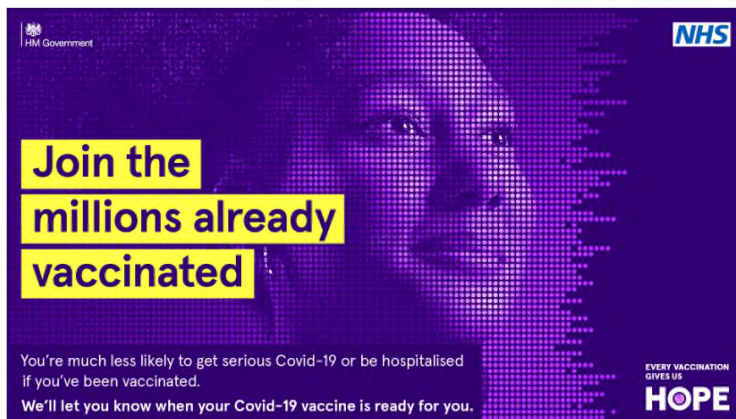


St Albans Licensing Newsletter

August 2021

Covid Vaccination



More and more people are now being invited to join the millions already vaccinated against Covid-19. If you visit the link below you will find the answers to the most commonly asked questions:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/coronavirus-vaccine>

Rapid Tests for Licensed Drivers

Rapid testing is available for all members of the public who are unable to work from home. This includes Hackney Carriage and Private Hire drivers. We want to make sure that all our licensed drivers are aware of this scheme.

This rapid test is for people who do not show symptoms.

Testing is free of charge and takes less than 5 minutes from arrival at the centre, and the results are received within 30 minutes of taking the test. There are sites across the county offering testing for 12 hours a day, 7 days a week. Appointments must be booked and this can be done by clicking on the following link;

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/about-the-council/news/coronavirus-tests.aspx#rapid>

We would suggest that drivers book a test regularly, if they are currently working.

You can also get free lateral flow tests, even if you have no symptoms, which you can do from home. Please follow the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests>

Covid Guidance

The government is constantly updating the guidance for licensed drivers. To see the most up to date guidance please visit the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-taxis-and-phvs>

Here you can find guidance on carrying passengers, Carrying out a COVID-19 risk assessment, and advice on keeping your vehicle clean before and after bookings.

Current Guidance for Carrying Passengers

Please keep your windows open where possible, when carrying passengers and/or use the car's vents to bring in fresh air from outside. You should not use the recirculated air option for the car's ventilation system when carrying passengers.

The requirement to wear face coverings in law has been lifted. However, the government expects and recommends that people wear face coverings in crowded areas such as public transport.

You do not have to wear a face covering, but we recommend that you do if it does not affect your ability to drive safely.

Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licencing Policy

We would like to remind licence holders that the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licencing Policy can be viewed the at the link below;

<https://www.stalbans.gov.uk/licences-and-permits>

We ask all licence holders to familiarise themselves with this policy and the requirements within, as all licences issued from 27th January 2021 will need to comply with this policy, including licence requirements, the code of conduct and the updated conditions.

English Language Requirement

An English language test is required for new and existing drivers who do not hold a qualification in English at a grade approximately equal to level B2 on the CEFR scale.

Drivers who hold a current English qualification at a grade approximately equal to level B2 on the CEFR scale should provide this to the Licensing Team for us to review.

For drivers who do not hold a current English qualification at a grade approximately equal to level B2 on the CEFR scale, must complete the Versant Test on English language. We will not accept any external qualifications that have been obtained since the adoption of the Policy. In exceptional circumstances we may consider accepting an external qualification. **Reminders**

Vehicle Licence Plates

At all times when a vehicle is licensed as a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle (unless an exemption has been granted), the vehicle must display the licence plate provided by us. This must be securely and permanently fixed externally in a prominent position on or above the rear bumper of the vehicle.

At all times when a vehicle is licensed as a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle, the vehicle must display the internal vehicle licence plate provided by us, securely fixed in a prominent position to the front windscreen.

The licence plates must be clearly identifiable and legible to the public at all times. Failure to display your plate correctly at all times can lead to 4 penalty points being issued as per our Policy.

Paper Licences

Hackney Carriage and Private Hire legislation states, licence holders are required to produce their paper licences for both vehicle and driver when requested by an authorised officer or a Police Constable. With this in mind we strongly advise that you keep both paper licences within your vehicle at all times. This will ensure you are able to produce the documents on request.

Dress code

Our Policy which was adopted on 27th January 2021, introduced a dress code for all drivers. We are committed to encouraging the professional image of the trade. We consider that drivers should conform to a minimum standard of dress.

We have been made aware that some drivers are not complying with the dress code. We would therefore like to remind drivers that if they are seen not complying with this dress code it is likely that penalty point would be issued in line with our Policy.

George Street/High Street

We have been made aware that some drivers are using George Street/ High Street to wait for fares. We would like to remind all drivers that these areas should not be used as 'ranks'.

Parking

The parking team have raised several parking issues relating to licenced vehicles.

We would like to remind all drivers that you cannot park in electric vehicle bays unless you have an electric/hybrid vehicle which needs charging.

We expect all drivers at all times, to park their vehicle in a legal fashion. Where drivers are conducting food delivery services, they should still ensure that they are parked up legally. We have had reports that drivers are parking over dropped kerbs and pedestrian crossing zig-zag lines. Please ensure you take care when parking your vehicle.