

# Quick Guide to the Taxi and Private Hire Policy and Handbook

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NORTH  
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COUNCIL

This guide contains basic information from the policy.

The policy is the complete guide to licensing taxis and private hire trade in North Norfolk.

Please read the details in the handbook if you are unsure about anything.

The numbers in this guide tell you where to find more information in the handbook.

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## Difference between taxis and private hire vehicles

Taxis can wait on a taxi rank. You can stop a taxi in the street to hire it. You must book a private hire vehicle through an operator. Private hire vehicles cannot take their vehicles on a rank.

Drivers must be safe and suitable. You would trust them at any time of day or night to travel with someone you care about.

### General rules

- 5.1 People with licences must write to the licensing team to let us know about any:
- Changes
  - Convictions
  - Cautions
  - Formal warnings
  - County Court Judgments
  - Complaints about them

They must do this within 48 hours

## 4. Tax conditionality

All renewing drivers, operators and vehicle owners must prove they are registered for tax. Do this online by visiting [www.gov.uk/guidance/complete-a-tax-check-for-a-taxi-private-hire-or-scrap-metal-licence](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/complete-a-tax-check-for-a-taxi-private-hire-or-scrap-metal-licence) First time applicants do not need code.

To carry out a tax check, you need:

- a Government Gateway user ID and password
- to know when you first got your licence
- the length of your most recent licence
- how you pay tax on the income you earn from your licensed trade

After you complete the tax check, you will be given a 9-character code. This is your tax check code.

Give the tax check code to the licensing team at North Norfolk

## 6. Drivers

- 6.1 Drivers will receive a licence to drive both taxis and private hire vehicles that are registered with North Norfolk District Council. The licence normally lasts for 3 years.
- 6.2 You must apply for a new licence before the expiry date, if you want to keep the licence.
- 6.3 Drivers must send a copy of their DVLA driving licence to the licensing team, whenever there are any changes to it. It must be provided **within 7 days**.
- 6.4 The Police, or the licensing team can ask for a copy of a driver's licence at any time. It must be provided **within 7 days**.
- 6.9 Drivers must take the shortest available route when they are hired.
- 6.12 Drivers do not have to wear a seatbelt when they have paying passengers in the vehicle.
- 7.1 All new drivers must pass the council's knowledge test
- 7.7 To prepare for the test:
- read the licensing handbook  
[www.north-norfolk.gov.uk/info/licensing/taxis-general-information/information-on-taxi-drivers/taxilicensing-fees-and-policy/](http://www.north-norfolk.gov.uk/info/licensing/taxis-general-information/information-on-taxi-drivers/taxilicensing-fees-and-policy/)
  - complete the safeguarding certificate  
[passengertransport.norfolk.gov.uk/driversafeguard/story\\_html5.html?lms1](http://passengertransport.norfolk.gov.uk/driversafeguard/story_html5.html?lms1)
  - read the Equality Act 2010  
[www.gov.uk/government/publications/easy-read-the-equality-act-making-equality-real](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/easy-read-the-equality-act-making-equality-real)
  - use a current map to locate places such as schools and hospitals in North Norfolk  
[www.google.com/maps/place/North+Norfolk+District](http://www.google.com/maps/place/North+Norfolk+District)
  - be aware of the Highway Code  
[www.gov.uk/browse/driving/highway-code-road-safety](http://www.gov.uk/browse/driving/highway-code-road-safety)
- 7.18 To keep your licence you must:
- Send a copy of your DVLA licence to the licensing team every year
  - Keep your group 2 medical up to date and let the licensing team know if you develop any new illnesses.
  - Have a valid DBS certificate.
- 8.2 Everyone who has a licence must follow the rules in the handbook.
- 8.3 Drivers need to be reliable and plan for bad weather, road closures and other issues. Let your operator or passengers know if you will be late, because of an emergency.
- 8.4 Drivers must help passengers to load and unload their luggage from the

taxi or private hire vehicle.

