

Taxi Operator Handbook

Contents

Part 1 - Introduction	3
Part 2 - Who is the operator?.....	4
Figure 1: An example of a licence granted to an individual	5
Figure 2: An example of a licence granted to a limited liability company.....	5
Figure 3 :An example of a licence granted to an ordinary partnership	6
Part 3 - Fit and proper person.....	6
Part 4 - Taxi drivers.....	10
Part 5 - Do I need an office?	11
Part 6 - Fees.....	11
Part 7 - Applying for your licence	14
Part 8 - Considering your application.....	15
Part 9 - Licensing decision and issue of licence	16
Part 10 - Conditions of licence.....	16
Part 11 - Record Keeping Requirements	17
Part 12 - Refunds	20
Part 13 - Manage an existing taxi operator licence.....	20
Part 14 - Subcontracting Work.....	23
Part 15 - Regulation of taxi operators	23
Part 16 - How DVA will handle your information	24
Part 17 - Further Information	25
Annex A. Taxi Licensing Legislation.....	25
Annex B. Key definitions from the Taxis Act (Northern Ireland) 2008	26
Annex C. Basic Disclosure Certificate	27

Document Control

Date	Version	Change made by	Authorised by	Change description
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Part 1 - Introduction

This Handbook is designed to provide information and advice to prospective taxi operator licence applicants and current taxi operator licence holders in Northern Ireland.

It is produced to give general guidance on how to apply for a licence and the standards the Department expects from licence holders in the course of their business and is therefore not a legal document.

This guide contains descriptions and definitions of all the systems and procedures you will need to follow to become a safe and legal taxi operator. It has been set out in order of the application process with additional information being referred to in the annexes.

If you are a new operator, you will find this guide useful for advice on the taxi operator licensing procedures and the legal requirements and undertakings you will be required to meet.

If you are an experienced and established operator, it will help you to refresh your understanding of taxi operator licensing and update your knowledge on legislation and best practice.

The Department of Infrastructure (DfI) is the licensing authority for taxi operator licensing in Northern Ireland. The administration process is carried out, on its behalf, by the Passenger Transport Licensing Division (PTLD) County Hall, Castlerock Road, Waterside, Coleraine BT51 3HS a division within the Driver and Vehicle Agency (DVA).

The Taxis Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 , Taxi Operator Licensing Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012 and associated regulations provides for the licensing and regulation of taxi operator licensing in Northern Ireland, and the drivers and operators of such vehicles.

It is an offence to provide a taxi service in Northern Ireland without having obtained a taxi operator licence to do so. It is also illegal for a licensed taxi operator to carry out taxi bookings using taxi drivers or vehicles that do not have the appropriate licences.

Part 2 - Who is the operator?

The Taxis Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 empowers DfI to grant a taxi operator's licence to any 'person' (legal entity) that it considers fit and proper to hold such a licence.

Taxi operator licences are not transferable, so it is important that the correct 'person' (legal entity) applies for the licence. Whilst this list is not exhaustive, the most common types of applicants are sole traders, 'ordinary' partnerships and limited liability companies.

Where an application is successful and the applicant is:

- **A sole trader**, the licence will be issued in the name of the individual who applied for it.
- **An 'ordinary' partnership**, the licence will be issued in the partnership's name as specified on the application.
- **A limited liability company or LLP**, the licence will be issued in the company's/LLP's registered name.

You should also be aware that, once licensed, any change to the structure of your business will require a new licence. For example, if a sole trader incorporates their business as a limited liability company, they will need to have applied for and been granted a licence on behalf of their new company before it takes over legal responsibility for the taxi operator business.

If you are unsure as to how to structure your business, you should seek advice from an accountant or solicitor.

Figure 1: An example of a licence granted to an individual

Figure 1 is an example of a licence issued to an individual called John Smith. As you can see, John Smith has two trading names, one for each element of his taxi operator business.

In this instance, as John Smith is solely responsible for the business in question, he would have applied as a sole trader.

It is open to John Smith to apply to add additional operating centres to his licence as long as he will be solely responsible for any taxi bookings accepted at those centres



The image shows a 'Taxi Operator Licence' issued by the Driver & Vehicle Agency. The licence number is TOL999999. The holder is John Smith, trading as 'A to B Cars'. The address is County Hall, 1 Castlerock Road, Coleraine, BT51 3HS. The licence commences on 03/12/2019 and expires on 02/12/2024. It lists two operating centres: 'A to B Cars, County Hall, Castlerock Road, Coleraine, BT51 3HS' and 'A to B Chauffeur Hire, Crown Buildings, Artillery Road, Coleraine, BT52 2AJ'. The licence is issued on behalf of the Licensing Authority by Infrastructure Bonneagair.

