

Hackney Carriage Conditions

1. All Hackney Carriages must be wheelchair accessible and conform to the Hackney Carriage licence conditions.

All new Hackney Carriages must be under 5 years of age from date of first registration when new (subject to the Council's exceptional condition criteria)

Vehicles currently licensed as wheelchair accessible Hackney Carriages will be permitted to be re-licensed annually provided they pass the mechanical requirements, but any replacement vehicle will be required to meet all requirements.

Vehicles currently licensed that are not wheelchair accessible, will be permitted to be re-licensed up to a maximum of 10 years from the original date of vehicle registration provided they pass the mechanical inspection. Any replacement vehicle will be required to meet all requirements.

The vehicle must:-

- (a) be a purpose built taxi; or
 - (b) If modified to accommodate disabled passengers, shall have been retested after modification to meet European Whole Vehicle Type Approval standards (or the low volume standard for UK vehicles) in respect of all such modifications. The relevant certificate will be required before such a vehicle can be licensed.
 - (c) Only be driven by a CBC licensed Hackney Carriage / Private Hire driver. Arrangements shall be made by the Council for drivers to receive training in the loading and unloading of wheelchairs and their passengers and also the care of the passenger in relation to their wheelchair use. The licences of drivers who refuse such training may be suspended or revoked.
2. All vehicles, including new, are required to undertake an annual mechanical compliance inspection at the Council's nominated test centre at Luton Borough Council's Transport Depot or Bedford Borough Council's Transport Depot.
 3. The vehicle will be tested in accordance with the National Inspection Standards together with the DVSA MOT vehicle standards and these conditions.

4. A second (six monthly) test will be required on any vehicle over the age of 5 years. It can be carried out at any DVSA appointed garage registered to test that class of vehicle.
5. The licensing period runs for 12 months.

Signage

6. The only permitted signage allowed to be displayed is:-
 - a. an illuminated 'For Hire' sign must be fitted inside the licensed vehicle and must be of a type and fitted in a position within the vehicle approved by the Council. Such sign must be extinguished during any period for which the vehicle has been hired. The sign shall not be illuminated at any time whilst the vehicle is outside the district of Central Bedfordshire.
 - b. the plate (provided by the Council and which shall remain the property of the Council) identifying the vehicle as the Hackney Carriage and stating the maximum number of passengers which the Council have licensed the vehicle to carry must be affixed to the vehicle in a conspicuous position on the rear exterior of the vehicle in such a manner as the Council shall prescribe.
 - c. The Council must be informed immediately should the licence plate showing the number of the Hackney Carriage be broken, lost or stolen. On no account must a Hackney Carriage ply for hire without a plate.
 - d. The licensed vehicle shall carry an identifying disc (issued by the Council and which shall remain the property of the Council) which shall be affixed inside the vehicle to the near-side of the front windscreen so that the information on it is plainly and distinctly visible from the exterior of the vehicle.
 - e. Any permitted sign must be positioned so as not to impede visibility.

Seating Capacity

7. All passenger seats shall be provided, where possible, with a lap and diagonal 3 point seat belt and where not possible a 2 point lap seat belt appropriate to the type and position of the seat.

Wheelchair Restraint

8. A system for the effective anchoring of wheelchairs shall be provided within the vehicle in all spaces designated for wheelchair spaces.

Wheelchair Space

9. The vehicle shall have a designated wheelchair space sufficient to accommodate at least one wheelchair bound passenger. The space / spaces

shall be immediately adjacent to the vehicle door fitted with the wheelchair access equipment so as to allow the wheelchair bound passenger to ingress the vehicle and use the anchoring equipment with the minimum of manoeuvring.

Floor Height and Steps

10. At every access door into the passenger area of the vehicle steps shall be provided to aid ingress as follows:-
 - Where the internal floor height of the vehicle exceeds 12in (305mm) intermediate steps shall be fitted every 9ins (228mm) from road level up to the internal floor height.
 - The tread area of all steps shall have a minimum depth of 6ins (152mm) and shall have a slip resistant surface.
 - All steps shall be capable of supporting the weight of an adult.
 - Hand rails shall be fitted in appropriate positions in all passenger access doors so as to facilitate the use of the steps provided.

Bulkhead / Drivers Safety Screen

11. A full width full height bulkhead/safety screen shall be fitted in the vehicle directly behind the driver's seat. The upper section of the bulkhead/safety screen shall contain a clear vision panel sufficient for the driver to be able to see a substantial amount of the passenger compartment which must include vision of all access doors. A section of the bulkhead/safety screen shall be openable so as to allow verbal communication between the driving and passenger compartments. Except for the openable section, the surface of the bulkhead shall have no discontinuities such that a passenger could reach into the driver's compartment from the passenger compartment.

Emergency Exits

12. The vehicle shall have a minimum of 2 means of exit from the passenger compartment for use in emergency situations. The means of exit shall be free of any obstructions, reachable from all parts of the passenger compartment and have an aperture through which an adult can pass without undue difficulty.

Both exits shall be clearly marked 'Emergency Exit' together with clear instructions relating to the means of opening. All markings shall be both inside and outside of the vehicle.

Windows and Ventilation

13. The vehicle shall have windows fitted on both sides and the rear of the passenger compartment. A minimum of one window on each side shall be openable for the purpose of ventilation.

Tinted windows are allowed providing they are fitted during the manufacture of the vehicle and meet all current legal requirements. After market kits are not acceptable.

Interior Lighting

14. The vehicle shall have interior lighting fitted in the passenger compartment sufficient to light the whole of that compartment. The lights shall be switched such that they may be turned on or off from either the driving or passenger compartments.

