

Vehicle Licence Conditions – Private Hire & Hackney Carriages

As a South Cambridgeshire Private Hire or Hackney Carriage Driver you are NOT permitted to ply for hire in the Cambridge City Boundary or at any of the taxi ranks within that area, which includes the Railway Station. Any person caught doing so will be subject to investigation for breach of licence conditions with the possibility of suspension or revocation of their licence.

1. Type of Vehicle

The vehicle must be safe, comfortable and suitable in type, size and design for use as a private hire vehicle and must be:

- a) Not of such design and appearance as to lead any person to believe that the vehicle is a hackney carriage; a London" type taxi cab finished in the manufacturers standard colour; or
- b) A standard private hire vehicle finished in the manufacturers standard colour with a minimum of four doors not including the tailgate (unless specifically adapted to be used as an access or egress point); or
- c) A vehicle specially adapted to carry disabled persons and approved by the council and;
- d) Environmentally friendly vehicles such as hybrid vehicles, electric or LPG vehicles, and Four x Four (4x4) and Sports Utility Vehicles (SUV's) will be considered on their individual merits
- e) No more than four years old from the date of first registration when first presented for licensing. Luxury executive vehicles used for chauffeuring work may, at the discretion of the Licensing Officer be given an exemption to this condition, subject to no vehicle being more than six years of age from the date of first registration
- f) Hybrid/Electric or ultra low emission vehicles will be no more than 5yrs old from date of first registration when presented for licensing
- g) In a condition so as to comply at all times with all statutory requirements. (Testing by the council or its appointed agents does not avoid the need for a Certificate Of Compliance (CoC) for all vehicles more than one year old. The certificate (CoC) must be produced when submitting a vehicle application and must be no more than one calendar month old
- h) Where by the removal of seats, a vehicle original seating capacity is reduced to the maximum capacity of eight passenger seats, the redundant seat mountings must be rendered unusable. This must be done in such a way as to prevent the easy re-fitment of seats.
- i) Hackney Carriage – The vehicle must be capable of safely loading, transporting and unloading a wheelchair bound passenger from the side or rear of the vehicle.
- j) Hackney Carriage Facilities for the Disabled
 1. Approved anchorages must be provided for wheelchair tie downs and the wheelchair passenger restraints. These anchorages must be either chassis or floor linked and capable of withstanding approved dynamic or static tests. Restraints for wheelchair and occupant must be independent of each other.
 2. Anchorages must also be provided for the safe stowage of a wheelchair when not in use, whether folded or otherwise, if carried in the passenger compartment. All anchorages and restraints must be so designed that they do not cause any danger to other passengers.
 3. The door and doorway must be so constructed as to permit an unrestricted opening across the doorway of at least 75cm. the minimum angle of a hinged door when opened must be 90 degrees
 4. The clear height of the doorway must be not less than 1.2 metres.
 5. Grab handles must be placed at door entrances to assist the elderly and disabled, and must be contrasting in colour.
 6. The top of the tread for any entrance should normally be at floor level of the passenger compartment and comply with the following requirements: -
 - Be not more than 380mm from the ground, (measured at the centre of the tread width);
 - The surface shall be covered in a slip-resistant material;
 - Have a band of colour across the entire width of the edge which shall contrast with the remainder of the tread and floor covering.

Should any entrance be more than 380mm from the ground, an external interim step must be made available when the associated passenger door is opened and comply with the following requirements: -

- Not be more than 380mm in height from the ground, (measured at the centre of the step width);
 - Not be less than 250mm deep;
 - The surface shall be covered in a slip-resistant material;
 - Have a band of colour across its leading edge which shall contrast with the remainder of the step and floor covering;
 - Not be capable of operation whilst the vehicle is in motion;
 - If automatic or powered, be fitted with a safety device which stops the motion of the step if the step is subject to a reactive force not exceeding 150N in any direction and if that motion could cause injury to the passenger;
 - Can fold or retract so that it does not project beyond the side face of the vehicle and the vehicle is not capable of being driven away unless the step is folded or retracted.
7. The vertical distance between the highest part of the floor and the roof in the passenger compartment must not be less than 1.3 metres.
 8. Where seats are placed facing each other, there must be a minimum space of 350mm between any part of the front seat and any part of any other seat that faces it, provided adequate foot room is maintained at floor level.
 9. Where all seats are placed facing to the front of the vehicle, there must be clear space of at least 66cm in front of every part of each seat squab, measured along a horizontal plane at the centre of the cushion.
 10. A ramp for the loading of a wheelchair and occupant must be available at all times for use, as a minimum, at the nearside passenger door on all new vehicles presented for licensing. The ramp must be 70cm wide, as a minimum, and comprise a single non-slip surface. An adequate locking device must be fitted to ensure that the ramp does not slip or tilt when in use. Provision must be made for the ramp to be stowed safely when not in use.
 11. When a vehicle has been modified post manufacture to provide access or special facilities for disabled passengers, the vehicle must have all modifications and adaptations (including all seats seat belts and anchorages), retested or approved to meet either European Whole Type Approval or the UK Low Volume Type Approval (ESVA or IVA) that meets the required standard. Prior to the first licensing of the vehicle, the proprietor and/or driver must produce certification that the vehicle meets the required standards.

