

Temporary Protective Screens in licensed vehicles

It is recognised that the risk of infection with Covid-19 increases the closer you get to another person with the virus and the amount of time you spend in close contact with them.

Public Health England continue to advise everyone including the drivers of licensed vehicles and their passengers to stay 2 metres apart from other people where possible to minimise the risk of infection.

It is recognised that this is difficult in a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle and that licensees may feel it is necessary to temporarily install a protective screen in the form of a flexible film or sheet in between the rear passenger compartment and the driver. The screen

- **Must** comply with the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986
- **Must not** be permanently installed in the vehicle;
- **Must not** be composed of a rigid material
- **Must not** have a solid frame;
- **Must only** be fitted by way of either Velcro or adhesive fastenings, which can be removed from the vehicle when the screen is no longer permitted;
- **Must** be fitted in such a way so as not to affect the structural integrity of the vehicle, or interfere with any manufacturer fitted safety equipment e.g. air bags;
- **Must not** wrap around the driver seat and create a partition between the two front seats;

The film or sheet used **must** be clear and transparent, no more than 0.5mm thick, fire retardant and must only be fitted across the rear of both front seats, creating a partition between the front and rear cabin area of the vehicle.

If any driver wishes to fit a temporary protective screen in their vehicle, they **MUST FIRST:**

- Notify the Licensing Team of their intention to fit a protective screen by emailing licensing@gateshead.gov.uk;
- Provide proof from their insurer that fitting the protective screen will not result in their insurer refusing to cover the vehicle and;
- Confirm that they agree to remove the protective screen within a maximum of **21 days** after the current social distancing restrictions relating to COVID-19 have been removed.