



## Assisting taxi and private hire passengers

It is important that all licensed taxi drivers and private hire operators and drivers are aware of their obligations under the Equality Act 2010. Under the Act you cannot refuse to carry a disabled passenger without reasonable grounds. The Act also places specific duties on drivers who have wheelchair accessible vehicles and passengers accompanied by assistance dogs.

Under the Act, you must:

- Carry a passenger seated in a wheelchair
- Charge wheelchair users the same fare as non-wheelchair users
- Carry the wheelchair separately if the passenger chooses to sit in a passenger seat
- Take steps to ensure that the passenger is carried safely and in reasonable comfort
- Give the passenger mobility assistance as is reasonably required
- Carry a disabled person's assistance dog, allow it to remain with the passenger and not charge more for this service.

If you are unable to meet any of these duties because of a medical condition you must obtain an exemption certificate from Transport for London.

To help provide the best possible service to your disabled passengers follow these steps:

- **Do** ask the disabled person if they need any help, but wait for your offer to be accepted before doing anything. Listen to any requests and try to remember that everyone is different and what suits one passenger may not be appropriate for another.
- **Do** talk directly to the disabled person rather than to the person with them
- **Do** let visually impaired passengers know if there are delays in the journey and also let them know when they are near their destination
- **Do** count out the change for visually impaired passengers
- **Do** have a pen and paper handy to write things down for passengers with hearing impairments
- **Do** make sure that the wheelchair ramps in your taxi or PHV are available and in good working order at all times.
- **Do not** load or unload passengers who are wheelchair users where there is an incline or the pavement is sloped
- **Do not** make assumptions about a disability, or assume that it is insignificant because it is not visible

As a licensed taxi driver you should also make sure that you:

- Know how your wheelchair ramps work and how to safely load a wheelchair and secure it in the correct position (facing to the rear) using the wheelchair restraints and passenger belts
- Make yourself aware of the other features in your taxi that help disabled people, for example swivel seats, auxiliary steps or hearing loops, and let your passengers know about them
- Do not deliberately drive past a disabled person hailing your taxi
- Do not start the meter until a wheelchair passenger is safely in the taxi