Driver & Vehicle Agency

Taxi Operator Licence

Licence Number: TOL999999

John Smith

Trading As

A to B Cars

**County Hall
1 Castlerock Road
Coleraine
BT51 3HS**

Commences 03/12/2019 - Expires 02/12/2024

Operating centre(s) (Trading As "Name" included if applicable)

A to B Cars, County Hall, Castlerock Road, Coleraine, BT51 3HS
A to B Chauffeur Hire, Crown Buildings, Artillery Road, Coleraine, BT52 2AJ

Infrastructure
Bonneagair
www.infrastructure.gov.uk

Issued on behalf of the Licensing Authority

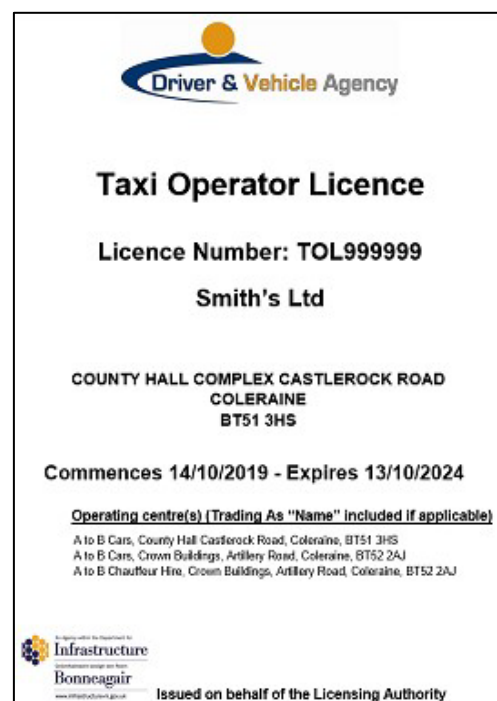
Figure 2: An example of a licence granted to a limited liability company

Figure 2 is an example of a licence issued to a limited liability company called Smith's Ltd. In this instance, Smith's Ltd run a minicab firm (A to B Cars) from two operating centres. The company also runs a chauffeur service (A to B Chauffeur Hire) from one of those centres. Smith's Ltd is legally responsible for all taxi bookings accepted at both centres.

Limited liability companies are incorporated with Companies House and will have a registered number (which is a unique identifier), and registered office. A licence granted to a company may only be used by the company with the registered number that was specified on the application.

If a licensed company is liquidated or dissolved, its licence must be returned to our offices within 7 days of that event.

Any change of a director designated member must be notified within 7 days of the event.



The image shows a 'Taxi Operator Licence' issued by the Driver & Vehicle Agency. The licence number is TOL999999. The holder is Smith's Ltd. The address is County Hall Complex Castlerock Road, Coleraine, BT51 3HS. The licence commences on 14/10/2019 and expires on 13/10/2024. It lists three operating centres: 'A to B Cars, County Hall Castlerock Road, Coleraine, BT51 3HS', 'A to B Cars, Crown Buildings, Artillery Road, Coleraine, BT52 2AJ', and 'A to B Chauffeur Hire, Crown Buildings, Artillery Road, Coleraine, BT52 2AJ'. The licence is issued on behalf of the Licensing Authority by Infrastructure Bonneagair.

Driver & Vehicle Agency

Taxi Operator Licence

Licence Number: TOL999999

Smith's Ltd

**COUNTY HALL COMPLEX CASTLEROCK ROAD
COLERAINE
BT51 3HS**

Commences 14/10/2019 - Expires 13/10/2024

Operating centre(s) (Trading As "Name" included if applicable)

A to B Cars, County Hall Castlerock Road, Coleraine, BT51 3HS
A to B Cars, Crown Buildings, Artillery Road, Coleraine, BT52 2AJ
A to B Chauffeur Hire, Crown Buildings, Artillery Road, Coleraine, BT52 2AJ

Infrastructure
Bonneagair
www.infrastructure.gov.uk

Issued on behalf of the Licensing Authority

Figure 3: An example of a licence granted to an ordinary partnership

Figure 3 is an example of a licence granted to an ordinary partnership. Such a body is not registered with Companies House and will consist of two or more persons who are all responsible for the business.

All partnerships are advised to draw up a written partnership agreement before they apply for a licence.

Any change in the makeup of a licensed partnership must be notified to this office within 7 days of the change.



Part 3 - Fit and proper person

1. Fit and proper criteria

To be considered for a taxi operator licence an “applicant”* must be a “fit and proper” person. In order to be considered as such, applicants will be expected to demonstrate that they have complied with legal requirements connected with running a business. *This includes all individuals who are listed as stakeholders on the application.* Failure to do so could result in the refusal of an application. Listed below are the criteria the Department will use to determine if applicants are “fit and proper” when making decisions on operator licence applications.

