

### **Protective Screens - Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicles**

At Rutland County Council, we are doing all we can to work with operators to ensure maximum safety for drivers and passengers. While we cannot specifically endorse the use of protective screens due to a lack of safety testing and information, we are taking a realistic approach to the policy.

Rutland County Council does not seek to approve the use of specific safety screens; therefore, it is the responsibility of the operator/proprietor to ensure that a protective screen installed is fit for purpose and does not compromise public safety. We will not accept liability in the event the screen caused injury to a driver or passenger. You must however confirm with your insurance provider that fitting a screen will not invalidate your policy and you must retain this confirmation.

We advise that you ensure the protective screen:

- Must not be permanently installed in the vehicle
- Must not have a solid frame fitted to the screen
- Must not impede driver or passenger access or exit from the vehicle
- Must not impede the driver's vision, movement or communication with passengers
- Must not wrap around the driver seat and create a partition between the two front seats, in addition to the rear cabin area. It should only be fitted behind both front seats
- Must not be fitted in such a way that it affects the structural integrity of the vehicle, or interfere with any manufacturer fitted safety equipment e.g. air bags
  
- Must be fitted with either Velcro or adhesive fastenings
- Must be fitted in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions
- Must be composed of fire-resistant materials
- Must meet relevant safety standards
- You must remove the screens upon instruction of the local authority.

The screen should remain free of scratches, stickers or clouding that impedes either driver or passenger visibility. The screen should be adequately cleaned/disinfected between bookings and at the start and end of the driver's shift.

If an authorised officer of the council has any concerns about the use of the screen in a licensed vehicle, the screen may be required to be removed and notification will be given to the operator/proprietor.

Further guidance can be found on the following government websites:

<https://www.instituteoflicensing.org/media/1gge5efp/20200513-taxi-phv-q-a-and-letter.pdf>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers#taxi-and-private-hire-vehicles>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-transport-guidance-for-operators>