

FOI Request (received 27 September 2022) - Reference: DFI/2022-0316

In accordance with Section 1 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (Act) and/or in the alternative under Section 5 of the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (Regulations)

I wish to request the following information from the Driver and Vehicle Agency relating to taxi driver and operator licenses in Northern Ireland:

- 1) What are the rules that govern how a Class C taxi driver or taxi operator can carry out their business and is there specific documentation regarding this?
- 2) What rules are in place that stipulate what marketing of the service provided can be carried out either by specific advertising or livery on Class C vehicles? I am specifically interested in operators working in the realms of providing tour services and app based taxi operators.
- 3) I am aware that there are stipulations regarding how Uber is allowed to operate in Northern Ireland but I can't find any information on this. Is there a document that sets out the rules Uber must follow and if so can this be provided to me?
- 4) If another app based taxi system, e.g. Bolt, Freenow etc., applied for a taxi operators license what would the Departments view be of the request?

Response (issued 11 October 2022)

Thank you for your e-mail dated 27 September 2022 requesting, under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI), information relating to taxi licensing.

I can advise that the information you have requested is publically available on www.legislation.gov.uk and can also be accessed through the Department's website.

For your ease of reference, I have included links below which should address your queries along with additional information that I hope is helpful.

The responses to your questions are listed, below, in the order asked:

- 1) The rules and documentation governing Class C taxi operations.
 - (i) All legislation relating to the governance of the taxi industry can be found at:
[Taxis Act \(Northern Ireland\) 2008](#);
[The Taxi Operators Licensing Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2012](#);
[The Taxi Drivers' Licences Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2014](#); and

[The Taxi Licensing Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2015.](#)

- (ii) Class C taxis can only be used on a pre-booked basis, booked at an operating centre and must carry details of their booking in the taxi during the journey. They cannot be hailed and cannot be used on taxi ranks. Examples of class C taxis are vehicles used for chauffeur services, weddings, funerals and courtesy transport. These taxis must not display a roof sign or advertise as a taxi service, but must display a sign in the front windscreen.

2) Rules for all Class C license holders:

Reg. 27(3) of the Taxi Licensing Regulations (NI) 2015 states that, "*The owner or driver of a Class C licensed taxi shall not cause or permit the display of any roof sign or other external markings which advertises the taxi as carrying passengers for hire or reward*".

3) Uber taxis operate under Class C regulations - see link to regulation above.

4) All Taxi Operator applications will be processed in line with the regulations set down in legislation, and specifically: [The Taxi Operators Licensing Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2012.](#)

You may find the following information of some use.

<https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/publications/taxi-operator-handbook-tol-2;>

<https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/publications/your-guide-becoming-taxi-driver-and-information-manual>; and

[Assessing an application for a taxi vehicle licence | nidirect.](#)

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