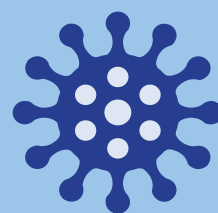


FACE COVERINGS

Face coverings are no longer legally mandated. However, Public Health advice remains that you should wear them on public transport (including SPSVs). We would strongly recommend that you continue to manage the ongoing Covid risk and protect yourselves and your passengers by wearing face coverings. This is particularly important for vulnerable passengers and drivers.

You should put on a mask immediately if asked to do so by a passenger. Where you require

passengers to wear masks, you should carry new masks to give to those who do not carry them. If a passenger will not wear a mask at your request, our compliance team will review any passenger refusal complaint on a case by case basis.



NATIONAL MAXIMUM TAXI FARE REVIEW

A confidential telephone survey of approximately 500 drivers nationwide commenced on 21 February as part of the National Maximum Taxi Fare Review. These surveys will provide information in the areas of insurance, fuel and other operating costs, together with current taxi demand and supply. We really appreciate your time and assistance in gaining accurate information to use in the Review.

The Review is carried out approximately every two years to assess changes in operating costs for taxi owners, renters and drivers. This Review is particularly important in light of COVID, Brexit and the recent increase in the cost of fuel and living expenses. The last Review increase was due to be applied in July 2020. However, prior to its implementation, COVID-19 arrived in Ireland. As a result of the pandemic, and its devastating impact on the SPSV industry, the Advisory Committee on SPSVs and taxi industry representatives recommended that the increase not be implemented. Both NTA and the Department of Transport agreed with this recommendation. So this Review is a very important one for the industry assessing changes since 2018.

The results from this Review, which combines both driver and user surveys, together with an economic analysis of the Taxi Cost Index (TCI) of operating costs, will provide an accurate estimate of the current environment experienced by typical operators.

Once the surveys have been analysed and compared with the economic TCI research results on the fixed and running costs of a typical taxi, together with labour costs, NTA will issue a National Maximum Taxi Fare Review Report, with a fare change recommendation, by way of public consultation on our website. All taxi operators and stakeholders, including the public, will be able to submit their opinions on the content to NTA. This will be brought to the NTA Board for consideration and, if approved, the short legal process of completing a Maximum Fares Order will commence.

We will keep operators updated as the Review progresses.



ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON SMALL PUBLIC SERVICE VEHICLES

The Advisory Committee, with a membership of a large cross section of both users and providers of SPSV services, advises the Minister for Transport and the NTA in relation to SPSV Industry policy (including licensing, compliance and enforcement, regulation, codes of practice, quality, accessibility, security, maximum fares, standards etc.) under Part 9 of the Taxi Regulation Act 2013. [Click here for more information.](#)

There are currently two positions vacant on the Advisory Committee. The Minister for Transport is seeking members in the following categories:

1. Small public service vehicle and driver interests.

- A person who represents the interests of SPSV drivers and vehicle owners in the Greater Dublin Area

2. Special interest or expertise in matters relating to the functions of the Authority, the Advisory Committee or related matters.

- A person who represents limousine operators nationwide

Candidates must demonstrate by CV and cover letter to secretary@spsvadvcomm.ie substantial evidence of their suitability for membership and the degree of representation they undertake.



RETURN TO WORK

Many SPSV operators are now returning to work as nearly all Covid-19 restrictions have been lifted and the hospitality and arts sectors are operating. Whilst some key points are set out below, compliance with all SPSV legislation is required to operate.

Maintaining Your Driver Link

SPSV drivers must ensure they have an active driver to vehicle link when operating an SPSV. Further information on the many ways to do this, including how to register for SPSV Online Services and SMS linking, can be found [here](#) or can be obtained by calling the SPSV Information Line.

Safety Equipment

All SPSV drivers have a legal obligation to carry and maintain certain safety equipment. A safety equipment checklist can be found on NTA's website, which details the required equipment, including the contents of the first aid kit. The contents of the first aid kit must be complete and in-date. Further information can be found [here](#).



MOTOR TAX REFUND SCHEME

The Motor Tax Refund Scheme for SPSVs opened last September and over 2,400 refunds have been paid. Licence holders may apply to NTA for a refund of the €95 motor tax within 30 days of the Motor Tax issue date. Further information can be found [here](#).

STANDARD RENEWAL FEES WAIVED

SPSV licence holders do not have to pay standard licence renewal fees for 2022 renewals. From 01 January 2023, all fees will return to normal.



