



# Interested in working as a taxi or private hire vehicle driver?

## What you need to know ...

This leaflet aims to give general information and guidance to individuals thinking of working as a taxi or private hire driver.

### What is the work like?

Taxis and private hire vehicles play an important part in the country's transport system and they come in two varieties – the traditional hackney carriage (taxi) or a private hire vehicle (sometimes known as a minicab in certain parts of the UK).

As a taxi or private hire driver, your job would be to pick up passengers and take them to their destination, following the shortest and safest route. Your main responsibilities would include:

- taking job details over the radio from the operator back at the office;
- helping to load and unload passengers' luggage;
- helping passengers to get in and out of the vehicle if required;
- taking payments for fares;
- keeping the vehicle clean and in a roadworthy condition;
- keeping accounts and records up to date if self-employed.

If you drive a taxi you could be booked in advance, wait at an official taxi rank or pick up passengers while on the move, for example at railway stations and busy shopping areas. If you work as a private hire driver, you would only collect pre-booked passengers. You could not be flagged down in the street or wait on or near a taxi rank.

You may be able to combine normal day-to-day jobs with contract work such as school runs, or longer-distance trips like taking people to airports or to and from concerts and nightclubs in other towns.

### What qualifications and experience will I need and how do I apply for a licence?

The Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership (LRSP) has developed a Hackney Carriage / Private Hire Driving Test Assessment. All new applicants for a licence must successfully undergo the driving test before they are granted a licence by this Authority.

Currently in order to be licensed as a driver with East Lindsey District Council you need to:

- successfully complete the LRSP taxi and private hire driving test;
- complete an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check;
- complete a DVLA Data Subject Enquiry Check;
- be over 19 years of age;
- pass a Group 2 vocational medical;
- have held a full UK driving licence (or legal equivalent) for at least 2 years.

Also, all new applicants with East Lindsey District Council must successfully complete a combined English/communication test and a basic test relating to the understanding of taxi and private hire licensing before a licence can be granted. Further information in relation to the test can be found later in this guidance leaflet.

At present there is no specific requirement for drivers to undergo a wheelchair passenger assessment prior to gaining a licence with this Authority. However, at a later date, the Council will be looking at requiring all drivers (both new and existing) to successfully undergo a wheelchair-loading assessment before driving a wheelchair accessible taxi or private hire vehicle.

However, if you have access to a wheelchair accessible vehicle, you may wish to undergo wheelchair loading training now rather than waiting until a later date.

The number of new hackney carriage vehicle licences issued in East Lindsey is limited to purpose built wheelchair accessible vehicles, whereas private hire vehicle licences are more freely available. You should contact the Council's Licensing Team for exact vehicle licensing requirements and specifications required in the East Lindsey area.

## **What further training and development can I do?**

Once you are working as a licensed driver, you can complete the NVQ Level 2 in Road Passenger Transport, specialising in taxi or private hire work. The Council are currently considering whether the NVQ should be made obligatory for all licensed drivers or perhaps just newly licensed drivers.

You could also take the BTEC Level 2 Certificate in Transporting Passengers by Taxi and Private Hire. This is a short course designed to support new drivers, and anyone who wants to update their qualifications after a break from driving.



## **What are the hours and working conditions?**

Working as a licensed driver allows you the flexibility to choose your hours but you are likely to find more work in the evenings and at weekends. Friday and Saturday evenings would normally be your busiest times. You could expect to work between 40 and 60 hours a week if full-time. You would spend most of your time on the road, sometimes in heavy traffic. Earnings would depend on the level of fares, the number of journeys made, and the hours worked.

## **What skills and knowledge will I need to perform the job efficiently?**

- good driving skills and an awareness of road safety;

- a detailed knowledge of the area, including street names, major landmarks and one-way systems;
- the ability to manage and plan your own time;
- good customer care skills;
- an awareness of disabled access issues;
- the ability to deal politely but firmly with angry or drunken passengers;
- good numeracy skills for cash handling, and accounts (if self-employed);
- a sound understanding of laws and regulations covering licensing, insurance and road use.

### **Further Information:**

Information regarding licensing is available on the Council's website ([www.e-lindsey.gov.uk](http://www.e-lindsey.gov.uk)) in the Business Licensing Section or by contacting the Licensing Team direct.





## The Combined English/Communication Test and Basic Test Relating to the Understanding of Taxi and Private Hire Licensing

All new applicants with the Council for hackney carriage and private hire vehicle driver's licences must successfully complete a combined English / communication test and a basic test relating to the understanding of taxi and private hire licensing before a licence can be granted. This guidance leaflet advises prospective applicants of the format and content of the test.

Licensed drivers will be expected to know the law and conditions that apply to driving licensed vehicles. Members of the travelling public place a lot of trust in the driver of the licensed vehicle they get into. Therefore the Council insists on high standards from an applicant for a driver's licence. The travelling public have a right to expect that the licensed drivers are fully aware of the responsibilities placed upon them.

