

**Code of Conduct for Hackney
Carriage and Private Hire
Driver's**

Overview

Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Drivers (referred to in this document as Drivers) are in a position of trust in respect of the safety and welfare of their passengers.

The Licensing Authority, through its Licensing Team and Committees, have to ensure that all Drivers are 'fit and proper' to undertake their work as Drivers and that they also act as ambassadors for the district. It is essential that the Council and Drivers work together in order to ensure members of the public are treated with dignity and respect, including reporting any concerns.

On occasions, Drivers may become aware of, or have suspicions that, their passengers may be the victim of abuse, neglect or exploitation either sexual or otherwise, or at risk of becoming a victim. In addition, Drivers themselves may be accused of misconduct or inappropriate behaviour through the misinterpretation of the Driver's actions or conversation.

Therefore, North West Leicestershire District Council has introduced this **Code of Conduct** which is aimed at providing the best possible service by protecting both passengers and Drivers. This ensures that concerns, suspicions of abuse, neglect or exploitation can be reported appropriately and minimise the risk of misunderstandings.

Drivers are required to comply with this Code of Conduct. Failure to do so may result in the Driver being questioned by a Licensing Officer or referred to the Licensing Sub-Committee to explain the circumstances surrounding any incident. In the event of a repeated and/or serious failure to comply, Drivers can expect that consideration will be given to the suspension or revocation of their licence.

~~In order to promote Public safety with regard to hackney carriage and private hire licensing, the Council has adopted the following Code of Conduct, which should be read in conjunction with the other statutory and policy requirements set out in this document.~~

~~The adoption of a Code of Conduct is a fundamental step in the attempt to improve the ethical culture in today's business world and, more specifically, to prevent unethical behaviour within the trade.~~

~~Licence holders can gain several benefits when they adhere to a core set of ethical values embodied in a code of conduct, including;~~

- ~~• Greater motivation amongst staff,~~
- ~~• A demonstrated respect for the law,~~
- ~~• Protection of the company's reputation or brand,~~
- ~~• Improves business relationships,~~

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR LICENSED DRIVERS

It should be noted that the Code does not override any obligations that are detailed in legislation, licence conditions or contractual obligations, such as County Council contracts.

4. General

4.1 Drivers shall:

- a) Act in a professional manner at all times;
- b) Treat passengers and other road users with respect;
- c) Keep relationships with passengers on an appropriate, professional basis;
- d) Respect all individuals – regardless of age, disability, gender, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion/belief, language spoken, race or ethnicity;
- e) Pay attention to personal hygiene and dress so as to present a professional image to the public. This is further defined below;
- f) Be polite, helpful and fair to passengers, particularly disabled passengers whose mobility may be restricted-;
- g) Drive with care and due consideration for other road users and pedestrians;
- ~~not use a hand held mobile phone whilst driving;~~
- ~~Obey all Traffic Regulation Orders and directions at all times;~~
- h) Ensure that there is no smoking in the vehicle at all times;
- i) Comply with all Traffic Regulation Orders and directions at all times;
- j) Fulfil their responsibility to ensure compliance with common sense and any legislation regarding the length of working hours;
- k) Undertake a vehicle check, i.e. lights, tyres & pressures, engine fluids, prior to starting shifts to ensure roadworthiness;
- l) Undertake suitable training.

And be aware of:

- a. Safety and well-being of passengers must be paramount;
- b. The importance of the use of appropriate language;
- c. Be aware of the vulnerability of children and adults;
- d. Be aware of passengers with special needs;
- e. Any instruction given about the care or first aid requirements of a passenger;

- f. Personal beliefs and standards, including dress and religion;
- g. Passengers misreading situations;
- h. The use of social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter. These are public websites and therefore passengers conveyed may access a Driver's site. Ensure you use the appropriate privacy settings to avoid passengers viewing your social media sites.

