

Driver Training



REAL
REAL Passenger REAL Person


Department
for Transport

Discussion

Why do you think **taxi and private hire vehicle (PHV) services** are so important to disabled people?

.....

Do you **understand your duties** under the law?

.....

Do you think that they are **fair and reasonable**?

.....

What **challenges have you had** in supporting disabled passengers?

.....

Are there any **issues** you would like to **discuss**?

What the Law says

The Equality Act 2010 states that those who have a physical or mental impairment that has a ‘substantial’ and ‘long-term’ negative effect on their ability to do normal daily activities are disabled.

.....

This could be to do with how they move around; what they can see or hear; how they need information provided to them; or if they feel pain, or anxiety; or distress over a long period.

.....

Remember – **many things that mean that someone is disabled aren’t visible.**

Picking up Passengers

You need to pick up a disabled passenger if they hail or book your car.

.....

This doesn't mean you have to carry a disabled passenger under all circumstances.

.....

For example, if a disabled person is drunk and abusive, a driver can refuse to carry them, just as they would a non-disabled person in the same condition.

.....

Remember that some conditions might cause a person to have jerky movements, or to shout or even swear, for example cerebral palsy or Tourette's syndrome. It is likely to be reasonable to carry passengers with these conditions.



Assisting Passengers

Remember, not every disability is visible.

.....

If you think someone may be disabled, be prepared to get out of the car, hold the door open, stow luggage, offer an arm for support and adjust the seat if necessary.

.....

Make sure you understand how any ramps or swivel seats work.

.....

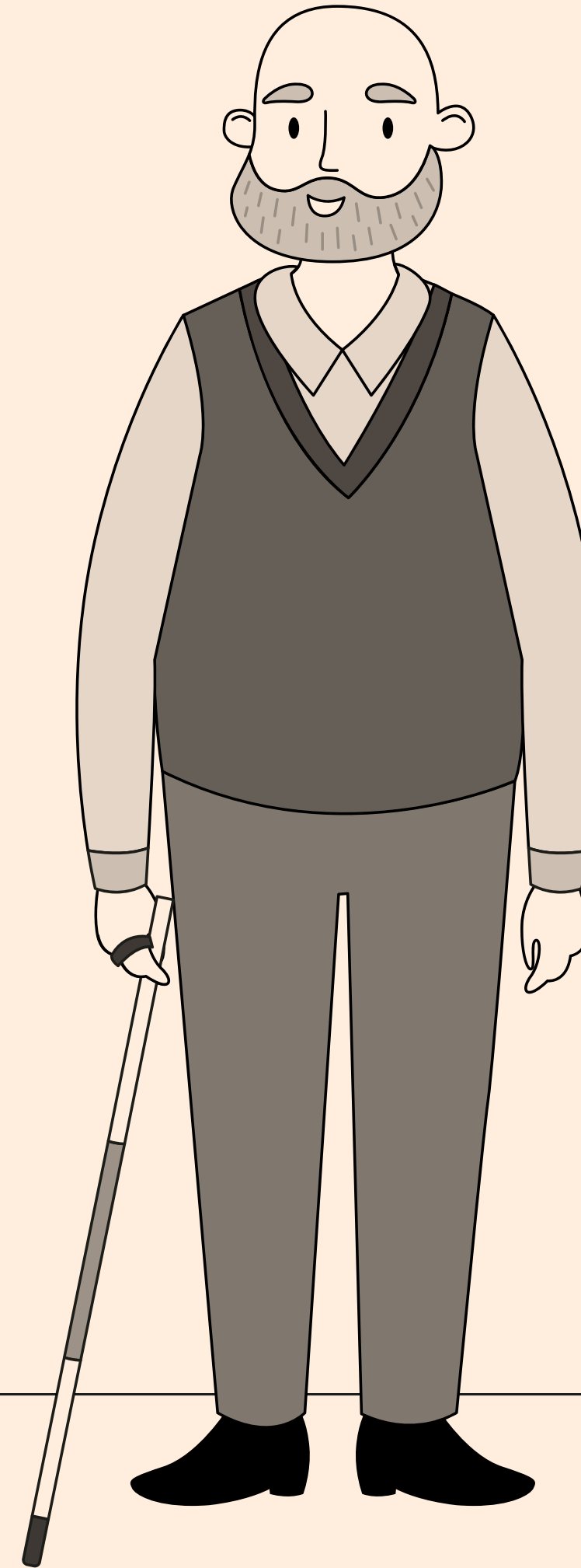
Always offer to help people in and out of the vehicle and with their luggage.

