

# APPENDIX K

## CODE OF CONDUCT WHEN WORKING WITH VULNERABLE PASSENGERS

A vulnerable passenger is a passenger whose age or disability means that they are more susceptible to harm than a typical passenger. This may be, for example, a child, an elderly person or somebody with learning difficulties. In addition, an individual should be considered vulnerable if they do not fall within the description above, but their condition is such as to render them more susceptible to harm than may otherwise be the case (for example as a result of being under the influence of alcohol or drugs).

This code of conduct aims to promote good safeguarding practice for drivers and staff working with vulnerable passengers in the taxi or private hire trade. The following safeguarding principles should be embedded into driver working practice:

- Drivers must carry photo ID at all times, and wear it in accordance with the conditions of licence.
- A vulnerable passenger must not be transported in the front passenger seat of the vehicle unless the booking being carried out is under a Staffordshire County Council, or other relevant body, contract for carrying vulnerable persons, in which case the vulnerable passenger may be carried in the front passenger compartment of the vehicle.
- The driver / operator must confirm that appropriate provision has been made for the vulnerable person prior to accepting the booking or commencing the journey. This does not necessarily mean that the driver / operator is responsible for the provision of appropriate measures, however if appropriate measures are not in place then the driver / operator must not undertake the journey.
- When making a journey with vulnerable passengers and there is a carer/responsible person present, then photo-identification should be produced to the driver by the carer responsible for the vulnerable person. If necessary, the driver should obtain a record of the carer's contact details if there is no chaperone.
- If a vulnerable passenger is refused service a responsible person, such as their carer, family member, parent or guardian should be informed so that alternative arrangements can be made. For example, this situation may arise if the customer has an assistance dog and the driver has a medical exemption granted by the council.
- Drivers should always ask if a vulnerable passenger needs assistance, and should not make assumptions.
- Drivers must remain professional at all times and should not:
  - Touch a person inappropriately
  - Make offensive or inappropriate comments (such as the use of swearing or sexualised or discriminatory language)
  - Behave in a way that may make a passenger feel intimidated or threatened
  - Attempt to misuse personal details obtained via the business about a person

These standards are equally applicable when working with vulnerable and non-vulnerable passengers.

- A log should be maintained by drivers when a service has been provided to a vulnerable passenger including the details of any incidents occurring / actions taken or refusals of service.
- Drivers and operators must remain alert to issues around the safeguarding of children and adults at risk. If a driver/operator is concerned about the safety, welfare or behaviour of a vulnerable person, they should report this to the Police by telephoning 101 (or in an emergency by calling 999).
- If a driver/operator is concerned about someone else's conduct, they should report such concerns to the council's licensing department (01782 717717), Police (101 or in an emergency by calling 999) or Crimestoppers (0800 555111).