

Taxi and private hire

February 2025



Tamworth
Borough Council

Welcome to the February update to all taxi and private hire drivers, vehicle proprietors and private hire operators in Tamworth. In these updates, we'll highlight current issues and information to help support your work. If there is something you'd like us to include in a future update, please contact us at taxi-licensing@tamworth.gov.uk.

Reminder of contact details

So we can support you more quickly, your main point of contact is taxi-licensing@tamworth.gov.uk.

Your main points of contact are Jodie and Giles, if you need to call us, please call 01827 709 709. Please avoid contacting other officers, this will likely delay your enquiry and our support to you.

Marmion House reception

A new face to face service is now open at Marmion House. All enquiries can now be dealt with face to face support on a Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 10am-2pm and a Tuesday and Thursday 2pm-6pm. One of the customer service team will be on hand during these times to assist you in your enquiry. For any collections or pre booked appointments please continue to use the door to the left of the building.

Reminder to sign up to the DBS update service

By law, we must check your DBS record every six months. We therefore recommend you sign up to the update service. Failure to do so will result in you having to apply for a new DBS check. If you've recently had your DBS check, please sign up to the update service within 30 days of your certificate issue date. Please visit www.gov.uk/dbs-update-service

We have been notified that the DBS Service will be increasing the fees for the update service to £16 per year. Please make sure the automatic renewal can be processed as the DBS service will cancel your subscription.

Motor vehicle services – missed appointments

Currently all of your compliance checks with Motor Vehicle Services are pre-booked when you are given the pass certificate. The date of your appointment is clearly stated on your certificate. Motor Vehicle Services has made us aware of an increasing issue with drivers missing their prebooked appointments. It is **your responsibility** to make sure you note the date of your next compliance test when it is issued to you. If you are unable to attend or you no longer require your appointment, please rearrange.

Appointments with Motor Vehicle Services are required for compliance tests, MOT's, re-tests etc. **Please do not turn up expecting to be seen without a pre-booked appointment.**

The situation with missed pre-booked appointments is now under review and will be monitored over the coming weeks. Should the situation not improve we will have no choice but to consider alternative methods of booking which may include drivers pre paying for tests.

Private hire door signs

All private hire vehicles (unless an exemption has been applied for and granted) have been issued with two door signs. Although we have not mandated where these should be located, we request that they are positioned on the rear doors roughly midway. It is not acceptable to have the door signs placed anywhere other than the doors.

Licence conditions

Whether you hold a Hackney carriage and private hire drivers licence, a vehicle licence or an operators licence, all are issued with conditions. We have had drivers appearing before the licensing committee who have admitted to not knowing the conditions that they should be abiding by. The conditions are in our policy and attached to the licence when it is sent to you. Please visit **www.tamworth.gov.uk/licensing/taxis-and-private-hire/all-forms-and-guidance** to make sure you are familiar with the conditions to your licence.

Driving in adverse weather

We want everyone to keep themselves and their passengers safe over the winter so here are some handy driving tips. We are sure that your vehicles are regularly inspected, serviced and in good working order, but in adverse weather, particular attention should be given to the following:

- Does the car battery need replacing? car batteries last approximately five years, and extra demand placed on them during adverse weather from the use of heaters, lights, and wipers can decrease their lifespan.
- Check the tyre pressure in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications.
- Check the tyre tread depths. For winter driving it is recommended they have 3mm of tread and certainly not less than 2mm.
- Make sure that there is an adequate amount of anti-freeze, in both the windscreen washer bottle and radiator.
- Keep lights clean and check bulbs regularly so you'll be prepared for lower visibility and shorter days.
- Make sure wiper blades aren't worn and the vehicle has sufficient windscreen washer fluid so you can keep your windscreen as clean as possible.
- Dirty windows and mirrors can make it hard to see as the low winter sun hits. Keep them clean and free of ice and snow in colder weather. Ensure windows are clear and demisted before setting off.
- Make sure the taxi plate and registration plate are kept clean and legible.

Uber

We know that many of you have concerns about the impact Uber bookings are having on local trade. Uber hold private hire operator licences with our neighbouring authorities. This means that Uber are taking on many more drivers and vehicles from Staffordshire and surrounding areas.

The law – taxi and private hire legislation allows private hire operators, such as Uber, to take bookings for journeys anywhere in the country. There are no requirements for them to stay within the district where the operator licence is held. This means that an Uber vehicle can legally be in our borough waiting for a pre-booking to come through the app. Private hires, such as Uber, are not allowed under taxi legislation to ‘ply for hire’. This means they cannot take an immediate hire.

For example, they cannot take a fare from someone waiting at a taxi rank, or they cannot wait outside a train station for a chance hiring that is not through the app. They should not be parking, dropping off or picking up from any of our taxi ranks in the district.

We are currently investigating if we can Geofence Stationfields.

How to make complaints – If you want to report a complaint about a specific Uber vehicle, you can contact the relevant council for them to investigate. To report a complaint the licensing teams at the other councils need time, date, and location of the incident, registration number, plate number and details about what happened. Ideally, they want some photos as evidence, but only if you can take a photo without putting yourself at risk. If you are unsure about which authority the vehicle is licensed with then please contact us and we can help. It is always useful if we can be copied into any complaints so that we can monitor the problem in our area.

Working for Uber – We have been asked if Tamworth licenced drivers can work for Uber. To do this you would need to get a private hire driver licence and a private hire vehicle licence with the authority that have issued the operators licence. You cannot work for Uber using Tamworth issued private hire driver and vehicle licences. This is because under private hire law the operator, vehicle and driver licence must all be issued by the same council.

As a driver you can be dual licensed with more than one authority, however, a vehicle can only be licensed with one authority at a time and cannot be dual licenced. We have been told that Uber will take on hackney drivers and vehicles licensed outside of the area where Uber hold the operator licence. This is because hackneys are not required by law to work under an operator licence. However, Uber will not give the hackney drivers Uber app bookings within the district that issued them their hackney licences. This is because the Uber charging system may conflict with the hackney fares set by the local council. If you want to find out more, you should contact Uber direct.

Contact us

For further information, advice, or to make a complaint, please contact:

Tamworth Borough Council

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Tel: 01827 709709

Email: taxi-licensing@tamworth.gov.uk

www.tamworth.gov.uk

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please phone: 01827 709709