



Guidance for taxi and private hire drivers, and private hire operators on overseas convictions checks and Certificates of Good Conduct

The requirements for when a Certificate of Good Conduct (CoGC) must be provided are changing to extend the period covered from three years to 10 years and will include all periods of absence from the UK, including extended vacations.

This guidance is for taxi drivers, private hire drivers and all individuals associated with a private hire operator's licence, and is about the requirements for when a CoGC must be provided.

Current requirements (up until 30 June 2024)

Taxi and private hire drivers

We currently conduct a number of background checks, including an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, for all applicants for taxi and private hire driver licences and licensed drivers seeking to renew their licence.

However, the enhanced DBS only provides information on UK convictions or the small number of foreign convictions recorded on the Police National Computer and may not provide a complete conviction history where a person has spent extended periods of time outside the UK.

To help with this, we require any applicant for a taxi or private hire driver's licence (new and renewal) who has lived (excluding extended vacations) outside the UK¹ for three or more continuous months in the three years prior to the date of application to provide a CoGC from every relevant country.

Private hire operators

We currently do not require private hire operators to provide us with a CoGC.

Consultation

Following our consultation on implementing the Department for Transport's [Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards](#), and the importance of us being aware of any adverse information in respect of licensees, we are changing the current requirement for taxi and private hire drivers, and introducing a new requirement for private hire operators.

From **1 July 2024** all new and renewing applicants for taxi and private hire driver licences and private hire operator licences will be asked to produce a CoGC when they have lived in a country other than the UK for one or more continuous periods of three months or more in the last 10 years.

¹ The requirement does not apply to periods spent in the Channel Islands and Isle of Man



They will be required to provide a CoGC from every relevant country to cover any such period.

The new requirements (from 1 July 2024)

Taxi and private hire drivers

From 1 July 2024, **all** new and renewing applicants for taxi and private hire driver licences who have lived in a country other than the UK for one or more continuous periods of three months or more in the last **10 years**, must complete a Living Abroad Details form ([TPH/205](#)). They will then be asked to produce a CoGC from every relevant country to cover the period declared in the form.

There is no longer an exclusion for periods of extended holiday/vacation, so any period of three months or more must be declared.

Private hire operators

From 1 July 2024, any individual associated with a private hire operator's licence² who is applying for a new licence or renewing a licence and has lived in a country other than the UK for one or more continuous periods of three months or more in the last 10 years, must complete a Living Abroad Details form ([TPH/205](#)). They will then be asked to produce a CoGC from every relevant country to cover the period declared in the form.

Changes in the individuals associated with a private hire operator's licence

During the life of a licence, where there is a change in the individuals associated with that licence, those wishing to be added to it will be requested to provide a CoGC if they have lived outside of the UK for three or more continuous months in the last 10 years.

What does 'lived' mean?

The term 'lived' should be read in the broadest sense for the purposes of the requirement, to mean 'present, irrespective of purpose, duration or legality'.

This will include trips overseas for business, visiting friends or family members, holidays and any other reasons for going to another country.

This is consistent with the UK Immigration rules, which do not make any exception for periods of extended vacation.

What does 'continuous period' mean?

A 'continuous period' would include periods where:

² [The Private Hire Vehicles \(London\) \(Operators' Licences\) Amendment Regulations 2023](#) defines who the individuals associated with a PHV operator's licence covers



- You have left the UK and have not returned to the UK for at least three months
- You moved to the UK in the past 10 years but before this spent three or more months not in the UK
- You normally live outside of the UK and spend three or more continuous months outside of the UK

Individual shorter periods of time spent outside of the UK that add up to three or more months but are not continuous do not have to be declared.

If you are unsure about whether there are periods you need to declare please contact us by emailing tphlicensing@tfl.gov.uk.

Are periods of extended vacation included?

Yes. There is no longer an exclusion for periods of extended vacation, so any period of three months or more must be declared.

Are periods under the age of 18 included?

No. Periods spent outside of the UK when you were under 18 years are not included.

Do I need a separate CoGC for every period spent overseas?

You will need to produce a CoGC from every country outside the UK you have lived in.

If you have lived in one country for three or more months on more than one occasion, you only need to produce one CoGC covering all such periods.

What is a CoGC and how do I get one?

A CoGC is an extract from the judicial record or equivalent document issued by a competent judicial or administrative authority for the relevant country. It should document any convictions recorded against the individual or confirm 'good conduct'.

All CoGCs must be provided in English and can usually be obtained via the relevant embassy, consulate or high commission in the UK. The Home Office has published [guidance](#), including contact details, on how to apply for criminal record checks for time spent abroad.

You must provide proof of the CoGC's authenticity from the UK embassy, consulate or high commission of the country of issue.

A translation is required if the CoGC is not provided in English. Any costs associated with obtaining a CoGC, including translation costs, are your responsibility as the applicant.



What do we do with the information?

Any information disclosed on a CoGC will be considered in line with our [licensing policies](#).

What if I am unable to obtain a CoGC?

We recognise that there may be some situations where it is not possible to obtain a CoGC. In these circumstances you must explain why and we may require you to provide references from individuals/bodies who can confirm your conduct for your time in the country (the referee must not be a family member).

The absence of a CoGC or references will not prevent your application from being considered, but it will be taken into account at the decision-making stage.

Each case will be considered on its merits. We will pay particular attention to whether you have shown you have provided all the available evidence or made every effort to get hold of the information.

Asylum seekers

If you have been granted, or are awaiting a decision to be granted, asylum/refugee status you will not be required to produce a CoGC from the country you are claiming asylum from. But if you have lived outside of the UK for three or more continuous months in the last 10 years you will be required to obtain a CoGC from any other country you have lived in within the 10 years prior to the date of your application.

To gain this exemption, you must provide a clear and legible photocopy of either your Certificate of Registration or a letter issued by UK Visas and Immigration.

How will the changes affect me?

We recommend that you plan ahead and if you know you will need to provide a CoGC you should apply for this in advance of submitting your licence renewal application to help reduce the risk of any delays.

If you are a licensed taxi or private hire driver and have been licensed for:

- **Less than 10 years:** When you next apply to renew your licence, you should declare all periods when you have lived outside the UK for one or more continuous periods of three months or more in the last 10 years. You will need to obtain and provide a CoGC for any period that you have not previously provided one for
- **10 years or more:** If you have been licensed for 10 or more years, you should already have provided CoGCs to cover any periods where you have spent three or more continuous months outside the UK (other than for periods of extended vacation). You will only have to provide CoGCs for:
 - Any new periods you spent outside the UK since your last renewal



- Any periods of extended vacation that you have not previously provided a CoGC for. You do not need to resubmit any CoGCs you have already submitted unless these cover periods of extended vacation you have not previously declared

As the licensing authority for London’s taxi and private hire services, we must consider a wide range of information to ensure a licensee is suitable to hold a licence.

We recognise that these changes may affect licensees who spend a lot of time outside of the UK. However, it is important that we are aware of any offences that a taxi or private hire driver or private hire operator may have committed in another country when making a licensing decision.

If you have any questions about the change in the CoGC requirements or are unsure whether you need to provide a CoGC, then please contact us by emailing tphlicensing@tfl.gov.uk so as we can help you and answer any questions you have.

Version control

This document will be kept under review and may be altered or amended to reflect any changes in the law or Transport for London policies and guidance.

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