

# **EAST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL**

## **POLICIES IN RESPECT OF TAXI AND PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLES** **AND DRIVER FITNESS**

## **POLICIES IN RESPECT OF TAXI AND PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLES AND DRIVER FITNESS**

This policy document has been prepared to set out East Dunbartonshire Council's ("the Council's") policy in respect of certain requirements for taxi and private hire vehicles. For a full list of the relevant requirements applying to taxi and private hire licences the relevant conditions should be consulted.

### **VEHICLE TESTING**

#### **Frequency of Testing**

All vehicles which are younger than five years old must undergo a test once per year to assess their roadworthiness and suitability for use as a taxi or private hire car vehicle, and the Licence Holder must hold a current Certificate of Compliance in respect of the vehicle issued by a Test Station showing compliance with the Council's requirements in respect of that vehicle.

In respect of vehicles which are five years old or older, these must undergo a test every six months to assess their roadworthiness and suitability for use as a taxi or private hire car vehicle, and the Licence Holder must hold a current Certificate of Compliance in respect of the vehicle issued by a Test Station showing compliance with the Council's requirements in respect of that vehicle. Consequently, for such vehicles the test pass will only be valid for six months instead of twelve months.

#### **Test Stations**

Testing must be carried out only by Test Stations that have been approved by the Council in writing.

Test Stations shall only be approved if they comply with certain requirements notified by the Council from time to time.

Among these will be the requirements to show that a valid, up-to-date Motor Vehicle Testing Authorisation of Examiner certificate issued by the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency is in place.

A Test Station shall not be approved by the Council to carry out taxi or private hire vehicle testing in respect of any vehicle where any person who owns, has an interest in or exerts any control over the Test Station, or is involved directly in the testing, also holds or has an interest in that taxi or private hire operator's, driver's or booking office licence granted by the Council under the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982. Applicants for approval and current holders of approval in respect of a Test Station will be required to confirm and, if required, evidence to the Council's satisfaction that no such person is in this position.

### **VEHICLE SPECIFICATION**

#### **Vehicle Specification – Taxis**

In addition to the vehicle requirements below, all vehicles used for taxi licences must be of a Hackney, Fiat Scudo, Peugeot Euro 7 or other type of vehicle approved in writing by the Council for public hire.

## **Vehicle Requirements - Taxis**

In order to pass the annual or six monthly vehicle inspection, vehicles must meet the standards set out in the conditions of fitness of taxi vehicles which are incorporated within this policy at Schedule A Part 1 and which are also attached to the new standard taxi Conditions as Schedule A.

Guidance Notes on Vehicle Testing are to be issued to each new and existing licence holder in relation to these conditions of fitness. This guidance is incorporated within this policy at Schedule B.

## **Vehicle Specification – Private Hire Vehicles**

In addition to the vehicle requirements below, all vehicles used for private hire licences must:

- (i) be a saloon car, estate type or such other type of vehicle approved by the Council;
- (ii) have four doors;
- (iii) have an engine capacity with a power to weight ratio equal to or greater than 0.0648 hp per kg;  
and
- (iv) have a minimum seat cushion size of 400mm wide and 350mm depth.
- (v) have a minimum seat cushion height (or near side front cushion height if manufacturer's original) of 300mm, and
- (vi) have minimum leg room of any passenger seat of 650mm.

Subject to vehicles being included in the approved list of electric vehicles maintained by the Council and inspection and testing by the Council or Test Stations approved by the Council, private hire vehicles may use electricity as a means of propulsion including its use within any hybrid engine.

## **Vehicle Requirements – Private Hire Vehicles**

In order to pass the annual or six monthly vehicle inspection, vehicles must meet the standards set out in the conditions of fitness of private hire car vehicles which are incorporated within this policy at Schedule A Part 2 and which are also attached to the new standard private hire car conditions as Schedule A.

Guidance Notes on vehicle testing are to be issued to each new and existing licence holder in relation to these conditions of fitness. This guidance is incorporated within this policy at Schedule B.

