

Appendix C - Private Hire Vehicle Conditions

1. Introduction

- 1.1 All licensed private hire vehicles shall comply, in all respects, with the conditions of licensing set out below. The conditions of licence are supplementary to, and should be read in conjunction with, applicable statutory legislation. The conditions are considered to be reasonably necessary by North Northamptonshire Council in relation to private hire vehicles and all private hire vehicle licences will be granted subject to these conditions.
- 1.2 The conditions will be attached to every private hire vehicle licence unless specifically altered by the council. Additional conditions that are reasonably necessary will be attached to vehicle licences on a case-by-case basis.
- 1.3 In determining these conditions the council has had regard to the Department for Transport's Statutory Taxi & Private Hire Vehicle Standards 2022 and the Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing Best Practice Guidance for Licensing Authorities in England, 2023.
- 1.4 These conditions are ancillary to and should be read in conjunction with applicable statutory legislation and policies.
- 1.5 Failure to comply with any of the conditions attached to a private hire vehicle licence may result in NNC Licensing Penalty Points being issued to the licence holder, or other action such as referral to the Licensing Sub-Committee, with a view to potential suspension or revocation of the licence, or other action.

2. General Conditions

- 2.1 The licence holder must notify the Council of the location where the vehicle is kept regularly when not in use and any authorised officer must be afforded such facilities as may be reasonably necessary to inspect and test the vehicle there.
- 2.2 After the vehicle has passed the Council test and has been licensed, no material alteration or change in the specification, design, condition, or appearance of the vehicle can be made without written approval from the Council. At all times the vehicle must comply with the specifications for a licensed private hire vehicle detailed in the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy.

3. Doors

- 3.1 All doors designed by the manufacturer to allow the access or egress of passengers must function correctly and be capable of being opened from the inside and the outside.
- 3.2 Tailgates and rear doors must only to be used for loading/unloading luggage or as an emergency exit, unless the vehicle has been designed, modified or adapted to carry wheelchair bound passengers, and has the relevant M1 or M2 Type Approval Certificate, in which case the rear doors may be used for loading those passengers only.

4. Windows

- 4.1 The minimum light transmission for the vehicle windscreen is 75% and the minimum light transmission for front side windows is 70%.
 - 4.2 The minimum light transmission of windows rear of the B-pillar is 30%.
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4.3 The application of aftermarket tinted film to any window, or to the window screen, is not permitted.

5. Ventilation

5.1 The vehicle must have windows at the rear and on each side adjacent to any passenger seating.

5.2 The driver's window and all passenger windows must function correctly and be capable of being opened and closed by the driver and passengers.

6. Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles (WAV's)

6.1 All equipment and devices used for or involved in the loading, unloading and secure transportation of wheelchair bound passengers must at all times function correctly and must be used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

6.2 Access to and egress from the wheelchair carrying position must not be obstructed in any manner, at any time, except by wheelchair loading apparatus.

6.3 Wheelchair internal anchorage points and equipment must be of the manufacturers design and construction and comply with the M1 or M2 standards as specified in European Directive 76/115 EEC (as amended by 90/629 EEC) and not altered or modified in any way.

6.4 A suitable, separate, restraint (seat belt) must be available for the occupant of the wheelchair.

6.5 All access ramps or lifts must be able to support the weight of any wheelchair, occupant and helper and all such devices must have a minimum load rating of 300kg. Relevant information and manufacturers markings must be displayed on all lifting equipment and ramps.

6.6 Ramps, steps and lifts must be securely stored in the vehicle before driving off.

6.7 The vehicle must be fitted with a locking mechanism, or other device, that holds the wheelchair access door in the open position whilst a wheelchair is being loaded or unloaded.

6.8 Any equipment fitted to the vehicle for the purpose of lifting a wheelchair into the vehicle must have been tested in accordance with the requirements of the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (S/I 1998/2307). Any such equipment must be maintained in efficient working order so as to be available for use at all times.

6.9 The licence holder must ensure that all drivers of wheelchair accessible vehicles have received sufficient training to be able to load/unload and convey wheelchair bound passengers in safety and comfort, with refresher training taking place as necessary. Records of this training must be kept and made available upon request from an authorised officer.

