

Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Advice for Taxi Drivers

COVID-19 is a new illness that can affect your lungs and airways. It's caused by a virus called coronavirus. We recognise that taxi drivers in Bath and North East Somerset may have concerns regarding the possible implications of the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. Public Health England and the NHS are providing useful advice on how to slow the spread of the virus, some of which have been outlined below.

Please note that this is a rapidly changing situation and the latest information can be found at: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

Symptoms of coronavirus

- a new, continuous cough
- a high temperature

But these symptoms do not necessarily mean you have the illness. The symptoms are similar to other illnesses that are much more common, such as cold and flu.

How coronavirus is spread

- large droplets from coughing and or sneezing by an infected person within a short distance (usually one metre or less) of someone
- touching or shaking the hand of an infected person and then touching your mouth, eyes or nose without first washing your hands
- touching surfaces or objects (such as door handles) that have become contaminated with the virus and then touching your mouth, eyes or nose without first washing your hands

What to do if you think you might have coronavirus

If you have symptoms of coronavirus infection (COVID-19), however, mild:

- stay at home and do not leave your house for 7 days from when your symptoms started (this action will help protect others in your community while you are infectious)
- plan ahead and ask others for help to ensure that you can successfully stay at home
- ask your friends and family to help you to get the things you need to stay at home
- stay at least 2 metres (about 3 steps) away from other people in your home whenever possible.
- sleep alone, if that is possible
- wash your hands regularly for 20 seconds, each time using soap and water.
- stay away from vulnerable individuals such as the elderly and those with underlying health conditions as much as possible
- you do not need to call NHS111 to go into self-isolation. If your symptoms worsen during home isolation or are no better after 7 days contact NHS 111 online. If you have no internet access, you should call NHS 111. For a medical emergency dial 999

How to slow down the spread of COVID-19:

Drivers are encouraged to:

- Always carry tissues and use them to catch coughs and sneezes

- Dispose of used tissues in the bin as soon as possible
- Wash hands with soap and water, or use sanitiser gel to kill germs
- Clean surfaces regularly with sanitising wipes or spray to get rid of germs, including; card payment devices, steering wheel, handbrake, door handles etc.

What to do if a passenger is unwell before, during or after a journey:

Passengers who have the symptoms of coronavirus should go home and not leave their house for 7 days from when your symptoms started. If their symptoms worsen during home isolation or are no better after 7 days contact NHS 111 online. If you have no internet access, you should call NHS 111. For a medical emergency dial 999.

Please use this guidance if you become aware that a possible or confirmed case has spent time in your vehicle while symptomatic:

COVID-19: decontamination in non-healthcare settings

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>

Public information poster

Please follow this link to a poster outlining good hygiene practices for passengers which can be displayed in your vehicle:

https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/coronavirus_print_friendly_a4_poster1.pdf

Useful sources of information:

Whilst the above advice is current at the time of writing, please regularly check the Public Health England website and Government / NHS websites for updated information:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

5 things you can do to protect yourself and your community:

<https://publichealthmatters.blog.gov.uk/2020/03/04/coronavirus-covid-19-5-things-you-can-do-to-protect-yourself-and-your-community/>

COVID-19: guidance for staff in the transport sector:

The Department for Transport and Public Health England has issued guidance to transport sector workers.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-staff-in-the-transport-sector/covid-19-guidance-for-staff-in-the-transport-sector>

Social distancing in the workplace during coronavirus (COVID-19):

We are aware that the taxis and PHV trade are undertaking delivery work – please see the section on ‘Deliveries’ as well as ‘Transport businesses’. Measures contained in the section on ‘Use of private vehicles and car pooling’ would apply to the taxi and private hire vehicle sector e.g. maintain good ventilation.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/social-distancing-in-the-workplace-during-coronavirus-covid-19-sector-guidance#transport-businesses>

Insurance for undertaking deliveries:

Association of British Insurers (ABI) motor insurance members have committed to support taxi and private hire drivers seeking alternative sources of income: licenced taxi or private

hire drivers that had hire or reward insurance in place, as of 8 March, will not need to contact their insurer to extend their your existing cover while driving this vehicle to carry parcels, medical supplies, household goods, groceries or takeaway meals during the Covid-19 restrictions.

The ABI's commitment will be in place until the end of the Covid-19 restrictions, or until 31 July 2020, whichever is sooner

<https://www.abi.org.uk/products-and-issues/topics-and-issues/coronavirus-hub/motor-insurance/>

Face masks:

The UK does not currently advise use of face masks outside of care settings, in line with PPE guidance.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19/guidance-for-employers-and-businesses-on-coronavirus-covid-19>

Cleaning of non-healthcare settings:

Public Health England have provided guidance on the cleaning of non-healthcare settings, this is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings>

Driver licensing:

Medicals - It will remain a matter for licensing authorities whether to issue or renew a taxi or private hire vehicle driver licence. We are aware of the current difficulties in obtaining medical examination reports, such as those used for the Group 2 HGV and bus driver entitlements that many taxi and private hire vehicle licensing authorities base their assessments on. As part of its response to the coronavirus pandemic, we are reviewing the position on Group 2 medical assessments.

Offers of assistance from the trade:

We have received many offers of assistance from the trade, to co-ordinate the offers and assistance needed we are requesting that all offers of services be directed to: www.gov.uk/coronavirus-support-from-business; this will help us to ensure all such offers are received by the correct team leading on a particular issue and responded to quickly.

Assisting the trade:

The Self-employment Income Support Scheme will allow you to claim a taxable grant worth 80% of your trading profits up to a maximum of £2,500 per month for the next 3 months. This may be extended if needed. More information on the scheme is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/claim-a-grant-through-the-coronavirus-covid-19-self-employment-income-support-scheme>

The above is perhaps particularly relevant to the taxi and PHV trade but it is part of the measures announced, e.g. changes to Universal Credit - more info is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/support-for-those-affected-by-covid-19/support-for-those-affected-by-covid-19>

Assistance for businesses:

The Chancellor has set out a package of temporary, timely and targeted measures to support public services, people and businesses through this period of disruption caused by COVID-19. More information on the measures is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19/covid-19-support-for-businesses>