

Government and BBC's joint statement on delaying the TV licence fee for over 75s

Changes to the TV licence for people aged over 75 had been due to come into effect on 1 June. But during this time the government and the BBC do not want anyone to be worried about any potential change.

The BBC's priority over the coming period is to do everything it can to serve the nation at this uniquely challenging time. As the national broadcaster, the BBC has a vital role to play in supplying information to the public in the weeks and months ahead.

Recognising the exceptional circumstances, the BBC Board has decided to change the start date to 1 August and the issue will remain under review as the situation continues to evolve.

Culture Secretary Oliver Dowden said:

I am pleased the BBC has worked with us and agreed to delay their licence fee changes for over 75s from coming in and will keep this under review. It will be welcome news to millions of older people who now don't need to worry about their TV licence during this challenging period. It is right that the BBC have recognised the exceptional circumstances posed by the coronavirus outbreak and the need for the whole country to pull together in the national effort.

BBC Chairman, David Clementi said:

The BBC board has decided to delay changes to over 75s licence fees. We are in exceptional circumstances. Now is not the right time. We are fully focussed on delivering our services to the public at this difficult time.

Braemar Cruise Ship: Foreign Office Statement

We are working around the clock to arrange evacuation flights from Cuba to the UK as soon as possible for passengers on the Braemar cruise ship.

The evacuation is being co-ordinated with Fred Olsen Cruise Lines and we advise that all passengers follow their instructions.

We continue to update British passengers as the plans progress.

HGV 'supercab' patrolling M25 to reduce road accidents

Using specially adapted, unmarked HGV cabs, officers will patrol the M25 and record drivers of all types of vehicles committing mobile phone or other safety offences that are the leading cause of many accidents.

The fortnight of action, called Operation Orbital, runs from Monday 16 March to Friday 27 March. A similar safety week on the M1 in 2019 led to the number of collisions falling by almost a third.

Colin Evans, Regional road safety officer, for Highways England in the South East, said:

The busiest sections of the M25 are used for nearly 200,000 journeys every day, ranging from commuters getting to work to haulage firms delivering goods along the route or overseas.

We know that the vast majority of drivers obey the law but a few are risking potentially devastating consequences by driving dangerously.

Over these two weeks of action, enforcement agencies will be carrying out a coordinated series of checks all around the M25 to help improve safety for everyone.

As well as driving offenses, officers will also check on vans and lorries for road worthiness, secure loads, weight and drivers' hours to reduce the risk of incidents along the route. In December 2018 alone, there were over 400 collisions along the 117 mile route, often leading to congestion and delays for drivers, and affecting companies travelling to ports, airports and making deliveries to towns and cities by the motorway.

National Police Chiefs' Council Lead for Roads Policing Chief Constable Anthony Bangham said:

I welcome initiatives to reduce the number of people killed or injured on our roads. We have seen similar successful collaborations between the police and Highways England in the past

and I am pleased to see us working together again.

We want all of those using our roads to do so safely and we will prosecute drivers who put themselves and others at risk by breaking the law.

Operation Orbital is being co-ordinated by Highways England and involves police forces from the Metropolitan Police, Hertfordshire, Essex, Kent, Surrey and Thames Valley Police.

The HGV supercab, which is funded by Highways England, plus three more HGV tractor units will be used on the M25 by police forces across the South East during the two week initiative. The HGV cabs allow police officers to film evidence of unsafe driving behaviour by driving alongside vehicles, and drivers are then pulled over by police cars following a short distance behind.

The cab has a derestricted speed limiter, which means it can travel at speeds up to the national speed limit.

As well as the police enforcement activity, Highways England's traffic officers will be providing free tyre checks and safety tips to drivers at motorway services around the M25. The activity starts today and runs until Friday 27 March.

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Media enquiries

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.

[Media advisory notice – PC Andrew Harper](#)

Three defendants are currently on trial for the murder of PC Andrew Harper. The jury was empanelled on 10th March 2020 and the trial is due to last approximately 6 weeks.

The Solicitor General Rt. Hon Michael Ellis QC MP wishes to draw attention to the requirement not to publish material, including online, which could create a substantial risk that the course of justice in these proceedings could be

seriously impeded or prejudiced. Publishing this information could amount to contempt of court. It could also put the trial at risk and jeopardise the defendants' right to a fair trial.

In particular, the Solicitor General draws attention to the requirement not to publish material that asserts or assumes the guilt of any of those who face trial. That is an issue to be determined by the jury on the evidence that they hear in court.

The risks may also arise by inaccurate reporting or reporting that prejudices issues that witnesses may give evidence about during the trial.

The Attorney General's Office will be monitoring the coverage of these proceedings.

Editors, publishers and social media users should take legal advice to ensure they are in a position to fully comply with the obligations they are subject to under the Contempt of Court Act.

They are also reminded of the terms of the order made under section 45 of the Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act 1999 by Mrs Justice Whipple DBE on 19th September 2019.

[British Embassy Chisinau announces a call for proposals: climate change](#)

This call for proposals specifically seeks applications for projects related to the UK's four priorities as part of its Presidency of the Conference of Parties on Climate Change and host of the COP26 summit in November. These are:

- clean growth: focus on renewable energy; tackling emissions; clean growth in sectors such as power, transport and industry
- green finance: the green transformation of the financial sector
- nature-based solutions: mitigate climate change and biodiversity loss; restoration of natural habitats and ecosystems
- adaptation and resilience: helping communities to prepare for natural disasters

Further details of the UK's climate change ambition and priorities can be found at www.ukcop26.org

Budget

We welcome project proposals in the value range up to £20,000.

Selection criteria

- project alignment with the above mentioned thematic priorities
- projects should include clear gender and social inclusion activities or outcomes within the above mentioned thematic priorities wherever possible
- projects should have clearly defined, SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time-limited) outputs and deliverables and demonstrate value for money
- project partners may be local or national across Moldova or international organisations
- projects must cover activities which meet Official Development Assistance definitions
- funding may be awarded to consortia of local and/or international organisations; but there will need to be a clear lead organisation that will be accountable for financial and results management and delivery
- funding allocations for 2020/21 must be spent by 31 December 2020
- successful applicants will be required to submit quarterly and final financial and narrative reporting
- as a general rule, grants should not be used to procure goods and equipment but this will be considered on a case-by-case basis; no more than 10% of project funds may be used for equipment. The Fund may not be used for gifting
- payments will be made in MDL at an FCO (Foreign and Commonwealth Office) rate

Reporting and M&E

- the supplier will meet at least monthly with the British Embassy team to discuss ongoing progress against their project plan (including communications plan), risks and impact
- the supplier will be asked to formally submit financial and narrative reporting on the project on a quarterly basis as well as a completion report at the end of the project
- FCO reserves the right to carry out evaluation visits at a time agreed with the supplier and after giving reasonable notice

Dependencies

The supplier is asked to assume that they will deliver an entirely independent intervention should they win the competition. Items such as office space, translation costs, security, legal fees, and insurance, transport and accommodation costs should be priced into the contract.

The supplier is responsible for due diligence of potential partners and for assessing, reporting on and mitigating all risks at a project level.

How to apply

Applicants must complete the Project Proposal and Project Budget forms (in English). Applicants must be aware that the British Embassy Chisinau will

accept applications until close of business on 21 April 2020. Projects proposals submitted after the deadline will not be taken into consideration. Please note that the size of one message should not exceed 3 MB.

Applicants must send the completed Project Proposal and Project Budget forms to email: projects.chisinau@fco.gov.uk