



Department for Environment and Community Services

Coronavirus (COVID-19) – Protection screens

As a current vehicle licence holder, this advice sheet has been produced due to the current public health emergency and to affirm the current Government guidance. The Licensing Service is fully aware that many questions are being asked by service users in relation to fitting temporary protection screens in hackney carriage and private hire vehicles.

- Protection screens provide a physical barrier between drivers and passengers in the vehicle. They are commonly installed in purpose built hackney carriages as a safety feature to protect the driver from physical attacks or theft. There has been an increased interest in the use of temporary polycarbonate or PVC screens as a way of providing physical separation between a driver and passenger(s) in order to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19.
- Some purpose built hackney carriages are already fitted with a protection screen between the driver and passenger(s). However, licensed saloon vehicles do not have protection screens installed, there is a wide variety of different makes and model of saloon vehicles licensed in South Gloucestershire.
- At time of producing this guidance, there is no evidence available that demonstrates that protection screens in hackney carriage or private hire vehicles fully removes the risk of transmission of COVID-19 infection; protection screens in hackney carriage or private hire vehicles do not generally provide a fully sealed compartment which completely separate the driver from the passenger(s). Depending on type and fit, protection screens may reduce the risk of transmission of infection.
- Whether a protection screen should be installed is a matter for vehicle owners, drivers and/or operators to consider. This guidance outlines this Licensing Authority's view on the installation of protection screens in hackney carriage or private hire vehicles.

Specification

The protection screen:

- ✓ Must comply with the Road Vehicle (Construction and Use) Regulations.
- ✓ Should be securely fitted and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- ✓ Must not impede the driver's vision, movement, or communication with passengers.
- ✓ Must not impede driver or passenger access to or egress from the vehicle or any other person in times of an emergency.

- ✓ Must be fitted in such a way so as not to affect the structural integrity of the vehicle or interfere or affect any manufacturer fitted safety equipment or features including headrests, seatbelts, airbags, egress points or CCTV.
- ✓ Must not wrap around the driver seat or create a partition between any of the front seats, in addition to the rear cabin area.
- ✓ Must not affect the ability of the vehicle to be properly insured for the purpose of carrying persons for hire and/or reward. **It is essential that the vehicle's insurance certificate issuer is notified of any installation.**
- ✓ Must not adversely influence or interfere in any way with vehicle type approval.
- ✓ Should not be significantly changed or modified from the original manufactured design. In cases where it is necessary to modify the original design of the screen (for example, to facilitate installation of the screen in the vehicle), assurances should be sought from the supplier/installer that the proposed modification does not raise any concerns in relation to safety of the screen and complies with the relevant UK and/or EU safety legislation.
- ✓ Should be properly and effectively maintained so as to remain clear and be free of scratches, clouding or stickers which would impede the drivers or passengers' visibility.

Acknowledgement Procedure

- In accordance with the conditions attached to respective hackney carriage and private hire vehicle licences (Appendices G & H in policy), acknowledgement by this Licensing Authority must be sought prior to any vehicle alterations, including installation of a protection screen in any vehicle licensed by South Gloucestershire Council.
- Acknowledgement can be sought by completion of the prescribed form and submission to the Licensing Service by email only to licensing@southglos.gov.uk.
- This Licensing Authority reserves the right to seek any additional information that it may require including, but not limited to:
 - Technical specifications on any protection screen installed;
 - Written confirmation that any protection screen installed has been done so and in accordance with the manufacturers requirements and specifications; and/or
 - Confirmation that the vehicle's insurance cover has not been affected by the installation of the protection screen.

Acknowledgement request form

Vehicle Licence Holder Name:	
Vehicle Registration Number:	
Vehicle Licence Number:	
Private Hire Operator's Licence Number (for private hire vehicles only):	
Driver Name (if renting the vehicle):	
Driver's Licence Number:	
Description of protection screen: Please send us the technical specification or manufacturer's specification (web link).	
Declaration: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. This authority is obligated to process information fairly and lawfully. I understand that the council will process the information I have provided on this form in accordance with the relevant privacy statement available at https://www.southglos.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/data-protection-and-freedom-of-information/privacy-statement/2. I confirm the installation, design and maintenance of the protection screen will be in accordance with South Gloucestershire Council's policy and requirements.3. I confirm I have notified my insurer/s of the material alteration to my licensed vehicle and it has been confirmed that my insurance for carrying passengers for hire and/or reward has not been adversely affected by this alteration.	
Date:	
Signature:	

For further Information please visit the website,
www.southglos.gov.uk/licensing-services-and-coronavirus