Visual Impairments

If you know someone is blind or partially sighted, don't wait outside. Knock on the door to say you have arrived.

.....

Give as much information to the passenger as possible, such as the type of vehicle, which way the door opens and which way the vehicle is facing.



Continued

Guide your passenger to the vehicle’s door, place their hand on the open door, and indicate the position of the roof.

.....

Try to avoid pushing or pulling them, and always tell them what’s ahead (e.g. steps, slopes, doorways, anything they could bump into).

.....

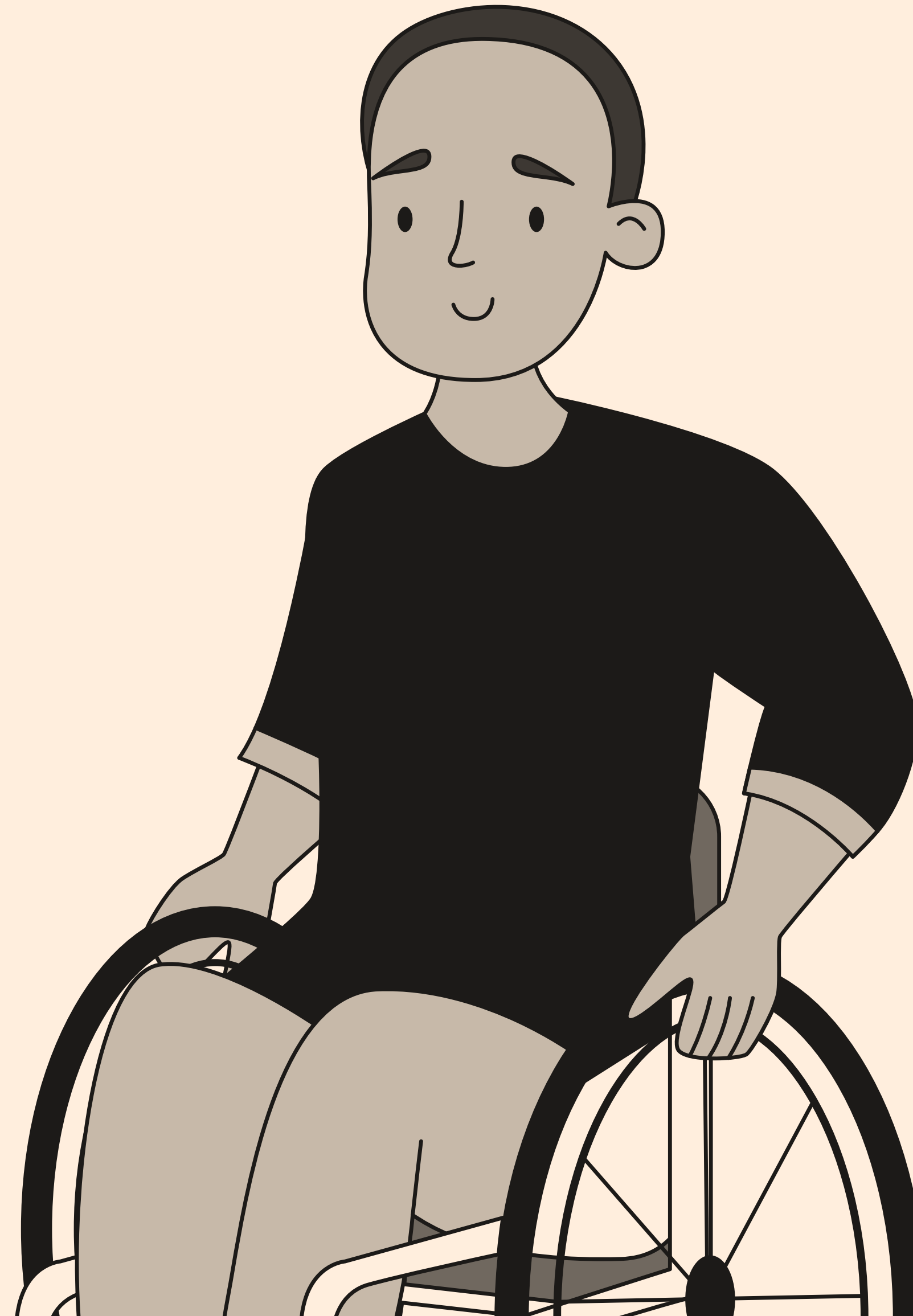
At the end of the journey, offer to guide the customer to their final destination.

Wheelchairs

Don't leave a wheelchair user at the roadside. It could put them at risk.

