

Following the Prime Ministers announcement on 22 September 2020, the Department for Transport (DfT) laid a Statutory Instrument in both Houses of Parliament to mandate the wearing of face coverings in taxis and private hire vehicles (PHVs) in England under the Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984. This regulation has now come into effect.

In line with public transport and retail settings the Regulations gives new powers to taxi and PHV drivers to deny access to a service, and to direct someone to leave a service, if they are not wearing a face covering without a legitimate reason. If passengers fail to comply, the Police have a power to remove passengers from a service (using reasonable force if necessary), and issue a Fixed Penalty Notice. The requirement only applies when a service is being provided i.e. passengers are not required to wear a face covering when the vehicle is used for personal use.

We always recommended that passengers wear face coverings in PHVs and taxis and moving to mandating this is a reasonable additional step to take to reduce the risk of infection when used alongside other measures. We will also be working with taxi and PHV operators and drivers to ensure that all passengers are aware of the exemptions to this regulation. There are health, age, equalities and other reasons why someone may not be able to wear a face covering. It is crucial that operators and passengers are aware of these exemptions to ensure that everyone can have confidence in using public transport. DfT will publish updated guidance as soon as possible for operators and passengers on travelling safely during the outbreak. The guidance will reflect the latest information about face coverings. I would be grateful if you could share the change and the updated guidance with your licensees.

We would also like to take this opportunity to draw your attention a number of assets which DfT are creating to support our stakeholders to communicate this change. The assets will contain messages around how to ensure both drivers and customers are kept safe, as well as messaging on exemptions. They will be made available [here](#) shortly alongside the existing assets we have available. Please do cascade these assets and resources to your members/networks.

The following COVID guidance pages have been updated:

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): safer transport guidance for operators](#)

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): safer travel guidance for passengers](#)

[Face coverings: when to wear one, exemptions, and how to make your own](#)