

Pending specific guidance on Taxis from the Government on Omicron Variant

Face coverings

The Government has said that it "expects and recommends that face coverings are worn in crowded and enclosed spaces, such as public transport, when mixing with people you don't normally meet."

Following the Government's announcement, we expect and recommend that taxi and private hire drivers and passengers continue to wear face coverings, at all times, when in taxi or PHV, unless they are exempt.

We are strongly encouraging PHV operators and taxi booking platforms to communicate Coventry City Council guidance on face coverings to passengers as part of the booking process, to support drivers and to ensure the safety and comfort of both drivers and passengers.

Guidance is provided below to assist licensees in instances where a passenger is not wearing a face covering.

Guidance for managing a passenger not wearing a face covering

Coventry City Council expects and recommends that passengers continue to wear face coverings, at all times, when in a taxi or PHV.

Drivers must assess the risk to their own safety and can request that a passenger wear a face covering while in the vehicle. A driver also has the discretion to refuse to carry a passenger if they refuse to wear a face covering without good reason.

The following exemptions should continue to be applied:

- children under the age of 11
- people who cannot put on, wear or remove a face covering because of a physical or mental illness or impairment, or disability
- where putting on, wearing or removing a face covering will cause severe distress
- if someone is speaking or providing assistance to someone who relies on lip reading, clear sound or facial expressions to communicate

What happens if a passenger isn't wearing a face covering when they get in the taxi/PHV?

In these circumstances please explain that Coventry City Council expects and recommends that passengers are required to wear face coverings when travelling in a taxi or PHV. This measure is for their safety.

Can a taxi or PHV driver refuse to undertake a job if a passenger refuses to wear a face covering?

In these circumstances, drivers should request that a passenger wears a face covering while in the vehicle and can refuse to carry a passenger if they do not wear a face covering, unless they are exempt.

What if the passenger gets in the vehicle and then removes their face covering?

In these circumstances please explain that, in line with Government guidance, Coventry City Council expects and recommends that passengers are required to wear face coverings at all times when in a taxi or PHV unless exempt.

What if the passenger becomes aggressive?

If the passenger becomes aggressive or refuses to pay drivers should contact the police on 101 or 999 if that is considered justified because of the passenger's conduct. Please note that the driver cannot demand that the passenger remains in the vehicle until the police arrive.

Does the passenger have to provide any evidence to show that an exemption to wearing a face covering applies?

No, passengers do not have to provide any proof of an exemption.

Some passengers may not have a face covering exemption badge or card and we ask that drivers are mindful and respectful in such circumstances.

Cleaning your licensed vehicle

After each journey, you should prepare your vehicle for the next passenger.