**Face Covering**

Welsh Government have announced that from Monday 27th July all users of public transport, including taxis, must wear a face covering.  This requirement will apply to all individuals including drivers unless an exemption exists.

<https://gov.wales/all-passengers-wear-face-coverings-public-transport-wales-monday-july-27>

As with any employer or self-employee, it is the responsibility of the business operators and individuals to ensure they are safe at work, and I would expect that each business has a risk assessment in place and is briefing its employee appropriately but I can reassure you that if a taxi drivers refuses a fare, from a person not wearing a mask, breaching the public health regulations or threating the public health, then no action will against the driver will follow from the Licensing Authority.

North Wales Licensing Authorities are advising that it would be reasonable for a driver to refuse a fare where face coverings not used or person is a threat to the public health, Drivers are urged though to consider the exemptions in place before refusing.

It is a requirement for the public to have a face covering not for the local authority or taxi drivers to distribute them but where passengers do not have a face covering then Licensing Authorities will not prevent a Driver / Operator supplying a mask and making a reasonable charge for doing so.  Those that do make this provision will be solely responsible for ensuring face coverings are of the appropriate type as stated by Welsh Government (three layer face covering).  Drivers / operators should not seek to charge more than a reasonable charge based on their costs for supply.

We would recommend that where existing communication channels (apps, social media etc.) exist then operators should actively promote / remind customers of this requirement and go further when arranging bookings by ensuring customers are aware of their obligation to wear a face covering before committing to the booking.

Guidance will be updated as more information becomes available over the coming days and all licensed drivers and operators should monitor the Welsh Government website for more information - <https://gov.wales/restarting-public-transport-guidance-operators-html#section-46263> and <https://gov.wales/taxi-and-private-hire-vehicle-guidance>

By law, businesses are required to assess risks (with employers required to document that process where there are five or more employees) and this change in Welsh Government requirements will need to be considered in your current assessments.