



Guidance for private hire vehicle operators: Accepting bookings

Private hire journeys must always be booked with a licensed PHV operator at a licensed operating centre. The following guidelines are issued to inform operators as to what they may and may not do. If an operator does not follow these guidelines, they may be committing an offence. In addition, the driver of a private hire vehicle may be committing the offence of plying for hire or touting.

1. PHV operators, or their representatives, **must not** approach anyone in the street or any other public place to offer private hire services.
2. Private hire bookings **cannot** be taken, whether in person or by telephone, anywhere other than at the address or addresses listed in your private hire operator's licence as your operating centre(s). This includes taking bookings in the street, in a private hire vehicle or on a mobile phone away from an operating centre.
3. Before taking bookings from a new operating centre, a licensed operator **must** apply to the PCO to vary their existing PHV operator's licence to include a reference to the new operating centre. It is only after this address is included in the licence that they are permitted to accept bookings at the new operating premises.
4. Drivers **must not** accept bookings from anyone other than a licensed operator to which they are attached and who holds their driver and vehicle records.
5. Drivers **must not** allow any passenger to enter their vehicles without first having received a booking via their licensed operator. In addition, drivers **must not** draw attention to themselves as being available for hire. Any act or gesture accompanied by a conversation with a member of the public suggesting the driver is available for hire without a prior booking from his/ her licensed operator is unlawful. This applies whether or not the driver is sat in his or her vehicle. Further guidance for drivers is given in PCO Notice 42/08.
6. Any private hire driver using a private hire vehicle to carry a passenger without a booking allocated by a licensed operator is **committing an offence**.

Operators wishing to advertise their premises as a licensed private hire operating centre can display the PCO licensed private hire operator sign publicised in PCO Notice 24/07.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mary Dowdye', enclosed within a large, loopy circular scribble.

Mary Dowdye
Head of Standards and Regulations

1 December 2008

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MAYOR OF LONDON