

What happens if I suspend or change my insurance cover? How do I keep my SPSV licence?

SPSV legislation is clear that to hold a vehicle licence, and display a licence disc, SPSV insurance must be in place, not just to operate.

If SPSV Insurance is temporarily not in place (suspended, reduced cover) your licence will immediately expire and your vehicle will have to undergo a suitability inspection to regain your licence.

To avoid this during this COVID-19 Emergency, NTA will facilitate the suspension of your licence for up to a maximum of 3 months at your request.

Where a licence is suspended it ceases to have effect during the period of suspension. Any period of suspension will not extend the period of operation of the licence. **The licence renewal date will not change.**

How to temporarily suspend your vehicle licence:

Only where you have changed your SPSV insurance cover, you must:

1. Email NTA at suspension@nationaltransport.ie using the exact format below in the subject line and please confirm in your e-mail how long your SPSV insurance has been suspended for:

» Subject Line: **VL NUMBER – SUSPENSION**

2. Remove your roof sign

3. Remove your tamper-proof discs from the front and rear window and post to *National Transport Authority, SPSV Licensing Section, PO Box 436, City North Business Park, Tuam Road, Galway.* NTA will facilitate you getting replacements at the end of the suspension period.
4. **You do not have to remove the taxi branding from the front doors of the vehicle.**

Further details

- » The period of suspension of a vehicle licence will only be activated from the date NTA receives your email request. We will confirm the period of suspension with you by email. You must retain this confirmation for your records.
- » It is the responsibility of the vehicle owner to prove, in a manner acceptable to NTA, that SPSV insurance has been reinstated to remove the licence suspension and permit SPSV operation.
- » When the period of suspension expires, if you have not contacted NTA and agreed a further period of suspension, your licence will go in to inactive status.
- » It is the responsibility of the vehicle owner to re-establish the “driver link” once the suspension period has ended.
- » SPSV licence holders not operating are advised to contact their insurance provider to discuss what can be arranged on an individual basis to assist your own financial situation.

A process is in place to make sure you can get replacement tamper-proof discs quickly and easily at the end of the suspension period.

This will be done at **no cost** to the licence holder. **A suitability inspection will not be required** for the application of duplicate tamper-proof discs.

My SPSV vehicle licence is due to expire. Can this be extended?

SPSV vehicle licences which entered or were due to enter an expired status between 13th March and 12th June have had their validity **automatically extended** by NTA for a period of 3 months, at no cost to the vehicle owner. A notification of this has been issued directly to each vehicle licence holder. NTA will continue to monitor the situation.

It is important to note an SPSV cannot be operated where the licence is in an expired status unless the licence holder has received notification from NTA advising that the licence has been extended and carries this notification in the vehicle for production.

My vehicle has reached the final operation date – what can I do?

A legislative amendment is compulsory to permit any *temporary* alteration of maximum permissible age limits for vehicles in the fleet. A public consultation is currently being held on this amendment and submissions can be made at the following link: [submissions can be made by clicking here](#)

Driver Links

As always, it is the driver's responsibility to notify NTA (create a driver to vehicle link) when operating a vehicle or face a fine and potential prosecution.

Any SPSV licence holders **not** operating at present are required to break their driver to vehicle link by using the SPSV Online Portal or emailing taxis@nationaltransport.ie. This includes owner operators who usually create open ended links for themselves on their vehicle. The Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection may verify that SPSV licence holders, who have applied for income support, have notified the NTA that they are not operating a vehicle (i.e. broken their driver to vehicle link).

Any taxi licence holders not operating at present are also required to remove the taxi roof-sign.

Section 15 Nomination- Vehicle licence continuing in the event of the death of a licence holder

If you are a current vehicle licence holder, you may nominate someone to take over the licence after your death. Doing this is relatively straightforward and there is no charge for doing it.

Further information may be found in [Guide G15](#).

You simply download and fill in the [Section 15 Nomination Form](#) – S15N.

The form is in two parts:

- » Details about you (the current licence holder), including your PPSN and the vehicle licence number.

Details about the nominee (the person or company you wish to take over the licence after your death), including the person's PPSN and date of birth. If the nominee is a company, you need to include the company name and tax reference number. You must sign the form and send it back to NTA.

SPSV Compliance

During this period the NTA will continue to support and assist all licensed SPSV operators.

All laws, regarding licensing and the operations of SPSVs, will still apply during this period. However, although compliance and enforcement activity does continue, it is understood that licensed SPSV operators are experiencing many difficulties during this period. NTA will act with due consideration to these difficulties, and where issues arise with licenced operators, compliance officers will seek to offer advice and assistance wherever possible so that the usual high standards of service are maintained.

It is an offence to operate a SPSV without a valid SPSV driver or vehicle licence.

NTA will introduce measures so that licence holders can maintain an active licence, should they wish to, during this time. Therefore, NTA will continue to act robustly with anyone operating without a valid licence. Operating without a valid licence directly impacts all those licensed operators continuing to operate within the law.

SPSV Information Line

Our contact centre is receiving an exceptional volume of calls at this time. This may result in long delays for callers. If you can, please email the full detail of your query to the relevant mailbox as below and our team will answer you as quickly as possible.

NTA Email: taxis@nationaltransport.ie – general industry queries

suspension@nationaltransport.ie – vehicle licence suspension

compliance@nationaltransport.ie – report SPSV related illegal activity

Additional Helplines:

DEASP Income Support Helpline for COVID-19:
1890800024
HSE COVID-19 Helpline: 1850241850

How do I keep my vehicle clean to reduce the spread of the Coronavirus?

