

Norfolk & Suffolk Crime Prevention

Guidance Note

Making off without paying Taxis



SUFFOLK
CONSTABULARY



NORFOLK
CONSTABULARY
Our Priority is You

If you're a taxi driver you will almost certainly have experience of people making off without paying.

This Guidance Note is intended to offer advice as to how to avoid this situation occurring and how to deal with it if it does occur.

What is the law

If a passenger leaves the vehicle and makes off without paying the fare they are committing an offence under Section 3 of the Theft Act 1978 - Making off without payment.

In simple terms a person who uses the taxi knowing that payment is required or DISHONESTLY makes off without payment, intending that payment shall not be made, commits the offence.

A person entering a taxi with no money in their possession who fails to inform the driver until the journey is complete, commits an offence under Section 11 Fraud Act 2006 – Obtaining services dishonestly.

If the passenger states that he was unhappy with the service and attempts to negotiate part payment and provides his details the matter would become a civil debt and would not be dealt with by police.

What to do when this occurs

For Further Crime Prevention Advice:-

For Norfolk dial 101 and ask to speak to your local Architectural Liaison Officer (ALO)

For Suffolk dial 101 and ask to speak to your local Safer Neighbourhood Team

- If a situation occurs it is recommended that drivers maintain calm and professional. Try to avoid strong or threatening language and distance yourself from any physical contact where possible.
- Always try to avoid placing yourself in unnecessary danger.
- If the matter is a threat to your physical safety or damage to your property, the police should be called immediately using 999.
- Do not attempt to lock a passenger in the vehicle. This would leave you open to a criminal complaint of false imprisonment and counter action under civil law.
- Always stay with taxi at all times. Never chase anybody who has made off without payment.
- Door handles can be modified so that they can only be opened from inside and deadlocks can also be fitted.
- Consider installing CCTV/dash cams/audio recording equipment.
- Don't carry too much cash in the taxi.
- Consider fitting lockable plastic partitioned glass.
- Ensure you have the most up to date radio and other communication devices.
- Always carry on board:
 1. mobile phone
 2. notepad and pen to record any incidents and descriptions etc.
 3. spare key for vehicle.

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