

PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS: TAXI MAX FARE INCREASE AND CASHLESS PAYMENT FACILITIES



NTA opened public consultations on the proposed taxi fare increase and cashless payment facility regulations last month.

The cost of operating a taxi has increased between 10.7% and 11.5% since 2017. Our proposal for an increase in maximum fares of 12% covers both this increase, and the cost associated with the provision of card payment facilities for all passengers. Further information can be found [here](#).

Following the public consultation a full assessment of the submissions will be

completed, together with consultations with The Advisory Committee on SPSVs and the Legal Metrology Service. If it is decided that the proposed changes are appropriate, the change in legislation will come into force in summer 2022.



SPSV LICENCE EXPIRING IN THE NEXT 2 MONTHS? RENEW NOW!



Is your SPSV licence due to expire in the coming 2 months? Please begin your renewal process as soon as possible. This summer is due to be very busy post Covid and available renewal inspection appointments may be weeks ahead.

Processing the renewal of your licence early does not change the annual expiry date of your licence – it remains one full year (or six months) from the date on the current licence. NTA cannot guarantee the appointment you want if you don't begin the renewal process in good time.

You must have the following at least two working days before calling to book your renewal inspection appointment:

1 Valid NCT certificate dated within 90 days of your inspection appointment date.

The dedicated NCT Booking line for SPSV operators is 01-4135960.

2 Valid electronic tax clearance.

REDUCED LATE RENEWAL FEES

NTA first implemented the waiver on late renewal fees at the start of the Covid-19 pandemic to assist the SPSV industry. Last year NTA introduced emergency regulations which extended that waiver to 30 June 2022.

After this date, licence holders will again have to pay a fee for a late renewal. However this fee will be the same as the normal standard renewal fee (€150/€75/€37.50) for the relevant licence category until 31 December 2022.

Please note, reduced late fees are also applicable if completing a **change of vehicle** on an expired licence.

Standard renewal fees for **active** licences will continue to be waived until 31 December 2022.

From 1 January 2023, all fees will return to normal as set out in the SPSV Regulations at **Schedule 1 Fees**.



PRIORITY WHEELCHAIR BOOKINGS

WAV operators are reminded of their obligation to give **priority to persons with disabilities**, including persons who wish to travel in their wheelchairs.

This applies to all WAV operators, irrespective of whether they have received Grant funding.

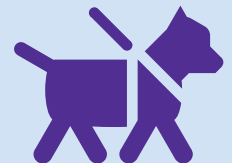


GUIDE DOGS, ASSISTANCE DOGS AND MOBILITY AIDS

Drivers must carry guide dogs, assistance dogs and mobility aids for passengers who need them at no extra charge. It is an offence to refuse to carry a guide dog or any assistance dog.

Some tips for picking up a customer who is blind or vision impaired:

- ✓ Walk up to the person and stop at their right hand side (the Guide Dog or Assistance Dog will always walk on their owner's left side)
- ✓ Introduce yourself to the person and look at and speak directly to them
- ✓ Ask if they would like some help or directions on getting into the car – they may not.
- ✓ If yes, continue to speak with the passenger: offer them your arm, do not take theirs; let them know how far away the door is or if they are approaching kerbs, steps or obstacles; say which way the car is facing, and place the person's hand on the door/handle if they wish.
- ✓ Push forward the passenger seat as far as it will go, so that the Guide Dog or Assistance Dog has plenty of room to curl up in the back seat foot well next to their owner
- ✓ During the journey drive smoothly
- ✓ Tell the passenger the fare on the taximeter or any discounted fare you may have agreed. Keep in mind that it may take your passenger longer to find the fare at the end of the journey
- ✓ Remember, guide/assistance dogs are working dogs, so do not be tempted to distract them – do not talk to, pet or feed them



WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE VEHICLE GRANT SCHEME - WAV22

WAV22 opened on 1 January and remains open to applications. The Scheme offers financial aid of up to €7,500 nationwide for the purchase or conversion of a new WAV – and a sliding scale, with lesser monies being available for older cars. The Scheme supports the better availability of wheelchair accessible vehicles in Ireland's fleet. 17% of the fleet is now wheelchair accessible.

By the end of April, €233,000 in funding had already been approved for payment, with almost €1 million allocated in provisional grant offers. We hope those applicants will complete the process quickly and get their new vehicles licensed.