- **Proof of Identity:** all stakeholders must provide evidence of identity. For those applying for a first application, or for those included for the first time in a renewal application, evidence will also be required as part of the ‘right to work and reside in the UK check’. Separately, all stakeholders who wish to assist in the applying for or the managing of a licence will have their identity verified through the identity assurance process
- **Convictions:** subject to the Rehabilitation of Offenders (Northern Ireland) Order 1978 applicants must declare any unspent convictions. and if they are not the

holder of a current Northern Ireland taxi driver licence they must provide a Basic Disclosure Certificate issued less than 3 months prior to date of application. Additionally, if any member of the organisation has lived outside the UK they may be asked to provide a Letter of Good Conduct from the country they have resided in

- Bankruptcy: applicants must declare whether they have had a discharge suspended for failing to co-operate with the Official Receiver
- Company directorship: applicants must declare whether they have ever had a disqualification order made against them under the Company Directors Disqualification (Northern Ireland) Order 2002, thereby disqualifying them from being a director, or taking part in the management of a limited company
- Health and Safety: applicants must declare and show that they are compliant with any requirements applicable to their premises, their staff or the public
- Accounts: applicants must provide evidence that they are registered for VAT and the business is compliant with the requirements for audited or certified accounts. Sole Traders or Partnerships - applicants may provide a copy of their last HMRC self-assessment return or if it is a new business, confirmation from HMRC that they have applied for, or registered for, self-assessment; or provide a bank statement showing either a monthly direct debit or payment to HMRC (print outs must be stamped, signed and dated by a bank official), or alternatively where the business is not registered for VAT, evidence that the business tax obligations are in order
- Insurance: applicants must provide evidence that, where staff are employed at a taxi operating centre, they are maintaining a policy of employers' liability insurance of at least £5,000,000 in any one event; and where an operating centre (depot) is accessible by the public, they are maintaining a policy of public liability insurance of at least £5,000,000 in any one event
- Radio Circuit: a taxi operator who communicates with his drivers by two way radio or uses a computerised booking dispatch system will be required to provide evidence that they hold the appropriate licence issued by Ofcom (Office of Communications NI) by providing a copy of the radio licence at application

Ofcom (Office of Communications NI)
2nd Floor Landmark House
5 Cromac Quay
The Gasworks

Ormeau Road

Belfast

BT7 2JD Telephone: 0300 123 3333

Licensed taxi operators cannot use CB radios in connection with their taxi business

- Planning Permission: applicants* must provide a declaration that the operating centre complies with planning regulations. This can be either:
 - a. Planning permission has been granted
 - b. A Certificate of Lawful Use is in place which allows the premises to be used as an operating centre without planning permission
 - c. Or that evidence is available that planning permission or a Certificate of Lawful Use has been applied for

It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that any taxi operating centre is compliant with current planning requirements and where there is any doubt, an applicant should contact the council planning office directly for advice and guidance. If it is found that an Operating Centre does not hold the current planning approval the taxi operator licence may be revoked

- Right to reside and to work in the UK: when a taxi operator first applies for a licence or renews a licence for the first time after 1 December 2016, all stakeholders included in the application must provide evidence that they have entitlement to reside and work in the UK and to undertake work as a taxi operator. Each named person in the organisation must be available to attend a personal interview in PTLTD, Coleraine to confirm their right to reside and work in the UK and must supply evidence from the list of documents specified in the Home Office publication: '[Guidance for the Department for Infrastructure to prevent illegal working in the taxi sector in Northern Ireland](#)'. However, if a stakeholder is the holder of a current Northern Ireland taxi driver licence issued after 1 December 2016 they will generally not need to undergo a further check. For those who have limited permission to be in the UK, this check will be undertaken at each subsequent application to renew or extend the licence until such time as the applicant* can demonstrate that they are entitled to remain indefinitely in the UK, and there are no restrictions on their ability to work. Where a person's immigration permission to be in the UK is time-limited to less than the statutory length for an operator's licence, the licence will be issued for a duration which does not exceed the applicant's period of permission to live and work in

the UK. In the event that the Home Office cuts short or ends a person's immigration permission (referred to as curtailment or revocation), any licence that person holds will automatically lapse

- Previous applications: if anyone named on an application has previously been refused a taxi driver licence or a taxi operator's licence, or held either licence elsewhere in the country, which was suspended or revoked, they will be expected to supply details of the refusal, suspension or revocation upon application

***Applicants should note that where a licence has been issued and breaches of the requirements are found, which indicate that the licence holder is no longer considered "fit and proper", the licence may be suspended or revoked.**

2. Declarations

The applicant* or person nominated to apply for a licence, its renewal or variation, will be required to make a declaration that the information given and material provided, is true. If the declaration proves false or the material misleading, the licence, renewal or variation can be refused on the grounds that the person is not "fit and proper". Additionally, false information could lead to the suspension or revocation of any licence granted and to formal legal proceedings being initiated against the applicant. It is therefore essential, that where a business gives authority for a member of staff to act as a nominee on their behalf, that they ensure the nominee understand of the importance of providing accurate information.

