



Coronavirus Update 21

This Notice contains important information following the [Prime Minister's announcement](#), on 5 April 2021, that outlined the measures for Step 2 of the roadmap for easing national lockdown restrictions.

This Notice also contains information on the recommencement of driver assessments, planned closure of NSL vehicle inspection sites, PPE distribution, face covering guidance, a Health, Wellbeing Safety & Security Forum, DBS checks and COVID vaccinations.

This Notice supplements, and should be read in conjunction with, [TPH Notice 01/21 – Coronavirus Update 17 \(National Lockdown\)](#), [02/21 – Coronavirus Update 18 \(Consolidation\)](#), [03/21 – Coronavirus Update 19](#), [04/21 – Coronavirus Update 20](#)

Roadmap for Easing National Lockdown Restrictions

On Monday 5 April the Prime Minister announced that Step 2 of the [roadmap for lifting lockdown restrictions](#) will take place on 12 April 2021.

Step 2 will see the will see the re-opening of non-essential retail; personal care premises such as hairdressers and nail salons; and public buildings, including libraries and community centres. Indoor leisure facilities such as gyms will also reopen (but only for use by people on their own or in household groups); as will most outdoor attractions and settings including outdoor hospitality venues, zoos, theme parks and drive-in cinemas. Self-contained accommodation such as campsites and holiday lets, where indoor facilities are not shared with other households, can also reopen.

Hospitality venues will be allowed to serve people outdoors and there will be no need for customers to order a substantial meal with alcoholic drinks and no curfew, although customers must order, eat and drink while seated ('table service'). Wider social contact rules will apply in all these settings to prevent indoor mixing between different households.

While funerals can continue with up to 30 mourners, the number of people able to attend weddings, receptions and commemorative events such as wakes will rise to 15.

The government has published some [guidance explaining the reopening of businesses and venues](#). Until then, everyone across the UK is reminded to observe current lockdown restrictions. Licensees are reminded to follow the government advice and check the [gov.uk Spring 2021 Covid-19 response webpage](#) for further information.

Before proceeding to the Step 3, the Government will examine the data to assess the impact of the previous step. It takes around four weeks for the data to reflect the impact of the previous step and the Government will provide a further weeks' notice to individuals and businesses before making changes.

We will publish details of further steps in future TPH Notices.

Distribution of PPE

To help ensure the safety of licensees and passengers, as there is an easing of national lockdown restrictions and more people begin to travel, we will continue to provide complimentary PPE packages of 50 medical-grade face masks coverings, bottles of Dettol hand sanitiser and stickers with coronavirus-specific information to be displayed in vehicles. More information on this initiative can be found in [TPH Notice 19-20](#).

If licensees would like to collect a PPE pack from one of our designates sites, please email us at TPHPPE@TfL.gov.uk. **Please include your licence number in the subject line and details of your two preferred (NSL) Vehicle Inspection Sites for collection.**

We will respond confirming when and where you can collect your pack.

Face coverings guidance

As national lockdown restrictions continue to ease, we would like to reiterate the importance of following the [Government's guidance](#) of **Hands. Face. Space. Fresh Air**. It remains important to continue to wash your hands, cover your face and make space to control infection rates and avoid a further peak. Government guidance on face coverings is provided [here](#).

Licensed taxi and private hire drivers are reminded that they are expected to wear a face covering, **at all times**, when in their licensed vehicle, unless they are exempt.

It remains a legal requirement for taxi and PHV passengers to wear a face covering, unless they are exempt. Information on handling passengers who are not wearing face coverings and information on exemptions is [outlined in TPH Notice 02-21](#).

Vaccinations

The Government vaccination programme continues to be rolled out, with over 30 million people across the nation having now received the jab.

As lockdown restrictions ease, it is likely we will see an increase in cases of the virus, and as such it is important that those most vulnerable are protected. The Government is urging, in particular, people over 50 or those from a BAME background to prioritise getting their first dose of the vaccine if they have not already done so.

Detailed guidance on vaccinations can be found on the [Government website](#).

We are working to ensure there are taxi and private hire drop-off and pick-up arrangements in place at vaccination centres. Information for licensees, on where to drop off and pick up passengers, who they are transporting to vaccination hubs is provided here: www.tfl.gov.uk/info-for/taxis-and-private-hire/existing-licensee/coronavirus-information-for-licences

Reopening of driver assessment centres from 12 April 2021

As the national lockdown restrictions ease, we will re-open our driver assessment centres for Topographical testing for PHV drivers and appearances for Knowledge of London students, from 12 April.

As before, a number of measures will be implemented to reflect Public Health England guidance and to reduce the risk to staff and candidates presented by the coronavirus. Measures include the installation of social distancing markers and hand sanitiser units and the wearing of face coverings.

We will be contacting all candidates who had an assessment cancelled due to lockdown or as a result of the pandemic, to re-book their assessment and provide them with details of the measures we have implemented. **Candidates need not take any action and we request that you do not contact us as we currently have limited access to our phone lines.**

Planned closures of NSL vehicle inspection sites

Last year a temporary closure of TfL's vehicle licensing inspection centres meant that some taxis and PHVs remained licensed for a further 6-month period.

As a result, we anticipate that the demand for vehicle inspections in April will be considerably lower than normal.

In recognition of the significant reduction in the number of vehicle licences expiring in April, while still meeting the forecasted demand for vehicle inspections, we plan to

close three vehicle inspection centres for the first half of April. These centres will then re-open and the other centres will close for the second half of April.

In April vehicle inspection centres will be open as follows:

1 April to 16 April – Staples Corner, Crayford and Enfield **will remain open**.

19 April to 30 April – Canning Town, Coulsdon and Heston **will remain open**.

When open, the sites will continue to operate in line with government guidance with appropriate safety measures in place, including: social distancing markers, hand sanitiser stations, personal protective equipment for staff, ventilation of vehicles and limits on contact between staff and customers who are asked to wear face coverings.

The quickest and most efficient way to make a booking for a vehicle inspection remains the [online booking portal](#). The online portal allows you to book or reschedule an appointment at your own convenience 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

However, we appreciate that some licensees prefer to book their inspection over the phone, so we are currently trialling phone lines remaining available over the weekend. Call 043 222 5555 to make a booking, 8am – 5pm, seven days a week.

Disclosure and Barring Service check provider

GB Group (GBG) was contracted by TfL to provide an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check application service for taxi and private hire applicants and existing licensees.

GBG has sold part of its business to First Advantage. From 1 April 2021 First Advantage is now providing this DBS check service during the application process. The DBS check process has not changed, the telephone and email addresses remain unchanged and anyone who was already undertaking a check via GBG will be unaffected.

This change will have no effect on licensees who use the [DBS online subscription service](#) that lets applicants keep their DBS certificates up to date.

Health, Wellbeing, Safety & Security Forum

We appreciate that the prolonged nature of the pandemic is causing stress and anxiety to some licensees. During this difficult time, it is important that we all continue to prioritise our mental and physical wellbeing.

We will be hosting an event focused on Health, Wellbeing, Safety & Security for stakeholders and a limited number of licensees. The Forum will take place on Thursday 22 April 2021 and will include presentations on a range of relevant topics.

If you would like to take part, please email us at TPHEvents@tfl.gov.uk to express your interest. If you are not able to attend, all information presented at the Forum will be published on our [Health and Wellbeing page for licensees](#).

Please do stay safe and well.

Graham Robinson

**General Manager
Taxi and Private Hire
Transport for London**

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For previous Notices and additional licensing information, please visit tfl.gov.uk/tph