- 8.5 Passengers might have an allergy or religious reason for avoiding certain foods or drinks. Always ask before eating or drinking anything while you are in the vehicle. Some operators will not allow eating and drinking in the vehicle at all.
- 8.6 All drivers must be clean and look tidy. You must not wear:
- sports clothes
  - swimwear
  - clothes with rude words or pictures
  - damaged clothes
- 8.7 All drivers must behave professionally.
- 8.8 Take care of passengers as they get in and out of the vehicle.
- 8.9 You must ask the passenger if you want to play any music in the vehicle.
- 8.11 You must not beep your horn to let passengers know you have arrived.
- 8.12 No vaping or smoking in the vehicle.
- 8.13 Email the licensing team if the taxi or private hire vehicle breaks down. You must do this on the day of the breakdown, or the next working day.
- 8.14 Drivers must not charge more than the operator agreed with the passenger. Drivers must not charge more than the fare displayed on the meter.
- 8.15 Lost property must be returned to the owner.
- 8.16 Check the vehicle is safe at the start of every shift.
- 8.17 Never:
- Ask a passenger for personal information
  - Touch them
  - Have inappropriate conversations with passengers
- 9.1 A driver must not take more passengers than the maximum shown on the vehicle plate.
- 9.3 Car seats are required for:
- children under 12
  - children under 135cm tall
- 9.4 Children can travel without a car seat in the back seats. They must wear a seat belt.
- 9.6 Drivers must not refuse to take a disabled passenger in the vehicle.
- 10.1 The Equality Act 2010 says drivers must 'ensure the passenger is carried in safety and reasonable comfort'.
- 11.9 Passengers must not be refused because of their:
- race

- gender
  - sex
  - religion
  - sexuality
  - marital status
  - pregnancy or maternity
  - age
  - disability
- 12.1 Drivers must not allow their own animals in the vehicle when they are working. The vehicle must be clean and smell fresh at all times.
- 12.2 Animals must be transported in a safe way.
- 12.4 Animals and passengers should be allowed to sit together in the vehicle.
- 12.5 Reasonable adjustment must be made to give access to a disabled person's animal, if they need it.
- 13.8 You will have to go to a committee hearing if you have committed any offences in the last 10 years.
- 13.9 You will have to go to a committee hearing if you have ever committed any offences of a sexual or violent nature.
- 14.2 A new medical is required every 5 years. A new medical is required every year after the driver is 65 years old.
- 14.9 The driver (or their representative) must email the licensing team if they develop any new conditions before their medical certificate expires.

### **13. DBS and update service**

Drivers must always have an enhanced DBS certificate.

They must provide a new one every 6 months

**OR**

They must register on the DBS Update Service.

- 13.7 When you apply to be a driver, you must declare any criminal convictions no matter how long ago they happened.

### **16. Operators**

- 16.4 Anyone who takes bookings for private hire vehicles must have a valid operator licence.
- 16.18 An operator must not include the word 'taxi' or 'cab' in their company trading name, unless they have licensed taxis.
- 16.19 A taxi is not working legally unless the driver and vehicle are both licensed with the same council. A private hire vehicle is not working legally unless the driver, vehicle and operator are all licensed with the same council.

## 18. Vehicles

- 24.1 Roof signs are not permitted on any private hire vehicles.
- 24.2 A list of signs that are allowed on the vehicle can be found at 24.3 in the handbook.
- 24.5 Licensed vehicles must display a sign provided by the council on both rear doors.
- 24.6 You will need permission from North Norfolk District Council before you put adverts on the vehicle.
- 24.7 You will need permission to make major changes to the vehicle.
- 26.1 Wheelchair accessible vehicles (WAVs) must be adapted to carry at least 1 wheelchair passenger.
- 26.3 The taximeter must not be started until the passenger is ready to start the journey.
- 26.6 The rate on the taximeter must not be higher than the maximum rate on the council's tariff card.
- 29 Taxis must not be left without a driver, when sitting at a taxi rank.
- 33.1 A valid vehicle licence plate must be securely fixed to the vehicle. You must be able to read it from 5 metres away.
- 34.1 A valid internal licence must be fixed inside the front top left corner of the windscreen. It must not be covered in any way, unless the covering is see-through.
- 38.1 The owner of a taxi or private hire vehicle must email the council as soon as possible if the vehicle is involved in an accident.

This must be done within 72 hours of the accident.
- 38.1 Drivers must only use a fire extinguisher on a vehicle if they have training on vehicle fires.

## 43. DVLA penalty points

- 43.1 7-9 points - an enforcement officer will decide if the driver is still safe and suitable to be licensed. They might ask the driver to do training. They might send the driver to a hearing, where councillors will decide.
- 43.2 10 or more points - councillors will decide if the driver is still safe and suitable to keep their licence.
- 44.5 Shows a list of North Norfolk District Council penalty points.

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