

## LICENSED DRIVER CODE OF CONDUCT

1 In order to promote its licensing objectives as regards hackney carriage and private hire licensing, the Licensing Authority has adopted the following Code of Good Conduct, which should be read in conjunction with the other statutory and policy requirements set out in this document.

### **2 Responsibility to the Licensing Authority**

2.1 Licensees shall endeavour to promote the image of the Hackney Carriage and Private hire trade by:

2.1.A Complying with this Code of Conduct;

2.1.B Complying with all the Conditions of their Licence and the Authority's Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy; Byelaws.

2.1.C Behaving in a professional manner at all times.

2.1.D Notifying the Licensing Authority in writing of any change of their address and contact details during the period of the licence within 7 days of such change taking place.

2.1.E Notifying the Licensing Authority in writing within 7 days of commencing work with a private hire operator.

2.1.F Notifying the Licensing Authority upon any subsequent change of private hire operator.

2.1.G Ensuring that relevant documentation (including DBS certificate/status, Medical Certificate, and right to work documentation) required by the Council to assess their fit and proper status, is kept up to date and remains 'valid' in line with the Council's policies.

2.1.H Attending (as required) and pay the reasonable administration charge or fee attached to any requirement for training or to produce a relevant certificate (i.e., new medical certificate), assessment, validation check or other administration process.

2.1.I Registering and remain registered with the DBS Update Service to enable the Local Authority to undertake regular checks of the DBS certificate status as necessary. If the driver does not subscribe to the DBS update service, allows their subscription to lapse or the information changes, they will be required to obtain a further DBS check after 6 months, in accordance with DFT statutory Standards.

2.1.J Notifying the Licensing Authority immediately in writing (or in any case within 7 days) if they are subject to any of the following:

- arrest or criminal investigation;
- summons;
- charge;
- conviction;
- formal/simple caution;
- fixed penalty or speed awareness course;
- criminal court order;
- criminal behaviour order or anti-social behaviour injunction;
- domestic violence related order;
- warning or bind over;
- any matter of restorative justice and shall provide such further information about the circumstances as the Council may require.

2.1.K Notifying the Licensing Authority of any newly diagnosed or change to a current medical condition which may restrict their entitlement to a driver's licence requiring a DVSA Group 2 medical standard (the same standard as applied by the DVSA to the licensing of lorry and bus drivers). Notification must be sent to [ncclicensing@newcastle.gov.uk](mailto:ncclicensing@newcastle.gov.uk) email address immediately (or in any case within 48 hours) of the relevant diagnosis or change to medical condition.

## **2.2 Responsibility to Customers/Clients**

2.2.1 Licensees shall:

2.2.1.A Maintain their vehicles in a safe and satisfactory condition at all times;

2.2.1.B Keep their vehicles clean and suitable for hire to the public at all times;

2.2.1.C Attend punctually when undertaking a pre-booked hiring;

2.2.1.D Assist, where necessary, passengers into and out of vehicles;

2.2.1.E Offer passengers reasonable assistance with luggage;

2.2.1.F When hired shall, (subject to any directions given by the passenger), take the shortest route bearing in mind likely traffic problems and known diversions and explain to the passenger any diversion from the most direct route. Alternative routes must be discussed with the passengers before being taken;

2.2.1.G Ensure that a daily vehicle check has been completed at the beginning of each shift. This check should include as a minimum; tyre tread depth, pressure and overall condition; all operational lights; water levels; washer fluid levels; internal and external cleanliness; condition of bodywork; required vehicle markings and identification plate. This check list is not exhaustive;

- 2.2.1.H Ensure they are aware of all the workings and mechanics of the vehicles before undertaking bookings;
- 2.2.1.I Not display any moving images or have any form of visual display screen fitted to the licensed vehicle other than satellite navigation;
- 2.2.1.J Not conduct any telephone conversation whilst driving passengers.

### **2.3 Responsibility to Public (inc. Residents)**

- 2.3.1 To avoid nuisance to residents when picking up or waiting for a fare, a driver shall:
  - 2.3.1.A Not use the vehicle's audible warning device (horn) to attract customer attention. The horn must only be used in an emergency;
  - 2.3.1.B Keep the volume of the vehicle sound system and any internal audio to a minimum so as to avoid noise nuisance and disturbance;
  - 2.3.1.C Turn off the engine if required to wait.
  - 2.3.1.D Take whatever additional action may be necessary to avoid disturbance to residents in conducting licensed work.

