

# Newport City Council

## PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE LICENCE CONDITIONS

A private hire vehicle proprietor is an owner or part-owner of a vehicle, or where a vehicle is subject to a hiring agreement or hire purchase, the person in possession of the vehicle under the agreement.

A private hire vehicle proprietor requires a private hire vehicle licence from Newport City Council for each vehicle used for private hire.

The vehicle can only operate under a Newport City Council operator's licence.

Licences can be obtained by making a full application to the council. Applicants must submit an application for every vehicle for which a licence is required.

### Specification

1. The proprietor shall ensure that the vehicle and all its fittings and equipment and at all times when the vehicle is in use or available for hire kept in an efficient, safe, tidy and clean condition and all relevant statutory requirements (including in particular those contained in Motor Vehicles Construction and Use Regulations) shall be fully complied with.
  - a) The vehicle shall have no evident signs of previous significant accident damage. The paint work shall be of a professional finish over the whole of the vehicle's bodywork.
  - b) The bodywork shall have no significant signs of corrosion, including visible rust and signs of rust by virtue of the paintwork being blistered etc.
  - c) Bodywork damage cannot be patched-up or fixed with 'gaffer tape' etc. (Although the quarter light windows can be affixed by gaffer tape in the interest of prevention of crime and wing mirrors can be taped if the mirror has been vandalised, but the mirror should be fixed before any future council tests.)
  - d) All parts of the passenger compartment shall be kept clean and free of any damage, which may otherwise affect its suitability for the carriage of passengers.
  - e) Where seat covers are used they shall be properly affixed to the seat so as not to become loose during use. They shall be kept clean and devoid of damage of any kind.
  - f) An adequate heating and ventilation system shall be provided for the driver and the passengers alike.
  - g) A window on either side of the passenger compartment shall be capable of being opened easily by passengers when seated.
2. No material alteration or change to the specification, design, condition or appearance of the vehicle shall be made without prior approval of the licensing manager.
3. The vehicle must comply with British and European Vehicle Regulations, be type approved to the standard of M1 Whole-Vehicle, M1 (Low volume) and be unaltered since it received type-approval.
4. Private hire vehicles can be any colour unless the vehicle is a 'purpose built' vehicle; these types of vehicles are not permitted to be black / dark blue / dark grey or any other colour that could be confused with black.

## **Plates, signs, advertising and livery**

5. The private hire vehicle licence plate must be displayed externally, adjacent to the rear bumper and securely attached to the vehicle with the use of a plate bracket provided by the council. The only exception for not displaying the plate is when the bracket breaches the Road Traffic Act. In this case proprietors must contact the licensing team to seek exemption from having to display a bracket.
6. The licence disc must be displayed at the top left hand corner of the inside front windscreen in such a way as to obscure the driver's visibility ensuring that the licence details thereon are visible from both inside and outside the vehicle.
7. The vehicle must display authorised council door stickers on the driver's and front passenger doors. The only exception is when private hire vehicles are used in connection with a wedding or a funeral, they are then permitted to cover up the council door stickers with a magnetic cover and no other advertising is permitted on the vehicle including company logos.
8. No signs, notices, symbols or emblems shall be displayed in or on the vehicle without the approval of the licensing manager. However, a sign can be attached to the rear passenger doors, no larger than 80cm x 50cm and should only be used to highlight the operator for whom the vehicle is working.

## **Change of circumstance**

9. The proprietor shall, within fourteen days, notify the council in writing of any conviction, arrest, or caution imposed during the period of this licence.
10. The proprietor shall, within fourteen days, notify the council in writing of all changes in circumstances affecting this licence, such as change of address or change of private hire operator etc.
11. The proprietor should inform the licensing authority within four working days and in writing of any accident or damage to the vehicle.

## **Return of plate**

12. The private hire licence plate and disc supplied with the licence is the property of Newport City Council. The plate should be returned within seven days of the licence expiring. Failure to do so will result in loss of the plate deposit and could result in other action being taken.

## **Insurance**

13. The proprietor shall ensure that a copy of the insurance policy or cover note is carried in the vehicle at all times. The proprietor shall not use the vehicle, nor permit it to be used, as a private hire vehicle when there is not in force for the vehicle a policy of insurance, or such security as complies with the requirements of Part VI of the Road Traffic Act 1988, covering the use of the vehicle to carry passengers for hire or reward. The proprietor shall produce when requested the vehicle registration document, a valid MOT certificate and shall ensure that the vehicle's road tax has been paid for the year.

