

Taxi and Private Hire

Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable People

Human Trafficking and Child Sexual Exploitation

Everyone is becoming aware of the well-publicised issues relating to Child Sexual Exploitation and Human Trafficking that have occurred throughout the country. These are abhorrent crimes, and the Licensing Authority has a duty to assist the Taxi and Private Hire Trade and the public in tackling this issue, and to protect those who are vulnerable and / or being exploited. We need the help of taxi and private hire drivers and operators to identify those who commit these crimes, and protect those who most need our help.

As a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire Driver you will receive bespoke training devoted to helping you as a license holder or applicant to be aware of those who may be vulnerable or being exploited, and questions relating to this subject are posed within the Driver Training Test that all new applicants must undertake as part of the criteria for the grant of a licence.

However, there is always more that can be done by everyone to help promote a better understanding of this subject, and we hope that this page will assist you in being able to identify those at risk, how to protect those who may be vulnerable or being exploited, how to ensure that your actions do not negatively contribute to such persons becoming victims, and to whom to report your concerns.

What You Can Do To Help Those At Risk

By following the Good Safeguarding Practices below you will be helping to protect those who are vulnerable and / or being exploited. We need your help to bring to justice those who commit these crimes.

- Check at the point of booking if there are any vulnerability issues. This will allow you to prepare for the journey in the right way.
- Ask the person booking if an escort for the vulnerable passenger is required and if they are providing one.
- Let your office know (or keep a record) of the time you picked up the vulnerable passenger, the time and place you dropped them off and whether there was any incident or anything significant on the journey.
- If you refuse to take a passenger inform someone that you can't take them so they can deal with the person another way (e.g. hospital staff; family; security staff if a club/pub)
- Record incidents and refusals
- Be professional - try not to be over-friendly or talk about personal or intimate issues, don't exchange personal contact information such as passenger's telephone numbers or Facebook address.
- Avoid swearing or aggressive behaviour.
- Do not touch passengers.
- Never accept an offer of a sexual favour instead of payment.
- Make sure you are wearing ID, (your licence badge)
- Sit lone passengers in the back unless otherwise agreed.
- Ask or explain to passengers if using a centralised locking system - don't just put it on without an explanation.
- DON'T ASSUME that your passenger wants help - ALWAYS ASK
- Never follow a passenger into the house unless previously agreed / properly authorised
- Ask before making a journey shorter by going off the main roads/using isolated country roads, explain and give the passenger (or person booking) a choice of route.
- NEVER set off with a passenger without a specific destination address
- NEVER double up on a booking – even if passengers are travelling in a similar direction, they may pose a threat or risk to the other passenger

- If you think the passenger is afraid, offer to ring your operator to tell them you have a passenger named XXXX with you and give the address and approximate time of arrival; this reassures the person that they are safe and someone is monitoring the trip.
- As with all professions if you are concerned about another driver's conduct report your concerns to your office or the relevant agency.
- Organisations should have a lead member of staff for safeguarding; this person should be able to advise colleagues about how to manage vulnerable passengers and any incidents arising.
- ALWAYS KEEP A RECORD either in your cab or at the office, of ANY incidents or situations you were not happy with – the record should include a description of what happened and what you did to keep yourself and your passenger safe.

Who to Contact

If you think you may be carrying someone who is vulnerable and / or the victim of exploitation:
Phone 999: Call the Police emergency number if you believe that the risk is imminent or that an assault happened or is likely to.

Record and report non-emergency concerns to the Police 101 and - or the safeguarding services if a child or vulnerable adult is involved. Further information on the different options available to report your concerns can be found on the West Yorkshire Police & Kirklees Council web pages.

<http://www.westyorkshire.police.uk/help-advice/child-sexual-exploitation-cse>

<http://www.westyorkshire.police.uk/cse/onlineguides>

Phone Crimestoppers - 0800 555 111.

Contact the Kirklees Safeguarding Board - visit our web page for further information & resources

<http://www.kirkleessafeguardingchildren.co.uk>