

County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service (CDDFRS)

Taxi Testing

CDDFRS, VFS will be conducting taxi driving tests on behalf of Durham County Council.

The tests will be conducted from Spennymoor Community Fire Station, Enterprise Way, Green Lane Industrial Estate, Spennymoor, County Durham. DL16 6YP The station and car parking area can also be accessed from York Hill Road.

To book a test, contact:-

Vital Fire Solutions vfsenquiries@ddfir.gov.uk Tel No. 0191 3755690

On arrival the driver must produce their driving licence and be in possession of their National Insurance number to enable the licence to be inspected via DVLA 'View licence on line' the test cannot go ahead unless both documents are produced.

The vehicle produced for test must be;

Taxed and insured for the purpose of the test.

Fitted with a seatbelt for the assessor.

Fitted with a seat head restraint for the assessor.

All windows including front and rear screens must be clean and unrestricted.

'L' plates must not be displayed.

In car entertainment systems must be switched off or inaudible for the duration of the test

The assessor must be allowed to temporarily fix a rear view mirror to the front screen for the duration of the test and be able to have an unrestricted through the rear screen.

In a reasonable state of cleanliness

The test

The test will require you to show a level of driving skill and ability associated with that of an experienced driver, a sound knowledge of the Highway Code, vehicle safety, the responsibilities of a taxi driver and the safety of your passengers. The test will take no more than ninety minutes and include a drive in various locations.

The on road part of the test will be for a minimum of forty minutes in a variety of locations and traffic situations with the main focus of the test being road safety and the safety of your passengers. The test will be conducted in the same way as a normal driving test however the maximum number of driving faults allowed for a pass result is nine, so if you commit ten faults or more a fail is recorded. One serious fault or dangerous fault will result in failure. *The expected outcomes for the test can be found on CDDFRS Vital Fire Solutions web site.*

Driving fault, a deviation from the expected outcome which does not compromise safety

Serious fault, a significant deviation from the expected outcome with safety, control or a legal requirement is breached

Dangerous fault, safety, control or a legal requirement is breached that would have caused actual danger

Questions, three on the Highway Code, two on cabology, and five traffic signs. If two or more questions are answered incorrectly in any area a driving fault will be recorded for each area.

Turn in the road

During the on road test you will be required to turn the car around in the road, you will have to select the safest and most appropriate method of turning the car around, methods you can use are;

Turn in the road

A left or right reverse

A U turn within the width of the road

Utilising the mouth of a junction either left or right

Reversing into a side road

When using any of the above you must not mount any kerb or use any private driveway. All manoeuvres must be made safely under full control with effective all around observations in accordance with the Highway Code.

Stopping at the side of the road

You will be required to stop at the side of the road on at least two occasions as if you were picking up or setting down passengers, you should

Pull up where it is safe, legal and convenient

At a reasonable distance from the kerb

Apply the parking brake.

Select a neutral gear

Make sure there are no obstructions such as lamp posts which would prevent a passenger exiting without compromising safety or difficulty.

Independent Driving

You will be required to drive independently for about ten minutes, the assessor will ask you to drive following direction signs or road markings to a destination without receiving instruction.

Cabology Questions

Questions relating to the role of a taxi driver, two questions will be asked from the following list.

Q. As a licensed taxi driver what must you carry with you at all times?

Ans. The taxi driver's licence and badge (displayed in a conspicuous place)

Q. If you found an item of property left in your taxi, what would you do with it?

Ans. Hand it in at a police station within 24 hours

Q. What is the minimum legal requirement of a tyre tread depth?

Ans. 1.6mm

Q. If the tyre pressures of the vehicle you are driving are 35psi (2.5 bar) at the front and 40psi (2.8 bar) at the rear, what would you consider the correct tyre pressure for the spare tyre to be?

Ans. 40psi (2.8 bar) because it would be easier to deflate to the correct pressure than to inflate the tyre at the road side.

Q. As a taxi driver what is your main responsibility?

Ans. The safety and comfort of your passengers.

Q. How would you show consideration for passengers alighting from your vehicle?

Ans. Stop close the kerb and avoid proximity to any obstruction.

End of test.

At the end of the test the assessor will issue the driver with a test report indicating the test has either been successful or unsuccessful and provide a full debrief of the test.

A copy of the report will be sent to Durham County Council Hackney Carriage licensing department. A hard copy of the report can be supplied to the candidate on request, but will be sent to the email address supplied at the time of booking.

County Durham & Darlington Fire and Rescue Service Driver Training Department will retain a copy of the assessment for a period of 3 months until all payment and licensing has been completed, thereafter the report will be permanently deleted.