Section 44^{**}: a person who knowingly or recklessly makes a statement or furnishes information which is a false statement or misleading material, particularly for the purposes of obtaining, or varying, a licence is guilty of an offence.

***Applicant means any person named in the respective application.**

****Section 44 refers to the Taxis Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 , a copy of which can be found at www.legislation.gov.uk/nia/2008**

3. Operating centre inspections

During the lifetime of your taxi operator licence the Department may wish to conduct an inspection of any of your operating centres. As part of this inspection you may be expected

to provide evidence that you comply with the administrative rules listed above and with any record keeping requirements as set out in the regulations.

1. How you will record the required details of any bookings you may accept
2. How you will record the required particulars of licensed drivers and vehicles you will have available to you for the purpose of carrying out taxi bookings
3. How you will provide the Department with details of the licensed taxi drivers and vehicles you have available, or have had available, to fulfil bookings in a specified period
4. How you will ensure that you do not use drivers or vehicles to discharge bookings without the required particulars of those drivers and vehicles being kept on file
5. Your procedure for dealing with complaints and how details of those complaints will be recorded
6. Your procedure for dealing with lost and found property and how details of lost and found items will be recorded
7. That you are aware of the retention periods for records of bookings, drivers, vehicles, complaints, and lost property
8. Your VAT registration document or, if you are not registered for VAT purposes, a letter from a qualified solicitor or other appropriate documentation to show that VAT registration is not necessary
9. That you have a fixed landline telephone number for the purpose of accepting taxi bookings
10. Your procedure for providing passengers with an accurate estimate of the fare
11. Your procedure for providing booking confirmation details to passengers prior to the commencement of the journey
12. How you will ensure that you do not exceed the permitted number of licensed taxis to carry out bookings, in accordance with your licence

The particulars that a licensed operator must keep in respect of bookings, drivers, vehicles, complaints and lost property are set out in Part 11 of this handbook.

Part 4 - Taxi drivers

A taxi operator licence does not entitle you to drive a taxi. If you wish to act as a taxi driver you must obtain a taxi driver's licence. The regulations governing suitability to be a driver

are quite distinct from those governing suitability to be an operator. Anyone intending to hold both forms of licence should be aware that it is quite possible you may be granted an operator's licence(s) but refused a driver's licence.

A driver cannot be affiliated to more than one taxi operator at any time. The only exceptions are when the second operator employs the driver for:

- wedding transport or funeral transport in a Class C vehicle or
- Education & Library Board contracted home to school transport

Further information on taxi driver requirement and responsibilities can be found in the [Taxi Manual - all you need to know to be a taxi driver](#)

Part 5 - Do I need an office?

The Taxis Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 requires that you have at least one operating centre. An operating centre must be where your bookings are taken and where your records can be inspected. This can be your home address which would mean that your home will be your operating centre.

Part 6 - Fees

To obtain a taxi operator's licence you have to pay two fees.

The first is a non-refundable fee of £140 which you must pay when you submit your initial taxi operator licence application.

The second fee is payable with the application for the grant of licence. DVA will inform you that your initial application has been successful and invite you to apply for the grant of your licence. Failure to apply for your grant within 28 days from the approval of your initial application will require a new initial application and fee to be submitted.

The Regulations prescribe the level of application and grant fees by reference to the number of vehicles that an operator will have available for carrying out bookings.

There are two types of operator's licence:

- A small operator licence is limited to a maximum of two taxis with a minimum of one available for use at application
- A large operator licence has no restrictions on the number of taxis but must have at least three available for use at application

The licence fees are based on the length of licence period, licence type chosen (small or large) and number of vehicles to be affiliated to that licence.

You have the option to apply for a 1, 3 or 5 year licence.

You cannot convert the type of operator's licence once granted – you will need to send a completely new application if you want to amend the licence type you hold.

The Grant of Licence fee is a combination of the **fixed fee** (table 1) plus a **per vehicle fee** (table 2).

