



Taxi and Private Hire Update 25 March 2020



Dear Members of the Guildford Licensed Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Trades,

This update follows the update below issued this morning on 25.03.2020

It is a sign of how quickly things are moving as we deliver this second but important update of the day. Whilst your inbox may be full with other updates from various companies and mailing lists, please ensure that you read the important updates from the Council as these affect the licensed trade.

Department for Transport update on the taxi trade

The DfT have today issued the guidance below relating to the taxi trade:

Taxis and private hire vehicles can continue to work. But the advice is absolutely clear - people should stay at home if possible. That is the way to save lives and protect our NHS. The public should avoid travel unless absolutely essential. The only reasons to leave our houses are set out in the government guidance.

Clearly if absolutely necessary to travel by taxi or private hire vehicle, best efforts should be used to follow the guidance as far as is practically possible, including washing your hands as soon as you get home.

Taxi and private hire drivers should not generally be considered Critical Workers. Those undertaking Home to School transport or the transport of 'extremely vulnerable' people may be considered Critical Workers on a case-by-case basis. Critical Workers should also whenever possible make suitable arrangements for their children to stay at home; requests for children to attend school should be discussed with the school.

MOTs

The government has also announced that for vehicles whose MOT expires on or after 30 March 2020, MOT due dates for cars, motorcycles and light vans will be extended by 6 months to help prevent the spread of coronavirus.

Drivers do not need to do anything to extend a vehicle's MOT expiry date if it's on or after 30 March 2020. The vehicle will be automatically given a 6-month MOT exemption. This will extend your current MOT expiry date by 6 months.

However, you must make sure your vehicle is safe to drive ('roadworthy'). It can be unsafe even if your MOT expiry date has been extended.

Full information is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-mots-for-cars-vans-and-motorcycles-due-from-30-march-2020>

Vehicle tests

Our update this morning indicated that the Woking Road Depot is currently open. Again, however in a sign of the fast moving nature of events, the depot will be closing from Friday afternoon (27 March) reopening Monday only for retests and tests on cars that expire before 30th March only. The MOT bay resources will be redeployed into the fleet workshops to ensure the Council is able to maintain the refuse fleet.

As such, it will not be possible to complete the vehicle inspection for either renewal applications or interim tests. As such, if you need to provide the Council with a vehicle test, please complete the attached declaration form in place of the vehicle test.

As per this mornings update, the expectation is that you will get the vehicle test done as soon as practically possible once the depot resumes service. If the vehicle is inspected and found to be unfit for use as a licensed vehicle, further action is likely to be taken against the driver and/or proprietor.

NHS calls for volunteers

As has been widely reported in the media, NHS Volunteer Responders has been set up to support the NHS during the COVID-19 outbreak. It may be that the taxi trade is uniquely placed to assist as the NHS are looking for volunteer patient transport drivers with an Enhanced DBS.

For further details, and to sign up to volunteer please see:

<https://www.goodsamapp.org/NHS>

We will update the trade further when there is further information to provide. Important messages to the trade will also appear under the 'Information for current licence holders' section on our website at: <https://www.guildford.gov.uk/article/17617/Information-for-current-licence-holders>

Once again we wish the licensed trade well during this difficult time.

The Licensing Team
Regulatory Services

