



Private hire and hackney carriage - vehicle licences



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There are a number of criteria, which must be met if a vehicle is to be used for a taxi/private hire:

Private hire vehicles

When first licensed, all private hire vehicles should be less than 4 years old from the date of first registration.

Private hire vehicle may continue to be licensed to a maximum of 8 years old from the date of first registration and be capable of carrying not less than 4 and no more than 8 passengers.

The vehicle should be suitable in type, size and design for use as a private hire vehicle. It must not be of such design and appearance as to lead any person to believe that the vehicle is a hackney carriage.

A purpose-built mini-bus designed to carry not less than four or more than eight passengers in any colour of the original manufactures specification **except black** and shall have European Community **M1** type approval.

Please contact a member of the licensing team before any vehicle is purchased to confirm its suitability.

Vehicles that have been categorised as 'write offs' by any insurance company at any level will not be considered for licensing.

Suitable vehicles for Hackney Carriage licensing

When first licensed, all purposed vehicles should be less than 5 years old from the date of first registration.

Hackney Carriages may continue to be licensed to a maximum of 10 years old from the date of first registration and be capable of carrying not less than 4 and no more than 8 passengers.

Any purpose-built vehicle having obtained European whole vehicle type approval in the M or M1 category will be considered.

London TX Style type hackney carriage that is wheelchair accessible in **any colour** of the original manufactures specification, or

Hackney Carriage wheelchair accessible minibus variant must be **Black** in colour only.

Please contact a member of the licensing team before any vehicle is purchased to confirm its suitability.

Vehicles that have been categorised as 'write offs' by any insurance company at any level will not be considered for licensing.

Vehicle Mileage and Service

Where the vehicle mileage is in excess of **150,000** the vehicle will be required to undergo a Full Service annually. Evidence of this service must be shown to the licensing officer before the vehicle will be licensed. These requirements are in addition to the general testing requirements.

It is expected that all vehicles are maintained, serviced and inspected in accordance with the manufacturer's recommended schedule in terms of both mileage and time elapsed.

Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles

The council encourages vehicles to be wheelchair accessible and offers a discount on the licence fee.

All Hackney Carriages **must be** wheelchair accessible.

All drivers of wheelchair accessible vehicles must undertake the appropriate training to ensure they are trained in the loading, securing of and unloading of the wheelchair. This can be booked through accredited course providers.

A pass certificate must be provided to the council before a licence is issued.

Passenger capacity

The minimum number of passengers for which a vehicle will be licensed is four and the maximum is eight. Vehicles with a passenger capacity more than eight are classified as a public service vehicle and cannot be licensed as either a hackney carriage or a private hire vehicle.

Where one of the seats in the vehicle will be used for three passengers it must measure no less than 48 inches across (between the nearest interior fittings on either side).

Pre-licence testing

All vehicles require testing, regardless of age. You must make an appointment at one of our council-appointed testing stations - the details of these can be found in our application pack.

Your vehicle will have an MOT test, for which a normal MOT certificate will be issued, as well as a council test. Both inspections must be done at the same nominated testing station and both certificates must be dated within one calendar month of the time the vehicle licence is issued. For this reason we suggest you wait and have your vehicle inspected once we advise you to do so i.e. after your disclosure has been returned to us, your medical examination has been confirmed as satisfactory and you have passed your knowledge and driving test.

Vehicle exterior

The vehicle must be clean and in good condition.

Vehicle interior

The interior must be clean and in good condition. All vehicles must be provided with a fire extinguisher and first aid kit.

Roof signs - for hackney carriage vehicles only

Lettering on the sign should state 'TAXI' and a separate sign illuminated in the windscreen, 'FOR HIRE'. The sign must light up whenever the vehicle is available for hire.

Roof signs are prohibited from private hire vehicles.

Meters

Hackney carriages must have a taximeter fitted which has been calibrated to the current tariff set by the licensing department. All meters will be checked by the garage. The meter must be positioned so that passengers can clearly see the charge being made.

Private hire vehicles are not obliged to have a meter fitted.

Insurance

Certificates of insurance for hackney carriages will only be accepted if either HIRE AND REWARD or PUBLIC HIRE is stated on the certificate. For private hire insurance, certificates will only be accepted if HIRE AND REWARD or PRIVATE HIRE is stated. All insurance documents must be shown before the vehicle licence can be granted.

All drivers shown on the insurance certificate must be licensed drivers as only licensed drivers can drive licensed vehicles. Therefore, once you have licensed your vehicle, only you, as a licensed driver, will be able to legally drive the vehicle. This applies even if a non-licensed driver wishes to drive the car only for social or domestic purposes. Any non-licensed person found driving a licensed vehicle will face prosecution, as well as potentially invalidating the vehicle's insurance.

The following application forms and guidance information may help further:

- [Guidelines booklet for private hire and hackney carriage driver and vehicle applicants](#)
- [Hackney carriage and private hire driver and vehicle licence application](#) PDF
- [New Private Hire and Hackney Carriage and Renewal Application Form Word Document](#)
- [Approved MOT garage list with explanatory guidance](#)
- [Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Conditions](#)
- [Private Hire / Hackney Carriage Vehicle Renewal Form](#)
- [Private-Hire-and-Hackney-Carriage-Temporary-Replacement-Vehicle-Application-Form](#)
- [Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy 2017-2022](#)

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