The tables below allow you to calculate the cost:

Fixed fee for Grant of Licence (Table 1) Small Operator (1 or 2 vehicles)	Large Operator (3 or more vehicles)
1 year – £15	1 year – £40
3 year – £45	3 year – £220
5 year – £75	5 year – £360

Plus: Per Vehicle Fee (Table 2) For each of the first 25 vehicles included in your business	For the 26th vehicle and each vehicle thereafter included in your business
1 year – £40 (for each vehicle)	1 year – £10 (for each vehicle)
3 year – £120 (for each vehicle)	3 year – £12 (for each vehicle)
5 year – £200 (for each vehicle)	5 year – £20 (for each vehicle)

Changes to your drivers, vehicles or operating centres during the validity of a licence will be charged based on the fees below:

Adding/Substituting Drivers, Vehicles and adding an Operator Centre	
To replace a driver or vehicle	£5 for each driver or vehicle you are replacing on your licence Note: There is no fee to remove a driver or vehicle from your licence.
To add additional vehicle(s) e.g. if you initially paid to include 10 taxis when your licence was granted and during the life of the licence you want to add an 11th vehicle	Calculated on the basis of the number of remaining years and months on the licence but with a minimum charge of £5
Add a new operating centre	£200

How to calculate your fees

Below is an example of how to calculate your fees

Small operator (two or less vehicles)	Grant of Licence	+	Per vehicle
one year	£15	+	£40
three years	£45	+	£120
five years	£75	+	£200

Small operator with two vehicles for five years would be £475.

Large operator (three or more vehicles)	Grant of Licence	+	Per vehicle [1 – 25]	Per vehicle [26 +]
one year	£40	+	£40	£10
three years	£220	+	£120	£12
five years	£360	+	£200	£20

Example: large operator with eight vehicles for five years would be £1,960.

Example: large operator with 29 vehicles for three years would be £3,268.

Small operators can only apply for up to two licensed taxis to be added to their licence and must have a minimum of one available at grant application. If during the licence period a small operator decides to increase their business and operate with three or more vehicles they **must** apply for a large operator licence. A new application fee and grant of licence fee will be payable. Only once the new licence has been granted can they apply for a refund of the full remaining years on the small licence.

Large operators must apply for their licence based on the number of licensed vehicles they will have available to operate as taxis. Once granted they are under no obligation to maintain a minimum number of taxis available on their licence. If during the licence period a large operator decides to reduce their business and operate with 2 or less vehicles, they **may** apply for a small operator licence. A new application fee and grant of licence fee will be payable. Only once the new licence has been granted can they apply for a refund of the full remaining years on the large licence.

If you are considering changing your licence type, please contact the operator licensing team in the first instance.

Part 7 - Applying for your licence

Once you are satisfied, that as a business, you can meet the licensing requirements and have decided who will be the operator, you can apply for an operator's licence.

Your application will be submitted via the DVA Online webpage. To access DVA Online services you must have a nidirect account and have had your identity verified. To find out more about identity assurance and the documents you need to verify your identity see [Identity assurance](#)

Your ordinary driver licence details will also need to match the identity documentation supplied before you can use the online service. Further information about keeping your driving licence up-to-date can be found at: [Keeping your driving licence up-to-date](#)

You will be required to confirm the identity of the legal entity that is applying for a licence and to provide information about that person or persons, and the details of all proposed premises (operating centres) in Northern Ireland.

For a first application as a sole trader, the named person must submit the application and make the relevant declarations. For a partnership, the first application and declarations must be made by one of the partners, for all other types of applicant, the first application and declarations must be made by a person equivalent to a director of the body that is applying for a licence (e.g. in a limited liability partnership, a designated member must

make the declarations). Renewals can be submitted by 'Nominee(s)' of the licence holder provided they are aware that giving false information could lead to prosecution.

Each stakeholder (named persons associated with the application) will be required to provide relevant personal information, and their history, to the applicant making the declaration so that we may assess the fitness of each individual who will be associated with the licence.

Full details of all premises (operating centres) you would like to use.

A payment for the appropriate fee (see Part 6 for further information).

For applicants seeking to renew an existing licence, applications will only be accepted when you have received your electronic notification to apply. Any delay to the submission of the application may result in a delay of the application being fully assessed and may affect the ability of the operator to continue trading.

Section 25 **

- (1) An application for the grant of a licence shall be made in such form and include such declarations and information as the Department may require.**
- (2) The Department may require an applicant to furnish such further information as it may consider necessary for dealing with the application.**
- (3) If a person fails to do so without reasonable excuse to furnish information when required to do so, the Department may decline to proceed further with the application and refuse to grant the licence.**

Part 8 - Considering your application

When assessing an application for a taxi operator's licence, we will consider whether all named persons associated with the application (stakeholders) are suitable for licensing and meet the required "fit and proper" criteria.

The assessment will be based on the information provided within the personal declaration as well as any declared or known licensing history.

If the stakeholders are considered suitable for licensing we will then consider whether the operating centre(s) will be suitable for licensing, based on the information and documentation supplied, as well as any declared or known history. If necessary, a pre-licensing inspection of proposed operating centre(s) may be carried out in advance of a licensing decision being made.