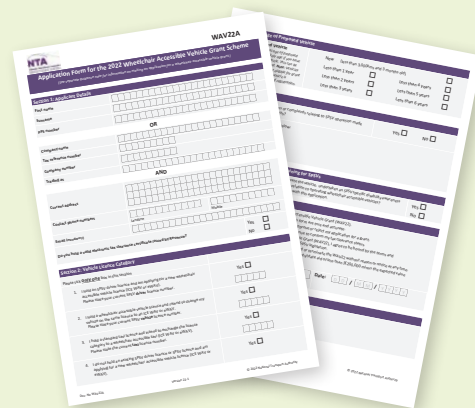
WAV GRANT COMPLIANCE

Under the Terms & Conditions of the WAV Grant Schemes, recipients of grant funding are required to submit journey records to NTA at six monthly intervals during the 36 month Services Period, or when requested by NTA.

If you have received funding under the WAV Grant Scheme please ensure to submit your journey records within six months of receiving funding. The WAV22J Journey Record Form can be found [here](#).

Journey records can be submitted by email to taxis@nationaltransport.ie or post to WAV

Grant Compliance, PO Box 436, City North Business Park, Tuam Road, Galway.



ESPSV GRANT - FULL €15M ALLOCATED IN 2 MONTHS

The eSPSV Grant was paused for new applications on 7 April following the allocation of the full €15 million. The Department of Transport, which funds the eSPSV22 Grant Scheme, said *“the scheme is paused to allow those drivers with grants approved time to draw down funding. We can advise that the scheme will reopen in the second half of the year”*. Keep an eye on the [Latest News](#) section of NTA's website for reopening dates.

If you have already received a Provisional Grant Offer Letter:

- There is no change, this will be processed
- Ensure your vehicle passes its suitability inspection before the expiry date on your

provisional grant offer letter

- If you want to withdraw your application, please notify NTA as soon as possible so the funding can be allocated to another applicant

Where a provisional grant offer expires, under the Terms and Conditions of the Scheme, that funding will return to the Scheme for other applicants to apply when the Scheme reopens.



MOTOR TAX REFUND SCHEME

The Motor Tax Refund Scheme for SPSVs will close to applications on 31 August 2022. For SPSV Motor Tax payments, a licence holder may apply to NTA for a refund of that €95.

Applications must be received within 30 days of the Motor Tax issue date, and a certificate must be submitted to NTA to support the application. Further information can be found [here](#).



NCT FEE WAIVER SCHEME

The NCT Initial Test Fee Waiver Scheme will conclude on 31 August 2022. SPSVs presented for the NCT will receive this test for free until then. So far, more than 11,700 free bookings have been made, meaning 62% of vehicle licence holders have benefitted.

Further information on the Scheme can be found [here](#).



COMPLIANCE - UNLICENCED OPERATOR DETECTIONS

Following a request from NTA compliance, members of the Kerry Roads Policing Unit assisted in an operation which resulted in the detection of an unlicensed operator working in North Kerry and West Limerick. A file will be submitted for prosecution.



During the two days of the Ed Sheeran Croke Park concerts in April, NTA Compliance Officers detected four unlicensed SPSVs.

NTA officers were assisted by members of An Garda Síochána to stop the vehicles. Prosecution

files have been submitted for each and court proceedings will follow. One of those vehicles detected, where the SPSV licence had expired in December 2021 and where there was no current Motor Tax, was seized.



PROSECUTIONS

In Dublin District Court, NTA prosecuted four individuals for operating without any SPSV licences, stemming from separate, joint operations with An Garda Síochána. Each offered services through online advertising and were engaged for the services by NTA. Covert operations were planned, two requiring the assistance of Garda members communicating through another language. All four prosecutions were successful.

In Kilkenny District Court, NTA prosecuted a company for operating two alleged SPSVs without valid licences.

The vehicles were being used to transfer passengers to regular medical appointments. The company was convicted and the court imposed fines and costs totaling €3,230.



ON-STREET COMPLIANCE ACTIVITY

NTA Compliance Officers continue to ensure the high standards of the SPSV industry are maintained having checked 67% of all licensed vehicles in the last 4 months. Officers are able to check all licence holders from the roadside through a bespoke mobile 'app'.



CCSN REMINDER

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.



HAPPY PRIDE FROM NTA

Wishing everyone participating in Pride 22 a great June and beyond.

National Transport Authority – Proud Sponsors of Dublin LGBTQ+ Pride 2022