## **HEALTH OF DRIVERS**

Fitness to drive will be assessed against the DVLA Group 2 standard. Responsibility for determining any higher standards and medical requirements for taxi and private hire vehicle drivers, over and above the driver licensing requirements, rests with the Council, in line with DVLA recommendations.

The Council has taken into account the occupational nature of the driving, the length of time that drivers spend driving on a daily basis and the fact that drivers convey paying passengers, including vulnerable passengers, in their vehicles. Accordingly it is appropriate that drivers are required to meet DVLA Group 2 medical fitness to drive standards and any medical certification required to be produced by a driver by the Council to prove that driver's fitness to drive must be to Group 2 standard.

## **SCHEDULE A**

### **Conditions of fitness of taxi vehicles and private hire vehicles.**

#### **Part 1 - Condition of fitness of taxi vehicles**

- i.** The battery shall be in good condition and free from leaking.
- ii.** Terminals shall be in good condition and free from corrosion.
- iii.** Engine compartment components shall be in good condition, secure and with no signs of chafing. In particular, the wiring shall be secure and insulated.
- iv.** The driver compartment shall be clean and in good condition. In particular, it shall not be dirty or dusty and it shall be free from any rubbish.
- v.** The speedometer shall be in full working order and shall be registering correctly.
- vi.** All ventilation equipment and heaters shall be in full working order. In particular, the heater shall emit heat, the ventilation shall supply adequate airflow to windscreen and car interior, the vents shall be secure and the control mechanism shall be fully operational.
- vii.** Vehicle suspension shall be of the correct geometry and not excessively worn.
- viii.** Wheel alignment shall not display any visible signs of incorrect geometry e.g. feathering of tyres.
- ix.** Clutch shall be in good working order and the pedal rubbers shall not be excessively worn or missing.
- x.** Tread depth of tyres shall not be less than 1.6mm across the width of the tyre.
- xi.** Wheels shall be of the type specified by the manufacturer.
- xii.** All wheels and wheel trims shall be matching.
- xiii.** Brake pads friction material shall not be less than 3.00mm.
- xiv.** The jack and wheel key shall be securely stored in the Vehicle.
- xv.** The fuel tanks shall be the manufacturer's original equipment.
- xvi.** All visible fuel components shall be in good condition and there shall not be any fuel accumulating in/on any fitting or receptacle.

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- xvii.** The exhaust system shall be in good working order and shall be of a standard specification.
- xviii.** Bodywork shall be in good condition and shall not be damaged or extensively corroded.
- xix.** The paint finish shall be of a good standard, and in particular shall be of a uniform finish, shall not be of any different colours or shades (except where intrinsic to the manufacturers livery), and shall not contain any surface deficiencies i.e. paint runs, peeling, scratches or broken paint surface, beyond that attributable to normal use.
- xx.** The engine compartment shall be in good condition and shall not be dirty, greasy or oily.
- xxi.** The passenger compartment shall be in a good and clean condition. It shall not be dirty or dusty and shall be free from any rubbish or litter.
- xxii.** Interior upholstery shall be secure, and in a good and clean condition. In particular, the upholstery shall not be dirty, missing, insecure or torn or in such a condition as to soil clothing or adversely affect passenger comfort.
- xxiii.** Ramps and steps for disabled access shall be in good condition, shall be stable, secure, and correctly and safely stowed.
- xxiv.** Roof mounted taxi sign shall be present, secure and in good working order. In particular, said sign shall illuminate.
- xxv.** The front and rear taxi plates shall be displayed, matching and secured with the appropriate fixing kit.
- xxvi.** Door opening mechanisms shall be in good condition, and in particular, the door seals shall not be damaged or missing.
- xxvii.** Door hinges are in good condition and are not worn or insecure.
- xxviii.** Taximeter (where fitted), lights, seal and calibration shall all be in good working order. In particular, they shall all be of the correct specification, shall illuminate, shall not be defective in any way and shall not fail the relevant road test. The seal shall not be missing or broken.
- xxix.** Modern, legally valid and fully working fire extinguishers shall be present, easily accessible, and properly secured. Fire extinguishers shall be of the correct type, conform to the relevant British

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standard and shall be at all times in good working order, and where applicable within its expiry date. Alternatively, and where appropriate, fire extinguishers shall be maintenance checked every 12 months. Fire extinguishers in Vehicles shall not be damaged, have been discharged or have a lack of pressure charge.