7. Seatbelts

7.1 All private hire vehicles must be fitted with fully operational seat belts, one for each passenger to be carried. Each seat belt to be fully compliant with any relevant legislation

and British Standard, except where the law specifically provides for an exemption. Seat belts must be used in accordance with the requirements of the legislation that is applicable at the relevant time.

8. First Aid Kit

- 8.1 A first aid kit must be always readily available.
- 8.2 The first aid kit must be of a suitable and comprehensive type that meets the requirements of British Standard BS8599-2 (medium sized kit) and be permanently and legibly marked with the registration number or licence number of the vehicle.
- 8.3 The contents of the first aid kit must be reviewed regularly to ensure that contents are within date and complete.

9. Tyres

- 9.1 All tyres on the licensed vehicle must be in good condition and conform with the minimum legal requirements subject to an additional requirement that there must be at least 2mm tread depth at all times.
- 9.2 Tyres must be correctly inflated to the vehicle / tyre manufacturer's recommended pressure.
- 9.3 The vehicle must be equipped at all times with, a spare wheel or other manufacturers standard equipment for the vehicle to deal with a punctured or damaged wheel or tyre (such as a gel or foam repair kit).
- 9.4 All replacement tyres fitted to licensed vehicles must be new (i.e. not have been used previously on any other vehicle), meet the vehicle manufacturers minimum specification for tyres and must have been fitted by a reputable vehicle maintenance company / contractor. Vehicle proprietors are required to retain invoices / receipts to show that any tyre that is purchased meets this requirement.
- 9.5 'Space saving' spare wheels must only be used in an emergency, and then only in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Should the use of a 'space saving' spare wheel become necessary during a period of hire then the journey may continue, but the wheel must be replaced before another journey carrying passengers commences. NOTE Space saver wheels have a maximum speed and distance restriction on them which must be adhered to.

10. Luggage

- 10.1 Luggage and storage areas must be kept as free space for passenger's luggage.
 - 10.2 Luggage must be suitably secured in place and must not obstruct any exit, or emergency exit.
 - 10.3 Vehicles with open luggage space such as estate cars must be fitted with a suitable guard or cover between the luggage space and the passenger compartment, which must be in use whenever passengers are carried.
 - 10.4 Vehicles with no clear demarcation between the passenger and luggage areas must be fitted with suitable restraining straps or other approved devices to secure the luggage and prevent it coming into contact with any passenger at any time (including in the case of an
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accident). These restraining straps or devices must be used whenever passengers' luggage is being carried.

11. Maintenance and Condition of a Private Hire Vehicle

- 11.1 No material alteration or change to the specification of the vehicle can be made without the prior written approval of the Council at any time.
- 11.2 The interior and exterior of the vehicle must be maintained in a clean, safe and proper manner, to the reasonable satisfaction of the Council.
- 11.3 Bodywork must be maintained to a good condition, paintwork must be sound, uniform across the vehicle, well maintained and free of corrosion, dents, scratches, chips and other signs of wear or deterioration, inferior re-spray work and 'cover up' temporary repairs.
- 11.4 The roof (including any sunroof or removable covering) must be watertight.
- 11.5 Fittings, furniture and additional equipment fitted in the vehicle must be kept in an acceptably clean condition, well maintained and in every way fit for public service. Items such as taxi-meters, radios, Sat-Nav's, PDA's, mobile phone holders and other ancillary items must be securely mounted in the vehicle in such a position as to not hinder or obstruct the driver's operation of, or view out of, the vehicle, or impede the seating of any passenger.
- 11.6 The seats must be properly cushioned, covered and free from cigarette burns, rips, splits, tears, stains or any other signs of deterioration or wear.
- 11.7 The floor must be covered with carpet, mat or other suitable material, properly secured and be free from cigarette burns, rips, splits, tears, stains, deterioration and wear.
- 11.8 The vehicle must be equipped with a suitable bulb-kit indelibly marked with the registration number or licence number of the vehicle to provide for the replacement of defective bulbs
- 11.9 The doors, windows and seats must function in accordance with the original manufacturer's specification.

