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# Dial-a-Ride & Taxicard Schemes

## INTRODUCTION

Dial-a-Ride is a door-to-door service for Disabled people who can't use buses, trains or the Tube. It can be used for all sorts of journeys, making it easier to go shopping, visit friends and attend doctor's appointments.

All Dial-a-Ride journeys must be booked in advance. All services are free of charge.

Before you can make a booking, you must first become a member.

## How does Dial-a-Ride work?

Dial-a-Ride is a membership service which you pre-book. You will usually be expected to travel with other passengers going in the same direction and may have your journey time extended by picking up or dropping off others on the way to your destination.

Dial-a-Ride is generally best for providing local trips, but longer journeys can often be arranged on request.

## **How much does Dial-a-Ride cost?**

Since 1 January 2008 all Dial-a-Ride services have been free. Please note, our drivers are not allowed to accept tips.

## **Can I bring someone with me when travelling with Dial-a-Ride?**

You can bring someone with you on Dial-a-Ride, as long as they are travelling to and from the same address as you. If you would like someone to accompany you on your journey, please let us know at the time of booking.

Please note that if space is limited this may not be possible. If it is essential for you to be accompanied, please inform your local depot, as special arrangements apply in such circumstances.

## **What help can Dial-a-Ride drivers provide?**

Drivers can provide assistance to and from your door to the vehicle - for example to help you with shopping bags. However, our drivers are not expected to provide any assistance within the home, nor can they provide passengers with personal assistance such as helping you to get dressed before you go out.

If you need help over and above the help that they can offer, you should contact your local authority social services department.

## **How far can Dial-a-Ride take me?**

Dial-a-Ride is generally best at providing short distance transport. You can travel for up to about five miles between pick up and destination. Longer distance travel can sometimes be arranged depending on available resources.

## **What are the opening times for the booking lines?**

Our booking lines are open between 09:00 and 16:00 Monday to Friday for next day and advance bookings, afternoon only for advance bookings. From 06:00 to midnight seven days a week for on the day issues (cancellations, enquiries about a late vehicle etc) and same day bookings.

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## **How far in advance can I book my journey?**

Most Dial-a-Ride journeys are booked the day before travel, but we can sometimes accommodate requests made on the day of travel, if space has become available due to cancellations.

You can book up to two weeks in advance if your journey is time critical and you need to arrive at a very specific time (for example for a meeting, appointment or special family event). We will let you know if we can accommodate your request within one working day; to give you time to make alternative arrangements if we cannot find a slot to match your requirements.

## **Contact details:**

### ***London Dial a Ride***

Fill out one of the forms as on dial a ride London website and email it to [DAR.reservations@tfl.gov.uk](mailto:DAR.reservations@tfl.gov.uk) (for regular and advance bookings only) by 16:00 on the day before you want to travel.

For Saturday travel: email by 16:00 on Thursday For Sunday and

Monday: email by 16:00 on Friday

If you're booking for an exact time you can email up to two weeks before. We'll let you know within two working days whether we can take you.

Phone: 0343 222 7777, 09:00 to 16:00 Monday to Friday

Fax: 020 7394 5210

Post: Dial-a-Ride, PO Box 68799, London, SE1P 4RD

Address: Progress House,

5 Mandela Way,

London

SE1 5SS

Telephone: 0845 999 1 999

The London Taxicard Scheme is funded by the participating London boroughs and the mayor of London. London Councils Transport and Environment Committee (TEC) manages the London Taxicard Scheme on their behalf.

Taxicard is a method of providing subsidised door-to-door transport for people who have serious mobility impairment and difficulty in using public transport. Taxicard holders make journeys in licensed London taxis and the subsidy applies directly to each trip. Your Taxicard can be used anytime, 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year, subject to taxi availability.

### **How much does it cost?**

The Public Carriage Office sets fares for journeys made by licensed taxis. The metered fare will be shown on the Taximeter at the end of the journey. The Taximeter works on a combination of both distance and time.

The Taxicard scheme is subsidised by local boroughs and the Mayor

of London, which means you pay considerably reduced fares. For most journeys you will pay a flat fare and your local authority will pay the balance of the limit shown in the table.

### 1. Member Flat Fare

In most boroughs, members pay a £2.50 flat fare up to the fare limit - see below.

### 2. Borough Maximum Subsidy

The borough maximum subsidy per trip is the maximum amount the borough will pay towards each trip.

### 3. Fare Limit

The Fare Limit is the Borough Maximum Subsidy and Member Flat Fare added together. If the fare on the meter is less than the fare limit, you only pay the flat fare. If the fare on the meter is more than the fare limit, you will have to pay the flat fare plus the difference between the fare limit and the meter reading.