- xxx.** Tow bars may be fitted to the Vehicle, and may be used for towing while the Vehicle is in use as a taxi.
- xxxi.** All exterior lights fitted to the Vehicle shall be clean and in good working order.
- xxxii.** All wiper blades fitted to the Vehicle shall be in good condition and any washer fluid system shall be fully operational with sufficient fluid present in the reservoir.

**Part 2 - Condition of fitness of private hire vehicle**

- i.** The battery shall be in good condition and free from leaking.
- ii.** Terminals shall be in good condition and free from corrosion.
- iii.** Engine compartment components shall be in good condition, secure and with no signs of chafing. In particular, the wiring shall be secure and insulated.
- iv.** The driver compartment shall be clean and in good condition. In particular, it shall not be dirty or dusty and it shall be free from any rubbish.
- v.** The speedometer shall be in full working order and shall be registering correctly.
- vi.** All ventilation equipment and heaters shall be in full working order. In particular, the heater shall emit heat, the ventilation shall supply adequate airflow to windscreen and car interior, the vents shall be secure and the control mechanism shall be fully operational.
- vii.** Vehicle suspension shall be of the correct geometry and not excessively worn.
- viii.** Wheel alignment shall not display any visible signs of incorrect geometry e.g. feathering of tyres.
- ix.** Clutch shall be in good working order and the pedal rubbers shall not be excessively worn or missing.
- x.** Tread depth of tyres shall not be less than 1.6mm across the width of the tyre.
- xi.** Wheels shall be of the type specified by the manufacturer.
- xii.** All wheels and wheel trims shall be matching.
- xiii.** Brake pads friction material shall not be less than 3.00mm.
- xiv.** The jack and wheel key shall be securely stored in the Vehicle.
- xv.** The fuel tanks shall be the manufacturer's original equipment.
- xvi.** All visible fuel components shall be in good condition and there shall not be any fuel accumulating in/on any fitting or receptacle.
- xvii.** The exhaust system shall be in good working order and shall be of a standard specification.
- xviii.** Bodywork shall be in good condition and shall not be damaged or extensively corroded.



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- xix.** The paint finish shall be of a good standard, and in particular shall be of a uniform finish, shall not be of any different colours or shades (except where intrinsic to the manufacturers livery), and shall not contain any surface deficiencies i.e. paint runs, peeling, scratches or broken paint surface, beyond that attributable to normal use.
- xx.** The engine compartment shall be in good condition and shall not be dirty, greasy or oily.
- xxi.** The passenger compartment shall be in a good and clean condition. It shall not be dirty or dusty and shall be free from any rubbish or litter.
- xxii.** Interior upholstery shall be secure, and in a good and clean condition. In particular, the upholstery shall not be dirty, missing, insecure or torn or in such a condition as to soil clothing or adversely affect passenger comfort.
- xxiii.** Ramps and steps for disabled access shall be in good condition, shall be stable, secure, and correctly and safely stowed.
- xxiv.** The front and rear private hire car plates shall be displayed, matching and secured with the appropriate fixing kit.
- xxv.** Door opening mechanisms shall be in good condition, and in particular, the door seals shall not be damaged or missing.
- xxvi.** Door hinges are in good condition and are not worn or insecure.
- xxvii.** Taximeter (where fitted), lights, seal and calibration shall all be in good working order. In particular, they shall all be of the correct specification, shall illuminate, shall not be defective in any way and shall not fail the relevant road test. The seal shall not be missing or broken.
- xxviii.** Modern, legally valid and fully working fire extinguishers shall be present, easily accessible, and properly secured. Fire extinguishers shall be of the correct type, shall conform to the relevant British standard and shall be at all times in good working order, and where applicable within its expiry date. Alternatively, and where appropriate, fire extinguishers shall be maintenance checked every 12 months. Fire extinguishers in Vehicles shall not be damaged, have been

