

# Implementing the DBS Update Service

2021



**TA:PLUS**

Taxi licensing specialists

# New standards and guidance

The DBS Update Service is becoming mandatory for the private hire industry in January 2021. You may be reading this with no idea what the Update Service is, and the fact it's becoming compulsory might be ringing alarm bells!

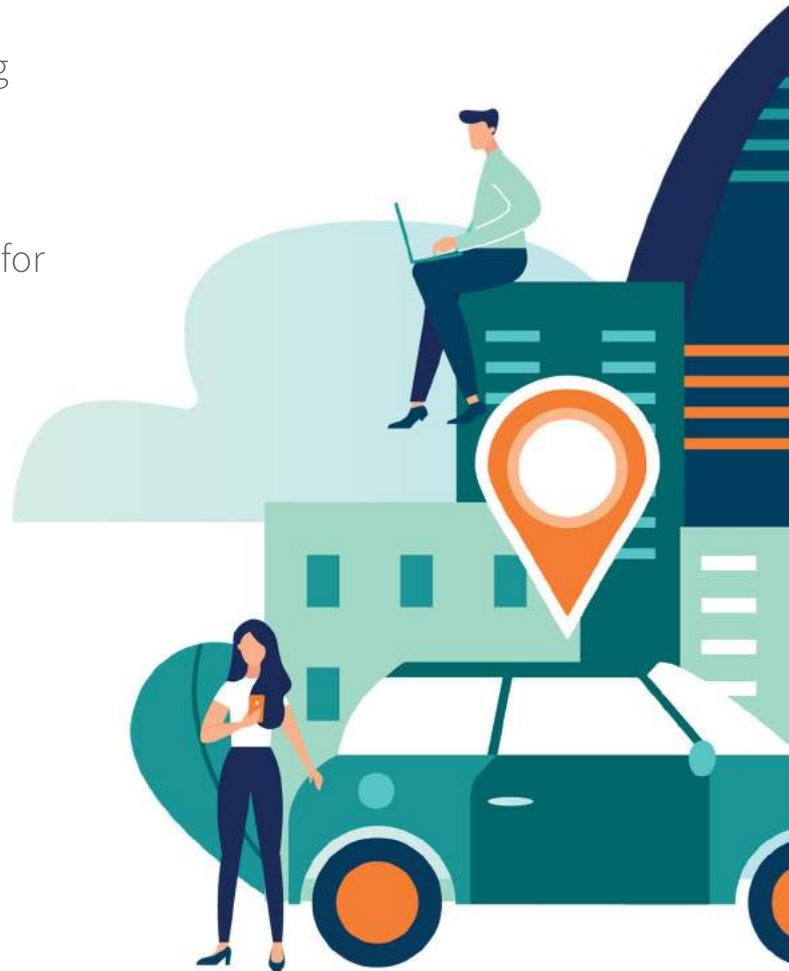
While it's not compulsory for everyone (yet!), it's likely this trend will continue. But what is it? Who is it for? And how do you implement it?

By the time you've read this you will be able to answer all the above and feel confident implementing the DBS Update Service into your recruitment/suitability decision making practice.

This guide is intended to help licensing authorities, operators, and drivers get ready for coming changes. However, the general information is applicable for any employer carrying out DBS checks.

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# What is the Update Service?

A system run by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) allowing applicants to share their DBS Check info with employers electronically, saving time and money.

The DBS Update Service (DBSUS) is a subscription with the DBS, signing up to this means that applicants gain a level of portability over their DBS Check(s).

This service is charged at £13p.a. and by subscribing to this service, applicants can:

- Add/Remove DBS Certificates
- View employers who have checked the status of a certificate
- Amend their contact details.

The key aim of the update service is to improve the speed and ease of the recruitment process for those within regulated industries.

If applicants are working within the same workforce, it allows movement between roles without needing another DBS check to be completed.

Rather than carrying out another check, employers can:

- Access a free online status check for an individual's DBS check.
- Be notified of any new information relating to that check.

Ultimately saving you time and money!



# Why is it becoming compulsory?

Part of the DBS' **5-year strategy** is to modernize their service in line with our increasingly digital society. Viewing certificate information online means employers can make quicker and safer suitability decisions.

The taxi industry is well suited to having compulsory update service registration as part of drivers licensing conditions.

