

Dear Colleagues,

The taxi licensing team and Unite Union (Taxi Branch Coventry) have been working together to see how we can support you as a trade in these unprecedented times.

Both the City Council and Unite are aware that there are some of you who have decided not to work at present, either through personal choice or because you have been advised to self-isolate by the NHS. Likewise, we acknowledge that several colleagues are continuing to work and providing an essential service to care workers and the public alike.

To help financially during the coronavirus crisis the City Council and Unite have agreed the following changes to taxi testing and licensing:

Taxis that currently are not working and are planning not to work during the COVID-19 crisis:

If you are not planning to work as a taxi driver during this period then the City Council will allow you to suspend your plate and vehicle licence for up to six months.

During this time there will be no need for you to have your taxi tested for licensing purposes. In addition, if you chose to go back to work after the six-month period the City Council will credit you any "unused" licence fee at your next point of licensing. For example, if you suspend your licence now and had six months left to run on your vehicle licence, we will credit this off your next licence fee.

If you wish to take advantage of the above, please can email Taxi.Licensing@coventry.gov.uk, with your details and request and we will do this for you remotely, there will be no need for you to come into the office.

However, once you have sent this email, the taxi plate must be removed from your vehicle. Any drivers wishing to go back to work after they have opted to suspend their licence can contact the taxi licensing office and arrange for the suspension to be lifted.

Any driver that has opted for the voluntary 6-month suspension and continues to work without informing the taxi licensing office will have their licence revoked immediately and may face prosecution.

Taxis that intend to continue to work during the COVID-19 crisis.

If you continue to work during the COVID-19 crisis, and your vehicle is due for re-plating and relicensing between now and the end of September we have agreed the following:

Taxi testing:

- The current suspension of six-monthly tests will remain until 30th September 2020.
- The requirement for an annual MOT test at Whitley Depot will remain. However, we will suspend the annual taxi test apart from the inspection of the disabled access ramp and securing systems. If a vehicle is due for annual testing between now and the 30th September 2020, this reduced testing scheme will apply. There are mechanisms in place at Whitley Depot to allow for social distancing.
- There will be no fee for this MOT test.

- If a vehicle passes its MOT with advisory points this will also not prevent the vehicle from being licensed or re-licensed.

Vehicle Licence and Plate Renewal Fees:

- Whilst licences and plates will still need to be renewed between now and the 30th September 2020, all fees for licences and renewals will be waived.

Driver and Operator licence renewals.

- These will be dealt with on a case by case basis and be discussed with the taxi licensing team.

Both the City Council and Unite would like to thank you for the essential service that you continue to provide to both residents and visitors to Coventry. For what ever reason, if you continue to face financial hardship during the Coronavirus Pandemic additional help is available from the City Council, details of this can be found at www.coventry.gov.uk.

Please stay safe.

Best wishes

Andrew Walster & Unite Union (Coventry Taxi Branch)