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discharged or have a lack of pressure charge. In respect of estate type Vehicles, no dog guard type device shall be fitted.

- xxix.** Tow bars may be fitted to the Vehicle, and may be used for towing while the Vehicle is in use as a private hire vehicle.
- xxx.** All exterior lights fitted to the Vehicle shall be clean and in good working order.
- xxxi.** All wiper blades fitted to the Vehicle shall be in good condition and any washer fluid system shall be fully operational with sufficient fluid present in the reservoir.

**Schedule B**

**GUIDANCE FOR TAXI AND PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE**  
**INSPECTION**



## **TAXI AND PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE INSPECTION**

### **Introduction**

East Dunbartonshire Council (“the Council”), as licensing authority in terms of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982, is responsible for the licensing of drivers of taxis and private hire car vehicles. To comply with licensing conditions, drivers are required to present their vehicles to the Council, or a Test Station authorised by the Council, for inspection on an annual or six monthly basis.

The purpose of this document is to provide taxi and private hire car vehicle operators with an indication of the requirements of the vehicle inspection. This document should be used as guidance for ensuring that vehicles are suitably presented for testing.

### **Vehicle Inspection**

Vehicle inspections for taxis and private hire car vehicles are required to pass the Certificate of Compliance examination according to the Council’s standards. This examination must take place annually for taxis and private hire vehicles less than five years old. In respect of taxis and private hire vehicles that are older than five years, vehicle inspections must be conducted every six months.

The condition that a vehicle must be in to pass the taxi and private hire car vehicle inspection is higher than that which is required for a M.O.T test and is to the standard contained in Schedule A to the licence conditions and Policy in Respect of Taxi and Private Hire Vehicles and Driver Fitness. A list of the standard that is required is outlined at pages 3 – 8 of this document. Generally speaking, any area where a “pass with advisory” is awarded for a M.O.T inspection will result in a failure for a taxi or private hire vehicle inspection.

In addition to assessing the mechanical condition of the vehicles, the taxi and private hire car vehicle inspection will also cover areas such as bodywork condition and cleanliness.

Testers responsible for inspecting vehicles are experienced professionals and are either officers of the Council or are acting on behalf of a Test Station authorised by the Council where a valid, up-to-date Motor Vehicle Testing Authorisation of Examiner certificate is in place. No Test Station shall be authorised by the Council to test a vehicle where any person who owns, has an interest in or exerts any control over the centre, or is involved directly in the testing, also holds or has an interest in a taxi or private hire operator’s, driver’s or booking office licence granted by the Council under the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 for that vehicle..

Should the vehicle inspection result in a failure, it is the responsibility of the licence holder to carry out any remedial work prior to presenting the vehicle for a re-test.

**Lights and Electrical system**

| <b>Inspection</b>                            | <b>Reason for Failure</b>  |
|--|--|
| Check operation of all lights and indicators | Lights not working<br>Insecure<br>Not fitted<br>Flickers<br>Cracked lens<br>Insufficient illumination<br>Out of alignment<br>Bulb/lens discolouration<br>Indicator rate of flash too fast (60-120per minute) |
| Check battery and terminals                  | Insecure, leaking<br>Corroded terminals  |
| Check engine compartment components          | Wiring not secure or insulated<br>Signs of chafing<br>Components insecure  |

