



Transport for London

Common myths and complaints about red route parking enforcement

TfL targets motorists because they are an easy source of revenue

We have a legal duty under section 16 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 to ensure the efficient and safe movement of traffic using our road network. The red route comprises 550km of the most important, strategic routes in London and this is why it has been designated as a 'No Stopping' network, except in marked bays at the times shown on the adjacent signs. We would prefer not to have to issue any PCNs, however if drivers do not follow the rules, we may need to take enforcement action against them. All surplus income from penalty charges is invested back into improvements to London's transport network.

TfL staff receive a bonus or incentive based on the number of PCNs they issue

PCNs on the red route are issued by CCTV operators, who have all completed an approved course in accordance with the London Councils Code of Practice for Operation of CCTV Enforcement Cameras, or by Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) employed by the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS), who patrol the red route on behalf of TfL. There is no bonus or any other kind of incentive paid to the officers who issue PCNs. We only enforce in congested areas where compliance with the rules is low, where there is a risk to road users' safety, or where other traffic management initiatives have been unsuccessful.

The use of CCTV for parking enforcement has been banned

The Government has restricted authorities' use of CCTV for issuing PCNs for parking enforcement by post. However, in recognition of their strategic importance, the new rules do not apply to enforcement of critical routes such as red routes where traffic must be kept moving for safety reasons; therefore TfL's use of CCTV to enforce red route parking contraventions remains lawful.

CCTV can only be used to issue PCNs for being "Stopped where prohibited (on a red route or clearway)"

The red route comprises the whole width of public highway, from building line to building line, which in most cases includes footways, verges and crossovers. The Statutory Instrument restricting the use of CCTV for parking enforcement specifies that the ban does not apply where a vehicle is stationary on a red route. This means that we may issue a PCN for any red route parking contravention such as double parking ("Parked in a special enforcement area more than 50 cm from the edge of the carriageway and not within a designated parking place") and footway parking ("Parked with one or more wheels on or over a footpath or any part of a road other than a carriageway"). Any driver who believes we have issued a PCN incorrectly has the right to appeal against the PCN to an independent Adjudicator.

There is a 10 minute grace period before a PCN can be issued

The grace period only applies to vehicles stopped in a parking bay. If a vehicle is parked legally in a designated parking bay when it is first parked, the ten minute grace period applies from the moment it becomes parked illegally. This means for example that, if a vehicle is parked in a bay that allows parking between 10am and 4pm, we may issue a PCN if the vehicle is still parked at 4.10pm. Remember that not all bays allow general parking and times may vary so always check the signs.

Other than the ten minute grace period in parking bays, there are very few exemptions to the 'No Stopping' rule on the red route. For all other traffic contraventions, there is no minimum time that must elapse before we can issue a PCN. Our CCTV operators will always observe a vehicle to establish the reason why the driver has stopped. If the reason for stopping does not fall within one of the few permitted exemptions, we may issue a PCN. We do not need to prove that a vehicle is causing an obstruction before we can issue a PCN.

TfL cannot issue a PCN if the sign is twisted or the road marking is faded

The purpose of traffic signs and road markings is to 'adequately inform' drivers of the stopping restrictions on the red route. This means that, provided drivers are not misled, the sign or road marking is valid. We regularly survey our signs and road markings to ensure they are properly maintained. We will always allow drivers time to check the signs but their priority must be to do this as soon as they have stopped.