.....

Don't let wheelchair users travel sideways in their wheelchair. Make sure the wheelchair is fixed in the designated space correctly and that a belt is offered to the wheelchair user.



Continued

For wheelchair users who wish to transfer from a wheelchair to a seat, ask what they need before touching either the passenger or the wheelchair.

.....

Be prepared to fold a manual wheelchair (under instructions from the wheelchair user) and stow it safely for the journey.

Mobility Scooters

Some mobility scooters can be carried in taxis and PHVs.

.....

However, passengers should not remain seated in their scooter while travelling as it may tip over.

.....

Wheeled scooters can't use channel ramps.

.....

Wherever possible, put scooters in the boot or the luggage hold.



Seatbelts

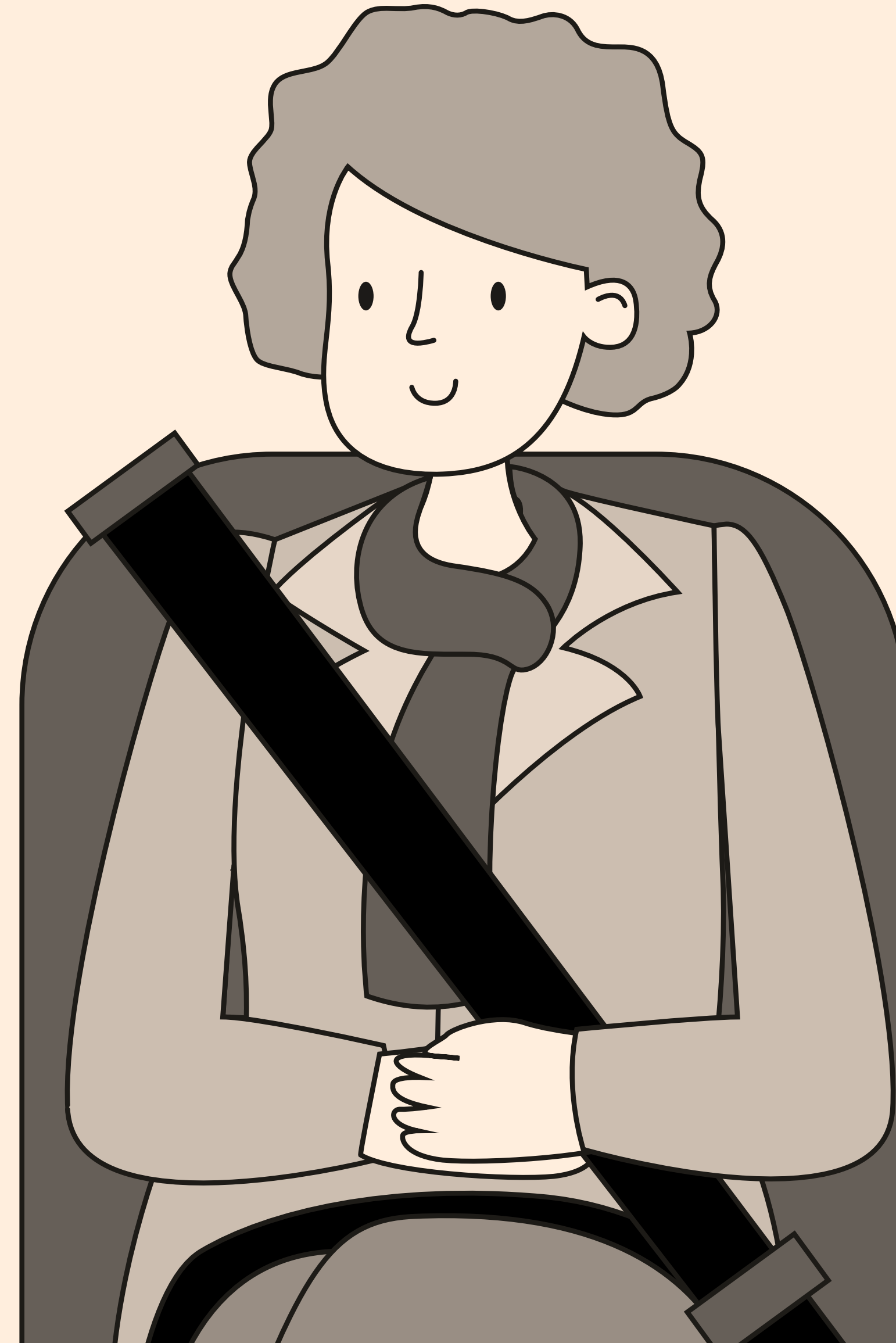
Offer to help a disabled passenger with their seatbelt.

