



**Private Hire Vehicles  
Stopping to pick up and set down passengers where waiting or  
parking restrictions apply**

This Notice summarises the rules that apply to private hire vehicles (minicabs, executive cars, limousines, chauffeur-driven cars etc) in London at present. It replaces PCO Notice 43/06 published in September 2006, and includes information on the new provisions allowing limited rights for PHVs to stop on red routes and the trial of stopping at cash machines on the red route.

**“...to pick up or set down passengers”**

Private hire drivers can stop to pick up or set down passengers in many areas where there are waiting or stopping restrictions e.g. in residents bays or on yellow lines (for red lines, please see below). This covers only the period while the passenger is boarding or alighting.

There is no set time limit, and drivers can stop for as long as necessary for the passenger to get in or out. For instance, if ramps or a lift need to be used to allow a wheelchair user into the vehicle, and time must be taken to ensure that the wheelchair is in the right position and the passenger is secured safely, this is allowed and all appropriate care should be taken. However the vehicle cannot stop for longer than necessary.

**Assisting passengers**

There is no general exemption to leave the vehicle to assist a passenger to or from a building and the usual interpretation is that the passenger (and their luggage) should be picked up or set down at the kerbside. Although the Public Carriage Office recognises the importance of drivers helping customers as much as possible, each highway authority determines what discretion is allowed in its enforcement procedures. A driver who regards this assistance as an essential part of picking up or setting down a particular passenger, e.g. a disabled person, should minimise any time spent away from the vehicle and, if possible, record details of the reason for leaving the vehicle in case a Penalty Charge Notice (PCN) is issued.

**Waiting**

A driver waiting at a time and place where restrictions apply (indicated by yellow or red lines and time plates) is contravening the traffic order and may receive a PCN. This applies whether the vehicle has arrived early for a booking or the passenger is late.

Highway authorities will not allow waiting where a passenger asks a driver to stop and wait while they visit a shop or use an ATM. This is generally seen as little different from a private motorist parking while they do the same.

There is however one exception to this. Transport for London is allowing PHVs with the roundel signs to wait for up to 5 minutes **on red routes only** while passengers use cash machines between 10 pm and 6 am. This is a trial (initially to Christmas 2008) to improve passenger safety, and only applies between these times on roads marked with red route signs. Drivers must not stop anywhere it is unsafe to do so or at places where no stopping is ever allowed (e.g. close to a junction or on a pedestrian crossing, including the zigzags). More details are in PCO Notice 15/08 published in July 2008 and available on the TfL web site at [tfl.gov.uk/pco](http://tfl.gov.uk/pco).

### **Places where a PHV can stop**

Boarding and alighting is allowed:

- on single and double yellow lines;
- in places where loading is prohibited (shown by markings on the kerb);
- in parking bays; and
- in bus lanes.

Drivers should **not** stop at any place where there is a “No stopping” sign, or where stopping would cause an obstruction or a safety hazard, including on the zig-zag lines by pedestrian crossings or outside schools.

PHV drivers with the special signs on their vehicles have limited rights to pick up or set down passengers on most places on red routes (see below).

#### Bus lanes

If the kerbside controls allow PHVs to pick up or set down passengers, they can do this in a bus lane even though they are not normally allowed to drive in the bus lane. Drivers should enter and leave the bus lane in the most direct and safe way, spending as little time in it as possible. Passengers should never be set down in the middle of the road, even if the vehicle is stopped in traffic – the driver must always get close to the kerb.

#### Bus stops

Although PHVs can stop to pick up or set down passengers at some London bus stops, it is recommended that drivers avoid these to reduce disruption to bus services. PHVs cannot stop at ‘bus stop clearways’ marked with a wide yellow line by the kerb and should not stop at bus stops on red routes.

### **Red routes**

These are the main trunk roads in London – making up about 5% of the road network, they carry over 30% of the traffic. They are marked with red no-stopping lines by the kerb and with signs. Stopping restrictions and facilities on red routes were discussed fully in PCO Notice 35/05, published in October 2005 and available

on the TfL web site at [tfl.gov.uk/pco](http://tfl.gov.uk/pco). If there are double red lines, the controls apply around the clock. A single red line means that the restrictions apply part of the time – typically Monday-Saturday between 7 in the morning and 7 in the evening.

Private hire vehicles displaying the new roundel signs on the front and rear screens can stop on most stretches of red route to pick up or set down passengers. The signs are designed to show other road users, red route enforcement officers – both on street and using CCTV cameras – and the police that the vehicle has licensed status and therefore is allowed to set down and pick up on red routes. Drivers should remember that other road users may not be expecting them to stop so take particular care, particularly looking out for buses, cyclists and pedestrians. Details of these rules and the application form for operators can be obtained from [tfl.gov.uk/phvredroutes](http://tfl.gov.uk/phvredroutes).

