

**North Tyneside Council**  
**Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy**

**Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Specifications**

**All** licensed vehicles shall comply in all respects with the requirements set out below as appropriate for the type of vehicle. This is in addition to all requirements of the Road Traffic legislation, which relates to all motor vehicles.

**All** vehicles must comply with the requirements of Section A. Private Hire vehicles must comply with the requirements of Section B and Hackney Carriages must comply with the requirements of Section C.

If you are making a new application for a Hackney Carriage proprietor's licence or are replacing a hackney carriage first licensed after July 1992, the vehicle must be wheelchair accessible and must also comply with the requirements of Section D.

All vehicles must have the appropriate Type approval.

The following vehicle specification must be maintained throughout the licence period unless changes have prior approval by the Authority.

**Section A - General specification for all vehicles**

**GENERAL CONSTRUCTION**

1. The vehicle shall comply fully with all relevant statutory provisions relating to the construction of motor vehicles and including in particular those contained in the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986 (or any successor legislation).
2. Any modification to the vehicle (e.g. conversion to wheelchair accessible, alteration of the original seat configuration or any other 'adaptation') must be approved by the Authority and the appropriate certificate produced.
3. The vehicle shall be right hand drive with a fixed head type body.
4. The vehicle shall be capable of carrying in reasonable comfort at least four passengers.
5. The vehicle shall be M1 category. In the case of post registration conversions Individual Vehicle Approval is required.
6. The vehicle shall have a minimum unladen height of 1.325 metres (53").

**PASSENGER COMFORT**

7. Every passenger seat in the vehicle must meet the following minimum dimensions:
  - Individual seat width – 41cm (16")
  - Bench seat width (i.e. rear seat of a saloon vehicle) – 124.5cm (49") Width between door handles – 124.5cm (49")
  - Width between rear doors – 132cm (52")
  - Seat squab height measured from vehicle floor - 30cm (12")
  - Seat squab depth – 45cm (18")
  - Headroom measured from centre of seat to underside of roof – 87.5cm (35")
  - Legroom measured from seat back diagonally to vehicle floor – 94cm (37")
  - Unobstructed space in front of seat measured from seat back – 63.5cm (25")

Licensing Officers are able to exercise their discretion as to the suitability of a vehicle where the measurements are below the above dimensions.

8. There shall be no obstructions or features in the vehicle (e.g. prominent transmission tunnels, door furniture, vehicle controls, etc) which in the opinion of the Authority materially interferes with the comfort of any passenger.

9. The vehicle shall have an adequate heating and ventilation system for the comfort of all passengers.
10. The vehicle shall be equipped with either:
  - (a) A spare wheel of full or space save design above the legal tread requirement and the tools to change a wheel, or
  - (b) An emergency puncture repair kit (with compressor/inflation pack) or
  - (c) Run flat tyres or
  - (d) Provide evidence of a contract with a mobile tyre replacement specialist.

In the event of a space – saver tyre, run flat tyres (when punctured) or puncture repair kit being used, it is only to complete a fare and must comply and be maintained in accordance with the manufactures' recommendations. Any such defective wheel should be replaced before taking another fare to ensure passenger safety.

### **PASSENGER SAFETY**

11. Glass shall have a minimum light transmittance of 75% for the front windscreen, 70% for the front side windows and 34% for all other vehicle window glass. If tinted windows are fitted as standard there will be no minimum light transmission to the rear of the B pillar.

Licensing Officers are able to exercise their discretion as to the suitability of a vehicle where the light transmittance of the windows is below 34% where tint has not been fitted as standard. This discretion however does not apply to the front windscreen or the front side windows.

12. The vehicle shall have at least 4 doors and open sufficiently wide so as to allow safe and easy access and egress. Each passenger, other than a front seated passenger, shall have access to at least two doors.
13. Every passenger seat shall be either forward or rear facing and shall be fitted with an approved (lap & diagonal) seat belt.

### **LUGGAGE CAPACITY**

14. The vehicle shall have capacity to convey an appropriate quantity of luggage.

### **Section B - Specification for Private Hire Vehicles**

15. The vehicle must not be black in colour or a colour which closely resembles black in the opinion of the Licensing Officer.
16. If the Private Hire vehicle is fitted with a meter, it must be properly tested and sealed.
17. Private Hire vehicles must not have a roof sign.

### **Section C - Specification for Hackney Carriages**

18. Hackney Carriage vehicles must be black in colour.
19. Hackney Carriage vehicles must have fitted on the roof, an internally illuminated TAXI top sign meeting a specification in relation to size and colour approved by the Authority and relevant to the type of vehicle.
20. Hackney Carriage vehicles must be fitted with a taximeter, properly tested and sealed, and calibrated to enable testing in accordance with the Authority's current Hackney Carriage Fare Table.

## **Section D - Specification for New and Replacement Wheelchair Accessible Hackney Carriages Only**

### **GENERAL CONSTRUCTION**

21. The vehicle must comply fully with the requirements of the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986 (or any successor legislation) as well as all general policies and specifications of the Authority which relate to hackney carriage vehicles.
22. The vehicle must comply fully with Sections A and C of the preceding 'General Specification for all Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles'.

### **PASSENGER SAFETY AND COMFORT**

23. The vehicle must be capable of accommodating one or more wheelchairs in either a forward or rear facing position allowing adequate space to ensure the safety and comfort of the wheelchair user, and without interfering with the safety and comfort of any other passengers.
24. The design of the vehicle must allow safe access and egress of passengers including elderly and disabled passengers.
25. Wheelchair access to the vehicle must be from the nearside or rear of the vehicle. The door and doorway must be constructed as to permit an unrestricted opening across the doorway of at least 75cm.
26. The clear height of the doorway must not be less than 1.2 metres.
27. Grab handles must be placed at one or more passenger door entrances as appropriate, to assist the elderly and disabled.
28. The vertical distance between the highest part of the floor and the roof in the wheelchair passenger area must be no less than 1.3 metres.
29. Approved anchorages must be provided for the wheelchair and chair bound disabled person. These anchorages must be either chassis or floor linked and capable of withstanding approved dynamic or static tests. Restraints for the wheelchair and occupant must be independent of each other.
30. Suitable means of wheelchair access must be fitted to the vehicle. Ramps must be of suitable design to ensure that they do not slip or tilt when in use and they provide a suitable gradient when in use. Tail-lifts must be of an approved type.
31. If any of the seating within the vehicle has to be removed or adjusted in any way to accommodate one or more wheelchairs, the following conditions will also apply:
  - The removal/adjustment must be able to be carried out quickly and easily so that in the opinion of the Authority there is minimal inconvenience caused to any hirer of the vehicle by the 'conversion'
  - Where one or more seats require removal to accommodate one or more wheelchairs there must be adequate space on the vehicle for the secure storage of any removed seats.
  - Where one or more seats are either removed or they become unusable when the vehicle has been 'converted' for wheelchair use there must be at least one further useable passenger seat.