.....

Don't set off until the passenger is seated and secure.

.....

Some disabled people don't have to wear a seatbelt. They will carry a certificate to confirm this.



Driving

You won't always know someone is disabled. They might be in pain or anxious. That's why it's always important to drive with care and attention.

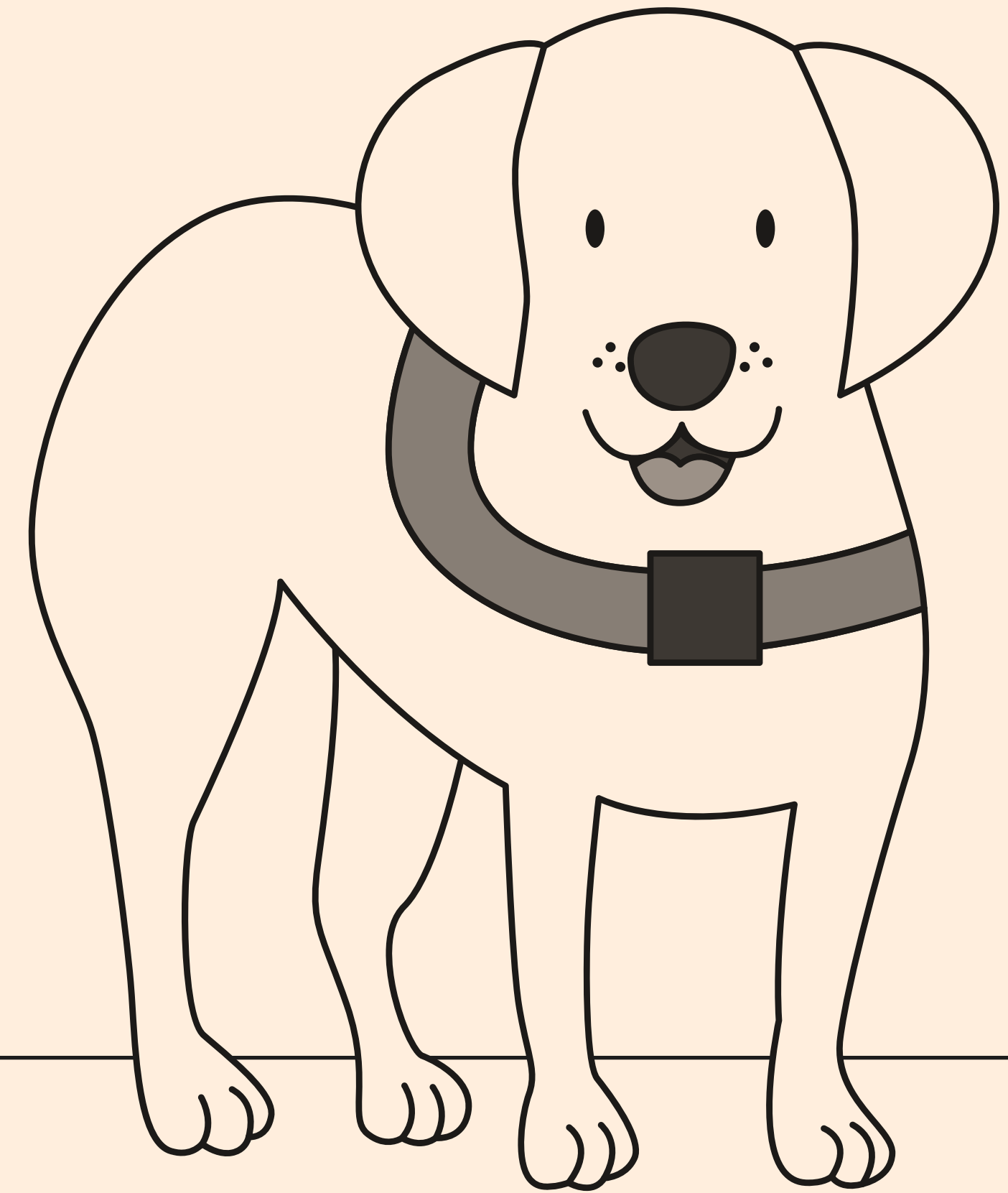
.....

Sudden braking and acceleration will cause alarm for some disabled passengers and will be painful for those with muscle and bone conditions, such as arthritis.

Assistance Dogs

You must accept a fare from a disabled person who uses a guide, hearing or other assistance dog.

