

# Taxi and Private Hire licence holders Covid-19 guidance

As the current situation with the Covid-19 outbreak continues to develop, the council is constantly keeping the matter under review, following government advice and looking at its own business continuity arrangements to ensure we can continue to deliver the services.

In relation to the taxi and private hire trade, we need to relay the information below. Note please that the situation is constantly changing and the information below may be subject to change, and will be updated accordingly. We will do our best to keep you informed but we appreciate your understanding and patience.

This important information is for all Hackney and private hire licence holders – vehicle proprietors, drivers and PH operators. It is important that you read this information as our services will be severely disrupted until further notice due to the impact of COVID-19.

---

## Self-employment income support scheme

On 26 March 2020 HMRC sent the following communication relevant to the trade:

The Chancellor announced a new self-employment income support scheme to support self-employed people who have been adversely affected by COVID-19.

GOV.UK has further details about [who is eligible for the scheme](#) and how it will work.

Self-employed people do not need to get in touch with HMRC as the scheme isn't yet open for applications. HMRC will contact eligible customers by the beginning of June, inviting them to apply.

Unfortunately, we are aware of an increase in scam emails, calls and texts. If someone gets in touch claiming to be from HMRC, saying that financial help can be claimed or that a tax refund is owed, and asks you to click on a link or to give information such as your name, credit card or bank details, please do not respond.

HMRC will never contact you out of the blue to ask for these details.

The government has also introduced the following help for the self-employed:

- [Deferral of Self Assessment Income Tax payments](#) due in July 2020 and VAT payments due from 20 March 2020 until 30 June 2020
- Grants for [businesses that pay little or no business rates](#)
- Increased amounts of [Universal Credit](#)
- [Business Interruption Loan Scheme](#)

- Directors of their own company paid through PAYE, may be able to get support using the [Job Retention Scheme](#).

Taxis and private hire vehicles can continue to work

On 25/03/2020 from Paul Elliott, DfT's Policy Adviser, buses and taxis division:

"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."

### **Critical worker status**

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."

## **Taxi and Private Hire Information**

Update 27/03/2020

Central government has decided to extend the expiry of MOTs by 6 months in response to the virus crisis. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-mots-for-cars-vans-and-motorcycles-due-from-30-march-2020>

However, vehicles licensed by Gloucester City Council as taxis or private hire vehicles must be held to a higher standard than cars used privately. Licensed vehicles are subject to being driven more regularly, under more demanding and intensive conditions and with much higher mileage than the average private car. These variances are likely to be more significant given the current restrictions on movement for the public.

### **Existing vehicle licences with a requirement to pass a fitness test.**

As far as we are aware most of our approved garages are still open and able to carry out fitness inspections and these should be submitted when required i.e. every 6 months for vehicles over 8 years old and upon initial application for or renewal of a vehicle licence. However, if you are self-isolating or unable to go out due to being "at risk" and unable to obtain the fitness test you **must** contact the Licensing Team on 01452 396396 for advice. We will monitor the situation and advise accordingly should things change.

## Renewals - all vehicle licences expiring prior to 31/05/2020

Please submit your renewal application by email to:

[cityimprovement@gloucester.gov.uk](mailto:cityimprovement@gloucester.gov.uk) with **as much notice as possible**. Payment can be made online at: <https://ip.e-paycapita.com/AIP/itemSelectionPage.do?link=showItemSelectionPage&siteId=105&languageCode=EN&source=AIP>

Please be aware our service may be subject to disruption, and you will not be able to drive your vehicle if we have not renewed it.

- a copy of your vehicle insurance that is valid for the start of your licence,
- a photo of your V5 log book
- a copy of the fitness inspection
- We will **not** need to see a new MOT to renew your licence. *However, we will check online that you have a valid MOT. For this purpose we will accept MOTs that have been extended by 6 months by the government.*

**Once we have received all the above, we will issue your 'paper' licence by email. We will attach a condition on the licence that will require an MOT and fitness test to be passed within 3 months from the start date of your new licence.**

You will be permitted to drive the vehicle once we have issued your licence by email. You must continue to display your existing plate until you receive your new plate. Your new plate will be issued to you by post. There are likely to be delays in sending new plates to you, so please be patient.

If your licence is already subject to a condition requiring a Fitness Test to be done every 6 months, this condition will remain on your licence. If the crisis continues for a protracted period, we may relax compliance with that requirement.

**Please note:** Failure to renew before the expiry date will mean that you will have to make a new application for a licence and, as such, the 5 year rule and Euro 6 emissions compliance requirement for new vehicles may mean that you will have to replace your vehicle.

## New vehicle applications received prior to 31/05/2020

We are only accepting applications for vehicles that are already on the approved list of vehicles. (We cannot measure new vehicles currently, so the application will not be determined until Government guidance is relaxed considerably). Please submit your application with as much notice as possible before you wish to use the vehicle.

You must submit your documents by email to:

[cityimprovement@gloucester.gov.uk](mailto:cityimprovement@gloucester.gov.uk) and make payment at: : <https://ip.e-paycapita.com/AIP/itemSelectionPage.do?link=showItemSelectionPage&siteId=105&languageCode=EN&source=AIP>

- a copy of your vehicle insurance that is valid for the start of your licence,
- invoice or bill of sale for the purchase
- a photo of your V5 log book or the new keeper supplement
- a copy of your meter calibration certificate
- a copy of the fitness inspection
- We will **not** need to see a new MOT. *However, we will check online that you have a valid MOT. For this purpose, we will accept MOTs that have been extended by 6 months by the government.*

Once we have received all the above, we will issue your 'paper' licence by email. We will attach a condition on the licence that will require an MOT and fitness test to be passed within 3 months from the start date of your new licence. Please provide as much notice as possible, as our service may be subject to disruption, and you will not be able to drive your vehicle until we have issued the licence by email.

We will prioritise the issue of plates for new applications, but there will still be delays in issuing them. However, you will be permitted to drive the vehicle as a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle once we have issued your licence by email.

In all cases you should carry a copy of the paper licence with you until such time as you receive the new plates.

**N.B. For new vehicles, we will revert to our normal policy in respect of MOTs / Fitness tests when there is good availability of test slots.**

## All drivers and vehicle proprietors

### Driver and Operator Licence Renewals.

These should be submitted as normal by email to:

[cityimprovement@gloucester.gov.uk](mailto:cityimprovement@gloucester.gov.uk) and payment made online at: [: https://ip.e-paycapita.com/AIP/itemSelectionPage.do?link=showItemSelectionPage&siteId=105&languageCode=EN&source=AIP](https://ip.e-paycapita.com/AIP/itemSelectionPage.do?link=showItemSelectionPage&siteId=105&languageCode=EN&source=AIP).

**Failure to do so will mean that you will have to make a new application.**

Most importantly, we remind all vehicle proprietors of your responsibilities to ensure that your vehicles remain safe for the public to use and to be driven. There are checks that all drivers should be carrying out regularly, in any case; but particularly where you may find it difficult to access garage services:

<https://www.gov.uk/check-vehicle-safe>