

LGA commissions new National Register of Taxi and Private Hire Licence Revocations and Refusals

The LGA has commissioned the development of a national database of taxi and PHV licence refusals and revocations.

The new register will allow councils to record details of where a taxi or PHV licence been refused or revoked and allow local authorities to check new applicants against the register.

Why is a register needed?

This is an important step to tackling the issue of individuals making applications to different licensing authorities following a refusal or revocation. At the moment, if drivers do not disclose information about a previous revocation or refusal of a licence, there is often no way for a council to find this information out. This means that vital intelligence about an applicant's past behaviour is being missed and an individual might be able to get a new licence in another area, despite having their licence taken away elsewhere.

How will it work?

The LGA has commissioned the National Anti-Fraud Network (NAFN) to develop and host the register. NAFN is a shared service, hosted by Tameside council, which supports public authorities to tackle fraud and share intelligence. NAFN have been working with the LGA and a user group comprised of licensing officers from a number of local authorities to develop the register, and testing of the site is set to begin shortly.

Licensing authorities will be responsible for adding basic details of drivers who have had applications for a licence either refused, revoked or suspended. The intention is, that when a licensing authority receives an application for a licence, the applicant's details will be run through the register to confirm that there is no record of them having being revoked or refused elsewhere. Details contained on the register will be limited to information that will help to identify an individual to a certain degree of accuracy, but will not give a reason why actions were taken. It will be up to individual authorities to follow up on any searches which come back with a match.

The national register of revocations and refusals was commissioned by the LGA as a voluntary register intended to tackle an issue that undermines public safety and confidence and, however unfairly, harms the reputation of local government. However, a Private Members Bill tabled by Daniel Zeichner MP which is due for a second reading in Parliament on the 2nd February aims to build on the LGA's work to establish the register. If successful the Bill would put a statutory duty on licensing authorities both to share information about licences they have revoked, refused or suspended on a register, and to check the register in respect of every new and renewal application.

When will I be able to access it?

The register is set to go live in April 2018 and guidance will be published to support licensing authorities with the steps they will need to take to sign up to the register and ensure they have supporting procedures in place.

Access to the register will be free for existing NAFN members which is approximately 90% of local authorities. The LGA is currently working with NAFN to explore the appropriate method for other authorities to access the register, although our understanding is that this would be a legitimate cost to be included in the licensing fee.

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