk Spring 2021 Covid-19 response webpage](#) for further information.

Coronavirus – Financial Support – SEISS

You can find out if you're eligible for the fourth grant of the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS) which covers the period February 2021 to April 2021 on the [gov.uk website](#), which also contains information about the fifth grant. Please also see the [guidance note](#) on updates to tax charges when a person is no longer eligible to Self-Employment Income Support Scheme payments. This tax information and

impact note is about the tax charge arising when a person is ineligible for a Self-Employment Income Support Scheme grant previously claimed.

We encourage all licensees to familiarise themselves with the financial support available. Details of what is available and how to apply can be found on the [gov.uk Business Support webpage](https://www.gov.uk/business-support), and you can find a summary of existing financial support [here](#).

Reopening of driver assessment centres from 12 April 2021

As the national lockdown restrictions ease, we will re-open our driver assessment centres for Topographical testing for PHV drivers and Knowledge of London for taxi driver applicants.

In line with the estimated dates in the Government roadmap, as referenced above, we are planning to re-open the assessment centre on 12 April.

As before, a number of measures will be implemented to reflect Public Health England guidance and to reduce the risk to staff and candidates presented by the coronavirus. Measures include the installation of social distancing markers and hand sanitiser units and the wearing of face coverings.

We will be contacting all candidates who had an assessment cancelled due to lockdown or as a result of the pandemic, to re-book their assessment and provide them with details of the measures we have implemented. **Candidates need not take any action and we request that you do not contact us as we currently have limited access to our phone lines.**

Planned, phased closure of NSL vehicle inspection sites

Last year a temporary closure of TfL's vehicle licensing inspection centres meant that some taxis and PHVs remained licensed for a further 6-month period.

As a result, we anticipate that the demand for vehicle inspections in April will be considerably lower than normal.

In recognition of the significant reduction in the number of vehicle licences expiring in April, while still meeting the forecasted demand for vehicle inspections, we plan to close three vehicle inspection centres for the first half of April. These centres will then re-open and the other centres will close for the second half of April.

In April vehicle inspection centres will be open as follows:

6 April to 16 April – Staples Corner, Crayford and Enfield **will remain open**.

19 April to 30 April – Canning Town, Coulsdon and Heston **will remain open**.

When open, the sites will continue to operate in line with government guidance with appropriate safety measures in place, including: social distancing markers, hand sanitiser stations, personal protective equipment for staff, ventilation of vehicles and limits on contact between staff and customers who are asked to wear face coverings.

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.

Department for Transport guidance on PHV partition screens

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

It is essential that any aftermarket equipment (e.g. temporary screen or partition) fitted in a London licensed private hire vehicle meets appropriate safety standards and that only approved adaptations are made to vehicles.

A number of vehicle manufacturers and companies have partitions available that have been approved by TfL. Information on temporary partition screens in PHVs can be found on our website: www.tfl.gov.uk/tph-policy.

Mental Health and Wellbeing

We appreciate that the prolonged nature of the pandemic is causing stress and anxiety to some licensees. During this difficult time it is important that we all continue to prioritise our mental and physical wellbeing.

It is important to take time to reflect in order to spot any early warning signs of feeling mentally unwell and to seek help and support at the earliest opportunity.

We have recently restructured and expanded our dedicated Taxi and Private Hire Health and Wellbeing webpage. For information, advice and guidance and details of financial support that is available to licensees, please visit: <https://tfl.gov.uk/info-for/taxis-and-private-hire/licensing/health-and-wellbeing>

Please do stay safe and well.

Graham Robinson

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

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