- » Regularly disinfect surfaces, such as card payment devices, steering wheels, gear stick, handbrake, door handles, seats and the backs of seats and headrests - Pay close attention to all surfaces that are touched often by passengers.
- » Wash hands frequently with soap and water (you can keep a bottle of water, soap and towels in your vehicle) or use a sanitizer gel if you have it – refer to the HSE handwashing guidelines.
- » Do not touch your face.
- » Carry a box of tissues and use tissues to catch coughs and sneezes. Dispose of used tissues in the bin as soon as possible
- » Consider putting a see through protective screen or barrier between yourself and your passengers. Some drivers have already installed Perspex screens or strong clear plastic sheets. Consideration should be given to the safety of both driver and passengers and the placement of such screens in order to ensure that the effective operation of safety equipment such as side airbags are not hindered.
- » Place the HSE COVID 19 information for your passengers in the rear of your vehicle so that it is clearly visible.

Wash your hands properly and often

- » You should wash your hands:
 - » after coughing or sneezing
 - » before and after eating
 - » before and after preparing food
 - » if you were in contact with someone who has a fever or respiratory symptoms (cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing)
 - » before and after being on public transport or in a crowd (especially an indoor crowd)
 - » when you arrive and leave buildings including your home or anyone else's home
 - » if you have handled animals or animal waste

- » before having a cigarette or vaping
- » if your hands are dirty
- » after toilet use

Physical distancing

Physical distancing is important to help slow the spread of coronavirus. It does this by minimising contact between potentially infected individuals and healthy individuals. Some of the things you can do

Do

- » keep a space of 2 metres (6.5 feet) between you and other people
- » reduce physical interactions with people
- » reduce the number of people you meet every day
- » avoid communal sleeping areas
- » avoid crowded places

Don't

- » do not shake hands or make close contact, if possible

Can I operate my friend's vehicle if s/he is unable to?

Yes. As a licenced SPSV driver, you can operate another licence holder's vehicle providing you remain compliant with current SPSV Regulations (i.e. driver to vehicle association (linking), SPSV insurance for you as driver, registering a rental agreement between the vehicle licence holder and you, as a licenced SPSV driver).

Can I refuse to accept cash payment?

Yes. During this period, any operators who chose to use cashless payment only must make this clear to all intending passengers before the journey commences.

Can I refuse to carry the maximum number of passengers my SPSV is licenced for in line with social distancing?

Yes. This must be communicated to the intending passenger/s and that the reason is the current directive for everyone to maintain 'social distancing'.

Should I ask passengers to sit in the back of my vehicle to assist with physical distancing?

Yes.

Physical distancing is important to help slow the spread of coronavirus.

Passengers should only sit in the rear of the vehicle to maintain as close to 2m distance from you.

Should I ask street or rank passengers for a way to contact them for contact tracing?

For pre-booked services, this information is typically recorded by dispatch operators and booking service providers. For rank and street pickups, some drivers are requesting contact details. Passengers appear very ready to provide this information.

During this time of COVID-19 pandemic management, Ireland is in the delay phase, with initiatives are put in place to slow the spread of the virus.

NTA supports a driver in requesting every street or rank pickup passenger to drop a single data item (contact number) into a sealed container (one for each day of operation) solely to be given the HSE contact tracing team if requested through NTA. Such container must have the date and driver licence number written on it and be retained for 6 weeks from the day of the journey. It must then be destroyed.

As this is a voluntary act, consent (**for the sole purpose specified of COVID-19 contact tracing**) will have been given by the passenger in relation to data privacy. Please see notice on our website for positioning in the back of your vehicle.

Are NCT and SPSV inspection centres still open?

No. The Minister of Transport, Tourism and Sport and the RSA have confirmed that the National Car Testing Service (NCTS) is suspended until further notice. This is in order to comply with the new public restrictions to tackle the spread of the Coronavirus. SPSV inspection centres are also closed.

Will I incur late renewal fees if I cannot renew my SPSV vehicle licence?

Any SPSV vehicle licence holder who is unable to complete a licence renewal due to the COVID-19 pandemic, will not be subject to any 'late renewal fee'.

I cannot get my meter sealed before my suitability inspection. Will I fail on this basis?

No. Taximeter verification will not form part of your suitability inspection at this time.

Contacting An Garda Síochána

If you need to renew your licence but are unable to come to the PSV office /Carriage office to pick up a form or hand in your completed application, PSV officers will be able to assist. Call your local PSV office or, if you are in Dublin, you can also email the Carriage Office at carriageofficedmr@garda.ie

If you need to contact An Garda Síochána for any reason, please note that all public offices of Garda stations remain open.

In an emergency always dial 999/112

Non-emergency or general enquiries:

- » For non-emergency or general enquiries, you can contact your local Garda Station by Telephone and Email.
- » Contact details for all Garda stations and key offices are available in the Garda Stations Directory

Can you update me on the proposal to make card payments mandatory?

A public consultation on the regulation will be held on our website and you will be informed. However, due to the Coronavirus this has been delayed.

Can you update me on the introduction of new fares?

A National Maximum Taxi Fare increase of 5% was due to be implemented in July. However, due to the Coronavirus this has been delayed until further notice.

All information is subject to change as the COVID-19 situation evolves – please visit our website regularly