A means of illuminating the entrance steps on all access doors into the passenger compartment shall be fitted and switched such that they automatically operate when the door is opened.

Tyres

15. Tyres must meet the minimum legal tread depth of 1.6 mm.

Radio

16. Radio Equipment must be securely fixed in the vehicle.

Insurance

17. The proprietor of the licensed vehicle shall ensure that the vehicle is insured for use for the carriage of fare paying members of the public at all times and must forward a copy of a certificate of insurance and all subsequent renewals of insurance to the Council's offices. Failure to do so will result in the licence being suspended or revoked.

Transfer of Vehicles

18. This licence may not be transferred, except with the prior approval of the Council, to another vehicle. Such vehicle must comply with the statutory requirements, the Council's requirements with regard to the licensing of Hackney Carriages and these conditions.
 - a. Replacement vehicle. A completed transfer form must be submitted with other required documentation and any necessary transfer fee prior to any such vehicle being used as a Hackney Carriage
 - b. Change of vehicle ownership. If a proprietor transfers his interest in a vehicle to somebody else, he must immediately give notice of the transfer, in writing, to the Authorised Officer giving the name and address of the new owner. In no circumstances may the vehicle be used as a licensed vehicle by the new owner until the licence has been transferred to that person and all documentation completed and any necessary fees paid.

Convictions

19. The licence holder should immediately, and in any case within 7 days, disclose to the Council in writing the details of any conviction imposed upon him or her (or in the case of a company or partnership, on any of the directors or partners) during the period of the Hackney Carriage licence.

Change of Address

20. The licence holder must inform the Council of any change of address in writing within seven days of the change of address.

Alterations

21. No alterations in the specification, design or appearance of the vehicle shall be made without the approval, in writing, of the appropriate Head of Service or the Authorised Officer.

Assistance Dogs

22. No driver may refuse to carry a seeing or hearing (guide) dog and other prescribed assistance dogs provided it is accompanied by a fare paying passenger, unless the driver can produce a medical certificate signed by a registered medical practitioner to the effect that the driver has an allergy to dogs and a certificate of exemption has been issued by the Council. No charge shall be made for the carriage of guide, hearing or other prescribed assistance dogs.

All drivers and vehicle owner/operators must comply with the Disability Discrimination Act at all times.

Dual Plating

23. No vehicle will be granted a licence if it is licensed in another district due to the problems of meeting the variance in conditions applied in different district and the enforcement of those conditions. No vehicle can be licensed as both a hackney carriage and a private hire vehicle.

Vehicle Damage

24. The proprietor of any Hackney Carriage should report to the Authorised Office as soon as reasonably practicable and in any case within 72 hours, the occurrence of any accident involving the vehicle.

Complaints

25. Any vehicle against which a complaint is laid must be presented to the Authorised Officer within one working day of being so requested for inspection, possible testing and for the driver to answer such complaint.

Inspection

26. The vehicle, including documentation, may be called in for inspection at anytime by the Authorised Officer to ensure compliance. Failure to attend and or show any documentation as requested may lead to suspension or revocation of licence.

Vehicle Checks

27. In the interest of public safety, any vehicle which is suspected of any infringement of legislation or conditions may be stopped by an Authorised Officer at anytime to ensure its fitness to be used as a Hackney Carriage.

Compliance

28. The responsibility for complying with these conditions, unless otherwise stated, shall be the proprietors and drivers jointly and severally.

Recording Equipment

29. No recording CCTV equipment shall be fitted without the written consent of the Council. Consent shall only be considered for a system that complies with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) Code of Practice. Any organisation (including taxi and private hire companies) using cameras to process personal data should follow the recommendations of the code. Companies may also wish to take into account the ICO's 'Privacy notices code of practice' 'Data sharing code of practice' and 'employment practices code'. This is particularly important if surveillance systems will be used to monitor employees.

Booking Records

30. The proprietor shall ensure that a record is kept of all pre arranged bookings for the vehicle. The record must be kept in the form described in the following condition:-

Records must be kept in a suitable book, the pages of which are consecutively numbered or on a computer with backup records which is capable of producing a hard copy..

The proprietor or his/her agent employed must enter, before the commencement of each journey, the following particulars of every booking of every Hackney Carriage operated by him/her:-

- The name and address of the hirer;
- The date, time and pickup point of the booking;
- The destination;
- The number of passengers to be carried;
- When and how the booking was made i.e. telephone, personal call;
- The plate number of the vehicle allocated;
- The name of the driver allocated to the booking and call sign of the vehicle;
- The amount to be charged;
- Remarks (including details of any sub-contract)

All records are to be kept for a period of not less than 12 months following the date of the last entry and to be produced for inspection on the request of an Authorised Officer of the Council or a Police Officer.

Suspension or Revocation

31. The Council has the power to suspend or revoke a licence. In the case of revocation the plate must be returned.

Appeal

32. You may appeal against all or any of the conditions attached to a licence granted to you.
You may appeal against the refusal of a licence to you.

Any appeal against the refusal to renew or the suspension or revocation of a Hackney Carriage licence must be made to the Magistrates Court within 21 days of such refusal to renew, suspension or revocation.

Any appeal against the refusal to issue a (new) Hackney Carriage Licence must be made to the Crown Court within 21 days of refusal to issue.

Legislation

33. Any requirements of Regulation that effect the operations being carried out under the terms of a licence shall be regarded as if they are conditions of that licence.

The Council reserve the right to vary, delete or waive any of the foregoing conditions.