Drivers should never:

- a) Become over-friendly or unprofessional in any way with passengers or engage in any form of inappropriate relationship;
- b) Inappropriately touch a passenger;
- c) Administer medication unless a specific request has been made by the hirer;
- d) Photograph or video passengers in your care unless used in compliance with data protection legislation and any relevant codes of practice;
- e) Engage with passengers through social networking sites other than for clear and obvious business connections;
- f) Phone or send text messages to passengers other than directly concerning the hiring of your vehicle;
- g) Swear, make personal/humiliating comments, or tell inappropriate jokes;
- h) Offer cigarettes or gifts of any sort;
- i) Stop anywhere other than the specified pick up/drop off points unless requested by the hirer;
- j) Use a hand held mobile phone whilst driving;
- k) Consume alcohol before or at any time whilst driving or being in charge of a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle;
- l) Drive while having used illegal or misused legal drugs;
- m) Act contrary to the advice of a medical practitioner;

Safeguarding:

If a driver has concerns or suspects abuse, neglect or exploitation of a passenger then these should not be ignored. If there are any suspicions or concerns about the way someone is being treated it is important to report this. The safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults is everybody's responsibility. Remember that your information could help a vulnerable child or adult.

If a driver is working under a Leicestershire County Council contract then their guidance and procedures should be followed alongside any training received. Otherwise the following procedures should be complied with in reporting any

information or suspicions you may have of anyone being subject to abuse, neglect or exploitation:

Action to be taken if you have concerns:

- a. If your concerns are of an urgent matter or you believe that a crime has been committed and there is an immediate risk of danger, telephone the police on 999.
- b. If you are suspicious or are concerned that a child or an adult is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, including any form of mistreatment, abuse, neglect or exploitation but it is not of an urgent matter, please call Leicestershire Police on 101.

~~1. Responsibility to the Trade~~

~~1.1 Licence holders must comply with the following:~~

- ~~a) comply with this Code of Conduct;~~
- ~~b) comply with all the Conditions of their hackney carriage and private hire licence's and the Council's Fit and Proper Persons Policy;~~
- ~~c) behave in a civil, orderly and responsible manner at all times.~~

~~2. Responsibility to Customers~~

~~2.1 Private hire and hackney carriage drivers are professional drivers and must be aware of the safety of their passengers and the safety of their vehicles at all times.~~

~~2.2 Licence holders shall comply with the hackney carriage and private hire vehicle conditions.~~

Responsibility to Residents

To avoid nuisance to residents when picking up or waiting for a fare, a driver shall:

- a) not sound the vehicle's horn illegally or repeatedly;
- b) keep the volume of audio and communications equipment to a reasonable level;
- c) switch off the engine if required to wait or on ranks; and
- d) take all reasonable measures to avoid disturbance to residents in the neighbourhood.

At taxi ranks where hackney carriages ply for hire by forming queues, drivers shall, in addition to the requirements above:

- a) queue in an orderly manner and proceed along the rank in order and promptly; and
- b) remain in the vehicle or in close proximity of the vehicle.

At private hire offices a licence holder shall:

- a) not allow their audio or communications equipment to cause disturbance to residents of the neighbourhood; and
- b) take reasonable action to avoid disturbance to residents of the neighbourhood which might arise from the conduct of their business.

Driver Dress Code – Professional image

The following items of clothing are examples of **acceptable dress**:

- Smart trousers or skirt
- Smart shirt or blouse
- Polo shirt
- Smart shoes or trainers
- Smart jeans
- Smart jumper or cardigan

The following items of clothing must **never** be worn:

- Flip flops
- Baseball caps
- Tracksuits or shell suits or components of
- Shorts
- Swimwear
- Sports shirts or replica sports shirts
- Scruffy trainers
- Unkempt or soiled clothing
- Dirty or ripped clothing
- Items of clothing with 'offensive' or 'suggestive' words or graphics

4. General

4.1 Drivers shall:

- ~~a) pay attention to personal hygiene and dress so as to present a professional image to the public;~~
- ~~b) be polite, helpful and fair to passengers, particularly disabled passengers whose mobility may be restricted;~~
- ~~c) drive with care and due consideration for other road users and pedestrians~~
- ~~d) not use a hand held mobile phone whilst driving;~~
- ~~e) obey all Traffic Regulation Orders and directions at all times;~~
- ~~f) ensure that there is no smoking in the vehicle at all times;~~
- ~~g) not consume alcohol before or at any time whilst driving or being in charge of a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle;~~
- ~~h) not drive while having used illegal or misused legal drugs.~~
- ~~i) acted contrary to the advice of a medical practitioner;~~
- ~~j) fulfil their responsibility to ensure compliance with common sense and any legislation regarding the length of working hours;~~
- ~~k) undertake a vehicle check, i.e. lights, tyres & pressures, engine fluids, prior to starting shifts to ensure roadworthiness;~~
- ~~l) Undertake suitable training.~~