

Private Hire Vehicle Driver's Handbook

Safety, equality and regulatory information for London private hire vehicle drivers

Version Control

This handbook will be kept under review and may be altered or amended to reflect any changes in the law or TfL policies and guidance.

TfL will publish this handbook on its website, and it will specify which version of the handbook to read in preparation for a particular test in the event that it has been altered or amended.

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Introduction

Transport for London (TfL) is responsible for the [licensing](#) and regulation of London's [taxi](#) and private hire vehicle (PHV) industry to ensure a safe and reliable service for the public.

We set regulations and policies for [taxi \(black cab\) and PHV services](#) to protect customers, and ensure vehicles are safe, accessible and meet strict environmental standards.

We are responsible for licensing all London's:

- Taxi drivers and vehicles
- Private hire [operators](#), drivers and vehicles

TfL sets requirements and standards for licensing and is also responsible for making sure that [licensees](#) follow the law. We work closely with the taxi and private hire trades, the Metropolitan Police Service and the City of London Police to ensure the safety of passengers.

We are also responsible for delivering the Mayor's Transport Strategy which sets out the transport vision for London between now and 2031.

PHVs play an important role in delivering passenger transport services in London and it is essential that standards set by TfL ensure the safety of passengers and other road users.

It is also important that all [licensed](#) PHV drivers provide a professional service to their passengers. TfL expects drivers to offer a high level of customer service, use clean and well-maintained licensed vehicles and to fully obey the laws of the road.

This handbook provides you with essential information to help you give your passengers the safe and professional service they expect. It also includes information on your responsibilities as a PHV driver.

It is important that both new applicants for a [licence](#) and existing PHV drivers have a good knowledge of all the information in this handbook.

You will therefore need to do an [assessment](#) based on the information in this handbook as part of the licensing application process, so please read all of it carefully. This assessment is known as the [Safety, Equality and Regulatory Understanding Assessment](#).

Please note that passing the Safety, Equality and Regulatory Understanding Assessment will also mean that you have the required English language skills of reading and writing in order to be licensed as a London PHV driver.

Some of the words in this handbook have links to the [glossary](#) section where you can find the meanings of those words. It is important that you read these meanings and understand what the words mean, but you will not be tested on their meanings.

This handbook also has some links to websites. You will not be tested on information found on those websites.

This handbook is not a complete statement of the laws or policies that London PHV drivers are subject to and should be used for general guidance only. Some of the laws and policies in this handbook are the responsibility of TfL, some are the responsibility of other authorities, and some are laws of the road. You must [comply](#) with them all and we encourage applicants and licensees to refer directly to the applicable laws and policies and to take independent legal advice where appropriate.

Section 1: London PHV Driver Licensing

To work as a London PHV driver you will need to be licensed by TfL – only then can you carry out bookings for a London private hire operator that is also licensed by TfL

When you get your licence to work as a London PHV driver, there are a number of rules and policies that you need to know about. This section sets out some of these rules and policies and explains what you need to do.

Licensing requirements

To get a licence:

- You must be aged 21 or older when you apply for your licence; there is no upper age limit
- You must have a full [DVLA](#), Northern Ireland, European Union (EU) or [European Economic Area](#) (EEA) state driving licence that is at least three years old
- You must have the right to live and work in the UK
- You must be a '[fit and proper](#)' person to hold a licence. You will need to have an [enhanced](#) criminal records check done by the [Disclosure and Barring Service \(DBS\)](#)
- You must be physically fit. This will mean that you will need to have a medical examination with a doctor who has access to all of your medical records. The medical requirements are the [DVLA Group 2 medical standards](#)
- You will need to take a separate test to check your ability to select and plan a route, read a map and identify locations. The test is held in a centre approved by TfL and conducted under exam conditions by a TfL examiner. This test is known as a [Topographical Skills Assessment](#)
- You will need to prove that you have at least a B1 level of ability in the English language. B1 is a level of English in the [Common European Framework of Reference for Languages \(CEFR\)](#). To prove your English language speaking and listening skills you will need to take a test. The test is held in a TfL building and conducted under exam conditions. Your English language reading and writing skills will be derived from the Safety, Equality and Regulatory Understanding Assessment

Private hire driver's licence

If your application is approved, TfL will send you a London PHV driver's licence. Your licence may have some [conditions](#) attached to it. For example, if you have a medical condition, you may be required to have extra medical checks. Any conditions added to your licence will be explained in the letter sent to you with your licence. It is very important that you keep the letter and comply with any conditions that come with your licence. If you do not, then your licence may be [revoked](#).

As soon as you are licensed it is important that you keep in contact with us and respond to any letters, emails or other forms of communication.

Your London PHV driver's licence normally lasts for three years. If it is for a shorter period, the letter that comes with the licence will explain why. You should keep your licence at home in a safe place and give a copy of it to any licensed private hire operator(s) you are working with.

If a police officer or TfL [Authorised Officer](#) asks to see your licence, you must let them see it there and then or within a maximum of seven days. The PHV operator(s) you work with must keep copies of your PHV driver's licence and your DVLA/NI/EU/EEA driving licence. The letter that comes with your licence contains important information about your responsibilities as a London PHV driver, including any conditions you must meet. It is important that you read this letter carefully and make sure you understand it.

If there are conditions on your licence which require you to provide TfL with information – for example if you need to provide further medical information – then TfL may write to you to remind you that the information is needed.

There are further general conditions that all licence holders need to know. These are given below.

Your PHV driver's badge

When you get your licence you will also receive a PHV driver's [badge](#) (also known as photographic ID). **You must wear this badge at all times when you are working as a PHV driver.** Your PHV driver's badge displays your name, photograph, licence number and the date your licence period ends. Remember, your operator must give passengers your name, photograph and vehicle details. This means that passengers can check this information against your badge.

Example of PHV driver badge:



You must wear your badge whenever you are working as a PHV driver, including when you are waiting to receive a booking or travelling to pick up a passenger. When you wear it, you must make sure that it can clearly be seen by other people. This applies to all PHV drivers unless we have given you special permission not to. This is called an [exemption](#). If we give you an exemption, we will send you an exemption notice. You must carry that notice with you at all times when working as a PHV driver.

If a passenger asks for your licence number, you should let them see your badge so that they can write the number down. The badge includes text in [Braille](#) which means a [vision-impaired](#) person can know that you are licensed.

Remember the badge is for you to use only. You **must not** allow any other person to use it to carry out bookings.

Lost PHV driver's badge and licence

If you lose your PHV driver's badge or licence, or somebody steals it, report it immediately to TfL. If your badge has been stolen you should also report it to the police and get a [crime reference number](#) from them. Without your badge you cannot continue working as a PHV driver.

TfL will replace your lost or stolen badge or licence. However, if you then find your original badge or licence, you must return it to TfL. Your badge and licence are the property of TfL at all times, including when they have passed their [expiry date](#). You must return them when they pass the expiry date or when you are no longer licensed.

Medical conditions

To get your licence to be a PHV driver you must be medically fit. The standards you must meet are the DVLA Group 2 medical standards. In most cases, this will mean that you will need to have a medical examination with someone (i.e. a doctor) who has access to your full medical records.

You may be [exempt](#) from supplying a medical form if you:

- Have a full or provisional ([issued](#) after January 1997) DVLA Group 2 licence or
- Have a current London taxi driver's licence or
- Have a valid, current pilot's licence issued by the Joint Aviation Authorities

TfL will remind you when a medical examination is due and send you the form you need. You are responsible for making sure that a doctor completes the form with all the required information about your health, and for returning the form to TfL. If you do not send TfL all the necessary information, you might not get your licence.

From the age of 45, PHV drivers must have a medical examination each time they apply to renew their licence. From the age of 65, PHV drivers must have a medical assessment every year. If you do not send TfL all the necessary information you might lose your licence. If you have an existing medical condition, extra medical examinations may be needed.

You should tell TfL immediately if, between medical examinations, you develop a new medical condition that may affect your ability to drive. Some examples of medical conditions you should let TfL know about include:

- Diabetes
- Epilepsy
- Poor eyesight or other eye conditions affecting sight
- Heart conditions
- High blood pressure
- Neurological conditions (including strokes)
- Prescription medication that may affect your ability to drive
- Psychiatric illness
- Any condition which the DVLA requires you to report

If you are not sure whether to tell TfL, you should contact TfL for advice

The DVLA frequently updates its medical standards so TfL recommends that you check with the DVLA if you develop any new medical condition.

Change of address

It is important that TfL has your correct home address and email address so that you can be contacted with any information about your licence. If you change your home address, you should tell TfL within 21 days. You should also tell us about any change to your email address or telephone number. This is important so TfL can keep you informed of any changes to the regulations to do with how PHVs and PHV drivers are licensed, as well as news and events that could affect your job.