Part 9 - Licensing decision and issue of licence

After reviewing your application we will notify you of our decision. If you are successful you will be sent an electronic message and advised that your electronic licence is available for viewing and printing.

If your application is not successful you will be advised of the reason for its refusal along with information on how to appeal, including the associated timescales.

Part 10 - Conditions of licence

Should your application be successful, once the licence is granted you will need to adhere to the following conditions.

1. Display a copy of the operator licence within each operating centre named on your licence that is accessible to the public.
2. Maintain public liability insurance cover for any of the operating centres specified on a licence that is accessible to members of the public, and employers' liability insurance where staff are employed at a taxi operating centre.
3. Inform DVA of the following within 7 days of the event/change:
 - where the licence holder or anyone associated with the licence (e.g. any of the stakeholders) are convicted of an offence and provide details of the conviction
 - any material changes to its operating model which may affect the operator's compliance with the licensing conditions
 - any material changes to the information provided in the licence application or variation of licence
 - when any driver becomes unavailable for carrying out bookings due to unsatisfactory conduct in connection with the driving of a taxi (the name of driver and circumstances of the case)
4. Shall not use CB apparatus in connection with a taxi booking.

5. Shall have and maintain effectively, a procedure for dealing with complaints arising in connection with any booking accepted by the licensed operator.
6. Shall have and maintain effectively, a procedure for dealing with property left behind by customers in either a taxi or at an operating centre.
7. Shall agree the fare or provide an accurate estimate fare for a prebooked journey.
8. Shall charge a fare in accordance with the taxi meter when using a Class A or B licensed taxi to carry out a booking.
9. Must not use more than the number of taxis listed on the taxi operator licence.
10. Must not use a driver or vehicle which is not specified on their licence.
11. Must provide the Department with such particulars of drivers and vehicles as may be required from time to time.

As well as these general conditions, we may also attach specific conditions to your licence in certain circumstances. If we do so, we will explain what these conditions are when granting your licence and provide you with information on how to appeal, including the associated timescales.

It is important that you adhere to all the conditions on your licence. If you do not, then we may take action which could include suspension or revocation of your taxi operator's licence. We can inspect records retained at an operating centre(s) to confirm compliance with the conditions.

Part 11 - Record Keeping Requirements

Records are required to be kept by a licensed taxi operator at each operating centre specified on an operator's licence, either in writing or in a way that the information can easily be transcribed.

Bookings

Before the commencement of each journey an operator must record the following particulars of each booking which has been accepted:

1. The date on which the booking is made and, if different, the date of the proposed journey
2. The name of the person for whom the booking is made or other identification of them, or, if more than one person, the name or other identification of one of them

3. The agreed time and place of collection, or, if more than one, the agreed time and place of the first
4. The main destination specified
5. The agreed fare or estimated quote
6. The name of the driver carrying out the booking or other identification of them.
7. If applicable, the name of the other operator to whom the booking has been subcontracted
8. The registered number of the vehicle to be used or such other means of identifying it as may be adopted

All booking records must be kept for 12 months from the date on which the booking was accepted.

Drivers

The operator shall keep at each operating centre specified on their licence a record containing the particulars of each driver who is available to them for carrying out bookings by them at that centre. The particulars that must be kept for each driver are:

The driver's surname, forenames, address and date of birth

1. The driver's national insurance number
2. A photocopy of the driver's ordinary driving licence, to include the card licence and up to date counterpart licence showing all endorsements
3. A photocopy of the driver's taxi driver licence
4. A photograph of the driver
5. The date on which the driver became available to the licensed operator
6. The date on which the driver ceased to be so available

All driver records must be kept for 12 months from the date of last entry

Vehicles

The operator shall keep at each operating centre specified on their licence a record of all taxi vehicles which are available to him for carrying out bookings accepted by them at that centre. The particulars that must be kept for each vehicle are:

1. The make, model and colour
2. The registration mark

3. The name and address of the registered keeper
4. A copy of the current certificate of insurance
5. A copy of the current Taxi Vehicle Licence
6. The date on which the vehicle became available to the licensed operator
7. The date on which the vehicle ceased to be available

All vehicle records must be kept for 12 months from the date of last entry

Complaints

The operator shall keep at each operating centre specified on their licence a record of any complaints made in respect of their actions as a licensed taxi operator. The particulars that must be kept for each complaint are:

1. The name of the complainant and any address, telephone number or other contact details they provided
2. The nature of the complaint
3. Details of any investigation carried out and subsequent action taken as a result
4. The date of the related taxi booking
5. The name of the driver who carried out the booking
6. The registration mark of the vehicle used
7. The taxi vehicle licence number of the vehicle used

All complaint records must be kept for 12 months from the date of entry.