## Harrow Concessionary Travel

Access Harrow

PO Box 592

Civic Centre

Station Road

Harrow

HA1 9BN

Tel: 020 8901 2680 (once connected select option 2)

Email: [concessionarytravel@harrow.gov.uk](mailto:concessionarytravel@harrow.gov.uk)

Taxicard details:

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Access Harrow

PO Box 592

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HA1 9BN

Tel: 020 8901 2680 (once connected select option 2)

Email: [concessionarytravel@harrow.gov.uk](mailto:concessionarytravel@harrow.gov.uk)

Taxicard details:

Trips: to a maximum of 40 trips a Year, 104 a year or 52 a year if you have been issued with a Blue Badge or Freedom Pass

Subsidy: £8.30

Maximum run in = £2.40

Minimum Fare: £2.50

Please note that members always pay a minimum contribution of £2.50 towards the fare. Your borough then subsidises the journey up to the amount of £9.10 or up to £11.60 on the meter and you will have to pay the balance.

Factors that may affect the final taxi fare

- Travelling in the rush hour and in heavy traffic. The amount on the meter continues to increase even if you are stationary, for instance at traffic lights
- Waiting with the meter running
- Extra stops on route
- Keeping the taxi waiting
- Roadwork's where drivers have to take a longer route
- Very bad weather conditions
- Annual increases to taxi fares by the Public Carriage Office

## **Estimates**

If you are concerned about exceeding the fare limit, please ask the contractor to give you an indication of the likely cost of your journey. It is important to remember that Taxicard journeys can be expensive if you travel longer distances. Due to the different combination of distance and time for each journey, depending on traffic conditions, the weather, route taken etc., it is not possible to give you an exact quotation.

The driver will usually take the shortest route to your destination. If

you have a preferred route you would like to take please tell the driver at the beginning of your journey.

## **Tipping**

There is no obligation to tip the driver as your Borough has already paid an amount for this. If you do choose to tip for good service the amount is at your discretion and is not refundable by London Councils Taxicard or your Borough.

## **Receipts**

If you require a receipt for the amount you have paid, please ask the driver at the end of your journey. Receipts are not given automatically.

## **Payment**

Note: It is important to ensure you have sufficient money on you to pay the full amount of the fare at the end of your journey. Failure to do so may result in the contractor refusing to book further journeys for you until the balance is paid.

Credit / debit cards: The contractor will not accept credit cards for your booking.

## **Cancellations**

If for any reason you decide not to travel after booking a taxi please cancel it as soon as possible with the contractor.

Note: If you do not cancel the taxi before it is allocated by the contractor to a driver your Borough has to pay what is on the meter



and you also lose a trip from your allocation.

This does not apply where a taxi arrives late and you choose not to travel.

## **Booking a taxi**

To book a taxi, contact:

### ***Computer Cab***

Telephone: 020 7474 6545,  
020 7763 5001.

Website: [www.comcablondon.co.uk/webbook/taxicardlogin.asp](http://www.comcablondon.co.uk/webbook/taxicardlogin.asp)

Email: [web.booking@comcab.co.uk](mailto:web.booking@comcab.co.uk)

Please note that the first booking must be made by telephone.

## **What information do I have to give when booking?**

When the call is answered please give the following information, if you can:

- Your name and Taxicard number.
- The address from where you want the taxi to pick you up. Try to give precise details such as a particular exit from a supermarket or theatre.
- The exact destination address.
- Whether you are a wheelchair user.
- Whether you will need help getting into and out of the taxi.
- Offer a contact phone number if possible.

If there is a problem in supplying your taxi on time an operator will contact you.

Note: The operator should confirm with you the details of your booking to ensure it has been recorded accurately.

## **Travelling Companions**

You can travel with up to 4 companions. If you have a wheelchair then there may only be room for 3 companions in the taxi.

## **Types of bookings**

Taxicard bookings are treated in exactly the same way as any other taxi booking. If you ask for a taxi to be provided as soon as possible they will begin their search straight away.

For advanced bookings, even if you have booked a taxi well in advance of your journey, they will not look for a taxi until approximately 15 minutes before your journey. Taxis are not allocated in advance. This is the way all radio controlled taxi circuits' deal with advanced bookings.

Note: If they find you a taxi immediately and it is close by it may arrive early - please be ready for this because if the taxi has to wait or you send it away there will be extra costs involved. Sending the taxi away can also cause further delay, as a new taxi will have to be found for you.

We suggest you consider the following when booking your taxi:

If you wish to book a taxi for immediate travel, you should try to book a minimum of 30 minutes before the time you would like to travel.

Extra time should be given for bookings that are important, for example:

- Connecting with on-going transport - e.g. at train or coach stations
- Other important appointments
- Outings to shows or other events where tickets have been bought in advance.