You are also required by law to tell the DVLA if you change your address. You will then get a new driving licence with your new address on it. Details of how to do this are on the back of your DVLA licence. The address on your PHV driver's licence should be the same as the address on your DVLA licence.

Other changes in personal circumstances

As a licensed London PHV driver, you must tell TfL **immediately** if your personal circumstances change.

This includes:

- If you have broken the law and have been [disqualified](#) from driving. Please note that you will also have to return your London PHV driver's licence and badge to TfL
- If you are the subject of a [mental health order](#) or [sexual offences order](#)

- If you are on either the [Adults or Children's Barred Lists](#)
- If you have a private hire or taxi driver's licence with another [licensing authority](#) and that authority has [suspended](#) or revoked your licence, or refused any new application you have made

Convictions, cautions and arrests

You must tell TfL **immediately** if you are arrested, [charged](#) with, [convicted](#) or [cautioned](#) for any crime. This includes any [fixed penalty notices](#) or road traffic offences that result in [penalty points](#) on your driving licence.

You are responsible for telling TfL about any offences you have committed. Do not rely on the police informing TfL.

If you fail to tell TfL about any [convictions](#), you could have your licence revoked.

Other fixed penalties, parking tickets and PCNs

You do not need to tell TfL about any other [penalty charge notices](#) (PCNs) or parking tickets that do not result in penalty points on your driving licence. However, if TfL becomes aware that you are getting frequent PCNs and/or parking tickets, TfL may take licensing action against you. This is because TfL expects all licensed drivers to behave responsibly.

Right to live and work in the United Kingdom

If there are [restrictions](#) on a driver's right to live and work in the UK, TfL will add an appropriate condition on the licence. If you are in this situation, you should make sure you comply with these conditions and make sure you have a continuing right to work.

In particular, if you are in the UK on a student visa you will only be allowed to work for a limited number of hours each week and you will not be allowed to be [self-employed](#).

Complaints

If TfL receives a complaint about you or becomes aware of any behaviour that is **not** satisfactory, TfL may write to you with the details and ask for your comments. It is important that you respond to TfL's request. TfL can only make licensing decisions based on the information received.

Suspending or revoking a PHV driver's licence

If for any reason your licence is revoked you must return your licence to TfL within seven days. If you do not, or your licence has been suspended or revoked with immediate effect, TfL may send an Authorised Officer to take it from you.

Revoking a driver's private hire vehicle licence

If your PHV driver's licence is suspended or revoked, and you are the owner of a licensed private hire vehicle, TfL may make the decision to revoke the vehicle licence as well. TfL will consider doing this if there is any risk to public safety. For example, if there is evidence that the vehicle could be used as a PHV by somebody without a PHV driver licence, or if a driver has been charged with, or convicted of, a serious violent or sexual offence.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

As part of the application process you (the applicant) must have an enhanced criminal records check from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). The DBS is a public body that does checks on people's backgrounds. The checks will show any convictions, [cautions](#), [reprimands](#) and final warnings you have had. The checks will also show if the local police have any information that is relevant to you working as a PHV driver and if you are on a list of people who are prevented from working with [vulnerable groups](#). TfL uses a separate company to arrange DBS checks for applicants - you **must** use this company to get your DBS certificate. Further details are on the [TfL website](#).

Section 2: Licensing Requirements for PHVs

This section gives you information on some of the licensing requirements and rules for private hire vehicles (PHVs). Even if you do not own a licensed vehicle, you should know about these requirements.

Licences and licence discs

Once a PHV has been licensed, the [registered keeper](#) is given a vehicle licence and licence discs will be fixed to the front and rear windscreens of the vehicle. The registered keeper also receives a leaflet which briefly describes the conditions of the licence.

PHV licences last for one year and the vehicle must have another licensing [inspection](#) before a new licence can be issued.

Example of PHV licence disc:



The licence discs must not be damaged or changed in any way. You should not remove the discs, even if you are using the vehicle for private purposes. The licence discs contain security features which mean that the discs will be permanently damaged if you try to remove them.

If the licence discs fixed to a PHV are damaged, lost, or stolen the vehicle owner should contact TfL immediately so that [replacement](#) discs can be issued.

Please remember, you cannot use a vehicle for private hire purposes if the licence discs are missing, have been badly damaged or their appearance has been spoilt in any way.

In some exceptional circumstances the vehicle might be given an [exemption](#) which means that the licence discs do not have to be displayed. In these cases, you will receive an exemption notice which you (the driver) must carry at all times when the vehicle is being used as a PHV.

Insurance

Every PHV must have hire or reward insurance. The [insurance policy](#) must be valid when the vehicle is licensed, and at all times when the vehicle is being used as a PHV.

We encourage you to carry details of the vehicle's valid hire or reward insurance policy **whenever you are working** as well as evidence that you are insured to drive the vehicle under that policy (for example, if the vehicle is insured by your operator).

You can carry the insurance details or display them within the vehicle.

You must make details of the insurance available to the police when you are asked for them. You must also provide insurance details to a passenger or member of the public if the vehicle you are driving is involved in a [collision](#).

Collision damage

Vehicles must be kept in good condition. If you own your PHV, you must tell TfL within 72 hours of any collision that affects the safety, performance, appearance or comfort of the vehicle. The vehicle may need to be re-examined before it can continue to be used as a PHV.

Information about vehicles

There may be circumstances where TfL has important information about the vehicle you are driving – for example, the manufacturer may have told TfL about a fault with the vehicle that means it needs to be returned to the manufacturer for repair. If you are the registered keeper of the vehicle TfL or the manufacturer may write to you to explain what you need to do to get your vehicle fixed. You should always follow the instructions in the letter. A letter from TfL may also explain that the vehicle cannot be used for private hire purposes until it has been fixed.

It is important that you read any letters you receive from TfL or the manufacturer carefully.

Section 3: Carrying out Private Hire Journeys

Private hire services are an important part of London's transport network, providing a wide range of services for residents and visitors. This section covers the basic requirements for drivers when carrying out private hire bookings.

Bookings

As a London PHV driver, you can **only** carry out bookings that you have received from a licensed London PHV operator. You must carry out these bookings in a London licensed PHV that has PHV licence discs on display (unless exempt).

TfL's website has a licence checker tool which contains the details of all licensed private hire drivers, vehicles and operators. This is a public register which you and anyone else can use.

You should never accept a booking from an unlicensed operator – if you are in any doubt you should ask the operator for their operator licence number and check their details using the online [licence checker tool](#)

It is important to remember that a PHV **is not** a taxi (black cab). This means that:

- You are **not** allowed to pick people up on the street or at stations or airports unless they have booked you through a licensed operator. This includes the street outside your operator's centre
- You must **not** allow any passenger to enter your vehicle before you have received the booking from your operator
- You must **not** give any sign or say anything to a member of the public that suggests that you are available for hire, without a booking

You must not encourage any member of the public to approach you or your PHV if they don't have a valid booking. If someone does come up to you, you are allowed to hand out a business card with the number of your operator on it or you can provide other contact details such as a website

Booking details

Before the start of each journey, your operator is required to record certain information about the booking. Although you are not personally responsible for collecting or recording these details, you should know about this requirement and let your operator know about any changes. For example, tell your operator if the final destination changes.

The information your operator must record includes:

- The date the booking is made and, if different, the date of the journey
- The name of the person the booking is for

- The agreed time and place for picking up passengers, or, if more than one location, the agreed time and place for picking up the first passenger
- The main destination
- The agreed fare or estimated fare
- The name or other identification of the driver carrying out the booking and
- The registration number or other identification of the vehicle that will carry out the booking

Operating centres in late night venues

If your operator has a licence to operate from a late-night venue, (e.g. a pub or nightclub) the operator can only take bookings inside the venue at the booking location specified on their licence.

You can only accept a fare if the passenger has booked the journey through a licensed London operator. You must not approach people on the pavement or outside a late night venue to offer them private hire services. If you do this, you may be committing an offence and could be [prosecuted](#). If a customer approaches you, then you should tell them to contact a licensed private hire operator to make a booking.

You, as the driver, are responsible for parking your vehicle, the noise it makes and for your own behaviour. Please think about the environment around the operating centre and how noise, traffic and/or customer movement may affect the people living in the neighbourhood.

Do **not** behave in an anti-social manner, do **not** leave litter in the street or road, do not go to the toilet in a public place, and do **not** leave your engine [running](#). Have respect for the area you are working in.

Remember, if TfL or the police get complaints about driver behaviour, they will investigate and, depending on the sort of complaint they receive, it could result in licensing action or prosecution.

Airports

Airports are private property and can make their own rules ([byelaws](#)) about taxis and PHVs.

Heathrow Airport has its own set of [byelaws](#) which you can find [here](#). You should know about these in case you get a booking to or from the airport.

You cannot enter Heathrow Airport to pick up passengers unless you have a booking from your operator or you are parking in an official car park or the [PHV Authorised Vehicle Area](#) to wait for a booking.