12. Vehicle Safety Checks

- 12.1 The proprietor/driver must undertake a daily safety check of the vehicle. As a minimum this must be a visual check on all lights, oil, water, tyres, mirrors, seat belts and cleanliness. A written record must be made of each safety check, details of faults recorded, and remedial action taken. The record must be signed by the person undertaking the safety checks and kept in the vehicle for the day of the inspection and then for a further six months by the Operator. Template Daily Check Sheets are available from North Northamptonshire Council.
- 12.2 If required by a Police Officer or authorised officer the driver must produce, to that officer, the recorded daily checks kept in the vehicle and the proprietor, on request by that officer, must produce those recorded checks in his possession and/or those kept in the vehicle.

13. Seats and Passengers

- 13.1 The proprietor must not allow a greater number of passengers to be carried in the vehicle than the number specified in the licence.
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- 13.2 In all licensed vehicles provided with a passenger side air bag, no child will be carried in a rear-facing carrier in the front passenger seat.
- 13.3 A notice must be displayed in the vehicle reminding passengers that it is a statutory requirement to wear the seat belts provided.
- 13.4 Assistance dogs must be conveyed in a licensed vehicle when requested by the dog's owner. Any dog so conveyed shall count as one person and no charge shall be levied for any such dog.
- 13.5 Any excess seating fixings which were removed or permanently capped before the vehicle was licensed, must not be replaced, or exposed during the currency of the licence.
- 13.6 Any minibus or other vehicle in which the seating is intended to be fixed in one place, and which has potential for capacity for over nine seats, which has had excess seating removed to allow not more than eight passenger seats, must have any excess seating fixings permanently removed and holes or other fixings permanently capped (i.e. welded over or similar) before a licence can be issued. This requirement will not apply to vehicles purposely designed to allow for regular flexible changes in seating configurations, including accommodating wheelchairs, and seating that is fitted onto manufacturers purpose designed and installed runners or tracks.

14. Taxi-Meter

- 14.1 The licence holder must ensure that where a private hire vehicle is fitted with a taxi meter: that the following conditions are complied with.
- 14.2 The tariffs with which the meter has been calibrated must be displayed in the vehicle in such a position as to be visible to passengers. Such a table must show full particulars of all tariffs calibrated on the meter including a statement that the Council has no control over the table of fares.
- 14.3 The vehicle licence holder must obtain and retain written certification of such calibration and sealing. This certification must be provided to an authorised officer of the Council upon request.
- 14.4 The taxi-meter must be located so that all letters and figures on the face are at all times plainly visible to any passenger;
- 14.5 A notice must be displayed within the vehicle in such a position as to be visible to passengers stating that if the meter is not used, the fare should have been agreed between the passenger(s) and operator before commencement of the journey. Any fare agreed in this way must be the fare that is charged at the end of the journey, unless the customer agrees to it being varied.
- 14.6 If a fare has not been agreed between the operator and the customer, then the fare charged must be that which is shown on the meter (if fitted).

15. Identification (Licence) Plate

- 15.1 The identification plates issued by the Council, bearing the number of the licence granted in respect of the vehicle, must be:
- securely fixed on the outside rear and outside front of the vehicle.
 - kept in such a condition that the information shown is clearly visible to public view.
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- must be fixed in such a manner that they can be removed by an authorised officer of the Council or Police without causing damage to the vehicle.

15.2 The interior sign provided by the council must be displayed inside the windscreen of the vehicle, in such a position as to be clearly visible at all times to passengers.

15.3 Vehicle licence plates remain the property of the Council at all times and must be returned on surrender, suspension, revocation or expiry of the licence or if the vehicle is sold, or disposed of, out of the licensed trade. If a plate is lost or stolen it must be reported to the Police and evidence of this must be provided upon request by an authorised officer. Written notification of the lost or missing plates must also be submitted to the Council's Licensing Team via email within 24 hours of the lost or stolen plates being noted.

16. Signs, Notices and Advertising

16.1 Members of the public can often confuse private hire vehicles with taxis, failing to realise that they are not available for immediate hire and that a private hire vehicle driver can only fulfil pre-booked requests. This Authority considers that greater differentiation in signage will help the public to distinguish between the two elements of the trade.

16.2 Unless an exemption has been granted in writing, all private hire vehicles must display two permanently affixed standard design North Northamptonshire Council door signs in the upper-central area of both front doors. This signage will be supplied by the Council and must not be adapted, modified, or obscured in any way.