2. Maintenance of Vehicle

- a) **Lighting Equipment** – All front and rear lamps including headlamps, stop lamps, directional indicators, hazard lamps and fog lamps, shall be fully operational. Also lamp lenses shall be clean and free from any chips or cracks which affect the beam pattern, or allow moisture to enter the light casing. Reflectors should be free of corrosion or similar defects
- b) **Steering and Suspension** – The steering shall be fully operational and comply with DVSA inspection regulations. The suspension shall be fully operational, free from any leaks and with no excessive bounce. All components to be in good working order. The fitting of part worn or second hand parts are not permitted.
- c) **Brakes** – All brakes including the foot and handbrakes shall be in good working order and pull evenly in accordance with DVSA inspection regulations. All vehicles must be fitted with a high level brake light, the fitting of part worn or second hand parts are not permitted.
- d) **Tyres and Wheels** – All vehicles shall carry in accordance with manufacturers' recommendations all necessary equipment for puncture repair. All tyres, including any spare tyre, should be in a roadworthy condition and comply with all relevant statutory requirements. Tyres should be of either all radial or all cross ply design; the fitting of part worn or second hand tyres are not permitted.
- e) **Seatbelts** – All vehicles shall have fully operational seatbelts in the front and rear to accommodate all passengers. Seatbelts should be in good condition and should not be frayed or torn. All seatbelts shall be mounted to the vehicle body (not to vehicle seats unless specifically designed to do so) and adequately secured. The fitting of part worn or second hand parts are not permitted.
- f) **Horn** – The vehicles horn shall be fully operational and adequately audible.

- g) **Heater and ventilation** – The vehicle shall be fitted with a fully operational heater, which can be adjusted according to the needs of the passengers. Passengers must be able to operate the windows independently.
 - h) **Wipers and Washers** – The correct size wiper blades shall be fitted and shall not be torn or frayed. The windscreen washers should operate correctly and fully.
- 3. Coachwork** – vehicles must comply with the following:
- a) The width of the rear part of the body, measured from internal armrest to internal armrest should be a minimum of 1.28m. This measurement to be made with both rear doors closed
 - b) The minimum legroom for passengers using the rear seats shall be 22cms, the measurement to be taken from the rear door pillar to the nearest point of the rear seat squab
 - c) All doors shall be capable of being opened from both the inside and the outside and to an angle of at least 60 degrees. Two windows capable of being adjusted and secured in any open or partly open position shall be fitted
 - d) All glass fitted shall be safety glass, i.e. glass that if fractured does not fly into fragments capable of causing severe cuts
 - e) Glass, either in the window, windscreen or other part of the vehicle shall not be broken or discoloured and shall be free from cracks in accordance with DVSA regulations. Aftermarket window tints shall not be fitted to any windows.
 - f) All coachwork shall be maintained in a clean condition and in a proper state of repair; and
 - g) If the vehicle is an estate or hatchback type car it must be fitted with a guardrail or other device of a type approved by the Council to separate the rear loading area from the passengers

4. General

- a) The vehicle must be fitted with an internal rear view mirror and on both sides with external rear view mirrors
- b) The two way radio equipment may not be installed without the prior approval of the councils Licensing Officer, who may specify the position of the equipment to ensure safe operation
- c) All parts of the vehicle, its fittings and equipment both internal and external must be kept in an efficient, safe and clean condition and comply at all times with all relevant statutory requirements; and
- d) The vehicle must at all times be insured to the satisfaction of the Council for fare paying passengers
- e) The proprietor/driver shall ensure that at all times whilst the vehicle is used on public roads, there is a current vehicle excise licence in force for the vehicle
- f) Hackney Carriage vehicles shall at all times have a fare table issued by South Cambridgeshire District Council displayed within the vehicle in a clear and prominent manner
- g) At least two No Smoking signs are to be displayed within the vehicle

5. Safety Equipment

The proprietor shall provide and maintain in good working order in the vehicle:

- a) A suitable first aid kit containing appropriate dressing and appliances in date., The external cover of the kit to have the plate identification number issued by the council, and the vehicle registration to be indelibly marked upon it.