When picking up passengers you must always use an official car park.

You should **not** wait in local car parks or residential streets. Remember that the [taxi ranks](#) at Heathrow Airport and London City Airport are for licensed taxis (black cabs) **only**. You must not stop, wait, pick up or [drop off](#) passengers at the airport taxi ranks.

Journeys outside Greater London

As a London licensed PHV driver, in a London licensed PHV, you may carry out a private hire booking (accepted by a licensed London PHV operator) where the pick-up point and/or the destination for the journey is outside Greater London as long as the booking has been accepted by a licensed London PHV operator.

If you have any doubts about whether the journey is legal or not, you should ask your operator.

Fares

TfL has no power to set or control the fares charged by PHV operators. However, it is important that all customers understand the fare they are going to be charged.

Your operator is responsible for either agreeing a fare for the journey with the passenger or giving them an accurate estimate before a journey starts.

If your passenger decides to change the destination of their journey, asks you to pick up extra passengers, or has extra luggage, you should tell your operator as soon as it is safe for you to do so. Your operator will then be able to update the fare or estimated fare for the journey.

You should check with your operator what to do if your passenger disagrees with the fare or is unable to pay it at the end of the journey. You should also check with your operator what the arrangements are for giving out receipts.

Lost property

At the end of the journey, you should remind passengers to make sure they have not left anything behind. You should also check your vehicle for lost property after every journey. If you have put any of the passenger's luggage in the boot, do not forget to check that too.

If you find any lost property you should take it back to your operator. The operator will keep the property and make a record of it. By law your operator must keep a record of any items of lost property they hold. Let your operator know as soon as you find anything in case the passenger has already been in contact about the item.

Suspicious items and behaviour

Terrorist attacks can happen at any time or any place without warning.

Items left in your vehicle are likely to be items passengers have left behind, but if you are suspicious of an unattended item, call the police immediately on 999 and follow their instructions.

Be aware of what is going on around you and of anything that seems different or unusual or doesn't feel right, or anyone that you think is acting suspiciously. It could be someone you know, a passenger or even someone or something you notice when you are driving that doesn't feel quite right. You can report your concerns about suspicious activity to the [confidential](#) police anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321.

Don't worry about wasting police time or getting someone into trouble. The police will decide if the information you give is important and will treat it as private and confidential.

When a booking cannot be carried out

When an operator has accepted a booking and you have agreed to carry it out, you should carry out that booking unless you have a very good reason.

There may be situations where you do not feel able or safe enough to take passengers, for example if they are carrying open bottles or cans of alcohol or anything dangerous or [inflammable](#), or if they are acting in a violent or offensive way. If you do refuse to carry out a booking, be polite and explain why. This could help avoid a complaint.

Make sure you tell your operator the full reasons why you did not carry out the booking. Because the operator accepted the booking, the operator is also responsible for either arranging for another driver to carry out the booking or to make it clear to the passenger that it has been cancelled.

You must not refuse to take passengers because they are disabled or they are travelling with assistance dogs. For more details, see [Section 8: Being Aware of Equality and Disability](#).

Section 4: Staying Safe

This section looks at how to keep you and your passengers safe. It covers:

- Driver safety
- Drugs and alcohol
- [Minimising](#) conflict

Driver safety

Angry or violent behaviour when at work is **never** acceptable. If a passenger in your vehicle becomes angry or violent you have a right to say that you will not accept that behaviour or if that fails, and it is safe to do so, to ask them to leave.

- You should never accept any bad behaviour towards you for any reason. Any offensive or violent behaviour towards you because of your race, faith, [sexual orientation](#), disability or gender identity is a [hate crime](#). If you experience or witness this type of behaviour TfL urges you to report it to the police so that it can be fully investigated and action taken against the offender. TfL advises drivers to report incidents as soon as possible to the police on 101, or 999 in an emergency.

Protecting yourself

To provide a safe service for your passengers and to protect you as a driver you should consider:

- Discussing with your operator how they can help protect you from the possibility of aggressive or violent behaviour by a passenger
- Making sure your operator has given you booking details, such as the passenger's name, pick up point and destination.
- Checking the passenger's name and destination before they get in the vehicle – this will help make sure the passenger doesn't get into the wrong vehicle
- Being clear with the passenger about exactly where you are taking them, the route there, how long it is likely to take and what the fare will be before the journey starts
- Letting the operator know about any change to the booking. The operator must then tell the passenger what the new fare will be
- Carrying a [lone worker device](#) or asking your operator to provide you with one

All these steps should reduce the risk of any disagreements.

If a passenger is aggressive or violent, tell your operator immediately and give them the passenger's full name and address if you know it.

In an emergency, call the police on 999.

Warning signs of possible aggressive behaviour

Some behaviour is a sign that someone is becoming more angry and upset. Below are signs that someone might become aggressive:

- Tapping their fingers
- Crossed arms
- Hands held tightly in fists
- Aggressive staring
- A raised voice
- An angry expression
- A sudden change in behaviour
- A change to the voice

Trust your own feelings and never try to ignore these signs.

If you feel concerned, act immediately. Remember, the earlier you notice a possible problem, the more choices you have to avoid it.

Drugs and alcohol

When someone has taken drugs or has drunk alcohol, it can affect their ability to think or communicate clearly and their behaviour can be difficult to predict. In some cases they may become aggressive.

Your operator may have warned you about any possible problems when they gave you the booking (e.g. if the passenger sounds like they might be drunk). You can also judge the passenger's physical and mental condition when you pick them up. If you have concerns then, contact your operator immediately.

If the passenger cannot communicate clearly to confirm their destination, or is unable to walk because of drink or drugs, you have the right to refuse to take them in your vehicle. You can do this because you cannot be sure that they have given you the correct address or that they will be able to get out of your vehicle without help.

In this situation, if possible, insist that a friend comes with them in your vehicle, or ask to speak to a friend of the customer by telephone to confirm the destination.

If the passenger is [unconscious](#), extremely unwell or seems to be injured or in an emergency situation, and there is no-one else to help them, call the emergency services on 999 and stay with them until the services arrive. If the passenger is being aggressive or

violent, move somewhere that is safe for you but where you can still see the person until the emergency services arrive.

Think about your personal safety first and do not put yourself at risk.

Reducing the risk of violence in a difficult situation

There are certain things you can do to reduce the chance of someone being violent or aggressive towards you. These include:

- Talking calmly and not raising your voice
- Listening to what someone is saying and not interrupting them
- Responding to the person's concerns
- Asking questions
- Explaining things to them, not arguing
- Having a pre-planned way to excuse yourself from a difficult situation, for example, you can't help them but perhaps someone at the address you are taking them to can sort the problem out for them
- Explaining procedures for dealing with unacceptable behaviour, for example, you will have to stop the vehicle and possibly call the police unless they stop being aggressive/violent

If you cannot reduce the risk of violence:

Sometimes you are not able to calm a situation. If that is the case, you should:

- Get away from the aggressive person and exit the situation. If necessary, find somewhere safe to stop the vehicle, turn off the engine, take the keys then get out of the vehicle. If the passenger is planning to hurt you, they will probably get out of the vehicle too. This gives you the opportunity to quickly get back in and lock the doors then drive away if it is safe to do so
- Consider using a lone worker device to let someone know that you need help
- If an incident happens while you are away from your vehicle, get to your vehicle when possible and try to take time to calm down before you drive off

After an incident:

- Try to talk about what happened with a friend, a colleague or your operator
- Find out if any support is available (there is advice on health and wellbeing on the [TfL website](#))

- Report the incident to help avoid it happening in future

What to do if you are attacked or assaulted

It is important for you to know where you can go for help if you are attacked or assaulted.

Find out in advance what your operator's reporting procedures are and who to go to after an incident like this.

If something happens to you, tell your operator and if necessary, also call the police and/or an ambulance depending on the incident.

It is important to record and report incidents that almost happened, as well as ones that actually did happen.

When you are recording an incident try and include the following details:

- When and where the incident happened
- Information about the attacker (name, address if known, description of clothing, age, gender)
- Whether the attacker was one of your passengers
- Brief description of the incident
- Anything that might have caused the incident
- Details of any [witnesses](#)
- Type of incident (verbal threat, physical [assault](#), written threat)
- Description of any injuries
- Account of the immediate action that was taken

CCTV cameras

Installing CCTV cameras into a vehicle can reduce threats and violence against drivers. Signs in the vehicle informing passengers that CCTV is used may also help to prevent aggressive or violent behaviour. You can buy a camera or rent one. Although this is an extra cost, having a CCTV camera may reduce insurance premiums. This is because a video recording can be useful evidence when there is a dispute with a passenger.

The [Information Commissioner's CCTV Code of Practice](#) requires that [signage](#) must be displayed where CCTV is in operation. TfL requires all PHVs fitted with a CCTV system to display the sign shown below somewhere that is easy for passengers to see.