#### **2.3.2 At hackney carriage stands and other places where hackney carriages ply for hire by forming queues, drivers shall, in addition to the requirements above:**

- 2.3.2.A Stand and proceed in an orderly manner;
- 2.3.2.B Remain in the vehicle;
- 2.3.2.C Be available for immediate hire;
- 2.3.2.D Not tout or solicit or importune any person to hire such carriage and shall not make use of the services of any other person for such purpose.
- 2.3.2.E Not locate their hackney carriage, with the intention of immediate hire, in a location other than an authorised rank.

#### **2.3.3 Private Hire Requirements:**

- 2.3.3.A The licensee shall ensure that the passenger(s) entering the vehicle is/are the correct person(s) for whom the vehicle has been pre-booked;

2.3.3.B The licensee must take precautions against behaviour that may be deemed to be standing or plying for hire, by not parking or waiting without a booking:

- in high footfall /high visible locations
- outside busy venues/businesses or in close proximity to events
- at the front or back of designated hackney ranks
- in groups or lines that present as a 'rank'

2.3.3.C The licensee shall not while driving or in charge of a private hire vehicle:

- Tout or solicit any person to hire or be carried for hire in any private hire vehicle
- Cause or allow any other person to tout or solicit any person to hire or be carried for hire in any private hire vehicle.
- Offer any Private Hire vehicle for immediate public hire (whether the journey was undertaken or not)
- Accept, or consider accepting, an offer for the immediate hire of that vehicle, including any such hire that is then communicated to the Operator to be recorded on the Operator's booking system. For the avoidance of doubt, bookings can only be undertaken when first communicated to the licensee by the operator.

2.3.3.D The licensee must take precautions against behaviour that may be deemed to be standing or plying for hire

## **2.4 General Requirements**

2.4.1 All licensed drivers shall:

2.4.1.A Pay attention to personal hygiene and dress in accordance with the Dress Code (Ref. F.3);

2.4.1.B Be polite, helpful and respectful to passengers;

2.4.1.C Drive with care and consideration for other road users and pedestrians and in particular shall not use a handheld mobile phone whilst driving;

2.4.1.D Obey all Traffic Regulation Orders and directions at all times;

2.4.1.E Not smoke in the vehicle at any time (this includes e-cigarettes, vaping);

2.4.1.F Not consume alcohol immediately before or at any time whilst driving or being in charge of a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle or when still under the influence of alcohol;

2.4.1.G Not drive while having misused legal or illegal drugs or when driving may be impaired by legal drugs;

### **3 Licensed Driver Dress Code**

3.1 The purpose of a driver's dress code is to seek a standard of dress that promotes a positive image of the hackney carriage and private hire trade in Newcastle upon Tyne, to enhance a professional image of licensed drivers and ensure that public and driver safety is not compromised.

3.2 The dress code is not a condition of licence; however, the Licensing Authority encourages and would expect all drivers to comply with the requirements.

#### **3.3 Acceptable Standards of Dress**

3.3.1 All clothing worn by those working as a private hire or hackney carriage drivers must be in good condition and the driver must keep good standards of personal hygiene

3.3.2 As a minimum standard whilst working a licensed driver, should wear trousers / or a knee length skirt or dress and a shirt/blouse which has a full body and short/long sleeves. Knee length tailored shorts are acceptable. Exceptions related to faith or disability are accepted.

#### **3.4 Footwear**

3.4.1 Footwear for all drivers shall fit around the heel of the foot.

#### **3.5 Unacceptable Standard of Dress**

3.5.1 The following are deemed unacceptable:

- Clothing not kept in a clean condition, free from holes and rips.
- Words or graphics on any clothing that is of an offensive or suggestive nature, or which might offend.
- Sportswear (e.g., football/rugby kits, track suits, beach wear etc).
- Sandals with no heel straps, flip flops or any other form of footwear not secured around the heel.
- Drivers not having either the top or bottom half of their bodies suitably clothed.
- The wearing of any hood or other type of clothing that may obscure the driver's vision or their identity.

#### **3.6 Uniforms**

3.6.1 The Council recognises the positive image that uniforms can create. This dress code does not require a licensed driver to wear a distinct uniform. The Council acknowledges that many private hire and hackney carriage companies do require licensed drivers to wear appropriate corporate branded uniform, and this is a practice that the Council would encourage licensed drivers to support.