.....
The dog should be allowed to remain with the passenger.



Continued

There are several different types of assistance dog, including:

Dogs that guide people who are blind or partially sighted.
These dogs wear a reflective harness

.....
Dogs trained to assist a deaf person. These dogs wear a
jacket bearing the words ‘Hearing Dogs for Deaf People’

.....
Other assistance dogs, for example those trained by Dogs
for the Disabled or Canine Partners to assist a disabled
person with a physical impairment. These dogs should wear
a jacket inscribed with the name of the relevant charity

.....
Owners of all these dogs will carry an identity card with the
name of the relevant charity

Continued

Assistance dogs are highly trained animals. They are trained to stay on the floor of the car, and are unlikely to damage or dirty it in any way.

.....

Where there is a separate passenger cabin, there is plenty of space for the dog. In saloon cars, the dog will generally curl up in the footwell of the front passenger seat, next to its owner.

.....

Where there is an airbag fitted it is important to tell the owner if they are sat in the front of the vehicle. They can adjust their seat to make sure that the dog can lie down, or move to the back seat where the dog will once again curl up on the floor.

Dogs and Islamic Law

Guidance from the Islamic Sharia Council in 2002 confirmed that trained assistance dogs may accompany disabled people in taxis and private hire vehicles managed or driven by Muslims.

.....

The Council’s guidance helps to clarify religious law and prevent any possible conflict with secular law.

.....

Lord Ahmed, a Muslim spokesperson in the House of Lords, said at the time: “Islam is a religion that cares for people. Although it is not encouraged to keep a dog in the house, if the dog is owned for reasons of safety then it is permitted. When a disabled person is accompanied by a trained dog, such a dog becomes a blind person’s eyes and therefore should not be stopped from entering with a blind person.”

Refusing to Carry Assistance Dogs

This issue is highlighted by disabled people as a frequent breach of their rights. Research from Guide Dogs for the Blind backs this up.

.....

The failure of a driver to admit an assistance dog makes them liable to a fine of up to £1,000, in addition to costs.

Exemption

If you have a medical condition, such as severe asthma, which is aggravated by contact with dogs, or if you are allergic, or have an acute phobia of dogs, you may qualify for an exemption.

.....

When considering this, your licensing authority would need to verify your medical condition.

.....

If you have a Notice of Exemption, you must display it, either in the windscreen or in a prominent position on the dashboard.

.....

If you are refused an exemption, you have a right of appeal to the local Magistrates’ Court. This right must be exercised within 28 days of the date of the licensing authority’s refusal.

Charging Policies

You cannot:

- Charge a disabled person more than anyone else would be charged for the same journey
.....
- Charge for carrying a wheelchair or assistance dog
.....
- Start the meter before the journey has begun as it may take some passengers more time to get into the taxi

Assistance to and from Your Vehicle

Wherever possible, assist passengers from the pick-up point to your vehicle and if requested, to the door of their destination.

.....

Exceptions to this would be where there is a risk to either the health and safety of the passenger, or you the driver, or to the security of the vehicle.

.....

In these circumstances, you can decide whether it is reasonable to continue.

Communicating During the Journey

Use visual material (including maps) to communicate with a passenger who is Deaf or hard of hearing.

.....

Be prepared to write down information and have a pen and paper available at all times.

.....

If you have to divert from the normal route because of congestion or a road closure, this can be worrying for many passengers, particularly those with learning difficulties, autism-spectrum conditions or mental health conditions, who may become confused or upset.

.....

Always explain **what you are doing and why**.

Summary

Disabled people make up a large percentage of passengers who want or need to travel by taxi, so being confident about carrying them makes good business sense.

.....

To offer a service to the public means being prepared and able to serve anyone, including people who are disabled, where this is reasonable.

.....

Fines can be issued if drivers refuse to carry a wheelchair user or someone with an assistance dog, where this isn't reasonable.

.....

Helping disabled people get around makes a huge difference to their lives.

Remember

Around 1 in 5 people may have problems when travelling.

.....

This is more likely the older we get.

.....

The choices you make can help people to travel safely and do all the things they need to do.

.....

Because transport is so important, people have rights to transport services, including to additional support to overcome disability barriers.

Your Role

What difference can you make to a disabled person's life?

.....

Do you now understand your duties under the law?

.....

Do you think that they are fair and reasonable?

.....

Are there any issues you would like to discuss?

REAL

Respect

REAL

Empathise

REAL

Ask

REAL

Listen

REAL Passenger REAL Person



Department
for Transport