6. Exterior Signs

The proprietor shall ensure that:

- a) Except where authorised in writing by the Licensing Officer under Section 75(3) Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, at all times the vehicle current licence plate provided by the Council is displayed: and
- b) Private Hire Vehicle: - No roof sign shall be displayed at any time;
- c) The vehicle shall display on the driver and front passenger door in a prominent position the name and telephone number of the Operator fulfilling the booking, except where plate exemptions are permitted
- d) The vehicle shall display on both rear external passenger doors in a prominent location affixed door signage, **“Private Hire Vehicle – Must be Pre-booked with Operator”**.
- e) Hackney Carriage Vehicle: - the vehicle shall be fitted with a roof sign not exceeding 500mm in length and 120mm in height, and bearing the word “TAXI” in black lettering illuminated in yellow and no other lettering to the front. The word “TAXI” and the wording “SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL” in black lettering, illuminated in red or yellow and no other lettering to the rear
- f) Any alternative sign may not be displayed except with the written authority of the Licensing Officer and in any event must bear the words mentioned above and no others

- g) The roof sign to be maintained in good order and displayed at all times on the roof of the vehicle except:
 - i) When the vehicle is on hire for a wedding
 - ii) When it is necessary to accommodate passenger's luggage by the use of a roof rack
 - iii) When the vehicle is being used for the proprietor or a person authorised by the proprietor for social, domestic or pleasure purposes;
 - iv) Otherwise with the prior approval in writing of the Licensing Officer
- h) The roof sign is illuminated during the hours of darkness except when the vehicle is under hire
- i) Any hackney carriage vehicle may only be white in colour and must have the South Cambridgeshire District Council emblem in blue, on the bonnet, with the minimum size being 0.7m x 0.7m.
- j) TfL approved black cabs may be black in colour with district council emblem displayed on the side vehicle doors.
- k) For Both Hackney Carriage & Private Hire Vehicles – The vehicle shall not be licensed, or be deemed to be licensed at any time if no current vehicle licence plate provided by the Council is securely fixed to the bracket which should be bolted or screwed to the outside rear of the vehicle, or in the case of Private Hire Chauffeur vehicles is subject to an Exempt licence as stated in condition 16.
- l) In certain circumstances the Council may authorise or require alternative or additional exterior signs subject to such further or substituted conditions as the Council may determine.

6.1 Required information for passengers

- a. Members of the public who have cause for concern, or who wish to complain about a journey in a licensed vehicle will need some information about the driver or vehicle they used in order to progress their complaint or report their concern.
- b. Exempt vehicles do not display a licence plate and therefore it may be difficult for members of the public to obtain information prior to getting into a licensed vehicle. If they have a problematic journey, they may attempt to get the information, but this can be difficult if it is late at night or the vehicle quickly drives away.
- c. Whilst licensed drivers are required to prominently display their licence badge, which contains their information, a passenger may feel it too confrontational to request to see the driver's badge, especially if they have had a difficult journey.
- d. In order to protect the public and to allow customers to correctly identify and report either a driver or a vehicle which caused concern, the council has determined that certain information must be displayed inside all licensed vehicles, in the form of an Internal Vehicle Notice.
- e. There must be a clear mechanism in place that informs any passenger of :-
 - The business name of the operator, or proprietor if it is a hackney carriage,
 - The telephone number where a customer can make a complaint or report a concern,
 - The vehicle registration number, and
 - The vehicle licence plate number.

This can be by way of use of digital technology sent to the customer prior to the booking or an Internal Vehicle Notice contain the information and displayed in a conspicuous place which can be easily read by a passenger travelling in the rear and front of the vehicle

7. Advertisement

Subject always to the Council's right to disallow any advertisement, no advertisement shall be displayed on the exterior of the vehicle except on advertisement panels with an area not exceeding 0.56sqm on the side doors. All adverts must be approved at the discretion of the licensing officer.

