

Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Driver Code of Good Conduct

This code of conduct will be issued as a separate document to all drivers on application or renewal.

This Code should be read in conjunction with the other statutory and policy requirements set out in the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy 2015. By accepting their licence, the holder is deemed to have accepted the terms and conditions contained within the Policy.

1 SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

Hackney carriage and private hire drivers (“drivers”) are in a position of trust in respect of the safety and welfare of their passengers. The Licensing Authority, through its licensing team and committees, have to ensure that all drivers are ‘fit and proper’ to undertake their work as drivers and they are also ambassadors for the South Kesteven District. It is essential that the council and drivers work together to ensure members of the public are treated with dignity and respect and any concerns are reported.

On occasions, drivers may become aware of or have suspicions that their passengers may be the victim of abuse, neglect or exploitation either sexual or otherwise, or at risk of becoming a victim. In addition, drivers themselves can be accused of misconduct or inappropriate behaviour through the misinterpretation of the driver’s action or conversation.

South Kesteven District Council has introduced this **Code of Conduct** which is aimed at providing the best possible service by protecting both passengers and drivers, ensuring that concerns, suspicions of abuse, neglect or exploitation can be reported and therefore minimise the risk of misunderstandings.

Drivers are expected to comply with this Code of Conduct. Failure to do so may result in the driver being referred to Committee to explain to Councillors the circumstances surrounding any incident. Where there is a repeated and/or serious failure to comply drivers can expect to have their licence suspended or revoked.

It should be noted that the code does not over-ride any obligations that are enshrined in legislation, licence conditions or contractual obligations, such as County Council contracts under the Green Badge scheme.

Drivers should:

- Place the safety and well being of passengers before any personal or commercial goals and before loyalty to friends
- respect all individuals, regardless of age, developmental stage, disability gender, sexual orientation, gender reassignment religion/belief, language spoken, race or ethnicity

Be aware of:

- The importance of the use of appropriate language
- Be aware of the vulnerability of children and some adults, and of passengers with additional needs, be they adults or children
- Any instruction given about the care or first aid requirements of a passenger
- The caution necessary in dealing with passengers in distress
- Personal beliefs and standards, including dress and religion
- Passengers misreading situations
- The use of social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter. These are public websites and therefore passengers conveyed may access a Driver's site. Ensure you use the appropriate privacy settings to avoid passengers viewing your social media sites.

Should never:

- Become over-friendly in any way with passengers or engage in any form of relationship, infatuation, crush or show favouritism
- Touch a passenger, unless in an emergency situation, or if required to do so because of the additional needs of the passenger
- Administer medication unless a specific request has been made by the hirer
- Photograph or video passengers in your care unless used in compliance with data protection legislation and any relevant codes of practice issued by the Home Office or Information Commissioner's Office
- Engage with passengers through social networking sites (such as Facebook and Twitter), instant messengers (such as MSN) or any other online communication software such as mobile phone applications or video games
- Phone or send text messages to passengers other than directly concerning the hiring of your vehicle
- Swear, make personal or humiliating comments, or tell inappropriate jokes
- Offer or accept sweets, cigarettes or gifts of any sort
- Stop anywhere other than the specified pick up/drop off points other than at the request of the hirer
- Show passengers videos or pictures on your mobile phone or any other electronic device

Safeguarding:

If a driver has concerns or suspect abuse, neglect or exploitation of a passenger then these should not be ignored. If there are any doubts or concerns about the way someone is being treated, it is important to report this. The safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults is everybody's business. Remember that information could help a vulnerable child or adult.

If a driver is working under a Lincolnshire County Council contract then those procedures set out in the Driver and Passenger Assistant Pack should be followed alongside any training received by the driver.

Otherwise the following procedures should be complied with in reporting any information or suspicions you may have of anyone being subject to abuse, neglect or exploitation:

Action to be taken if you have concerns

- If your concerns are of an urgent matter or you believe that a crime has been committed and there is an immediate risk of danger, telephone the police on **999 or 112** (from a mobile)
- If you are suspicious or are concerned that a child or an adult is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, including any form of mistreatment, abuse, neglect or exploitation but is not of an urgent matter, please call the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Customer Service Centre on **01522 782111 for children or 01522 782155 for adults**
- If you would prefer to speak to the police on a non-urgent matter then call them on **101** and follow directions for the Lincolnshire Police

2 RESPONSIBILITY TO THE TRADE

Licence holders shall endeavour to promote the image of the hackney carriage and private hire trades by:

- complying with this Code of Good Conduct
- complying with all the conditions of their licence, byelaws and the Authority's Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy
- behaving in a civil, orderly and responsible manner at all times

3 RESPONSIBILITY TO CLIENTS

Licence holders shall:

- maintain their vehicle(s) in a safe and satisfactory condition at all times
- keep their vehicle(s) clean and suitable for hire to the public at all times

- attend punctually when undertaking pre-booked hires;
- assist, where necessary, passenger into and out of the vehicle;
- provide reasonable assistance to passengers with their luggage.

4 Responsibility to Residents

To avoid nuisance to residents when picking up or waiting for a fare, a driver shall:

- not sound the vehicle's horn illegally between 11.30pm and 7.00am or from a stationary vehicle, except when another road user poses a danger)
- keep the volume of music media player media systems and VHF radios to a minimum
- switch off the engine if required to wait
- take whatever additional action is necessary to avoid disturbance to residents of the neighbourhood, which might arise from the conduct of their business

5 Responsibilities at Ranks and Offices

Licence holders shall:

- rank in an orderly manner and proceed along the rank in order and promptly
- remain in attendance of their vehicle
- not allow their music media players or VHF radios to cause disturbance to residents of the neighbourhood
- take whatever additional action is necessary to avoid disturbance to residents of the neighbourhood which might arise from the conduct of their business

6 General

Drivers shall:

- pay attention to personal hygiene and dress so as to present a professional image to the public
- be polite, helpful and fair to passengers
- drive with care and due consideration for other road users and pedestrians
- obey all Traffic Regulation Orders and directions at all times
- not consume alcohol immediately before or at any time whilst driving or being in charge of a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle
- not drive while having misused legal or taken illegal drugs
- fulfil their responsibility to ensure that adequate rest periods are taken during and after the working day
- not eat in the vehicle in the presence of customers
- respect Officers at Authority offices and elsewhere during the normal course of their duties