In recent years we have all become aware of how the taxi industry has been abused for criminal purposes. Investigations into child sexual exploitation and county lines drug offences have made this clear.

Using the update service means that licensing authorities can have confidence in their decisions. And the public can be confident of being safe whilst using these services.

As of January 2021, all taxi and private hire drivers will be required to demonstrate continuous and valid registration to the DBSUS.



# Where do I start?

1

## Firstly, update any existing guidance!

Any webpages, letters or emails that instruct drivers on how to apply for a badge need to state that the DBSUS is a requirement of a license.

2

## Second, start an awareness campaign!

Once you've updated all your guidance, you need to let drivers know.

Long-term licensees may be so familiar with the process they may not check new guidance.

Email and SMS campaigns are very effective and should be used in tandem with clear notices and info available on your website(s).

3

## Third, reinforce its importance!

At every stage of the license application it should be stressed that the update service is mandatory. If they don't sign up, they don't get a badge.

Our service allows us to automate these tasks for you. Sending custom emails and advice packs at specific parts of the DBS checking process.



# How do we integrate it into our process?

You've got your all your drivers signed up to the Update Service, but how do you actually use it?

The new statutory guidance requires drivers to provide evidence they have subscribed to the DBSUS. 'Status Checks' should then be carried out every 6 months by the licensing authority.

Checking someone is on the DBSUS and carrying out a Status Check follows the same process. You would follow this [link](#) and be required to enter your name and the following details:

- DBS Certificate Number
- Surname as it appears on the certificate
- DOB as it appears on the certificate

The update service would then show whether the status of the applicants check has changed. Any new info would then be used to inform licensing decisions.

You can also sign up to use the DBSUS Multiple Status Check Facility. This allows searches for the status of multiple checks simultaneously.

Organisations wishing to do this would need to contact the DBS directly. Full info can be found [here](#).





# What is a Status Check?

A Status Check is simply the act of looking up someone's information on the DBSUS to check if anything's changed.

A Status Check will give one of the 4 below responses:

- the certificate is clear and there is no new information.
- the certificate contains information but there is no new information
- New information is known
- Details not found

How information on a certificate is treated is down to the discretion of the licensing authority.

The guidance does state that extra consideration must be given to any driving offences, violent or sexual crimes as well as involvement with drugs or gangs.

Anyone appearing on either barred list should also be denied a license.

You can carry out a Status Check [here](#).



# Update Service Tips

There can be a lot to remember about the Update Service. We've compiled some of the most important points below:



Applicants need to retain the original certificate for the DBSUS to be valid.



Signing up needs to be done while the check is in process or within 28 days of certificates issue.



Drivers can be licensed without the DBSUS but will need to complete new DBS checks every 6 months



Certificates on the DBSUS can be accepted from other employers if it matches the check required. For taxi and private hire drivers this is normally an Enhanced DBS checked against Other Workforce and the Child and Adult Barred Lists.



If someone's subscription runs out, they will need to complete a new DBS Check and re-subscribe.



Signing up to the Update Service is always the individual's responsibility.

The DBS provide a suite of downloadable resources to help organisations encourage individuals to sign up. Including posters and presentations as well as YouTube videos.





# Summary

Ready or not the DBS Update Service is coming.

The new 'Statutory Taxi & Private Hire Vehicle Standards', released by the Department for Transport (DfT), are coming into effect as of January 2021.

Signing up to the DBSUS is an essential part of this new guidance and applies to all licensing authorities in England and Wales.

The DfT are determined that the failings of licensing authorities identified by the **Jay** and **Casey** reports, shall never be repeated. By encouraging drivers to sign up, licensing decision makers will be in a better position to safeguard the public.

Previous concern suggested that difficult licence applications could negatively impact the public, due to lack of appropriate transport. A concerted effort to get drivers signed up should negate this concern.

The portability of a check on the DBSUS means that drivers can apply for licences with multiple authorities without delay. Less delays for applications mean licensing managers have more time to spend on important decisions.

## Need help with your licensing process?



### Contact us today!

Speak to one of our friendly advisors and find out how we can change the future of taxi licensing for your council:.

Email us at [hello@taxiplus.co.uk](mailto:hello@taxiplus.co.uk)

Ring us on **01254 355 674**

Visit [www.taxiplus.co.uk](http://www.taxiplus.co.uk)