

HERTFORDSHIRE & BEDFORDSHIRE TAXI LICENSING OFFICER GROUP TAXI RANK CODE OF PRACTISE

General

- This code of practise is designed to ensure that taxi ranks provide minimum levels of comfort, convenience safety and accessibility for passengers, taxi drivers and other road users
- Taxi ranks will vary according to their location – for example, shopping centres, entertainment areas, hotels and large office buildings, main or suburban railway stations, park and ride locations, hospitals or local neighbourhood centres
- Before a Traffic Regulation Order is made to implement a rank, the local authority should consult the police, local taxi operators, and the operators of facilities adjacent to the proposed location

Rank location

- Passengers should be able to find ranks intuitively – for example, in busy shopping areas rather than quiet pedestrian areas. Ranks should be located within 50 metres – 100 metres of the facility being served
- Ranks should aim to minimise pedestrian travel distances, be central to areas that they serve, and have good access and egress for vehicles
- Pedestrian access to ranks should be favoured over vehicle access.
- Ranks should be located closest to the point of highest passenger need – for example, at railway stations, ranks should be located close to passenger entry and exit points
- Ranks should be sited so that passengers board and alight from the taxi onto the footway on the nearside of the vehicle. Ramps and steps from the vehicle should be used only from the nearside passenger doors.
- Locations should be regularly reviewed, especially with regard to changes in road lay-outs, traffic flows or nearby local attractions/facilities
- Where possible, ranks should be located allowing taxi drivers the greatest choice of routes, to avoid passengers having to pay fares unnecessarily
- Ranks should be located in the same direction as the predominant flow of traffic.
- If 'U' turns are not permitted from a rank, consideration should be given to providing a rank on the opposite side of the road, with secure pedestrian surface crossing facilities provided
- To promote security, ranks should not be located away from main pedestrian areas unless necessary
- Pedestrians should not generally have to cross roads to reach a rank. Where they may have to do so, consideration should be given to the provision of safe surface crossings
- 'Feeder' ranks need not be located close to pedestrian access routes, although they should be within line of sight of the main rank which they are feeding

Rank design, safety and accessibility

- Ranks should not have a shared use, unless there is a clear time separation between the two uses

- Ranks should have enforceable parking restrictions attached to it
- Ranks should not be located on a main running lane of traffic, but provided with a lay-by. Ranks should be designed to have minimal impact on traffic flow.
- Ranks should be designed to prevent drivers illegally double-parking or queuing beyond the end of the rank, if the rank is full. Providing general car parking at the rear of the rank is one way to achieve this, although bus stops, loading zones and no waiting areas are not always as effective
- Ranks should not have a dropped kerb
- In some circumstances, engineering solutions may have to be adopted to ensure that only licensed taxis can enter the rank to prevent abuse by other motorists
- The kerbside adjacent to the rank should be free from obstacles such as street furniture, trees and poles
- Footpaths should be wide enough to accommodate both waiting passengers and passing pedestrians. A minimum of 1.8 metres clear space should be provided for passing passengers, with a greater width in high-volume areas
- A minimum unobstructed footway width of 4040 mm should be provided to allow for the full extension of wheelchair ramps or the full turning circle of most electric wheelchairs
- Consideration should be given to providing seating where ranks are some distance (50 – 100 metres) from the facilities being served
- Where large queues of passengers are expected, consideration should be given for facilities for passengers to queue in the opposite direction to the taxi queue, to prevent 'queue-jumping'

Security

- Ranks should be covered for CCTV which operates during the whole period the rank is in operation.
- Ranks should be adequately lit at night
- Rank locations should be risk-assessed in consultation with the local crime and disorder reduction partnership/community safety partnership
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Signage

- There should be clear signage for pedestrians to the rank from at least ¼ mile distance
- The local authority should endeavour to publicise the rank location in local travel information and other material
- Ranks must be clearly signed according to the current Traffic Signs and General Direction Regulations 2002 (SI 2002 No 3113) (as amended)
- Where practicable signage should indicate the rank operating times
- Signage should be checked on a six-monthly basis and renewed as soon as practicable when defective
- Signs should be provided at the rank indicating
 - the rank operating times
 - the contact details of the relevant licensing authority
 - the fare tariff for vehicles from that rank
 - other nearby ranks

- alternative public transport provision or private hire vehicle operators within a reasonable distance of the rank
- indicating the nearest public conveniences where available
- 'Feeder' ranks should be clearly signed as such
- Signage should take into account the needs of disabled passengers. Consideration should be given to tactile ground surface indicators to direct vision impaired pedestrians to the head of the rank

General

- Ranks should not normally accommodate less than four taxis
- Litter bins should be provided conveniently near-by to a rank
- In exposed locations or where passengers may have to wait some time for a taxi, a shelter should be available for waiting passengers. Shelters should take account of the needs of disabled passengers
- Where night-time taxi ranks provide a service to large numbers of passengers visiting pubs and clubs, the local authority should consider providing a taxi marshalling service. A code of practise has been published relating to that
- Opportunities for improving ranks arise when improvements to the streetscape is made, when changes to entertainment or shopping facilities occur or when new facilities likely to attract large crowds are constructed.

Sources:

Taxi Rank Guidelines, VicRoads (November 2005)
Transport for London
Hertfordshire & Bedfordshire Taxi Licensing Officers' Group

NOTE:

This code was produced in October 2007 by the Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire Taxi Licensing Officers Group as a working document. Any comments should be sent to Jeffrey.leib@watford.gov.uk .