



Department for Transport

Head of Taxi & Private Hire Vehicle
Licensing

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Dear colleague,

TAXI & PHV LICENSING – SUPPORTING THE SECTOR & SCHOOL RETURN

Many thanks for all the hard work that has been undertaken by you and your teams, to overcome the challenges to the licensing system created by the Coronavirus outbreak.

The Department recognises that the pandemic has created a very challenging environment for local government to operate in, with the need to adapt quickly and decisively to maintain business as usual. We appreciate, too, that taxi and private hire vehicle licensing teams have been particularly affected, as a key part of many licensing regimes was face to face interactions with applicants to determine if they are fit and proper to hold a licence,

You will be aware that as the economy has started to reopen it is important there are sufficient licensed taxi and private hire drivers and vehicles available to meet the returning passenger demand. Concerns have been recently raised with the Department that, in some places, difficulties in licensing new drivers and operators could lead to shortages of supply in the sector. We understand that, in response to the initial lock down restrictions, a number of licensing authorities put new applications on hold in order to focus on dealing with renewal applications, and that some have not yet resumed their processing.

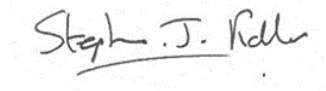
Taxi and private hire vehicle licensing is a statutory function of local licensing authorities and it is important that it continues during these challenging times, both to support the restart of schools and support local economies and to limit any long-term impacts on the sector. We are aware that licensing authorities across England have come up with innovative solutions to overcome challenges around issues such as DBS checks, identification verification, medical and local tests and training requirements to enable the continued processing of all applications. If your authority is one of these many thanks for your efforts and hard work.

If your authority is not yet processing new applications, however, we would urge you to urgently identify solutions that will enable you to resume this service to ensure that you can fulfil your statutory licensing function. You may wish to seek advice from your representative bodies, such as the Local Government Association or the Institute of Licensing, and/or other local licensing authority contacts in areas that are accepting new applications.

Hopefully some of the solutions found will help make the licensing function easier to carry out in the long-term. I appreciate it has been a difficult time and welcome your continued commitment to a fully functioning licensing system that ensures public safety.

If you have any questions about this letter please contact the Department's taxi and private hire vehicle policy team at taxis@dft.gov.uk.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephen J. Keller". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Director: Local Transport