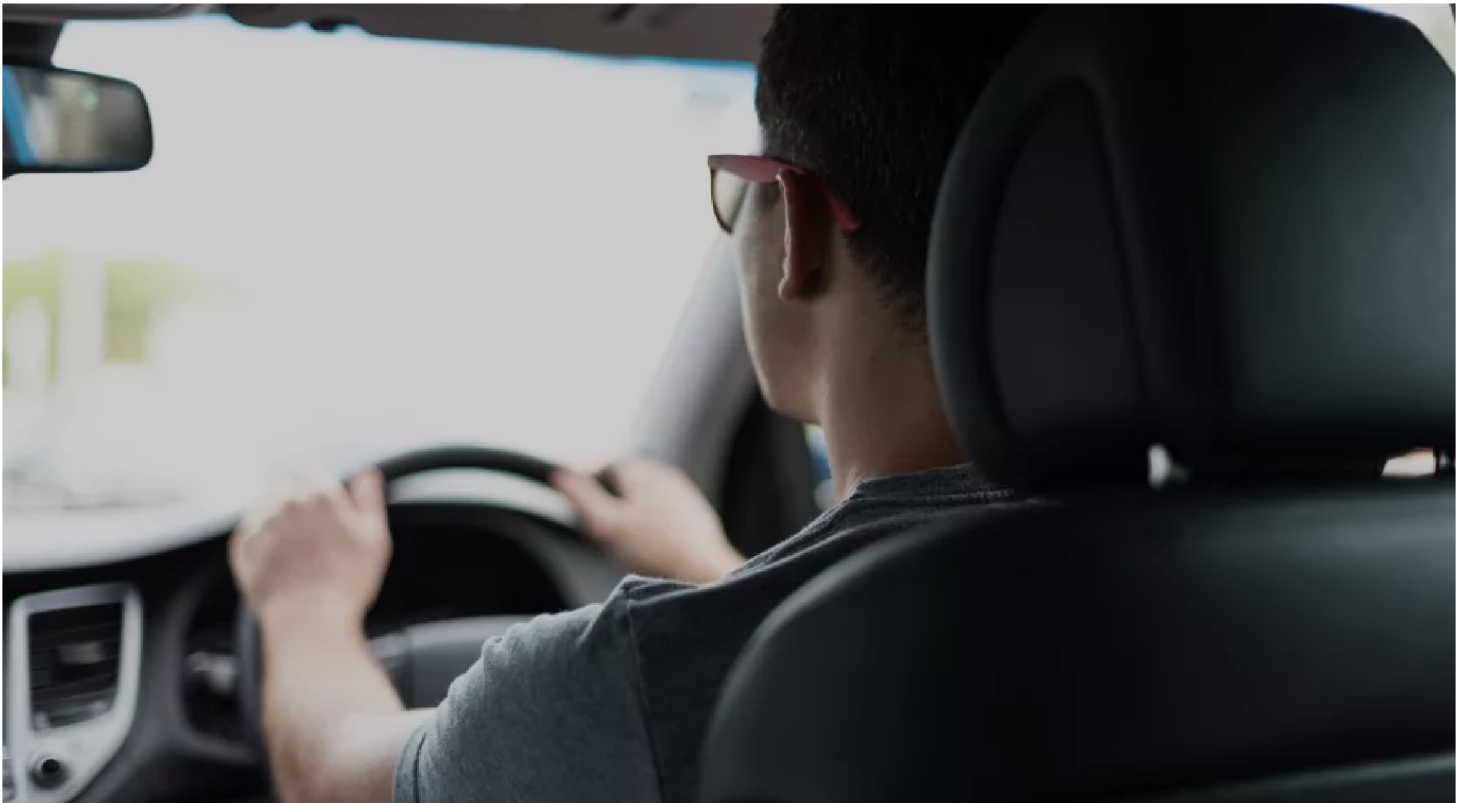


Save private hire industry before thousands of drivers lose their cars, GMB tells chancellor



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GMB has written to the Chancellor ahead of tomorrow's budget calling on him to help the thousands of hard-up private hire drivers at risk of losing their vehicles.



In the letter to Rishi Sunak the union, along with the Mayor of London Sadiq Khan and other private hire industry bodies, says thousands of drivers are now at risk of their cars after a Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) ban on repossessions ended on January 31.

The groups call on the Treasury to enable the Finance and Leasing Association (FLA) to extend full or partial payment deferrals until such a time as drivers have started to recoup their lost income.

Depending on the progress of the vaccination programme and the emergence from lockdown restrictions, this could be in summer 2021.

The UK's taxi and minicab industry - which sees 350,000 drivers perform services from private journeys to NHS patient transport, school and vulnerable children transport services and vulnerable adult transport services - is on the verge of collapse, GMB says.

Through the pandemic, demand has plummeted with many operators reporting an 80% drop in bookings month upon month.



Steve Garelick, GMB Organiser, said:

“There has never been a time drivers need help as much as they do now.

“Our private hire sector - is the largest transport sector in the country and provides vital transport for the NHS, schools, as well as vulnerable and disabled people - is on the verge of collapse.

“Through no fault of their own, drivers are set to lose their cars, their very livelihoods that they've worked so hard to own.

“With lack of income and little chance of a full return to normal for some time, GMB is committed to getting the best assistance possible for all in this position.

“A trade union wide decision to make this request with London's mayor reinforces the concerns we all have.”

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Member requiring help?

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