The vehicle owner can decide where to put this signage, but it must be displayed somewhere that it does not block the driver's view. It must also be as visible as possible to passengers as they enter the vehicle and while they are travelling in it.

TfL CCTV sign for PHVs:



Section 5: Driver Behaviour

TfL expects all licensed drivers to offer Londoners and visitors a professional and safe service. Providing excellent customer service is an important part being a London PHV driver.

This section explains how TfL expects drivers to behave towards passengers and other road users.

Complaints

It is important that each time a passenger gets into a PHV they receive a high quality of service from their private hire driver.

Operators must keep details of all complaints made to them.

Operators must report to the police any complaints that involve possible crimes, so that they can be investigated.

Although your operator will normally deal with complaints, passengers might contact the police or TfL directly. They might also contact TfL if they are not satisfied with the way the operator has dealt with their complaint. In these cases, TfL may carry out its own investigation. If TfL does investigate a complaint that relates to you, we will provide you with the details of the complaint and ask for your comments. As soon as you have had the opportunity to respond to the complaint and TfL has made any other necessary enquiries, TfL will tell you the result of that investigation. Remember, TfL can only make a decision based on the information we receive, so it is important you respond to all our requests for information.

If a serious complaint is made against you, or if there are a number of complaints, or there appears to be a pattern of poor behaviour and all the ways to improve your behaviour have been tried but have failed, TfL may have to suspend or revoke your licence.

Unacceptable behaviour

As a PHV driver, you offer an extremely important service to the travelling public. You have a responsibility to make sure your passengers feel safe when they travel in your vehicle. The way that you interact with them will affect the way they will feel about their journey with you. It is important that you are professional and deal with passengers in a way that makes them feel at ease.

You should never use a passenger's personal contact details to start communicating with them about anything other than the booked journey. Contacting a passenger for personal or social reasons is unacceptable and a misuse of the passenger's personal information.

You should never make comments or jokes about someone's age, race, religion, disability, sexual orientation or gender identity.

Drivers who behave in an unacceptable way will have action taken against them by TfL and/or the police.

Entering the back of your vehicle

Other than in an emergency, you must not get into the back seat of your vehicle while you have passengers on board. If you get into the back seat, you risk making your passengers uncomfortable and your actions may be misunderstood or considered inappropriate.

If your passenger is seriously ill, you should call the emergency services on 999 immediately. You should not try to physically check the passenger or administer first aid yourself unless you are following the instructions of the emergency services or a medical professional, or you have had appropriate first aid or medical training.

If your passenger is ill, or has a disability, and asks you to help them enter or leave your vehicle, make sure you check exactly what help they are asking you for, for example to take hold of your arm to support them. Keep any physical contact to the minimum required to give the help your passenger asks for.

Unacceptable sexual behaviour

No type of sexual behaviour between you and a passenger is ever acceptable, even if both of you agree to it.

TfL takes this issue extremely seriously. TfL or the police will fully investigate all complaints and reports, and they will take appropriate action. You will lose your licence if you are found to have acted in an unsuitable way towards a passenger.

You should never:

- Look at or speak to a passenger in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable, for example staring at any part of their body
- Make any sexual remarks or comments about a passenger's appearance or clothing
- Engage in conversation of a sexual nature. This includes asking questions about someone's sex life or telling sexual jokes
- Touch a passenger in an unacceptable way. You should avoid any physical contact with a passenger unless completely necessary (such as helping a person who needs assistance into your vehicle) to reduce any misunderstanding or complaints against you. Touching someone without their permission could be a sexual assault and will be investigated by the police
- Suggest having sex with a passenger
- Offer or accept sex or sexual activity in place of a fare
- Take part in sexual activity of any kind with a passenger (even if both you and the passenger agree to it or the passenger suggests it)

- Watch, display or share pornographic or sexual pictures, or any other sexual material
- Commit any other sexual offence

Your passengers expect to be treated in an appropriate way. Think about your actions and how they might affect a passenger. Avoid any behaviour that might be understood as being sexual, no matter how good your intentions are or how harmless you think your behaviour is.

Section 6: Driving and Parking in London

This section gives general information on parking and driving in London. It does not replace the need for you to be aware of your responsibilities under [The Highway Code](#).

You must remember that:

- PHVs are not allowed to drive in bus lanes
- PHVs are not allowed to park, wait, drop off or collect passengers on a taxi rank
- PHVs are not allowed to use or park on electric taxi charge points

A PHV is not a taxi. If a road sign shows that access is for a taxi you are not allowed access. Here are two examples:



Bus lane sign



Electric taxi charging point sign

Stopping and waiting

Private hire drivers can stop to pick up or drop off passengers in many areas where there are rules in place to limit waiting or stopping. You need to remember that:

- PHV drivers should **not** stop in any place where they might stop other vehicles moving or be a danger to other road users.
- PHV drivers must not stop on [zig-zag lines](#) (for example, by pedestrian crossings, outside schools)

You should check what signage is displayed about stopping or waiting and make sure you understand and follow the instructions:

- You can pick up or drop off passengers:
 - On single and double red lines

- On single and double yellow lines
- In places where [loading](#) is not allowed (shown by markings on the [kerb](#))
- In most [parking bays](#)
- In most bus lanes, although you should avoid this if possible as it might delay or obstruct buses

But remember you cannot **wait** for passengers in these areas.

- You can stop in the above locations only long enough for the passengers to get in or out of your vehicle. This includes the time to help passengers who need assistance, for example wheelchair users, including the time needed to make sure the wheelchair is in the right position and safely secured
- You should not stop on taxi ranks, even when picking up or [dropping off](#) passengers
- If there are waiting or parking restrictions, you cannot stop for longer than is needed for the passenger to get in or out of the vehicle. (There is no general permission that allows you to leave your vehicle to help a passenger to or from a building. However, some [councils](#) understand and accept that this is an important part of your job. If your passenger needs help, you should spend only a short time away from your vehicle, if possible, and make a note of the passenger's details/booking, just in case you get a Penalty Charge Notice (PCN). It will be down to the council who issued the PCN to decide whether to accept this evidence and cancel the PCN
- If you are not picking up or dropping off a passenger, you may get a PCN if you wait somewhere where there are restrictions. This can happen even if you have arrived early for a booking or the passenger is late, or if a passenger has asked you to stop and wait while they visit a shop or use a cashpoint
- You should not leave your engine running while you are waiting. If your engine is running while you are parked or waiting you are polluting the environment, and this can be illegal on a public road
- **Never** drop passengers off in the middle of the road, even if your vehicle is stopped due to traffic. You should always get close to the kerb

Bus lanes and bus stops

You can pick up or drop off passengers in most bus lanes, even though you are not allowed to drive in them, but you should avoid doing this if possible.

You must:

- Enter and leave the bus lane in the most direct and safe way. Pay careful attention to cyclists and motorcyclists who are able to use bus lanes and to pedestrians and bus passengers that may be getting off the bus and crossing the road

- Not stop at 'bus stop clearways' marked with a wide yellow line by the kerb. On red routes, you cannot stop at bus stops marked with a wide red line by the kerb. You should try not to stop at other red route bus stops to avoid delaying or obstructing buses
- Remember that only licensed taxis can use bus lanes – PHVs are not allowed to

You should avoid picking up or dropping off passengers at bus stops as this can delay buses and may not be allowed at some bus stops.

Taxi ranks

Taxi ranks can only be used by licensed London taxis, not by PHVs. PHVs should not park or wait on working taxi ranks at any time, nor pick up or drop off passengers on a taxi rank.

If you park or wait on a taxi rank you may be fined and TfL may also take licensing action against you. This could include suspending or revoking your PHV driver's licence.

Electric taxi charging points

Electric taxi charging points can only be used for charging electric taxis. They cannot be used for charging PHVs.

If you park or wait on an electric taxi charging point, or use it to charge a PHV, you may be fined and TfL may also take licensing action against you. This could include suspending or revoking your PHV driver's licence.

Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs)

PCNs can be given out by on-street parking attendants or [enforcement](#) officers or can be sent to the registered keeper of the vehicle if the vehicle was caught on camera breaking the law. You may get a PCN even if you do not see an enforcement officer, and the PCN does not have to be attached to the windscreen of your vehicle to be valid.

You can get a PCN for parking offences or other moving traffic offences such as driving in a bus lane, banned turns or movements (e.g. an illegal U-turn) or blocking a yellow box [junction](#).

Congestion Charging

PHVs entering the Congestion Charge zone need to pay the daily charge unless they have an exemption. You can find information about the times and days when you need to pay the Congestion Charge, and the area it covers on our [website](#)

If your PHV is [designated](#)¹ as [wheelchair accessible](#), you will not have to pay the Congestion Charge if you are entering the zone to carry out a booking from a London

¹ Designated vehicles are those listed by TfL under section 167 of the Equality Act

licensed PHV operator. You can check if your vehicle has been designated as wheelchair accessible on the TfL [website](#).

