



Address 4

DATE

PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLES

On 10 April 2019 a series of new policies to regulate the maximum age of vehicles that it will license after 1 January 2020 to prepare for the introduction of the Clean Air Zone (CAZ).

This letter provides you with information on how the policies will broadly affect you, but we are also preparing a more detailed document that will be sent to you to give you information about how you can apply for financial support if relevant to you. This will be ready within a few weeks.

SUMMARY OF KEY CHANGES

From 1 January 2020 we will apply a maximum age limit to taxi and private hire vehicles. Taxis will not be relicensed after they are 15 years old and private hire vehicles will not be licensed after they are 12 years old.

If your vehicle is older than its age limit on 1 January 2020 you will be able to use it until the date that its licence expires in 2020, but if your vehicle does not meet the CAZ emission standard you will not be exempt from paying the daily CAZ charge (£8) if you enter the CAZ area.

If you own a TX model taxi, you will be eligible to apply for it to be retrofitted with an LPG engine, depending on its condition.

A vehicle that is converted to LPG under this scheme will comply with the CAZ emission standard and will not pay the CAZ daily charge.

If your application for a conversion is accepted and if you have entered a binding contract for the conversion, you will be exempted from paying the CAZ daily charge even if the conversion is not completed before 1 January 2020.

The Clean Vehicle Retrofit Accreditation Scheme will test any new engineering products that manufacturers present to it to determine whether they can reduce pollution levels for the particular make and model of vehicle for which they have been made.

If any new products are approved for taxis or private hire vehicles, owners will be eligible for the same financial support package that has been made available for the Clean Vehicle Retrofit Accreditation Scheme. The Clean Vehicle Retrofit Accreditation Scheme will test any new engineering products that manufacturers present to it to determine whether they can reduce pollution levels for the particular make and model of vehicle for which they have been made.

We are aware of at least one company working on an after-treatment solution for the TX4 model.

If you want to replace your vehicle (taxi or private hire) with a vehicle that meets the CAZ emission standards, you have until 31 January 2021 to license a new petrol or diesel vehicle.

After that date any new vehicles must be Ultra Low Emission (ULEV), which is defined by the Office for Low Emission Vehicles as emitting less than 50g CO₂/km and able to travel at least 70 miles without any emissions at all.

BACKGROUND

Our policy before 10 April required all vehicles to comply with the CAZ emission standard by 1 January 2020. The minimum standard for petrol engines is Euro 4 and for diesel engines it is Euro 6. These standards were introduced by vehicle manurr diese19JET4assion standard by

NEW VEHICLE AGE POLICY

Our new policy, which will take effect on 1 January 2020, applies to all taxis (hackney

We have agreed that from 1 January 2021, any vehicle (taxi or private hire) that is licensed for the first time by Birmingham must be Ultra Low Emission (ULEV) or Zero Emission Capable (ZEC) this is defined as a taxi emitting less than 50gCO₂/km and capable of travelling at least 70 miles without emissions at all. This does not relate to vehicles that are already licensed by Birmingham. Although your trade representatives have asked that we extend this deadline until 2026 we have been unable to do so because it will extend the period during which drivers could continue to license new diesel vehicles and would undermine our efforts to ensure compliance with our air quality targets.

Drivers and your trade representatives have also been asking for an exemption from payment of the daily CAZ charge where they do not meet the CAZ emission standards.

We have not been able to agree to this because it would completely remove any incentive for drivers to upgrade their vehicles, which would make the entire policy ineffective, and would go against the air quality plan agreed with Central Government. The purpose of the CAZ is to improve air quality.

From 2030 we have said that all newly licensed vehicles must be entirely emission-free, although we have guaranteed to review this aspect of the policy before 2025 to ensure that technology has advanced sufficiently by then.

SUPPORT FOR DRIVERS

The Council has successfully bid for significant financial support for taxi and private hire owners from DEFRA (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs). This amounts to £14.75m and represents 39% of the total package of financial support (£38m) the Council will use to support the people who live and work in Birmingham.

This package of support is summarised as follows:

£2.75m for the City to buy a fleet of electric taxis which drivers can lease or hire.

We will use the money to either buy up to 50 of the latest electric taxis or rent a fleet ourselves, which should enable us to acquire even more.

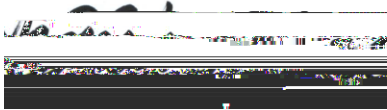
able to deliver the promised air quality improvements and be in breach of the terms upon which the government has awarded financial support to our drivers. This would be self-defeating for drivers and vehicle owners.

We have also been asked for drivers to be given the same assistance that people living inside the CAZ area will be entitled to, or that low income workers travelling into the CAZ will be offered. As taxi and private hire vehicle owners are already being compensated through the **Clean Air Fund** you cannot be compensated twice.

We are preparing more detailed information for you, which will also explain the process for applying for financial support. Please do not assume that you will be eligible for financial support or purchase a replacement vehicle on the assumption that you will receive financial support until you have received written confirmation that you have been approved.

We will also post information on our website: www.birmingham.gov.uk/licensing.

Yours sincerely,



Emma Rohomon

Acting Head of Licensing

REGULATION AND ENFORCEMENT DIVISION