However, you should be aware that taxis are not suited to journeys where it is vital that you arrive at your destination at an exact time.

If you require a return journey you may book it when you book the outward journey. Please inform the contractor if you cannot be contacted while you are at the location from where you will make your return journey.

If you make repeat journeys on a daily, weekly or monthly basis these can be booked in advance to save phoning on each occasion.

## **Availability of Taxis**

Every effort will be made to supply you with a taxi but at certain times it may be difficult to find a taxi and it may arrive late. In exceptional circumstances none may be available. This is because the number of available taxis varies continuously throughout the day and when demand is high it may outstrip supply.

For example this can occur:

- During rush hour
- When weather conditions are poor - traffic moves more slowly and there are more street hiring's

- During special events such as major state or sporting occasions - when taxi movements are restricted or drivers choose not to work
- Christmas and New Year holidays - when less drivers choose to work

When no taxi is available - what this means

The contractor may not be able to inform you that they cannot provide a taxi until shortly before the requested arrival time.

The operator will try to contact you and ask whether you want them to keep trying to locate a taxi or whether you wish to cancel and make other arrangements.

This is why it is important to always try and tell the operator how you can be contacted if you are not at home.

## **Wheelchair Users and Assistance**

- All licensed taxis are wheelchair accessible, and the contractors' drivers are obliged to take wheelchair users.
- It is the law that wheelchairs are properly secured inside the taxi. Drivers should do this. Please ask them to help you if they fail to do so.
- Some electric wheelchairs and scooters are too large to be carried by a taxi. The contractor will advise if this is the case with your chair.
- Some of the larger than usual wheelchairs can only be carried by certain types of taxi and you may have to wait longer until one becomes available - seek the contractor's advice.
- Drivers cannot offer the type of specialist assistance given by some forms of dedicated transport for people with disabilities. They will give reasonable assistance into and out of taxis, but are not permitted to lift

people under any circumstances. If specialist help is required a companion who can render it should accompany you.

## **Taxi Ranks**

You can pick up Computer Cab taxis from ranks providing you have your Taxicard with you and the taxi has their logo on it. Drivers should accept your Taxicard as long as they are for hire.

## **Street Hailing**

You can hail a Computer Cab taxi in the street provided that the yellow for hire light is on, you have your Taxicard with you and the taxi has their logo.

## **Who is eligible for a Taxicard?**

Taxicard is for people with a mobility impairment, which makes it difficult for them to use mainstream public transport such as tubes, buses and trains.

In order to be eligible automatically you should either:

- Receive the Higher Rate Mobility component of the Disability Living Allowance
- Be registered as Blind (Being Partially Sighted does not allow automatic eligibility)
- Receive a War Pension Mobility Supplement Proof will be required that you are in one of the above categories.

If you are not in one of the above categories you may still apply, but you will need to get a section of the application form signed and stamped by your GP and/or may have to provide further information or

be required to have a mobility assessment.

## **How to apply for a Taxicard?**

### ***Harrow Concessionary Travel***

Address: Access Harrow, PO Box 592, Civic Centre, Station Road, Harrow, HA1 9BN

Tel: 020 8416 8025

Email: [concessionarytravel@harrow.gov.uk](mailto:concessionarytravel@harrow.gov.uk)

To apply for a Taxicard or for further information, including eligibility, please contact Harrow Social Services. If you reside in a different London Borough, please contact the central Taxicard office.

### **Do you need further help?**

**Please contact [HAD.org.uk](http://HAD.org.uk) on 020 8861 9920,  
Or visit us at The Wealdstone Centre,  
38-40 High Street, Wealdstone, Harrow, HA3 7AE.**

This fact sheet is one of a series, providing information and advice on a number of topics.

## **HAD.ORG.UK FACTSHEETS:**

- Access to Shops, Cafes and Everyday Services
- Accessible Public Transport
- Aids and Adaptations
- Blue Badge Scheme
- Concessionary Travel
- Dial-a-Ride and Taxicard Schemes
- Education and Learning
- Holidays
- Leisure at Home
- Motoring
- Performing Arts
- Self Directed Support
- Sports
- The Care Act 2014
- Universal Credit
- Utilities
- Visiting Places of Interest
- Voluntary Transport
- Welfare Benefits
- Wheelchairs

## **HOUSING MATTERS:**

- A General Guide to Housing Benefit
- A Guide to Housing Benefit for Disabled Students
- Applying as Homeless (Priority Need)
- Homelessness (Out of Hours) Emergencies
- Private Tenants: smoke and carbon monoxide alarms
- Rent Increases : Assured Shorthold Tenancies
- The Right to Rent
- 10 Rights of Private Tenants