Ultra Low Emission Zone

To help improve air quality, an Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) operates in London. You can find information about the times and days when you need to pay the ULEZ charge, and the area it covers on our [website](#).

PHVs need to meet the ULEZ [emissions standards](#) or their drivers must pay a daily charge to drive within the zone:

- Petrol PHVs must be Euro 4
- Diesel PHVs must be Euro 6

The emissions standard of a vehicle can usually be worked out from the date of its first registration as new, which is shown on the vehicle's registration document known as the V5C.

PHVs registered as wheelchair accessible by TfL are exempt from the ULEZ charge.

Red routes

These are the main roads in London and are marked with red lines by the kerb and, where required, with signs. PHV drivers can pick up or drop off passengers on single or double red lines, but PHV drivers **must not** wait for a passenger where restrictions apply, even if they have arrived early for a booking or the passenger is late or wants to visit a shop.

The only exception is that we **do** allow PHVs to stop on the red route to wait for passengers to use a cashpoint between the hours of 22:00 and 06:00 only but for no longer than 5 minutes.

Please note that you must **never**, for any reason, stop within [pedestrian clearways](#), zig-zag line, bus stops with wide red lines, or any place where your vehicle would cause an [obstruction](#) or any danger to other road users.

Some parts of red routes are marked for parking. Parking bays can be identified by a 'P' on the signs that accompany them. The signs will tell you when parking is allowed, how long vehicles can be parked and how soon a vehicle can stop again in the same section of road.

It is important to pay attention to the signs and particularly the time limits and restrictions shown on them. PHVs can pick up or drop off passengers and can park or wait in a parking bay as long as they obey these limits.

Red route signs:

<p>No stopping at any time</p>	<p>No stopping during times shown on sign</p>	<p>Parking is limited to the duration specified during the days and times shown</p>	<p>Only loading may take place at the times shown for up to a maximum</p>

Section 7: Safer Driving

PHV drivers need to keep a careful watch on the roads at all times and be able to interact safely with all other road users, especially those that are more vulnerable such as pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists.

This section tells you about the how to maintain the highest standards of driving.

More advice on driving safely is on the TfL website.

Obey the law

As a PHV driver, you are expected to be fully aware of and to obey the rules of the road, as explained in The Highway Code. You should avoid behaviour that causes any danger to you, your passengers and other road users.

Most collisions in London are caused by a small number of easy-to-avoid behaviours. These include speeding or driving too fast for the conditions, making dangerous [manoeuvres](#), [getting distracted](#) and not following the rules of the road.

You need to be aware of your responsibilities as a professional driver. Think about:

Safe speeds

Drive at a speed within the speed limit and one that is appropriate for the situation, environment and weather conditions.

The faster you drive, the less time you have to do something to avoid a collision. The resulting injuries also become more serious as speed increases.

Safe manoeuvres

Think about the manoeuvres you make, and make sure they are safe. This includes things like looking carefully when pulling out of junctions, turning across traffic or passing cyclists or motorcyclists.

Careless or dangerous driving is a serious offence with heavy penalties.

Concentration

You need to focus on the road and be able to react quickly. Don't get distracted by mobile phones and other electronic devices, music or passengers.

If you do need to answer or make a call you will need to stop safely, park your vehicle and turn the engine off.

Distractions can make you less aware of what is happening on the road and affect your judgement so your decision-making abilities are reduced.

Remember it is also illegal to use a hand-held phone or similar device when you are driving unless you are calling the emergency services in an emergency and it is unsafe or impractical to stop. This includes when you are stopped in a queue of traffic e.g. at traffic lights, delays, etc.

Use of alcohol or drugs

You **must never** drive while you are under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

The police test for drug and alcohol use at the roadside to catch those who break the law.

Prescription medicine

If you are taking prescription medicine you must check with your doctor that it is safe for you to drive.

Following traffic laws before a journey begins

You need to know about and follow the laws on the safe use of vehicles e.g. laws that require you to have [insurance](#), a current [MOT certificate](#), a driving licence, wear a seatbelt and not drive a faulty vehicle.

All drivers must make sure that their vehicle is maintained to the required standard. It is important that you are aware of the rules regarding passengers wearing seatbelts in PHVs.

All adults must wear a seat belt and drivers should encourage adult passengers to wear a seatbelt for their own safety. Drivers must also make sure that all children are correctly seated and restrained.

Drivers are responsible for making sure that all children under 14 years of age wear seatbelts or sit in an [approved child car seat](#).

If the correct child car seat is not available, children can travel without one - but only if they travel on a rear seat:

- And wear an adult seat belt if they are 3 or older
- Without a seat belt if they are under 3

The police keep a close watch on London's roads 24 hours a day and will identify drivers who choose to break the law.

If you fail to obey any of the above rules, you may get a fixed penalty notice (FPN) or be prosecuted – this can result in a fine and penalty points on your licence. It may also result in you being banned from driving. You could also lose your PHV driver's licence.

Being aware of other road users

TfL expects all professional drivers to be fully aware of other road users. In particular those people who are the most vulnerable:

Pedestrians: Be aware of pedestrians suddenly stepping into the road and [give way](#) to pedestrians on side roads.

Cyclists: Be aware of cyclists at all times but especially when you are turning, in slow moving traffic or when you are [pulling away](#) from traffic lights. Make sure you give cyclists enough room when you overtake them

Please ask your passengers to check before they open their door into the road to make sure there isn't a cyclist coming. You must do the same.

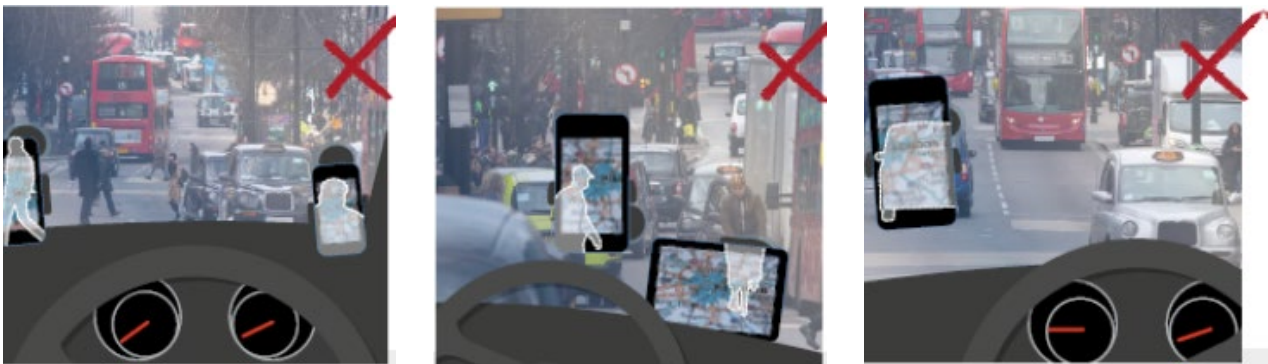
Motorcyclists: Be aware of motorcyclists at all times but especially when you are turning or in slow moving traffic.

Windscreen vision

In clear sight

Annex 6 of the Highway Code, which deals with vehicle maintenance, says 'windcreens and windows must be kept clean and free from obstructions to vision'. That means you should not put or fix anything onto your windscreen that will stop you being able to see the road ahead. This includes mobile phones, sat navs and other devices that will reduce your vision.

These pictures, based on photographs taken by the City of London Police, show just how much your area of vision is reduced by having devices attached to your windscreen.

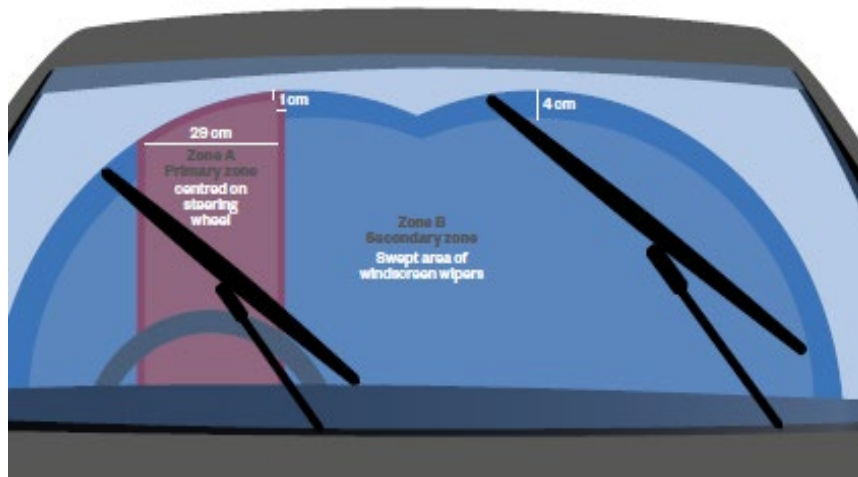


Be cradle careful

Before starting any journey, you should make sure you have a clear view through the windscreen and windows of your vehicle and that no devices or signage reduce or obstruct your view.

