



CHELTENHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

TRADE TIMES

For Hackney Carriage and Private Hire drivers.

Unacceptable behaviour and safeguarding concerns

At around 02:30am on Saturday 22nd June, a young lady making a short trip within the borough was refused by 3 hackney carriage drivers on the Promenade rank. She was left in tears, and eventually got home safely by using a private hire company who took her fare without question.

This raises safeguarding concerns that there are some licensed drivers, driven by greed for more lucrative fares, who are willing to let vulnerable individuals find their own way home.

Remember your safeguarding duties.

Refusing fares within the borough, without reasonable excuse, is an offence. If anyone can identify the offending individuals, please let us know. This is another customer who will not use the Promenade rank again.

Assistance dogs and the law

We have been asked by The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association to circulate this information with all taxi and private hire vehicle drivers that we licence.

Taxis and the door-to-door services are an important mode of transport for people with disabilities. It is important that disabled people who use guide and other assistance dogs have confidence that they can hire a taxi, which will carry them and their dog at no extra charge.

Your legal obligations

Since 2001, drivers of licensed taxis and private hire vehicles have a duty to carry any guide or other assistance dog travelling with a disabled person, at no additional cost.

In 2006, further duties were introduced to make it unlawful for taxi providers to refuse or offer a lower standard of service to a disabled person, for a reason relating to their disability. For example, a taxi operator making a guide or other assistance dog owner wait longer for a vehicle than a passenger without a disability, because some drivers prefer not to carry an assistance dog.

The Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles (Disabled Persons) Act 2022 amends the Equality Act 2010 to place duties on taxi and PHV drivers/operators. Any disabled person has specific rights and protections to be transported and receive assistance when using a taxi or PHV, without being charged extra. This requires drivers to provide reasonable adjustments for passengers with a disability (please see below for more information). *(Continued overleaf)*

Licensing Contact Details

By appointment only:

Licensing Department
Municipal Offices
Promenade
Cheltenham
GL50 9SA

licensing@cheltenham.gov.uk

01242 264135

<https://www.cheltenham.gov.uk/>

Upcoming Safeguarding and Local Knowledge Test Dates

We continue to add dates to both our safeguarding sessions and Local Knowledge Tests (LKTs). The following are available to book via [our online form](#):

Safeguarding Dates	Local Knowledge Test Dates
11th July 2024	3rd July 2024
8th August 2024	24th July 2024

All sessions are held at the Municipal Offices. Safeguarding sessions are scheduled to begin at 10:00am with a duration of two and half hours. LKTs begin at 11:00am, and last for approximately one and a half hours.

Assistance Dogs and the Law (*continued*)

Cultural beliefs

Cultural beliefs can raise sensitive issues relating to dogs. However, religious grounds cannot be used to exclude assistance dog owners. The Equality and Human Rights Commission successfully reached agreement on this with several religious groups. Assistance dogs are working animals, not pets. They are trained to provide independence and mobility to their owners. Assistance dog owners are trained to maintain a high grooming standard of their dog, with attention to cleanliness.

Exemptions

The only grounds for any driver to decline to carry an assistance dog is through the approved medical exemption process. Drivers cannot refuse to take a person travelling with their assistance dog, unless they have a valid medical exemption certificate from the appropriate licensing authority, to show that they are unable to carry an assistance dog for health reasons. An exemption notice must be displayed in the vehicle when it is being driven by the exempted driver.

Reasonable Adjustments

Providers must make reasonable adjustments for disabled people in the way they provide their services. [This does not include physical adjustments to the vehicle.]

In relation to taxis, reasonable adjustments may include:

- Ensuring that booking apps are accessible (with an option to state whether the customer has any access requirements.)
- Meeting a passenger with sight loss at their front door or other collection point, letting them know that you have arrived (rather than expecting them to find you) and introducing yourself (use the customer's name, if known).
- Assisting the passenger to safely enter/exit the vehicle and guiding them to a safe location/destination point before departing.
- Asking where the assistance dog owner would prefer their dog to be accommodated.
- Requiring that all taxi and PHV drivers complete mandatory disability awareness training

Useful Resources

Please see the additional documentation and guidedogs.org for more information on:

- [Sighted guide training](#)
- [Supporting customers with sight loss](#)
- [Carrying guide or other assistance dogs](#)

Upcoming works within Gloucestershire's bus lanes

The county council is carrying out some essential works on the cameras within bus lanes over the next few weeks. Please be aware that, at times, operatives may be working on the highway either from a vehicle, or on foot with health and safety protocols in place. The work team will aim to keep disruption to taxi drivers to a minimum. We thank you in anticipation for your cooperation and patience whilst these essential works are carried out.

Please address any queries regarding these works to parking@gloucestershire.gov.uk.

Licensing Contact Details

By appointment only:

Licensing Department
Municipal Offices
Promenade
Cheltenham
GL50 9SA

licensing@cheltenham.gov.uk

01242 264135

<https://www.cheltenham.gov.uk/>

Report It

The Licensing Team welcomes reports from drivers regarding individuals whose actions are illegal or seriously damage the reputation of the 'Trade'. If you are reporting on behalf of another driver, please make this clear so that we can deal with the issue appropriately. Evidence directly from the person who witnessed an incident is always the best evidence.

You can make a report to:

- licensing@cheltenham.gov.uk
- 01242 264135