

## **Coronavirus (COVID-19) – Protection screens**

As a current vehicle licence holder, this advice sheet has been produced due to the current public health emergency and to affirm the current Government guidance. The Licensing Department is fully aware that many questions are being asked by Drivers and Operators in relation to fitting temporary protection screens in Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles.

- Protection screens provide a physical barrier between drivers and passengers in the vehicle. They are commonly installed in purpose built hackney carriages as a safety feature to protect the driver from physical attacks or theft. There has been an increased interest in the use of temporary polycarbonate or PVC screens as a way of providing physical separation between a driver and passenger(s) in order to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19.
- Some purpose built hackney carriages are already fitted with a protection screen between the driver and passenger(s). However, licensed saloon vehicles do not have protection screens installed, there is a wide variety of different makes and model of saloon vehicles licensed in Gloucester City.
- At time of producing this guidance, there is no evidence available that demonstrates that protection screens in hackney carriage or private hire vehicles fully removes the risk of transmission of COVID-19 infection; protection screens in hackney carriage or private hire vehicles do not generally provide a fully sealed compartment which completely separate the driver from the passenger(s). Depending on type and fit, protection screens may reduce the risk of transmission of infection.
- Whether a protection screen should be installed is a matter for vehicle owners, drivers and/or operators to consider. This guidance outlines this Licensing Authority's view on the installation of protection screens in hackney carriage or private hire vehicles.

### **Specification**

The protection screen:

- ✓ Must comply with the Road Vehicle (Construction and Use) Regulations.
- ✓ Should be securely fitted and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- ✓ Must not impede the driver's vision, movement, or communication with

passengers.

- ✓ Must not impede driver or passenger access to or egress from the vehicle or any other person in times of an emergency.
- ✓ Must be fitted in such a way so as not to affect the structural integrity of the vehicle or interfere or affect any manufacturer fitted safety equipment or features including headrests, seatbelts, airbags, egress points or CCTV.
- ✓ Must not wrap around the driver seat or create a partition between any of the front seats, in addition to the rear cabin area.
- ✓ Must not affect the ability of the vehicle to be properly insured for the purpose of carrying persons for hire and/or reward. **It is essential that the vehicle's insurance certificate issuer is notified of any installation.**
- ✓ Must not adversely influence or interfere in any way with vehicle type approval.
- ✓ Should not be significantly changed or modified from the original manufactured design. In cases where it is necessary to modify the original design of the screen (for example, to facilitate installation of the screen in the vehicle), assurances should be sought from the supplier/installer that the proposed modification does not raise any concerns in relation to safety of the screen and complies with the relevant UK and/or EU safety legislation.
- ✓ Should be properly and effectively maintained so as to remain clear and be free of scratches, clouding or stickers which would impede the drivers or passengers' visibility.

## Acknowledgement Procedure

- Acknowledgement can be sought by emailing a request to the Licensing Department at [cityimprovement@gloucester.gov.uk](mailto:cityimprovement@gloucester.gov.uk)

This Licensing Authority reserves the right to seek any additional information that it may require including, but not limited to:

- Technical specifications on any protection screen installed;
- Written confirmation that any protection screen installed has been done so and in accordance with the manufacturers requirements and specifications; and/or
- Confirmation that the vehicle's insurance cover has not been affected by the installation of the protection screen.

