



## Taxi rank suspension policy

### Background

Taxi ranks are a vital part of the transport network and help ensure that taxi services can meet passenger demands. Transport for London (TfL) is responsible for appointing taxi ranks on the public highway in all Greater London boroughs, with the exception of the City of London.

Taxi ranks provide an area where taxi drivers can legitimately ply for hire whilst stationary and are located in areas where it is anticipated that there will be a demand for taxi services. If no taxi rank is provided or a rank is suspended then drivers cannot stop and park and be available for hire, as this is an offence.

Requests to suspend taxi ranks are received from a wide range of organisations including contractors, utility companies, the Metropolitan Police, film and television companies, and special event organisers. The reasons given by organisations for requests vary but common reasons include road and utility works, road closures, responding to emergency incidents (e.g. gas or water leaks), filming and special events (e.g. charity galas, Cannonball Run launch, Harrods' sale, etc).

When considering a request to suspend a taxi rank the needs of the organisation making the request must be balanced and considered against the impact on the public if the taxi rank is not available and also against the impact on taxi drivers who use the rank. Suspending a taxi rank could make it more difficult for the public to access taxi services and in some locations put them at an increased risk from illegal cab drivers. Suspending a taxi rank also removes a location where taxi drivers can work from which in turn could affect a driver's livelihood. It could also lead to an increase in on-street hails resulting in congestion, problems with taxis being able to safely pick-up passengers and an increased risk of drivers receiving Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs).

This policy sets out what factors are taken into account when considering a request to suspend a taxi rank and the process for suspensions and arrangements in emergency/exceptional circumstances.

For further information about taxi ranks in London and suspending a taxi rank please email [TPHRanksinterchange@tfl.gov.uk](mailto:TPHRanksinterchange@tfl.gov.uk).

### Considering a request

Each request to suspend a taxi rank will be considered on a case by case basis. When considering a request the following factors will be taken into account:

- Reason for the request – Full details of the reason for the request must be provided in writing by the person making the request.

- Length of suspension – many requests are for short periods only but in some cases requests may be needed for longer periods. In these cases options to appoint a temporary taxi rank should be explored because of the greater impact on the public and taxi drivers.
- Space required – some requests may only require part of a rank, therefore some space can be retained for taxi drivers to continue to use the rank.
- Is there a road closure in place? – if a full road closure is in place then a taxi rank will not be accessible therefore it is likely that the suspension will be approved or may not be necessary.
- Times of operation of the taxi rank – some taxi ranks only operate at certain times and not when the suspension is required. Where this is the case the person making the request will be advised to contact the relevant highway authority.
- Location of the taxi rank, the normal usage and the impact on drivers – Requests to suspend a well served taxi rank in an area with high passenger demand for taxis may not be approved unless the request makes clear why the suspension is unavoidable.

Some suspensions are unavoidable (e.g. roadworks on the actual rank location) but where possible full taxi rank suspensions, for long periods of time with no alternative arrangements provided should be kept to a minimum.

### **Suspension process**

A completed 'Taxi rank suspension form' must be submitted before a request will be considered. Completed forms must be submitted to the TfL Taxi Ranks and Interchange Team at least ten full working days before the suspension is required in order to allow time for the request to be considered and for notices advising drivers of the suspension to be produced and posted at the taxi rank.

Once a request is received, the Taxi Ranks and Interchange Team will contact the requester by phone or email to confirm if the request has been approved, rejected or if further information is required.

When a taxi rank suspension request is approved a notice advising drivers of the dates of the suspension and reason for this will be posted at the taxi rank.

Requests to suspend certain taxi ranks which are well used by drivers and passengers and in areas where there is a continuous demand for taxi services (e.g. Park Lane) will be considered on a case by case basis by a senior manager within TfL. For these locations the request should be submitted to TfL at the earliest opportunity and ideally at least 20 full working days before the suspension is required.

### **Emergency requests**

Although at least ten full working days is needed to consider every taxi rank suspension request it is acknowledged that on some occasions it will be not be possible to submit a request ten days before the suspension is required or that

a taxi rank suspension may be required at short notice in an emergency (e.g. a burst water main, gas leak, etc.)

Emergency requests will be considered on a case by case basis and these requests must include full details of what the emergency is, what action is being taken and why the taxi rank is required.

Although all emergency requests will be considered it will not be acceptable for companies to submit ongoing requests with fewer than ten full working days notice and ask that these all be treated as emergency requests. Emergency requests will be accepted in exceptional circumstances only and where possible we will try to work with the requester to assist them in such circumstances. However, any abuse of this arrangement may result in us reviewing whether any future requests to suspend a taxi rank can be considered.