If you put a [cradled](#) device (such as a mobile phone or sat nav) on the area on your windscreen that is covered by your windscreen wipers (known as the 'swept area'), you are committing an offence. If you are prosecuted, you may be fined and get penalty points on your driving licence.

The swept are of a windscreen:



Driving conditions can change quickly and dangers such as pedestrians suddenly stepping in front of you, or bikes coming out of side streets, mean you need to have a clear view of the road. If your windscreen is covered in devices, you increase your chances of getting distracted or not seeing dangers in time to avoid them. You must make sure that you put any devices in positions that do not reduce how much you can see.

Other things to consider

Being tired: Tiredness can have a similar effect on a driver as drinking alcohol and can result in death or serious injury. Plan your day to include regular breaks from driving and do not begin a journey if you are already tired.

Weather conditions: You should change your driving behaviour when the weather conditions change, so that you are always driving safely. If it suddenly starts to rain heavily or there is thick fog, reduce your speed.

Driving at night: You should pay particular attention when driving at night because pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists may be more difficult to see then.

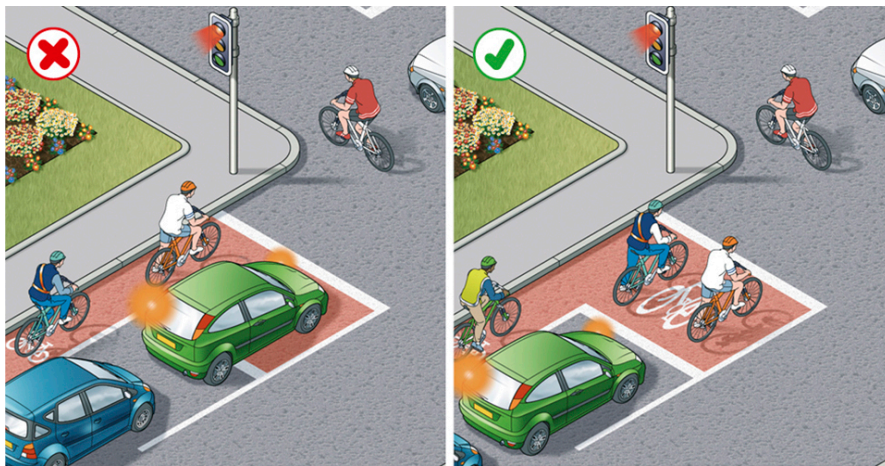
Cycle safety

PHV drivers spend a lot of time on the roads and are almost twice as likely as private car drivers to be involved in a collision that results in the death or serious injury of a cyclist. Because of this, it is very important that you follow the advice below so you can reduce the risk of a collision and help make sure that everyone travels safely.

Top tips

- Always check for cyclists, pedestrians and motorcyclists who may be moving, even if most vehicles are stopped in traffic

- Look out for cyclists, especially when checking your mirrors before indicating to go left or right, or changing your speed or direction
- Check over your shoulder for cyclists and other road users before opening your door to make sure it doesn't swing out in front of them
- Use your indicators when turning or changing lanes, even if you don't think anyone is near you
- Indicate well in advance to allow others to react
- Make sure your indicator is off once you have completed your manoeuvre, to avoid confusing cyclists and other road users
- Leave room for cyclists at traffic lights. Drivers should not enter the advanced stop line box when the light is red. This space is for cyclists and you may be fined and get points on your driving licence



- Give cyclists room. Keep a safe distance from cyclists and don't try to overtake when there is not enough space. Give as much space as you would for another car. If a cyclist is using the middle of the lane, wait patiently until you can pass safely

Vehicle safety

As a professional driver you are responsible for checking your vehicle is safe and legal to drive.

Driver's compartment

Check that:

- Your seat and seatbelt are in good condition, are secure and you can adjust them as you need
- The steering wheel is secure and in good condition

- The clutch and brake pedals have anti-slip covers
- The handbrake is in good working condition
- Driver warning lights do not light up when the engine is started
- The indicators are working correctly
- The horn works
- The windscreen washers and wipers are in good condition
- Any devices for opening and closing the driver and front passenger windows work correctly
- You can see in all the mirrors

Passenger compartment

This should be clean and all equipment in it must be in good working order.

This includes:

- Seat belts fitted to all passenger seats
- Upholstery, headlining, carpets and door trims
- Passenger courtesy lights
- Wheelchair safety belts/seat belts (if applicable)
- All doors and door locking mechanisms
- Vehicle heater system
- No smoking signs
- CCTV signage is displayed in a prominent position (this is only required where CCTV is installed in the vehicle)

Wheels and tyres

Tyres must be the correct size, speed and weight rating for the make and model of your vehicle. You should make sure all wheel nuts are in place and secure.

Tyres must be free from:

- Cuts, lumps, bulges and tears
- [Excessive](#) or uneven tyre wear

- Excessive damage to the wheel rim

[Tyre wear bar indicators](#) are positioned around the tyre. If the [tread](#) pattern has worn down to the level of the indicators, then you must replace the tyre.

Outside the vehicle

Make sure there are no signs of [fluids](#) (oil, brake fluid) leaking from under the vehicle on to the ground.

You should check:

- All external lights and reflectors are there and secure, undamaged and working
- Body panels have not been badly repaired
- There is no evidence of serious damage to the external body panels
- There is no serious [rusting](#) or [corrosion](#) resulting in sharp edges
- All windows are clean, undamaged and free from unapproved signage or advertising material

Section 8: Being Aware of Equality and Disability

TfL is committed to improving transport in London by making it more accessible, safer and reliable for all. Public transport plays an important role in opening up opportunities by providing access to education, employment and other essential services. It helps people stay in touch with family and friends and allows many people to live independently.

This section tells you about your responsibilities and how to provide the best service to all your passengers.

Assisting passengers

TfL believes it is important to provide a public transport system which all people can use, so that older and disabled people have the same opportunities to travel as all other people. TfL expects PHV drivers to deliver a high standard of customer service to all passengers, whatever their needs. However, we know that some passengers may need more help. This section gives you information, advice and tips on what you can do to help disabled passengers and other passengers that require assistance.

Here are some tips to help provide the best service to your passengers.

- Always ask your passengers if they need any help and wait for your offer to be accepted. Listen to any requests and remember that everyone is different
- Be ready to give disabled and older passengers some help. This could be as simple as writing things down for them, giving them a little extra time, facing them so they can see your lips as you speak, or speaking loudly and clearly if they have problems hearing you
- Talk directly to the older or disabled person rather than to the person with them if they are travelling with someone
- If the passenger is vision-impaired and asks you to guide them to the vehicle, stand by the person's side and allow them to take hold of your arm/elbow so you can guide the customer along. Do not take hold of the passenger and pull or push them in a particular direction
- Disabled or older passengers may need more time or help to get in and out of your vehicle. For their safety, be patient and make sure they are comfortable and have their seatbelt fastened before you start the journey
- You can also help by asking the passengers if they have all their belongings with them before you set off and when you arrive at their destination
- Tell the passenger where they are going and let them know about any possible dangers, such as pavement kerbs, doors opening towards or away from them and slopes going up or down. This will help prevent accident and injury

- During the journey, vision-impaired passengers in particular should be told about any delays, or changes to the route. This is also a good thing to do with any elderly passengers or passengers who have a learning disability, as they might get worried or upset if there is a change to the route they expected to take
- When you arrive at your destination, tell the passenger the location, then offer to assist them out of the vehicle and to guide them to a safe place before leaving them
- Clearly tell the passenger how much the fare is. When you give change to passengers who are vision-impaired, it is important to count out the coins and notes into their hand
- Offer to help count out the change if a passenger seems to be having problems
- Always have a pen and paper with you so that you can write things down. This can help passengers who have a problem hearing or passengers who do not speak much English
- If you drive a designated wheelchair accessible vehicle, make sure the equipment is in good working order and therefore available to use at any time
- Be careful of where you pick up and drop off wheelchair users. Avoid places where the pavement is on a slope
- Not all disabilities are easy to see, so offer, or be prepared to help any passenger

Equality Act 2010

The following characteristics are protected under the Equality Act:

- Age
- Disability
- [Gender reassignment](#)
- Marriage and [civil partnership](#)
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Pregnancy and maternity

It is illegal to treat anyone unfairly based on any of the characteristics listed above. It is unacceptable for you as a PHV driver, or for any of your customers, to use language or

behave in a way that [discriminates](#) against any person. As a PHV driver you are expected to treat all passengers in a professional and respectful way without making a judgement about any person's personal characteristics or assuming anything about them.

