



Lost Property Policy

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Operating Office:

**Office 506
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Barking
IG11 8BB**

Happi Group Ltd t/a
Happicars

Approved and signed on behalf of the above companies/trading names

**Mohammad Umar Hussain
Director**

Dated.....10th Janary 2024.....

About this Policy

The Operator and its drivers are conditioned to take certain steps to record, retain and return lost property. The operator provides a service of accepting bookings for private hire vehicles and facilitating drivers of private hire vehicles to fulfil such bookings. Occasionally customers may leave property behind in a private hire vehicle despatched by us. This Policy sets out the steps that we will take in order to return property to you if lost.

Lost Property

Property remains the responsibility of its individual owner and the customers are encouraged to take good care of their own belongings and not to leave them behind on a private hire vehicle. The Operator is not responsible for any property that is left behind until it is given to the Operator at its offices. The safe keeping or return of your property does not form part of any contract for a private hire vehicle formed between us and you.

Discovery of Lost Property by a Driver

Private hire drivers are conditioned by the Licensing Authority to check their vehicle for lost property after the termination of each booking. If any lost property is identified it should be returned to the customer immediately where possible.

If lost property is discovered after a customer has left the vehicle and is no longer in the vicinity of the driver's vehicle the driver may:

- a) seek to return the item to the customer within 24 hours;
- b) give the lost property to the Operator, no later than 24 hours after its discovery.

A driver will not retain lost property for more than 24 hours.

If the Driver seeks to return the item directly:

The driver may return the item directly to the customer if they are able to do so. For instance, by visiting the customers drop off destination. If the driver has the details to do so, he may contact the customer to make arrangements for the return of the property. The driver may leave the property with another reasonably responsible person – for instance, at the reception of the customers place of work. The driver will be responsible for this and should get a receipt if considered necessary.

Items of Value

If the item is of value, whether monetary or personal, the driver should contact the operator immediately upon discovery of the item and confirm if the driver intends to return the item directly or to give it to the operator.

Examples of an item of value are:

- Mobile phone;
- Wallet
- Purse
- Recently purchased shopping
- Business folders

It is important that the driver notifies the operator as it is likely the customer will notice the missing item and will contact the operator. The operator can then make arrangements with the driver and customer of the safe return of the items. Early notification will also reduce any concern or accusation that the driver is seeking to keep the item if it is not reported missing.

If the item is not of significant value, for instance, a newspaper the driver is not obligated to inform the operator within the first 24 hours if he expects to return the item. However, the driver should not ever discard or destroy the lost property.

Payment/ reward for return of lost property by Driver

The return of the property does not form any part of the private hire contract between the customer and the operator. No charge is payable for the return of property by the driver – it is a duty imposed on the licence holder. The customer may pay the driver a reward for returning the item but the driver should not insist on this.

End of Drivers responsibility

If the driver has not returned the property to the owner within 24 hours, he or she must, within that time, give the lost property to the Operator. Once it is given to the operator, the driver is no longer responsible for its return unless there is further agreement between the operator/customer and driver.

The Operators role

Happicars will store lost property at the operating centre specified in the licence and record, containing the particulars set out in lines a) to e) below, of any lost property found at that centre or in any private hire vehicle used to carry out a booking accepted by them.

a) the date on which it was found

- b) the place where it was found and, if it was found in a vehicle, the registration mark of that vehicle
- c) a description of the item
- d) evidence to show that, where practical, an attempt was made to return the item to the owner and whether or not this was successful and
- e) in the case of any unclaimed item which has been disposed of, how it was disposed of

Happicars has a retention period of 12 months from the date on which they were entered in the respective record. When lost property is received the Operator will make a record of its receipt and keep it at its office. The record shall identify the driver providing the lost property, the journey it was in relation to, and who it was returned to (if claimed).

Illegal Items

If the driver of a vehicle discovers an item left behind that is illegal – for instance a weapon or drugs, the driver must hand it to the Police or his operator immediately. No such item will be retained or held on to and will not be returned to its owner.

Allegations against a driver for theft of property

The operator cannot resolve complaints against a driver for any allegation that property lost has been kept (stolen) by the driver. Such allegations should be made to the Police and the Council. Before making such an allegation the property owner should be satisfied that the property was left in the vehicle with the driver.

Any driver found to have retained a valuable item without notifying the operator, taking steps to return the item or for longer than 24 hours will be disciplined by the operator and reported to the Council.

Queries regarding lost property should be made to: info@happicars.co.uk.