



New taxi driver grant

The second round of the New Taxi Drivers' Program commenced on 1 June 2022.

Applications for grants of up to \$600 per new driver are open from 1 June 2022 to 22 June 2022 to help taxi operators and networks recruit new drivers by covering the cost of driver training and authorisation.

Taxi operators and networks can find the program eligibility, guidelines and information on how to apply for the payments at

<https://stategrowthtas.smartgrants.com.au/NewTaxiDriversProgramR2>

For more information contact

operator.accreditation@stategrowth.tas.gov.au

Fee increase

Fees relating to the application and issue of operator [accreditation and public passenger vehicle licences](#) will increase on 1 July 2022 in accordance with the [Fee Units Act 1997](#). State Growth's website will be updated on that day.

Mask wearing rule change

From 18 June, masks will no longer be required in airports. From 25 June masks will not be required on public transport including taxis. For more details go to <https://www.coronavirus.tas.gov.au>

Duties of drivers

The Regulations Team has received reports of taxi drivers refusing to accept a hiring when the taxi is in taxi zone (rank).

Unless a driver believes the passenger is unable to pay or the hirer is a threat to their physical safety or safe operation of the taxi, they are not allowed to refuse to accept a hiring when they are parked in a taxi zone within their taxi area.

If a driver is found to have unreasonably refused to accept a hiring, they may be fined.

Operators should ensure their drivers are familiar with their legal obligations and duties (r59 of the [Taxi Industry Regulations 2018](#)).

Other rules drivers should know are that they must:

- move the taxi to the first vacant space available within a rank,
- not prevent another taxi from leaving a rank,
- not tell a person that they must hire the front taxi on the taxi rank, and
- not leave the taxi parked unattended on a rank.

If you would like any more information about the duties of drivers, email the Regulations Team at operator.accreditation@stategrowth.tas.gov.au

Child restraints in taxis

In Tasmania, taxis and buses are exempt from supplying car seats and therefore, children are not required to be seated in a car seat when travelling by taxi or bus. However, all passengers including children must wear seatbelts if they are fitted.

Children under 12 months old are allowed to sit on the lap of an adult passenger in a bus or taxi providing they are not in the front row of seats of the vehicle.

Children should never be allowed to share a seat belt with another passenger.

More information about child restraints is online at [Child restraints - a guide to car seats – Transport Services](#)

Driver behaviour in Salamanca

The Transport Commission has received reports about taxi drivers disobeying the rules and obstructing traffic when picking up and dropping off passengers at the Salamanca precinct.

The information suggests that the behaviour of some drivers may be placing passengers and other road users at risk.

A driver may be fined for standing or parking a taxi on a public street unless –

- it is standing or parked in a taxi zone,
- it is picking up, or about to pick up passengers
- it is dropping off or about to drop off passengers, or
- it is prominently displaying a 'not for hire' sign

Accredited taxi operators should ensure their drivers are aware of the rules. Any questions about the duties of drivers can be emailed to operator.accreditation@stategrowth.tas.gov.au

Wheelchair-accessible taxi (WAT) services

WAT services provide a vital link to the community for those people living with disability or required use a wheelchair.

Currently there are around 1600 Transport Access Scheme (TAS) members with a WAT endorsed taxi smart card in Tasmania.

To support the provision of WAT services and offset the higher set-up cost of a WAT -

- WAT licences are free and are still available (the moratorium on licence release only applies to Owner Operator Taxi Licences)
- there is no restriction on how many WAT licences the Transport Commission can issue
- The Commission pays a trip subsidy each time a WAT endorsed TAS member is transported

WATs can also operate as normal taxis.

Recent legislative changes mean that the Commission may approve a vehicle for use as a WAT if it is not more than 7 years old and meets all other criteria required under [Schedule 1](#) of the [Taxi and Hire Vehicle Industries Act 2008](#).

Like normal taxis, WATs can be used until they are 12 years old.

Currently there is demand for WAT services in various taxi areas.

If you would like to discuss the requirements to become a WAT operator, call Tania Shilcock (Senior Regulations and Concessions Officer) on 6166 3303 or email the Regulations Team at operator.accreditation@stategrowth.tas.gov.au

Regulations Team

Contact us by e-mail at operator.accreditation@stategrowth.tas.gov.au.