8. Inspection

The proprietor shall submit the vehicle to the Council or its appointed agents for inspection:

- a) Annually when the licence is due for renewal

- b) After any repair made necessary by an accident affecting the safety, performance or appearance of the vehicle or the comfort or convenience of passengers and the proprietor shall notify the Licensing Officer of any such accident within 72 hours; and
- c) At any other time if so requested by the Licensing Officer

9. Convictions

The proprietor shall, within seven days disclose to the Licensing Officer, in writing, details of any conviction, caution, reprimand or warning issued to him or her or, if the proprietor is a company, on any of its directors during the period of the licence.

10. Change of Address

The licensee driver shall notify the Licensing Officer in writing of any change of his or her address during the period of the licence within seven days of such change taking place.

11. Transfer of Licence

If an owner/proprietor/co-owner of a vehicle in respect of which the Council has granted a licence, transfers his/her interest in the vehicle, he/she shall within 14 days after the transfer give written notice of the transfer to the Council. That notice must contain the name and address of the person to whom the licensed vehicle has been transferred and the written consent to the transfer from the previous proprietor(s)/owner(s)

12. Surrender of Licence

Except in situations to which Section 49 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 applies (transfer of vehicles with licence), if the proprietor ceases to use the vehicle for the purpose for which it is licensed he or she shall surrender the licence and return the plate, which remains the property of South Cambridgeshire District Council, to the Licensing Officer.

13. Deposit of Drivers' Licences

If the proprietor permits or employs any other person to drive the vehicle as a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle he or she shall, before that person commences to drive the vehicle, cause that person to deliver his or her hackney carriage or private hire driver licence for retention until such time as the driver ceases to be permitted or employed to drive the vehicle, or any other vehicle of his.

14. Hackney Carriage Taximeter

- a) The vehicle shall be fitted with a taximeter visibly recording the passenger fare payable in conformity with such table of fares as may from time to time be approved by the Council
- b) The position of the taximeter shall be agreed by the Council's Licensing Officer and shall be maintained at all times so that the fare displayed can readily be seen by the passenger; and
- c) The operation of the taximeter shall accord with any Byelaws made by the Council.

15. Hackney Carriage Byelaws

The vehicle must comply with the relevant provisions of the hackney carriage Byelaws or be taken out of service as a hackney carriage until such time as the vehicle complies with the Byelaws.

16. Exemption Licence Conditions (Private Hire Only)

The following condition applies ONLY if the Council has allowed in writing an Exemption licence to be issued instead of an external rear plate. The Council has determined that under the Private Hire Vehicle license an exemption license will be issued, to be kept in the vehicle at all times, for all uses of the vehicle as a private hire vehicle where the driver is acting as a uniformed chauffeur under a written contract for one or more journeys (Appendix D). If any use of the vehicle as a private hire vehicle is made where there is no written contract or where the driver is not in uniform a plate shall be used at the rear of the vehicle.

If the plate is not correctly displayed or the exemption licence not within the vehicle, or if there is any contravention of this provision, the vehicle shall not be deemed to be licensed.

[NB: In Cambridge City, certain Road Traffic Regulation advantages given to licensed vehicles in use as such may not be available unless a plate is used. You will need to observe the relevant requirements if you wish to claim those advantages.]

17. Conditions specific to Stretch Limousines

The driver hereby licensed shall within 7 days or as soon as practicable thereafter disclose to the Council in writing any medical condition which would likely to adversely affect his/her ability to drive during the period of the licence.

- a) All stretch Limousines should meet the Q.V.M. (Quality Vehicle Modifier) issued by the Ford Motor Company, C.M.C. (Cadillac Master Coachbuilder) or have relevant approval documentation of the originating chassis supplier approving the conversion as presented for licensing.

- b) No vehicle will be licensed when after the conversion the increased length is more than 120 inches.
- c) Passenger capacity will be determined by how many forward facing seatbelts are within the vehicle. (Side seatbelts and rear facing seatbelts are not considered suitable)
- d) Correct tyres as recommended by the manufacturer must be fitted to include appropriate weight loading of the converted vehicle.
- e) That no stretch Limousine over 6 years of age from the date of its first registration shall be licensed.
- f) The maximum weight of any converted vehicle should not exceed 7100lbs

Failure to comply with conditions

Failure to comply with any of these conditions may result in the Council suspending, revoking or refusing to renew the licence and in certain circumstances, in prosecution. There is a right of appeal to the Magistrates Court.