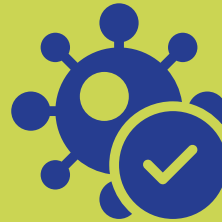
NCT FEE WAIVER SCHEME

40% of vehicle licence holders have received free Initial NCTs already. This Scheme will continue until 31 August 2022. Further information can be found [here](#).

FÁILTE IRELAND LAUNCHES STRATEGIC TOURISM TRANSPORT BUSINESS CONTINUITY SCHEME 2022

€50 million was provided in Budget 2022 to support strategic tourism businesses through the Covid-19 pandemic and driving recovery thereafter.

As part of this, Fáilte Ireland launched the Strategic Tourism Transport Business Continuity Scheme, which is aimed at eligible tourism transport operators such as vehicle rental companies, chauffeur and limousine businesses. Further details are available [here](#).



WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE VEHICLE GRANT SCHEME 2022

WAV22 opened on 01 January to help increase the availability of wheelchair accessible vehicles in Ireland. It offers financial aid of up to €7,500 for the purchase or conversion of a new wheelchair accessible vehicle. This Scheme provides free Disability Awareness Training to all recipients. Further information about the WAV22 Grant Scheme including information on how to apply, can be found [here](#).



ESPSV GRANT 2022: ELECTRIC VEHICLE SCHEME

eSPSV22 opened on 04 February to enable owners of small public service vehicles to buy electric vehicles. It offers financial aid of up to €10,000 towards the purchase of a new, full-battery eSPSV, enhanced levels of funding are available for Scrappage and eWAV of €20,000 and €25,000 respectively.

Further information about the eSPSV Grant Scheme including information on how to apply, can be found [here](#).



CCSN REMINDER

As you know, NTA introduced a confidential customer service number called a 'CCSN', which is now your unique identifier as a licence holder. The number is included on letters and/or emails from NTA to SPSV licence holders. When contacting the SPSV Information Line please have your CCSN ready, as it will be used in our security questions for data protection. This number is exclusive to your SPSV profile and should be kept confidential. Your CCSN will also be required when registering for SPSV Online Services for maintaining driver links and rental agreements. Information on how to register for SPSV Online Services can be found [here](#).



COURT

In September and November, NTA prosecuted two individuals who made calls to the SPSV Information Line to renew SPSV licences, pretending to be the licence holder. This is part of a targeted operation by our Compliance and Enforcement Team. Both criminal trials resulted in convictions. Fines and costs of €2,300 were imposed by the courts.



PASSING ON YOUR SPSV LICENCE

Section 15 of the Taxi Regulation Acts enables a licence holder to nominate a representative who may apply to NTA to continue to operate the licence in the event of the licence holder's death. The nomination process is free of charge and NTA encourages all licence holders to complete the nomination process.

Further information on the process can be found in **Guide G15 (Section 15 Nomination and Assignment)**. A nomination will only be complete when you have received your confirmation of nomination letter from NTA. Please retain this valuable letter with your personal documents. This is the only way that a vehicle licence may be given to someone else – including your intention in your will is not sufficient. Transfer of licences is not possible in any other way.



REFUSAL OF GUIDE DOGS AND WHEELCHAIR PASSENGERS

Following complaints received in 2021, NTA compliance officers issued eight Fixed Payment Notices to drivers for refusing to carry passengers with guide dogs or assistance dogs, or refusing those passengers using wheelchairs. Another two complaints are still under investigation.

The Fixed Payment Notice for refusing to carry a guide dog or assistance dog is currently a penalty of €40 and an unreasonable refusal of any passenger is a penalty of €80. In 2022, NTA will publish proposals for the introduction of a new Fixed Payment Offence for refusing a passenger who uses a wheelchair and to increase substantially the penalty that applies to the refusal of a guide dog or assistance dog.



UNLICENSED DETECTION

In one of the joint operations between the NTA and An Garda Síochána, which targets unlicensed SPSVs, three vehicles were seized while operating in the Dublin region. Court appearances are to follow.

← Tweet



An Garda Síochána
@GardaTraffic

A joint operation between NTA, DMR Roads Policing Unit, Dublin Castle and Dublin Airport Gardaí targeting unlicensed Small Public Service Vehicles operating in the Dublin Region resulted in 3 vehicles being seized.

Proceedings commenced & court appearances to follow for all.



COMPLIANCE ACTIVITY

Our compliance officers continue to focus on education, deterrence, and enforcement measures to maintain high levels of compliance by SPSV operators within the regulatory framework. During 2021, our officers engaged in compliance activities, in accordance with relevant health guidelines, across the country conducting checks and audits.

In 2021, 81% of the 18,946 active licenced vehicles were remotely checked at least once by a compliance officer. Over 5,000 face to face driver and vehicle audits were completed during the year where more detailed checks were carried out.