**Drivers Compartment and Controls**

| <b>Inspection</b>   | <b>Reason for Failure</b>  |
|---|--|
| Check driver compartment is clean and in good condition         | Dirty/Dusty<br>Contains any rubbish<br>Contains any items likely to interfere with the proper control of the vehicle   |
| Check condition and security of driver's seat & passenger seats | Seat insecure or structurally weakened<br>Padding or covering is seriously deteriorated<br>Seat belts must be operational and in good condition (not structurally weakened)                                      |
| Check seat adjustment mechanism                                 | Insecure, ineffective  |
| Check steering wheel and drivers controls                       | Controls inoperative, ineffective, insecure<br>Damage to steering wheel<br>Movement between shaft and steering wheel<br>Excessive radial movement at top of steering wheel<br>Excessive steering shaft end float |
| Check Horn  | Horn control or horn faulty<br>Sound emitted not loud enough to be heard by another road user or pedestrian  |
| Check Speedometer operation                                     | Not working<br>Clearly registering incorrectly   |
| Check the operation of all ventilation equipment and heaters    | Heater doesn't emit heat<br>Ventilation not supplying adequate airflow to windscreen or car interior<br>Insecure vents<br>Control mechanism is inoperative   |

**Steering, Drive and Suspension**

**The steering wheel must be set on the offside of the vehicle.**

| <b>Inspection</b>                                    | <b>Reason for Failure</b>   |
|--|---|
| Check steering mechanism                             | Any part of mechanism that is not working correctly, excessively worn, fouling or obstructing movement at wheel rims/brake pipes<br>Dust covers/gators damaged/ not intact  |
| Check Power steering operation and inspect for leaks | Power steering inoperative<br>Leak in system<br>Pipe damaged/ fouling<br>Pump insecure/ drive system defective  |
| Check transmission shafts                            | Any obvious damage<br>Excessive wear in a shaft bearing<br>Loose or missing flange bolts, flange cracked or loose on the transmission shaft<br>Bearing housing cracked/ insecure<br>Excessive wear in universal joint<br>Deterioration of flexible coupling<br>Damaged, cracked or bent shaft<br>Fouling<br>Dust covers/ gators damaged/ not intact |
| Check wheel bearings                                 | Excessive free play or “roughness in wheel” that could result in failure  |
| Check suspension (front/ rear)                       | Incorrect geometry<br>Fracture, displacement or distortion that could affect steering operation or excessive wear.  |
| Check shock absorbers (front/rear)                   | Missing, leaking, potential to detach<br>Condition likely to adversely affect control of vehicle  |
| Wheel alignment                                      | Visible incorrect steering geometry e.g. feathering of tyres  |
| Check clutch operation                               | Pedal not secure, pedal rubbers worn excessively or pedal rubbers missing.<br>Excessive wear and/or defective clutch operation  |



**Wheels, Tyres and Brakes**

| <b>Inspection</b>                       | <b>Reason for Failure</b>   |
|---|---|
| Check circumference of all wheels/tyres | Different to that specified by taximeter  |
| Check tyre type/size                    | Incorrect type of tyre (as per manufacturers standard specification)<br>Incorrect tyre size   |
| Check tyre condition                    | Any obvious damage/faults:<br>Worn<br>Bulge<br>Incorrectly seated<br>Cut(s)<br>Tread depth is less than 1.6mm across the width of the tyre  |
| Check wheels                            | Incorrect size<br>Wheels different from manufacturers specification<br>Any obvious damage to wheel or rim Spare wheel is not full size, or a is not a manufacturers recommended space saver wheel<br>Non-matching wheels or wheel trims |
| Check wheel security                    | Insecure, loose nuts  |
| Check foot pedal/ hand brake            | Operation/condition/ fitment and performance<br>Any side play<br>Excessive wear/travel<br>Pedal rubbers worn excessively or missing.<br>Brake pads friction material - less than 3.0mm<br>Handbrake pawl insecure/ineffective           |
| Check service brake operation           | General condition, fitment & performance<br>Failure on brake tester, vacuum not building.   |
| Check brake pipes                       | Leaks rust, insecure, fouling.  |
| Check jack and wheel key                | There is no appropriate wheel key or jack securely stored   |