Lost Property

The operator shall keep at each operating centre specified on their licence a record of any lost property found at that centre or in any taxi vehicle used to carry out a booking accepted by them. The particulars that must be kept for each item are:

1. The date on which it was found
2. The place where it was found, and if it was found in a taxi the registration mark of that vehicle
3. A description of the item

All lost property records must be kept for 6 months from the date of entry.

Retention period for operating centre records

Where a licensed operator ceases to use a centre specified on their licence, they must maintain all records relating to that centre and the drivers associated with it for a 6 month period from the date of the last entry.

Part 12 - Refunds

The initial taxi operator application fee is non-refundable.

However, the grant of licence fee may be partially refunded:

- Where a licence is surrendered and the licensed operator has ceased trading, or
- Where the business has been sold/transferred and before the date of transfer a new operator's licence has been granted

Refund calculations are based on the number of full years remaining on the licence at the point at which the licence is surrendered (and a new licence issued), for which a licence fee has been paid.

Where a refund has been issued, the licence ceases to be valid.

Part 13 - Manage an existing taxi operator licence

Operators can make changes to their operator's licences online. These changes include:

- Renewing your licence
- Adding/removing vehicles/drivers
- Adding/removing an operating centre
- Making changes to the operating mode
- Printing your licence
- Surrendering your licence and apply for a refund

The online system gives you 24hr access to your business details and will allow the licence holder to manage their account at any time, by adding and removing drivers and/or vehicles, when you need to change capacity to suit your business needs.

You will also be able to view your licence history, print your licence and read any messages or requests about your taxi operator licence.

Further information can be found at:

- [Customer Guide - Linking Licences](#)
- [Customer Guide - Manage licences](#)

Operators will also have the facility to add a “Nominee or Nominees” to manage their licence on their behalf.

Further information about the nomination process can be found at:

- [Customer Guide - Nomination Process](#)

Addition of driver

A **£5 administration** fee is required for the addition of each licensed driver you apply to add to your licence. This must be paid at application before a driver can be added to your licence. On approval you will receive confirmation that the driver has been added to your licence and you can view the change to your electronic licence. **It is an offence to use a licensed driver that is not affiliated to your licence.**

Addition of vehicles

A **£5 administration** fee is required for the addition of each licensed vehicle added to your licence along with any unpaid licence fee. This will be calculated at application based on the number of vehicles on your licence and must be paid before a vehicle can be added to your licence. A small operator licence can only have 2 vehicles on a licence and if additional vehicles are required a new large operator licence must be applied for. On approval you will receive confirmation that the vehicle has been added to your licence and you can view the change to your electronic licence. **It is an offence to use a licensed taxi that is not affiliated to your licence.**

Removal of drivers/vehicles

There is no fee for the removal of drivers or vehicles.

An operator can choose to remove a driver or vehicle from their own licence at any time and this will be confirmed by a notification to your DVA Online account.

Another current licensed operator may choose to add one of your existing drivers or vehicles to their licence. If this is the case, on approval, you will receive a message to advise that the driver or vehicle has been removed from your licence and you can view the change to your electronic licence.

During the validity of your operator licence, taxi driver or taxi vehicle licences that expire will remain on your licence until they are re-licensed. It is an offence to use an unlicensed vehicle or driver on your licence or an unaffiliated driver or vehicle to operate a taxi service.

Addition of an operating centre

The fee for the addition of a taxi operator centre is £200, or £5 when a residential address being used as the main operating centre is changed. An operator can choose to add an operating centre to their licence. The operator will have to declare that the premises have the necessary planning permission to be used as an operating centre and has both public and employer's liability insurance (if applicable), confirm whether a radio licence is required and to provide operating centre full postal address along with payment of the relevant fee. In either case, on approval you will receive a notification to let you know that your application has been successful and you will be able to view these changes on your electronic licence.

Removal of an operating centre

There is no fee for the removal of an operating centre. An operating centre can only be removed if there is at least one remaining operating centre on the licence. If the company has ceased trading as a taxi operator PTLTD must be advised within 7 days.

Once a request has been submitted you will receive notification when it has been approved and will be able to view these changes on your electronic licence.

Addition or Removal of Named persons on licence

There is no fee for the addition or removal of named persons (stakeholders) on an operator's licence.

An operator will have to provide the same level of information supplied for all other persons at the application stage when adding a new stakeholder. You will receive notification once

your request has been approved and will be able to view these changes on your electronic licence.

Change of Business Name

There is no fee for the change of a business name on an operator's licence.

If an operator wishes to change the name of the business they can apply to have the name changed on their licence provided that the same individuals form part of the business.