At and near a small number of particularly busy bus stops, stopping is prohibited for PHVs even with the new signs. At the moment these sites are:

- Wilton Road alongside Victoria Station;
- Euston Road eastbound in front of Kings Cross Station;
- Bishopsgate northbound between the junctions with Liverpool Street and Middlesex Street.

These locations are or will soon be marked with a wide red line by the kerb, in place of the normal single or double red lines. Other sites may be added in future.

Private hire vehicles without the new signs, like other cars, cannot stop when red route controls are in force.

#### Parking and loading boxes

Many stretches of red route have marked boxes where loading or parking is allowed part of the time, often with restrictions on how long a vehicle can stop and how soon they can return. PHVs without the new roundel signs can stop to pick up or set down passengers in a parking bay, but not in a loading bay. If a parking bay has a return time limit shown on the signs, the driver must not park in the same stretch of road within this time limit. On some red routes, parking and loading bays are unrestricted through the night (from 7 pm to 7 am) even if the adjacent red route controls are in force 24 hours a day. This is indicated on the signs next to the parking and loading bays.

In some locations there are special bays marked for pick up or set down. These have a maximum time limit of two minutes and are only for picking up or setting down passengers.

#### **Blue Badge holders**

This refers to the Europe-wide parking concession for disabled people. If a passenger has a Blue Badge, the driver of a PHV can stop on red routes for the passenger to board or alight even if this is not normally allowed. The Blue Badge should be displayed on the dashboard of the car and it would be prudent for the

driver to keep a record of the booking details to confirm any appeal if a PCN is issued.

### **Passenger requests**

Drivers should be familiar with the area in which they work and should, therefore, be able to advise passengers of places where they can stop and wait if necessary. If a passenger asks a driver to wait where this is prohibited, the driver should explain politely that the vehicle cannot wait in certain places. If possible, the driver should suggest alternative shops, ATMs etc as appropriate, or seek ways for the driver and passenger to give each other mutual assurance so that the driver will not lose the fare but the passenger is confident that the vehicle will return for them.

The Public Carriage Office appreciates that these issues can lead to disagreement between drivers and passengers, and understands the difficulties this causes. The professionalism of London's licensed drivers is essential in maintaining the good reputation of London's private hire trade.

### **Enforcement**

PCNs can be issued by Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs), or can be sent to the registered keeper of the vehicle as a result of camera observation. A PCN may be issued by post even if the CEO was on site but had not been able to finish the PCN and serve it before the vehicle is driven away.

In all cases there is a discount for prompt payment of a Penalty Charge. Drivers who are not the registered keepers of the vehicles they use are advised to discuss arrangements for making sure the keeper passes on any PCNs promptly so that there is time to contest any PCNs that have been issued in error.

### **Challenging a Penalty Charge Notice**

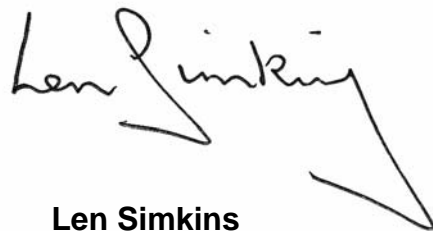
All highway authorities acknowledge that mistakes can sometimes be made, and there are legal mechanisms to allow Notices to be challenged. Some authorities publish information on their web sites describing the stages and processes to appeal against a Notice.

The details of how to make a challenge will be provided on the Notice, and drivers should follow the procedure outlined as quickly as possible. Any evidence to support the case, such as copies of relevant licences, details of the passenger, a copy of any log that shows the journey in question, or photographs of the location if the signage is incorrect, should be provided with the appeal. The private hire trade associations and trade unions may be able to advise drivers on how to express your challenge. If the authority does not accept the challenge, they will advise the driver of their right to appeal to an independent adjudicator at the Parking and Traffic Appeals Service. There is no charge for an appeal, and the driver can go to the hearing if desired. Again, providing copies of all appropriate evidence will help the case. The adjudicator's decision is final and binding on both the driver and the authority, and the adjudicator can award costs if either party acted unreasonably.

## **Transport for London**

Transport for London is the licensing authority for taxis and private hire and the strategic body for transport in London. TfL is also the highway authority for the red route network.

Most of London's roads are managed by the 33 boroughs, and TfL has encouraged these organisations to take sensible and pragmatic approaches to these issues. Relevant officers in each of the boroughs have been advised of the contents of this Notice.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Len Simkins". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

**Len Simkins**  
**Head of Strategy and Planning**

**2 September 2008**

For previous PCO Notices visit [tfl.gov.uk/pco](http://tfl.gov.uk/pco)