The test itself is not designed to be difficult. With a little bit of effort on your part you will pass it without too much trouble. The test should

normally be no more than 20 minutes in duration and will be held at the Council's Tedder Hall Offices, by a Licensing Officer. If you are unable to attend the Tedder Hall Offices please contact the Licensing Team and in certain exceptional circumstances we may be able to provide an alternative venue. Applicants are normally not permitted to bring a companion into the test room whilst the test is taking place. Please contact the Licensing Team to arrange an appointment for the test.

Question papers are drawn at random from a series of papers prepared by the Council's Licensing Officers. The papers are checked and revised periodically.

Prior to attending for the test, applicants will be issued with a copy of the Council's guidance booklets relating to driver and vehicle licensing. When reading the booklets it is important that you understand the differences between hackney carriages (taxis) and private hire

vehicles. In particular taxis can ply for hire in the District of East Lindsey and are usually found on taxi ranks and plying for hire on the streets. Private hire vehicles must not ply for hire and must be booked in advance by telephone or at their office.

The cost of the test and any subsequent first retest (at the time of the first licence application) will be included in the Council's standard licence application fee. Any subsequent retest (after the first retest) will be charged to the applicant at a cost of £10.00 per test. The charge of £10.00 to be paid to the Licensing Authority before the applicant sits the test.

If you require any special facilities and help in undertaking the test please contact the Licensing Team well in advance of the test date and we will endeavour to meet your requirements wherever possible.

**Details of the test are set out below.**

Sections A to C of the test will be a basic test to examine an applicant's ability to communicate in English and undertake simple addition and subtraction.

## **SECTION A – Reading Skills**

You will be asked to read aloud a short and simple passage of text to the Licensing Officer overseeing the test. The text will relate in some shape or form to hackney carriage or private hire vehicle licensing.

You must be able to read the passage clearly and without undue difficulty to the satisfaction of the Testing Officer.

## **SECTION B – Writing Skills**

The Testing Officer will give you the details of a supposed taxi or private hire journey and ask you to write a receipt for the fare at the end of that journey. The details you will be asked to write will include name of hirer, date of journey, destination, total fare, etc.

You must be able to complete the receipt without undue difficulty to the satisfaction of the Testing Officer.

## **SECTION C – Addition and Subtraction**

This section of the test will give 3 examples of taxi / private hire fares and the payments made by the customer. In each case you will be required to indicate the correct change to be given to the hirer.

You must answer all 3 questions in Section C correctly.

## **SECTION D - Knowledge of hackney carriage (taxi) and private hire vehicle legislation as well as the Council's byelaws and conditions relating to driver and vehicle licensing.**

This section of the test will consist of 10 multiple choice questions on the above legislation and licence conditions relating to hackney carriage and private hire work.

The questions will be based on the information contained in the following sections of the Council's guidance booklets:

### **A Guide for Hackney Carriage (Taxi) Drivers and Proprietors**

- Section 3 – Instructions for hackney carriage drivers and proprietors
- Section 4 – Hackney carriage fares
- Section 5 – Hackney carriage vehicle licence conditions
- Section 6 – Hackney carriage byelaws
- Section 10 – Smokefree taxis and private hire vehicles.

### **A Guide for Private Hire Vehicle Drivers and Proprietors**

- Section 3 – Instructions for private hire drivers and proprietors
- Section 5 – Private hire vehicle licence conditions
- Section 6 – Private hire driver's licence conditions
- Section 9 – Smokefree taxis and private hire vehicles.

You should acquaint yourself with the above contents before attending for the test. Copies of the guidance booklets are available by contacting the Licensing Team.

Please note that you may not refer to the guidance booklets during the actual test. In order to pass this section of the test you must answer at least 9 out of 10 questions correctly.

## **Other Information (Highway Code)**

The test does not include an examination of your knowledge of the 'Highway Code'. However applicants wishing to test themselves on Highway Code knowledge can visit the Driving Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) website ([www.gov.uk/dvsa](http://www.gov.uk/dvsa)) where practice Highway Code theory tests can be taken. This would be an opportunity for you to self test your current knowledge of the Highway Code and ascertain whether you need to refresh your knowledge of its contents.

## **Further Information**

Before taking the test you will be required to prove your identity. Failure to produce suitable identification will result in you not being able to sit the test. Information on suitable identification is available from the Licensing Team.

To order an application pack, including the relevant guidance booklets, please contact the Licensing Team. If there is any part of this information leaflet that you are unsure of you should also contact the Licensing Team.

The Licensing Team,  
East Lindsey District Council,  
Tedder Hall, Manby Park,  
Louth, Lincolnshire LN11 8UP

Tel: 01507 601111  
Email: [licensing@e-lindsey.gov.uk](mailto:licensing@e-lindsey.gov.uk)  
[www.e-lindsey.gov.uk](http://www.e-lindsey.gov.uk)