## Seating plan and luggage compartment

14. The vehicle must be capable of carrying no fewer than four passengers and no more than eight. Cars must have a back seat width (when measured in a continuous line from edge to edge) of at least 1220mm (48 inches).
15. Larger vehicles (MPV, minibus, or people mover types) must have sufficient doors of sufficient size to allow passengers to get in and out quickly and safely. Where exit from the rear seats in vehicles equipped with three rows of seats requires operation of a tip seat mechanism, passengers must be able to exit from either side of the vehicle and the tip seats at either end of the middle row must be capable of independent operation. Where a vehicle is equipped with pop-up, or auxiliary seats intended for occasional use only, those seats must not be included in the licensed capacity of the vehicle. Where the vehicle configuration requires a whole bench seat to slide and/or tip for access/egress to the rear seats, the rear seats should not be included in the seating capacity and should be removed to avoid pressure from passengers to carry numbers in excess of the licensed capacity.
16. The vehicle must have a boot or luggage compartment which provides sufficient space to carry a reasonable amount of luggage. For this reason certain models of **small family hatchback** vehicles will not be considered for a licence unless they are an estate model and able to carry a reasonable amount of luggage, for example prams, wheelchair and luggage.
17. Each passenger seat shall be fitted with a seat belt. No seats may be side facing, other than a wheelchair that has been correctly secured in the vehicle and in accordance with vehicle manufacturer's guidelines.
18. The vehicle should not carry children in pushchairs, the pushchair should be folded up and stored. If the vehicle does not have the correct child restraint then the child should be placed on the rear seat only. Children under three years old may travel unrestrained and should be held in an adult's arms or lap. Children aged 3 years old or over must use an adult seat belt as in accordance with Road Traffic Act. Read more here:  
[www.dft.gov.uk/think/focusareas/children/childincar?page=Advice&whoareyou\\_id=](http://www.dft.gov.uk/think/focusareas/children/childincar?page=Advice&whoareyou_id=)

## Alteration of vehicle

19. No alteration to the manufacturer's specification for the vehicle including a change of or additional fuel type shall be carried out except with the prior written approval of the council.

## Tinted windows

20. The front windscreen and front windows must have a visible light transmission (VLT) of not less than 75%. Only vehicle manufacture tints are permitted on the rear vehicle windows.

## **Vehicle tests**

21. Private hire vehicles will be tested once every year until five years old. Private hire vehicles over five years old but below ten years will be tested at the six month anniversary of yearly licence.
22. If a vehicle fails a council vehicle plating test or a MOT the vehicle should not be used as a private hire vehicle until such time the vehicle passes the council test or MOT.

## **Vehicle equipment**

23. The vehicle must carry the following equipment:
  - a. a spare wheel suitable for immediate use and which is properly maintained. If the spare wheel is of the temporary space-saver type, it may only be used to complete the current journey or hiring. Vehicles with certain technology may be exempt from this condition at the discretion of the council
  - b. a jack and tools for changing the wheels
  - c. any auxiliary equipment that is fitted to a vehicle shall not impede the driver in any way, or hinder the driver's view, or impede, or cause hazard to passengers or other road users.

## **Audio, video or surveillance systems**

24. No audio, video or recording systems which were not installed when the vehicle was manufactured shall be installed or operated in the vehicle without informing the council in writing.

## **No smoking in vehicles**

25. No smoking is permitted in the vehicle by either the driver or passengers. The vehicle should comply with the smoke free regulations as stated in the Health Act 2006.

## **Meters and fares**

26. The vehicle is not required to have a meter but if a meter is installed it must comply with the Measuring Instruments (Taximeters) Regulations 2006. The meter shall:
  - a) show the fare recorded on the taxi meter in clearly legible figures, and the word 'FARE' shall be clearly displayed so as to apply to such figures;
  - b) the meter should be set in accordance with the operator's tariff
27. The fare card must be fixed in a position that the fare to be charged is clearly visible to all passengers within the vehicle at all times, and the figures shall be illuminated for this purpose.
28. The proprietor of the private hire vehicle must ensure that a receipt book is available in the vehicle at all times, a receipt should be provided at the passenger's request.

## Lost property

29. The proprietor or driver of a private hire vehicle shall take all reasonable steps to return any property that has been left in his vehicle to the rightful owner and in any case must take any found property to Newport Central police station within 48 hours.

## Environment policy

30. **New private hire vehicle licences** will only be granted on vehicles that meet Euro 5 Standard.  
**Transfer of private hire vehicle licences** will only be granted on vehicles that meet Euro 5 standard.

**Replacement of private hire vehicle.** An existing vehicle licence holder (a proprietor that has held a current licence before introduction of the policy and continued to renew this licence) may change the vehicle on that licence if the vehicle meets minimum Euro 4 standards. Vehicle licences granted after the introduction of the policy will only be granted to replace vehicles that meet Euro 5 standard.

## Legislation

31. The holder of every private hire licence shall comply with the provisions relating to the licensing of private hire vehicles in the following legislation:
- Town Police Clauses Act 1847,
  - Part II Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 ,
  - Road Traffic Act 1988 Part 11 (a) Construction and Use of Vehicles and Equipment;
  - Equality Act 2010,
  - Health Act 2006