

APPENDIX B



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How Taxi Safe Are You?

A comprehensive guide for passengers



Not all taxis are the same...

Hackney Carriages (taxis), can be hailed in the street and have an illuminated sign on their roof, they also have a predominantly black body and advertising - often known as a 'black cab'.

Private Hire Vehicles must be pre-booked in advance via a licensed operator's base within the district. PHV's cruising the streets looking for customers are **illegal, uninsured and potentially very dangerous**. PHV's cannot use ranks, 'ply-for-hire' or be flagged down in the street. They also can often be identified by a yellow plate on the back of the vehicle.

Personnel Checks' 5 Taxi Safe Golden Rules...

- 1. Always pre-book:** Only use a licensed taxi or pre-booked private hire vehicle.
- 2. Wait for it to arrive:** Never get into a vehicle other than the one you have booked.
- 3. Always check their badge:** Every licensed driver, whether private hire or hackney carriage is issued with a licence plate which is displayed on the car, bearing their licence number and the council it was issued by.
- 4. Ride with friends:** Sharing a vehicle with someone you know is a great idea - you should always sit in the back seats.
- 5. Enter only when sure:** If you have any doubts, don't get in and order another vehicle.



Are you in-the-know?

Can I hail or flag down a hackney carriage in the street?

Yes, or they can also be found at taxi ranks.

Can I hail or flag down a private hire vehicle in the street?

No, private hire vehicles must be pre-booked through a private operator. Failure to book in advance would invalidate any insurance in place.



How safe am I travelling in a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle?

- All drivers licensed by a council should have been fully vetted, this includes the completion of a DBS check, which confirms they have no cautions or convictions on their record.
- All vehicles should have undergone and passed stringent tests for road-worthiness to comply with the current licensing conditions before a licence is issued.

What if I have a complaint?

In the first instance you should contact the appropriate Licensing Manager or Private Hire Operator. You will find the council the driver is licensed with on their plate, displayed within the vehicle. This will indicate which council's Licensing Manager you need to speak to.

If drivers are working on behalf of a licensed operator then your complaints should be made to the MD/Owner of the company, they have a duty of care to ensure their drivers are operating to the highest standards. If you are unable to resolve your issues with the driver/operator then you should contact your local council, giving them as much information as possible to help them identify the driver/operator. They will carry out further investigations and refer the matter to the police or other appropriate bodies as applicable.

How will the fare be calculated?

Each hackney carriage is fitted with a calibrated meter which can be seen in the cab of the vehicle and a table of fares is displayed inside each vehicle. The meters are automatically set to change to the appropriate set of charges i.e. bank holidays, night time.

Private hire vehicle charges are based on mileage and are calculated by the operator. You should always agree your fare with the operator/driver before getting in the vehicle.



If you have any concerns, do not get into the vehicle. If you are at all worried, ask the driver to stop in a busy area and get out of the car.

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Safeguarding Handbook for Taxi Drivers

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Signs to look out for and what to do

Signs to look out for:

- Taking/collecting young people (girls and boys) from hotels/B&Bs/house parties
- Picking up young people from other cars
- Young people who look distressed or intimidated
- Observing suspicious activity in hot-spot areas
- Young people under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol
- Attempts by young people to avoid paying fares in return for sexual favours
- Regular males requesting taxi rides to and from locations - taking young people with them
- Taking young people to A&E, who are not in the presence of parents
- Young people with injuries such as bruising or blood stains

Information to share:

- Names
- Locations and addresses of concern
- Descriptions of people
- Registration plates, makes and models of vehicles
- Description of concerning activity

What to do:

- Make notes about the information you know
- Call your council licensing team
- Call your local Safeguarding Children Board
- If the risk is imminent call 999

90% Of sexually abused children were abused by someone they knew...

Ayesha Ahmed
Taxi Account Manager

NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000

Suggested Code of Conduct when working with vulnerable passengers

General Good Practice:

- Records should be maintained of complaints and any disciplinary action taken against drivers who breach the Code of Conduct for safeguarding children and vulnerable adults
- A whistleblowing policy should operate to encourage the reporting of persons who breach the Code of Conduct for safeguarding children and vulnerable adults
- A log should be maintained by drivers when a journey involves a vulnerable passenger who is not under the supervision of a responsible carer, including the details of any incidents occurring and actions taken or refusals of service
- If the driver is concerned about the safety, welfare or behaviour of a vulnerable person, they should be encouraged to report this to the police (if it is an emergency dial 999) or other appropriate service and to their manager
- The nature of the concern and actions taken should be recorded in the incident log

Guidance for Operators employing taxi/private hire vehicle drivers

This guidance aims to promote good safeguarding practice in local taxi and private hire businesses that provide a service to vulnerable passengers. Vulnerability could be caused by a number of factors including **mental illness, misuse of drugs or misuse of alcohol**. Both children and adults can be vulnerable as a result of these factors.

It is recommended that the Business Manager implements the following principles in training and operational practice:

- At the point of booking, a vulnerable passenger risk assessment should be undertaken and recorded in writing. This should be used to inform your operating policy and staff briefing in relation to the protection of the vulnerable passenger and the driver
- All staff/drivers should be trained and staff training records should be maintained

You have the power to help prevent child sexual exploitation and trafficking.

Think someone may be in immediate danger? Call the Police 999

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Rossendale Council Safeguarding Contacts

If a crime is in progress please call 999

Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB): **0300 123 6720**

Rossendale Council Licensing Team: **01706 217 777**

Rossendale BOROUGH COUNCIL

Call us on 01254 355679

www.personnelchecks.co.uk | taxi@personnelchecks.co.uk
One Cathedral Square | Cathedral Quarter | Blackburn | Lancashire | BB1 1FB

#SafeguardingMatters

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