



PRESS RELEASE FROM The Blue Lamp Trust

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Safeguarding training for taxi and private hire drivers continues online

Licensing authorities continue to meet new government rules on safeguarding training for taxi and private hire vehicle drivers by making greater use of online courses to help drivers spot and report signs of abuse and exploitation among vulnerable passengers.

Moving classroom courses online is a response to new Government requirements placed on licensing authorities, published in the Department for Transport's latest Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicles Standards in July, to ensure that all taxi and private hire vehicle drivers in their areas undertake safeguarding training.

Taxi drivers transport thousands of children and potentially vulnerable people around the UK every day, so they are ideally placed to spot victims of exploitation or crime. The Blue Lamp Trust's qualified instructors show drivers how to recognise what makes a person vulnerable; to understand how to respond; to report safeguarding concerns and where to get advice.

Hampshire-based charity The Blue Lamp Trust have been running interactive, online safeguarding courses throughout the lockdown period and amid current self-distancing restrictions to cope with the demand for training.

Its fully interactive course is proving additionally popular by saving time and travel costs for participants who can learn from home. The Blue Lamp Trust also offers an e-learning safeguarding training package, which licensed drivers and applicants can work through in their own time.

Theresa Pratt, General Manager of The Blue Lamp Trust, said: "The value of these courses is that participants still get face-to-face learning interaction directly with the instructor and each other rather than passively watching a recorded presentation via webinar.

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“We’ve made some minor alterations to our classroom course to make it easier for Zoom, but the content is exactly the same. We still verify the identity of each candidate at the start of the course and they receive a certificate on successful completion.”

She added: “Online courses are also more convenient for many attendees, with no parking problems or travel costs.”

According to one recent student on the course:

“ I've just finished attending the online Awareness Course and I have to say that it was a brilliant idea to do it like that...much more easy, comfortable and stress free than going to a venue - having to drive miles usually, place that you might not be familiar with, parking difficulties, facilities etc. The instructor was very good, clear communication and all was done in a nice and friendly manner.”

The police-approved course is based on classroom sessions launched by the Blue Lamp Trust in 2019 to increase awareness and help drivers to spot potential incidents of abuse, child criminal and sexual exploitation, human trafficking, domestic abuse, radicalization or coercion by “county line” drug network gangs.

Attendees need to download the Zoom app onto a tablet or computer; a large screen is advisable, and a strong internet connection is required for full interaction with the course via video. At the end of the course, attendees must pass a multiple-choice knowledge test to be awarded a certificate in safeguarding awareness.

The Blue Lamp Trust

Since 2011, The Blue Lamp Trust has been a leading national provider of training and assessments for taxi licence applicants and private hire car drivers for over 120 licensing authorities. The service is now provided via Blue Lamp Trust (Services) Ltd, which is wholly owned by The Blue Lamp Trust. The trust also offers ongoing training to meet legal responsibilities, including Disability Awareness training, also via Zoom.

Income made by the not-for-profit organisation goes to fund the Bobby Scheme in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, an initiative to improve home safety and security for the vulnerable and elderly.

Licensing authorities wishing to offer or recommend a safeguarding course for taxi drivers can contact the Blue Lamp Trust at www.bluelamptrust.org.uk, email info@bluelamptrust.org.uk or call 0300 777 0157.

ENDS (654 words)

Notes to Editor

The Blue Lamp Trust

The Blue Lamp Trust, based in Eastleigh, provides driving assessments and other training for taxi licence applicants and fleet driver training nationwide. Through its activities it funds and operates The Bobby Scheme in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

The Bobby Scheme

Supported by the emergency services and local authorities, The Bobby Scheme provides a free service to elderly and vulnerable people, promoting crime prevention and fire safety initiatives. For over 20 years its

trained fitters, who are all vetted by Hampshire police, uniformed and carry ID cards, visit homes to carry out full home crime-prevention surveys, give reassurance and offer specific crime-prevention advice to improve safety. They also fit locks, spyholes, door chains and smoke alarms where needed.

Contact:

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