

Policy: The use of limousines for funerals during the coronavirus pandemic

Introduction

Many funeral directors offer a limousine service to families as part of their funeral packages. But since the introduction of Covid-19 social distancing rules, it has been extremely difficult for limousines to be used safely, due to the risk of virus transmission between the driver and passengers. There has also been a need to enforce social distancing rules amongst mourners.

However, new technology in the form of a transparent acrylic screen to separate the driver and passengers has become available, potentially allowing the safer use of limousines with precautions. A range of funeral sector limousine specialists such as Wilcox Limousines and Superior Automotive is supplying this technology. Funeral businesses should consult their motor insurance providers and notify of any modifications before taking to the road.

The specifications of the Perspex divider is the funeral directors responsibility to determine their measure of prevention of the spread of COVID-19. For instance, is it a full fitting divider screen from roof to floor and to the door pillars each side? What gaps for airflow and if the gaps are on the floor, rather than head height? This forms part of the risk assessment.

Importantly, this guidance is aimed at helping to facilitate the safe use of limousines during the pandemic; it is not intended to signal that all funeral directors should now start offering a limousine service if they feel unable to do so.

UK Government guidance can be found [here](#): dated 28 May 2020.

Guidance for funeral directors offering a limousine service

Funeral directors can offer limousines to clients if a dividing screen has been installed to separate the driver from passengers. Drivers should wear gloves and a face covering.

During the arrangement process an explanatory discussion with the families should take place about the procedures for complying to limousine use.

Passengers in each car should be from the same household, however where there is no alternative separate transport for passengers from different households, follow the advice in the section 'Guidance for mourners...' below.

Funeral directors should provide face masks, non-allergenic gloves and sanitizer for each passenger for the journey(s).

Air conditioning should be switched off. For ventilation, windows should be opened. Windscreen blowers can be operated to ensure safe visibility if required.

The driver should wash his or her hands with soap and water or sanitizer for at least 20 seconds prior to and after each journey.

Prior to collecting the passengers, the driver or person arranging the funeral should conduct a risk assessment to establish whether the passengers have been in contact with the deceased if Covid-19 is the confirmed or suspected cause of death. The assessment should also cover any mobility assistance needs. For example, will an elderly passenger require physical assistance alighting.

Upon arrival at the collection point, the driver should explain to the passengers that he or she will open the doors for the passengers and then stand back to allow them to alight. Once seated, the driver will close the doors and proceed with the journey. This process is to be repeated upon arrival at the funeral service venue and for any return journeys.

After each funeral, the interior of the vehicle, including the dividing screen, should be steam cleaned or wiped down with disinfectant. [Many disinfectant sprays](#) can be used on all types of upholstery material, although it's essential to check the product label before use. There are fogging cleaners also available to disinfect vehicles. Avoid products that contain bleach or hydrogen peroxide. PPE should be worn during the cleaning of vehicles. Further information about decontamination of non-healthcare settings can be found [here](#).

Any tissues offered to families should be replaced.

Funeral directors should make families aware of these measures prior to the day of the funeral service.

Funeral staff who feel uncomfortable driving a limousine during the coronavirus should not be pressured into doing so, nor should they be penalised.

Guidance for funeral directors on communicating limousine use during the coronavirus pandemic

To minimise the risk of misunderstandings and complications in the provision of a limousine service, it is essential that funeral directors communicate clearly with clients in advance of the day of the funeral service, ideally in the form of a leaflet or simple printed instruction sheet.

Areas of guidance in these instructions should clarify:

- The Funeral Director is to supply face coverings and gloves. and a safe means of disposal for the passengers.
- Hand sanitiser will be provided by the funeral director.
- Protocols for alighting, opening windows and seating positions (i.e., who opens the doors and where passengers are allowed to sit)
- What distance the funeral director is prepared to travel with a limousine
- The maximum number of passengers transported agreed by the funeral director and staff.
- The right of refusal to supply the service if a client has not complied with the terms on which limousines are being provided.

Guidance for mourners using a funeral director limousine service

All passengers should pay full attention to the driver and follow any instructions given.

All passengers are recommended to wear face coverings regardless of whether they are from the same household.

If passengers are not from the same household and are required to travel together in the absence of alternative separate transport, the following guidance should be observed.

The number of people in each limousine should be kept as low as possible.

Face coverings must be worn, and windows should be opened to allow good ventilation.

If possible, keep at least 2 metres distance between passengers, maximising the distance through appropriate seating positions.

Passengers should face away from each other.

Passengers should wash their hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer for at least 20 seconds before and after each journey.

Passengers should avoid touching their faces and if they cough, use a tissue and immediately dispose of the used tissue in a bin/bag provided by the funeral director. If no tissue is available, they should use the crook of their sleeved arm.

Further information about transport to and from funerals is available on the Government website [here](#).