**Fuel and Exhaust system**

| <b>Inspection</b>                          | <b>Reason for Failure</b>  |
|--|--|
| Check fuel tanks                           | Not original manufacturers equipment<br>Leaking or insecure<br>Tank condition, free of corrosion |
| Check (all visible) fuel system components | Unshielded, Overflowing, Leaking<br>Fuel accumulating in/on any fitting or receptacle            |
| Check exhaust system                       | Insecure, leaking / “blowing”, corroded<br>Not standard specification                            |
| Smoke emission                             | Failure to meet specified standards per vehicle type   |

**Vehicle Cleanliness/ Appearance/ Structure**

| <b>Inspection</b>  | <b>Reason for Failure</b>  |
|--|--|
| Check bodywork security/condition  | Bodywork damage<br>Bodywork extensively corroded   |
| Check paint finish   | Different colours/shades Not to a uniform finish<br>Surface deficiencies i.e. paint runs, peeling, scratched, beyond that attributable to normal use.<br>Broken paint surface  |
| Check external cleanliness   | Dirty/ Dusty exterior  |
| Check vehicle underside  | Not free from road dirt<br>Excess grease   |
| Check engine compartment   | Dirty, Greasy, Oily<br>Insecure components<br>Defective engine mounting<br>Any leaks   |
| Check passenger compartment is clean and in good condition<br><br>Check interior upholstery for security, cleanliness and condition<br><br>Ramps and steps for disabled access | Dirty/Dusty<br>Contains any rubbish<br>Upholstery, trim or headlining is dirty, missing, insecure, torn or in such a condition as to soil clothing or adversely affect passenger comfort<br>Incorrectly/unsafely stowed, insecure, not in good condition, unstable |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Check front and rear licence plate  | Not displayed<br>Delaminated<br>Illegible<br>Different<br>Not secured with approved fixing kit   |
| Check roof mounted "Taxi" sign (doesn't apply to P-H vehicles)                            | Absent<br>Insecure<br>Fails to illuminate<br>Taxi P.H. stickers correctly positioned<br>Taxi Details & number displayed on vehicle                 |
| Check front and rear "Taxi" or PHV plates.  | Not displayed<br>Different<br>Not secured with fixing kit<br>Taxi P.H. stickers correctly positioned<br>Taxi Details & number displayed on vehicle |
| Online check of road tax or equivalent to be undertaken by testing centre on day of test. | Out of date  |

**Doors, windows and visibility**

| <b>Inspection</b>                                | <b>Reason for Failure</b>  |
|--|--|
| Check operation of door opening mechanisms       | Inoperative, defective<br>Door seals damaged/ missing  |
| Check door hinges                                | Worn, insecure   |
| Check door pillars                               | Insecure, weakened by damage, corroded   |
| Check windows (including view to front and rear) | Any obstruction that limits the view out of front or rear windows<br>Insecure<br>Not made of safety glass<br>Crack, scratch or surface damage, which impairs the driver's vision to the front and rear<br>Tinted out with legal limits<br>Obscured by signs/stickers |

**Meter Testing**

| <b>Inspection</b>   | <b>Reason for Failure</b>  |
|---|--|
| Check Taxi meter (where fitted), lights, seal and calibration | Incorrect specification<br>Missing or broken seal<br>Failure to illuminate<br>Fails road test<br>Defective |

**Approved and Non-Approved additional extras**

| <b>Inspection</b>         | <b>Reason for Failure</b>   |
|---------------------------|---|
| Check fire extinguishers  | Absent<br>Not easily accessible<br>Not properly secured<br>Discharged or lack of pressure<br>charge Damaged<br>Last maintenance check in excess of 12months |
| Estate type vehicles only | Dog guard type device fitted  |
|                           |   |