16.3 No other signs, notices, advertisements, plates, marks, numbers, letters, figures, symbols, emblems or devices whatsoever can be displayed in, on or from a private hire vehicle apart from the registration number, a company reference number and Council-issued licence plates. A private hire vehicle must not display any commercial advertising of any kind.

16.4 The standard door signs must be displayed in the correct orientation and must be maintained in good condition. If damage, defacing, or wear etc is incurred the Licence holder must purchase replacement signage from the Council and replace the damaged / defaced / worn signs immediately.

16.5 Magnetic or other temporary type signage is not permitted.

16.6 No roof sign or roof light may be attached to or displayed on the licensed vehicle.

16.7 The foregoing provisions, of this condition, shall not apply to a sign in, on or from a private hire vehicle which:

- indicates membership of the AA, RAC or other similar motoring organisation; or
 - indicates that passengers should not eat or smoke in the vehicle. Signage in accordance with the Smoke free Workplace Regulations, vehicle requirements, must be affixed to the outside, or inside, of the vehicle indicating that smoking is prohibited in the vehicle; or
 - indicates that in-car CCTV surveillance is in use in the vehicle; or
 - indicates that the vehicle is suitable, and equipped, for the carriage of wheelchair bound
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passengers;

- indicates that the driver of the vehicle is exempted through medical grounds from the requirement to carry assistance dogs.
- Is required to be displayed by North Northamptonshire Council.

16.8 No other recognition symbols may be affixed to the licensed vehicle, aside from a company reference number.

17. Vehicles Converted to run on Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG)

17.1 A vehicle converted to run on LPG must display a warning sticker on the front and rear screens stating that the vehicle is fitted with an LPG tank.

18. Copy of Licence Conditions

18.1 A copy of these conditions must be carried in the vehicle at all times and must be available for inspection on request by any authorised officer, Police officer, hirer or passenger.

19. Change of Address

19.1 The licence holder must notify the Council in writing, of any change of their home or business address during the period of the licence, within seven days of such change taking place.

20. Transfer of Private Hire Vehicle Licence

20.1 Where a proprietor transfers their interest in respect of a private hire vehicle, it is incumbent on the current licence holder to provide the Council with written notice (using the prescribed form) of the transfer, giving the name and address of the new proprietor, together with the original licence document **within fourteen days of the date of the transfer**, together with the appropriate fee.

21. Insurance

21.1 All licensed vehicle owners / operators are required to maintain adequate motor vehicle insurance cover at all times whilst a vehicle is licensed. This insurance must either name all individual licensed drivers of that vehicle or provide full insurance cover for unnamed licensed drivers (such as a fleet policy) for that vehicle.

21.2 Private hire insurance must comply with Part VI of the Road Traffic Act 1988 and must be in force at all times for the duration of the licence. Public Liability Insurance (minimum cover £2m) is also required in respect of those vehicles licensed to carry passengers in wheelchairs.

21.3 The licence holder must produce, on request, a current, valid, Certificate of Motor Vehicle Insurance (or insurance cover note) which satisfies paragraph 22.1 and 22.2 above.

22. Vehicle Damage

22.1 The proprietor must, as soon as reasonably practicable, but in any case, within 72 hours, notify the Council of any accident involving the vehicle or, of any damage to the vehicle

however caused, which affects the safety, performance or appearance of the vehicle or the comfort or convenience of persons carried therein. This notification must be in writing, on the Council's prescribed form and provide full details of the damage. The vehicle must not be used until a Council Officer has inspected the vehicle and confirmed it may continue to be used.

- 22.2 A Council test may be necessary to demonstrate that the vehicle is roadworthy. The cost of such a test is to be paid by the proprietor. If the Council determines that the vehicle is unfit for use as a private hire vehicle, a suspension notice under section 68 will be issued.

23. Trailers

- 23.1 The Council does not permit the use of trailers on licensed vehicles.

24. Items Left in Private Hire Vehicles

- 24.1 The driver must search the vehicle after the completion of every journey carrying passengers, to establish whether any goods or property have been left behind.
- 24.2 If any property is found following such a search, drivers must wherever possible, make reasonable attempts to reunite lost property with its owner. In the event that this is not possible, the property should, as soon as possible be given to the Operator for safe keeping and notification of the details and circumstances of the lost property submitted to the Licensing Authority via email within 7 days.
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