Designated wheelchair accessible PHVs

If you drive a [designated](#) wheelchair accessible PHV, you have certain duties under the law. Your operator should be aware that the vehicle you are driving is a designated wheelchair accessible vehicle.

If your vehicle is a designated wheelchair accessible PHV, you must:

- Carry the passenger while they remain in the wheelchair and make sure the safety belts are attached to the wheelchair to keep it in a safe position
- Not charge extra because a passenger uses a wheelchair
- Carry the wheelchair safely and securely if the passenger chooses to sit in a passenger seat
- Make sure the passenger is carried safely and in reasonable comfort

Offer the passenger any help that is reasonably required

Exemptions

A driver can only get permission to not carry wheelchairs for medical reasons. If a driver cannot carry out the duties of section 165 of the Equality Act because the driver's poor health or fitness makes it impossible or unreasonable, an [exemption](#) certificate may be given to the driver. You will need to contact TfL to apply for an exemption certificate and, if granted, you will need to display an Exemption Notice in the windscreen of your vehicle.

Assistance dogs

Section 170 of the Equality Act says that PHV drivers must accept passengers with [assistance dogs](#) and must allow the assistance dog to sit in the footwell, with the passenger. PHV drivers and operators cannot refuse or charge a passenger extra because they have an assistance dog.

Assistance dogs are highly trained 'working' animals so should not be treated like pets. Do not stroke or feed assistance dogs or distract them in any way.

There is a wide range of assistance dogs. You can sometimes see what type of assistance a dog provides by looking at the colour of the jacket it is wearing. Remember, though, that an assistance dog may not always wear a jacket.

The pictures below are of some of the dogs you might come across. Please remember that assistance dogs are not always the same breed as shown in the pictures and not all assistance dogs have a jacket to identify them.



Dogs and Islamic law

In 2002, the Shariat Council confirmed that trained assistance dogs may accompany disabled people in PHVs managed or driven by Muslims. The council's guidance helps to make religious law clear, and to prevent any possible conflict with [secular](#) law.

Exemptions

A PHV driver can only get an exemption from carrying assistance dogs for medical reasons.

If a driver has a medical condition, such as [asthma](#) which gets worst when near dogs, or if the driver is [allergic](#) or has a fear of dogs (a [phobia](#)), it may be possible for them to get an exemption. You will need to contact TfL to apply for an exemption certificate and, if granted, you will need to display an Exemption Notice in the windscreen of your vehicle.

Complaints

We will investigate any complaint we receive about a PHV driver breaking the Equality Act. If there is enough evidence of an offence being committed and it is in the public interest to do so, we will always prosecute the driver. If you are convicted of an offence under the Equality Act we will decide how suitable you are to be a licensed PHV driver and we may suspend or revoke your PHV driver's licence.

Section 9: Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk

Safeguarding means protecting children and adults at risk (sometimes called [vulnerable](#) adults) from harm and abuse.

This section gives you information on how to keep your passengers safe.

Online [safeguarding awareness training](#) is also available. It is important that you take this training.

Who is a child or an adult at risk?

According to the law, a child is a person under the age of 18. All children are vulnerable to harm and abuse because of their age. Children are less able to protect themselves and are dependent on adults. This makes them vulnerable to being [exploited](#) or abused.

An adult at risk is anyone over the age of 18 who is in need of extra care and support. An adult may be at risk of harm or abuse because they are unable to protect themselves. This might be because of their age, a disability or mental illness.

Carrying unaccompanied children in your vehicle

If your passenger is an unaccompanied child, make sure your operator knows, and that you know the name of the adult who will be meeting the child at the end of the journey. Your operator should give you that information.

Carrying children and adults at risk in your vehicle

As a driver, you may have to transport children or adults who are at risk. You may come into contact with passengers that are being [trafficked](#), exploited, abused or who are in need of help in some other way.

Keeping children and adults at risk safe from harm and abuse is everybody's responsibility, not just social workers or the police. You can help with this and you should know what to do if you have concerns that a person is at risk. You might notice things which do not seem quite right, and you could be in a position to report something to the police that may help protect someone at risk.

Make sure your behaviour with all passengers, including children and adults at risk, is appropriate and professional at all times. Be aware of how your actions could affect others.

County lines

Criminal exploitation is also known as 'county lines'. This is when gangs and organised crime groups use children and young adults to sell drugs. These children and young adults are often forced to travel across counties for example, by train or in taxis and private hire

vehicles, and they use mobile phone 'lines' to keep in contact with individuals in the drugs trade.

Signs that a child or vulnerable person is at risk may include:

- Young or vulnerable people being picked up and taken to hotels or suspected [brothels](#) particularly at odd times of the day and night
- A young person travelling to meet someone they don't know, perhaps who they have met online
- A young person or adult who shows signs of being abused, harmed or neglected
- Adults putting a young person into your vehicle who may be under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- A child or young person who looks concerned or frightened in the company of adults
- An adult or young person who may be poorly dressed/unclean or look like they do not get enough food
- An adult who seems to be controlled by someone else or is having decisions made for them by another adult
- An adult who seems to have their money controlled by someone else

If you think you have seen a child or adult at risk who needs help or is suffering from any signs of abuse or if they have told you directly, you must report it to your operator and the police.

It is helpful to keep a note (written or recorded) of the incident or situation that you are worried about. Include details such as dates and times, a description of what happened, the name, address and a physical description of the people involved. You can then give these details to the police.

As a driver it is important to:

- **Be aware** of children and adults at risk
- **Be concerned** about their well being
- **Listen** to what they tell you
- **Reassure** them by being professional, kind and considerate
- **Report concerns** to your PHV operator or the police using 101. In an emergency, call 999

Other support

In most situations you should report any incidents or concerns to your PHV operator/controller and the police by calling 101. If it is an emergency call 999.

These are some other options if you do not feel it is appropriate to report the matter to the police:

- Crimestoppers (an [anonymous](#) service) - 0800 555 111
- National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) - 0808 800 5000
- Modern Slavery Helpline - 08000 121 700

You do not need to give your details and can report anonymously but the more information you can give the better.

Section 10: Ridesharing

Ridesharing is when people who do not know each other pay separate fares and travel together in the same vehicle.

All ridesharing journeys must be booked with a licensed London PHV operator. As a London PHV driver, you can only carry out ridesharing bookings that you have received from a licensed London PHV operator.

If you work for a PHV operator who offers ridesharing services you should talk to them about ridesharing training for PHV drivers, as the operator should provide this.

Ridesharing can potentially introduce some safety risks for passengers.

It is possible that ridesharing might happen if, for example, two people have a similar route to and from work and travel at similar times. They may choose to book a ridesharing PHV and travel with someone they don't know. In cases like this, one passenger could be put at risk if the other passenger learns things about them such as their home address, where they work, their daily routines and whether they live alone or not. A stranger knowing information like this may make a passenger vulnerable to crime.

Another possible problem is that a passenger may book a ride-sharing journey by mistake. If you stop to collect a second passenger and the first passenger was not expecting you to, it could result in an argument.

To try to reduce these problems, it is always a good idea to:

- Confirm with each separate passenger that they have booked a ride-share as soon as you pick them up
- Explain how many other people you will pick up and the predicted route
- Let them know if you have to change the predicted route or pick up new passengers during the journey
- Tell the passenger how long it is likely to take to get to their destination
- Make sure the passenger knows what the cost is likely to be

It may also be a good idea to say to passengers that if they feel uncomfortable at any point, they can ask to get out of the vehicle and they can arrange for a non-rideshare PHV vehicle to meet them at a point along your route.

You should not share the personal details of one passenger with any other passenger.

Glossary

Allergic (adj) – to describe someone who has a bad physical reaction to something e.g. I'm allergic to nuts and cat fur.

Anonymous (adj) – not giving name or any personal details e.g. an anonymous letter is a letter that does not have the sender's name.

Approved child car seats (n) – these are chairs or seats especially designed for children depending on their age and height that, along with a seat belt, keeps them safe while travelling in a vehicle.

Assault (n) – a serious physical attack.

Assessment (n) – a test of knowledge, understanding, skills etc.

Assistance dog (n) – a dog that is specially trained to help a person with a disability e.g. a blind person may have an assistance dog.

Asthma (n) – a medical condition that causes difficulty breathing.

Authorised Officer (n) – someone who works for TfL and makes sure that PHV drivers are acting within the law and to TfL regulations.

Badge (n) – something with information on it (name, address and photograph) that you wear to show who you are and what your job is.

Barred List (n) – a list of people who are not allowed to work with children or some adults. This list is kept so that children and vulnerable adults can be protected from people who are not suitable to work with them.

Braille (n) – a writing system used by people who are blind or vision-impaired. To read it you use your fingertips to feel the bumps (called raised dots).

Brothel (n) – a place where people go to buy sex.

