

[New standards to improve safety for taxi and private hire vehicle passengers](#)

News story

New standards for taxi and private hire vehicles sector will protect passengers.



- government introduces robust new statutory standards for the taxi and private hire vehicle sector across England and Wales to protect passengers
- new recommendations include enhanced DBS criminal record checks for drivers every 6 months
- latest step taken by the government to reduce the risk of harm to passengers and help improve consistency across local authorities

Passengers travelling in taxis and private hire vehicles (PHVs), including app-based services, will be kept safer under tough new licensing standards introduced by the government, Transport Secretary Grant Shapps announced today (21 July 2020).

The new [Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards](#) which local authorities will be expected to implement are designed to improve consistency in the licensing system, reducing the risk of harm posed to children and vulnerable passengers in the process. It follows historic and serious cases of taxi and PHV drivers abusing their position of trust.

Criminal record checks for drivers every 6 months form a key part of the standards, as does safeguarding training to help drivers identify and respond to passengers that may be being abused or exploited. A recommendation for licensing authorities to consider whether the use of CCTV would be beneficial or proportionate in their areas is also included, which sets out that potential privacy issues must be taken into account.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said:

We know the majority of drivers provide an important and safe service for communities, but in light of appalling incidents in places like Rochdale, Oxford, Newcastle and Rotherham, more must be done to protect passengers from those who abuse their position of trust.

That's why we're looking to licensing authorities to enforce these rigorous new standards, ensuring drivers are fit to transport passengers in a safe environment and to stop those who aren't.

We expect all licensing authorities to implement the standards and won't hesitate to introduce legislation if they don't fulfil their responsibilities to keep the public safe.

Following extensive consultation across government as well as with industry and regulators, the strengthened measures will mean all drivers applying for a licence should now be required to disclose if they hold or have previously held a licence in another area. Local authorities will also now have to have robust reporting systems in place to make sure passengers feel comfortable reporting incidents and or suspicious behaviour. This follows the Casey Report which found there was inadequate investigation of some complaints in Rotherham.

Licensing authorities will be expected to fully implement these measures as soon as possible. The department will closely monitor progress, work with authorities not meeting their responsibilities and look to introduce legislation if licensing authorities fail to adopt the standards and update their operations.

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