



**Public Carriage Office  
Private Hire Vehicle Licensing**

**Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

**Appointments**

**How do I make an appointment for my vehicle licensing inspection?**

All enquiries relating to:

- making a licensing inspection appointment
- confirming or changing a pre-arranged licensing appointment
- changing the time or location of the licensing inspection
- cancelling a licensing appointment should be made to the licensing booking line on **0845 378 2345**

**I have been offered an appointment at a test centre/time that is not convenient. Can I change the venue/time?**

The date/time or location of the licensing inspection can be changed by calling the licensing booking line number **0845 378 2345**

**What if I need to get my vehicle licensed/inspected urgently?**

When contacting the call-centre, make clear that your vehicle needs to be inspected urgently and give the reasons for that. For example:

- it's new vehicle not previously licensed
- you need a re-test following an earlier inspection failure

**Ad-hoc appointments**

SGS have been asked to make ad-hoc inspections available. SGS and PCO are to examine the demand for ad-hoc inspections so that we can better match the supply of inspections to meet owner's demands

**Bus lane exemption**

**My vehicle has passed the licensing inspection; am I entitled to drive in bus lanes?**

No. There are currently no provisions to exempt licensed private hire vehicles from bus lane regulations

## **Red Routes**

### **My vehicle has passed the licensing inspection; can I stop to pick up or set down passengers?**

Yes, but only if your vehicle has the private hire red route signage displayed correctly on the front and rear windscreen of your vehicle.

The signage is provided free by the PCO and all licensed private hire operators can apply for this. The additional signage must not be displayed on unlicensed vehicles or on vehicles for which an exemption from displaying licence discs has been granted, and therefore the drivers of such vehicles will not have the red route exemption. This signage does not replace the private hire vehicle licence disc – vehicles must continue to display both licence discs in addition to the new signs.

Further details on this can be found in PCO Notice 41/07, issued in December 2007.

## **Royal Parks**

### **Can a licensed PHV use the Royal Parks?**

No. Under the Royal Parks and Open Spaces Regulation 1997, access to the parks is prohibited for vehicles used for trade or business unless specifically exempted. Private hire vehicles do not currently benefit from such an exemption. Consequently, if a licensed vehicle uses a Royal Park in connection with a booking, the user runs the risk of being issued with a Penalty Charge Notice (PCN).

## **Congestion Charging**

### **How can I find out if my vehicle is exempt from congestion charging?**

Call the PCO PHV Contract management Team on **020 7126 1806** for confirmation.

### **What do I do if I receive a Penalty Charge Notice (PCN)?**

You must follow the instructions given on the PCN about how to appeal. Your appeal must be made within the timescales set out in the PCN. The Congestion Charging Unit will then contact PCO and we can confirm with them if your vehicle should have been exempt.

## **General information**

### **Who are SGS?**

SGS United Kingdom Limited have been contracted to provide the private hire vehicle inspection service on behalf of Transport for London.

## **How do I make contact with the PCO?**

PCO help line number is **0845 602 7000** you can then select the appropriate menu option.

## **Where can I get more information?**

Information leaflets can be collected from any of the inspection centres or from the Public Carriage Office.

## **Inspections**

### **What documents will I need to bring to the inspection centre?**

Please refer to the Public Carriage Office PHV Leaflet no:1 entitled Vehicle Inspection Criteria Guidance Notes (Before Licence Issue).

### **What will be tested/inspected**

Please refer to the Public Carriage Office PHV Leaflet no:1 entitled Vehicle Inspection Criteria Guidance Notes (Before Licence Issue) and the PHV Inspection Manual.

### **My vehicle has failed the licensing inspection; can I appeal against the decision not to issue a licence?**

- Owners of vehicles that fail the licensing inspection will be given a vehicle inspection report listing the reason(s) why a licensed has been refused along with instructions on what to do next. In each case the vehicle inspector will explain why the licence has been refused.
- You can ask for the SGS team leader to re-consider the failure decision. If the SGS team leader accepts your representation, the original decision will be reversed and you will be granted a PHV licence.
- Should the SGS team leader uphold the original decision, you **must** rectify the defect/s listed on the “Vehicle Inspection Report” before making a re-test appointment.
- You also have the right to appeal to a Magistrates’ Court against a decision not to issue a PHV licence. Should this option be considered, you must apply in writing and enclose the “Vehicle Inspection Report” and any relevant correspondence.

### **My vehicle has failed the inspection. Can I still use my vehicle for private hire?**

No – It is contrary to the regulations to use a vehicle for the purpose of carrying passengers if the vehicle is not licensed. You should make every effort to get the defects corrected and present your vehicle for a re-test.

## **Inspection centres**

### **Where are the PHV inspection centres located?**

There are four inspection centres located around the London area. The centres are located in:

- Croydon
- Enfield
- Hanworth
- Woolwich

### **I've heard that it is easier to pass an inspection at one inspection centre than at another?**

PCO and SGS are continuously analysing management information to monitor the performance of each of the licensing inspectors/inspection centres. This information is, in turn, used to offer additional training where required.

## **New vehicles**

### **I have a new/different car, how can I get an urgent appointment?**

Call the SGS booking line number **0845 378 2345** and speak to the call centre agent and make it clear that you require a new vehicle to be licensed.

## **Replacement licences**

### **I have had my PHV licence/disc stolen. Can I get a replacement?**

The theft of either the PHV licence or licence disc/s must be reported to your local police. You should ensure that you obtain a unique crime reference number showing that you have reported the theft. You are also required to contact the PCO PHV Contract Management Team on **020 7126 1806** where further advice will be given.

## **Compliance/MoT tests**

### **Is my vehicle required to undergo a second MoT test?**

If your vehicle required an MoT certificate at the time of the licensing inspection, you must ensure that a second MoT is obtained 6 months from the date of the licensing inspection.

## **Licensing fee**

### **What is the cost of the licensing inspection?**

Application fee £87

Grant of licence fee £27  
Total £114

NB: The licence is reviewed annually and separate announcement are made in the event of an increase.

## **Inspection Site Locations**

### **ENFIELD**

Unit 6 Watermill  
Business Centre  
Edison Road  
Enfield  
EN3 7XF

### **CROYDON**

Unit 4  
Twin Bridge Ind Pk  
232 Selsdon Road  
South Croydon  
CR2 6PL

### **HANWORTH**

Unit 9 Links Ind Estate  
Popham Close  
Hanworth  
TW13 6JE

### **WOOLWICH**

Unit 2 IO Centre  
Cornwallis Road  
(Off Tom Cribb Road)  
Woolwich  
SE18 6SR

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