Byelaw (n) – a regulation made by a local authority.

Caution (n) – a formal warning given by the police to persons aged 18 or over who admit to committing an offence.

Charge (v) – accuse of a crime e.g. The police charged him with dangerous driving.

Civil partnership (n) – a legal joining of two people with rights similar to a marriage.

Collision (n) – when a vehicle hits another vehicle, or object.

[Common European Framework of Reference for Languages](#) – a guide to describe the ability and achievements of learners of foreign languages across Europe.

Comply (v) – to obey a request, rule or law.

Condition (n) – something that must happen or be agreed so that something else can happen. For example, you might need to have an extra medical check when TfL issue you your PHV driver's licence.

Confidential (adj) – information that is meant to be kept secret or private.

Convict (v) – to decide that someone is guilty of a crime.

Conviction (n) – the decision of judge or court that someone is guilty of a crime e.g. He had a conviction for speeding.

Corrosion (n) – the natural process where metal changes as it reacts with oxygen and water in the environment. The main type of corrosion for cars is rust.

Council (n) – local government body.

Cradle (n) – something that you can use to hold a mobile phone or GPS device in place in your vehicle so that you can use it hands free.

Crime reference number (n) – a number given to you by the police when you report a crime.

Designated (adj) – to officially be given a particular role or job.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) – this is a public body that does checks on people's backgrounds. They look for past criminal convictions etc.

Discriminate (v) / **discrimination** (n) – to treat someone unfairly because of their sex, race, religion, disability, etc.

Disqualified (adj) – to be prevented from doing something e.g. He got more than 12 points on his licence and was disqualified from driving.

Drop off (v) – to take something or someone somewhere e.g. The PHV driver reached the destination and dropped off the customer.

DVLA (n) – the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency, an agency that is sponsored by the government's Department for Transport. It holds records on drivers and vehicles, issues driving licences and taxes vehicles.

European Economic Area (EEA) (n) – this includes all countries in the European Union as well as Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway.

Emissions standards (n) – standards for exhaust emissions of new vehicles sold in the European Union and EEA member states.

Enforcement (n) – the process of making sure that rules are followed. Enforcement Officers work for local councils.

Enhanced (adj) – at an increased or higher level e.g. a higher level of DBS check that shows full details of criminal records, including cautions and warnings.

Excessive (adj) – too much, so that it becomes a problem e.g. excessive speed.

Exemption (n) / exemption notice –to get special permission to not have to do something e.g. He got an exemption so he didn't have to wear his PHV driver's badge.

Expiry date (v) – when something runs out and is not valid any more e.g. date when the PHV licence ends and has to be renewed.

Exploit (v) / exploitation (adj) – to use someone or something unfairly.

Fit and proper (phrase) – there is no fixed definition in law but it generally means to not have a criminal record, and to be honest in your dealings with authority.

Fluid (n) – a liquid such as oil or water.

Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) (n) – a punishment for a driving offence which usually involves a fine and penalty points. It is given by the police on the spot or by post.

Gender reassignment (n) – the process of changing sex, from male to female or female to male, often by using medical procedures such as surgery.

Give way (v) – to stop and allow other vehicles or pedestrians to go before you do.

Hate Crime (n) – when someone commits a crime against someone based on disability, sex, sexual identity, sexual orientation, race, or religion.

Highway Code (n) – a set of rules, regulations, advice and guidelines for all road users in the United Kingdom:

Inflammable (adj) – something that is easily set on fire and is therefore dangerous.

Information Commissioner's CCTV Code of Practice – this describes the legal requirements for using surveillance cameras (CCTV) in order to protect the user and the people being watched.

Inspect (v) / inspection (n) – to test or check that something is working properly or that rules are being followed.

Insurance policy (n) – an arrangement with an insurance company where you pay a fixed amount of money (an insurance premium) and the company agree to pay you back if something gets lost or damaged e.g. in a collision.

Issue (v) – to give or say something in an official way e.g. a PHV driver's licence is issued by TfL.

Junction (n) – a place where two or more roads meet.

Kerb (n) – a stone edging to a pavement or raised path.

Licence (n) - an official document that gives you permission to own, do, or use something, usually after you have paid money and/or taken a test.

Licensed (adj) – approved to do something by an official organisation. For example, approved by TfL to drive a PHV.

Licensee (n) – the person who receives the licence; the licence holder.

Licensing (n) – the process of giving licences.

Licensing authority (n) – a local government body responsible for licensing.

Loading (n) – the act of putting things into a vehicle.

Lone worker device (n) – a device that allows for communication with employers, or in more serious situations, emergency services.

Manoeuvre (n) – a movement or action that needs skill and / or care to do. A three-point turn or reverse parking are examples of driving manoeuvres.

Mental Health Order (n) – the arrangements for treatment of a person with serious mental health problems.

MOT certificate (n) – a certificate that shows that a vehicle meets the minimum environmental and road safety standards.

Obstruction (n) – a thing that stops traffic or slows it down e.g. A bus has broken down and is causing an obstruction on the High Street.

Operator (n) – a company that does a particular type of business. For example, a company that gives driving work to a PHV driver.

Parking bay (n) – a space in a car park or on the side of the road big enough for one car.

Pedestrian clearway (n) – a section of road where you are not allowed to drive or must not block as pedestrians use the area.

Penalty Charge Notice (PCN) (n) – is a penalty, similar to a fine, for contravening road rules such as parking, loading, bus lanes and yellow box junctions.

Penalty points (n) – these are added to your driving licence for offences like speeding.

Phobia (n) – a very strong fear of something.

PHV Authorised Vehicle Area – this is the special place at airports where PHV drivers can wait to receive bookings from their operator.

Prosecute (v) – to start legal action against someone for a crime or other offence e.g. She was prosecuted for dangerous driving and had to go to court.

Pulling away (v) – to drive off and increase speed from zero miles per hour, for example from a parking bay or traffic lights.

Rank (n) – a special area where taxis (black cabs) wait for customers. At airports these are known as authorised standings.

Reassure (v) – to say and do things to try to stop someone worrying.

Registered keeper (n) – the person on the DVLA's records as the owner of a vehicle.

Replacement licence (n) – a new licence, when information on the licence needs to change or the old licence has been lost.

Reprimand (n) – a formal telling off (v) – to show someone that you do not approve of something, often in an official way.

Restriction (n) – a law or rule that controls or limits what you can do e.g. parking restrictions that stop you parking in certain places.

Revoke (v) – to cancel something or take it away e.g. He was convicted of dangerous driving and his PHV licence was revoked.

Running (v) – when a piece of equipment or an engine is on and working e.g. The engine is still running – turn it off!

Rusting (n) – when metal changes colour and form because of the action of oxygen and water. Holes can begin to appear in the metal.

Safety, equality and regulatory understanding assessment (n) – a test of your knowledge of the information in this handbook. This test is required by TfL.

Secular (adj) – something that is not connected to religion e.g. secular law.

Self-employed (adj) – to work for yourself and be responsible for your own tax payments etc.

Sexual Offences Order (n) – the arrangements by which a person who has committed a sexual offence must live so that they are not a risk to the public or particular individuals.

Sexual orientation (n) – a person's sexual identity in relation to who they are attracted to emotionally or sexually. They may feel they are heterosexual, homosexual or bisexual.

Signage (n) – collection of signs, notices and stickers given by TfL to PHV drivers to display in their vehicles.

Standard (n) – a level of quality that is acceptable e.g. PHV drivers must have a certain standard of medical health and fitness to get a licence.

Suspend (v) – to stop for a short time e.g. There were so many complaints against him that his PHV driver's licence was suspended for three months. He could not work during this time.

Taxi (n) – a London black cab

Topographical skills assessment (n) – a test of your ability to use a map to plot a route. This test is required by TfL.

Trafficking (n) – dealing or trading in something illegal, for example, human trafficking is the use of force to make someone a slave or do things against their will.

Tread (n) – this is the part of the tyre that makes contact with the ground and helps the vehicle 'stick' to the road. The tread contains deep grooves and as these are worn down the tyres become less effective and may become dangerous.

Tyre wear bar indicators (n) – these are small pieces of rubber in the grooves of the tyre that help you to see if the type has worn down too far. The minimum legal tread depth on a tyre is 1.6mm across the tread.

Unconscious (adj) – to be in a condition as if you are sleeping, often the result of an injury to the head, or alcohol or drugs.

Vision-impaired (adj) – this is the decreased ability to see.

Vulnerable (adj) – at greater risk of physical or emotional harm e.g. children are vulnerable to harm from criminal gangs.

Wheelchair accessible vehicle (n) – a vehicle which can carry wheelchairs.

Witness (n) – a person who sees an event, often a crime, as it happens and can give information to the police.

Zig-zag lines (n) – a pattern of painted markings on the road surface either side of a pedestrian crossing that show that no parking, waiting or overtaking is allowed.