Documentation to support the change in name will have to be produced. You will receive notification once your request has been approved and will be able to view these changes on your electronic licence. If the same individuals do not form part of the company, a new application will have to be submitted for the new legal entity.

Change of Trading As Name

There is no fee for the change of a 'trading as' name on an operator's licence.

Documentation will be required to be submitted to support the change in name. You will receive notification once your request has been approved and will be able to view these changes on your electronic licence.

Sale of business

Where an operator sells their business, the new owner must apply for a licence. If the taxi business is bought over by an existing licensed operator, the business may be added to their existing licence with a 'trading as' name and a specified operating centre, once approved, these changes can be viewed on your electronic licence.

Part 14 - Subcontracting Work

A licensed operator may choose to subcontract an accepted taxi booking to another licensed operator provided that both operators keep the appropriate records of the subcontracted journeys. It is not possible to subcontract work to a driver who is listed as an affiliated driver on someone else's licence.

Part 15 - Regulation of taxi operators

As a licensed taxi operator you must comply with all legal requirements contained within the Taxis Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 , the Taxi Operator Licensing Regulations 2012 and

other relevant licensing regulations. DVA must continue to be satisfied that a licence holder is a “fit and proper person”. Where there is any evidence that your conduct or actions indicate that this standard is not being maintained, DVA may choose to suspend or revoke your licence. In such cases you will have right of appeal and will be advised in writing of how such appeals can be made.

Part 16 - How DVA will handle your information

To find out how personal information you send to PTLD will be handled when using this service. Go to: <http://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/publications/fair-processing-notice-taxidriver-licence>

Part 17 - Further Information

Annex A. Taxi Licensing Legislation

All legislation relating to the governance of the taxi industry can be found at:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/>

[Taxis Act \(Northern Ireland\) 2008](#)

[The Taxis Operators Licensing Regulation \(Northern Ireland\) 2012](#)

[The Taxi Drivers' Licensing Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2014](#)

[The Taxi Licensing Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2015](#)

Annex B. Key definitions from the Taxis Act (Northern Ireland) 2008

1. **Taxi operator** means a person who operates a taxi service.
2. **Licensed operator** means a person who is the holder of an operator's licence.
3. **Operating Centre** means premises at which or from which a taxi operator operates a taxi service.
4. **Operating a taxi service means:**
 - to make provision for or in connection with, or otherwise to provide, a taxi to stand or ply for hire or reward or to carry passengers for hire or reward
 - to make any other provision for or in connection with, or otherwise to provide, a taxi to stand or ply for hire or reward or to carry passengers for hire or reward.
5. **Taxi** means a motor vehicle constructed or adapted to carry not more than 8 passengers in addition to the driver:
 - which is used in standing or plying for hire or reward or
 - which is provided with the services of a driver and is used to carry passengers for hire or reward in the course of business of carrying passengers.
6. **Taxi Booking** means a booking for a taxi to carry one or more passengers for hire or reward (including a booking to carry out as a subcontractor a taxi booking accepted by another operator).
7. **Affiliated driver** means a person who, is standing or plying for hire or reward or to carry passengers for hire or reward, drives a taxi for or in respect of a licensed taxi operator operating a taxi service.
8. **Taxi booking** means a booking for a taxi to carry one or more passengers for hire or reward (including a booking to carry out as subcontractor a private hire booking accepted by another operator).

Annex C. Basic Disclosure Certificate

An AccessNI criminal record check is for people living or working in Northern Ireland.

Details of how to apply online can be found at

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/services/applyonline-basic-check>. A basic check costs £18.00.

Before you start

All applicants must hold a nidirect account. When you create your nidirect account, you'll receive a confirmation email immediately. Once you activate your account, you can log in and apply for a basic check. You'll need:

- your home addresses for the last five years
- your National Insurance number
- three different types of ID (one must be photographic)
- a valid debit or credit card

Proof of identity

You must send proof of your identity to AccessNI within 14 days.

Disclosure certificate

When the AccessNI disclosure process has been completed, you will receive an email to inform you that your disclosure certificate has been issued. You will be advised to log into your nidirect account to view your certificate, and you will have the screen option to share your certificate to DVA's Passenger Transport Licensing Division (PTLD) email address:

taxiandbuslicensing@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk

When you share your disclosure certificate with PTLD, the link to view your certificate will remain live for five calendar days, however PTLD can only view it once.

Access NI disclosure certificates will only be accepted by PTLD through the token/email. A picture or screenshot of the disclosure certificate will not be accepted. Similarly, PTLD will not accept a printed version of a digital certificate.

Note: These notes are intended as a source of advice and assistance. They are not a statement of the law and must not be relied upon as such. Although the Department will generally follow the procedures set out in these guidelines, every application and situation is treated on its own merits.

