**Complaint letter
Refusal to allow travel in a taxi because of guide dog**

To: [Your local authority or Transport for London or the name of a minicab company]

Their Address

Also by email

From: Your name

Your Address:

Your Phone:

Your Email

[Date]

Dear [Your local authority or Transport for London or the name of a minicab company]

**Re: Complaint about disability discrimination – the Equality Act 2010**

I am writing this letter of complaint because of difficulties that I experienced travelling by taxi from [place X] on [insert date]. I would like you to take steps to ensure taxis are more accessible to me and other Disabled people. I believe I have been discriminated against. This letter explains what went wrong and what I want as an outcome of my complaint.

**I am a Disabled person under the Equality Act 2010**

I am a Disabled person within the meaning of Section 6 of the Equality Act 2010. [Describe your condition and its impact on your ability to travel. For example: “I am blind and have a guide dog.”]

**The issue I am complaining about**

[Give details of what happened. For example: “On [X date] I was trying to take a taxi at X Station. The station staff guided me to the taxi rank, where I approached a taxi with the vehicle registration number [X]” or “I used your app to call a minicab on the X date at X time to go from A to B.”]

[Describe what went wrong. For example: “The driver refused to let me in because I had a dog. I explained that it is a guide dog, but he did not want to listen.”]

[Describe the impact this had on you, including inconvenience, feeling humiliated, any physical impact, like being made to wait in the cold, any financial impact, were you late for an important meeting?

For example: “As a result I had to approach other taxis, which was not easy for me to do, as I could not see where they were. I stood at a taxi rank waiting for a driver who would agree to take me. I felt humiliated and more like a second class citizen. I am now less confident approaching taxis and feel anxious about travelling with my guide dog.”

or

“I was unable to travel; I had to call another taxi and had to wait X minutes for it. Not only I was late for my meeting, I also felt humiliated and angry.”]

[Describe whether this situation happens regularly]

**How the Equality Act 2010 has been breached in my case**

A taxi driver is a service provider under Section 29 of the Equality Act 2010.

Section 15 of the Equality Act says service providers must not discriminate against Disabled people because of something arising as a consequence of their disability.

Section 20 of the Equality Act 2010 requires service providers to take such steps as it is reasonable to have to take to avoid the disadvantage Disabled people like me experience when trying to access your services. Those steps should include: changing a provision, criterion or practice, altering a physical feature or providing an auxiliary aid.

It was clear to the driver that I am a Disabled person and that I had a guide dog. My dog has a special harness and a coat which indicate clearly that it is an assistance dog. I believe I was discriminated against because of something arising as a consequence of my disability: my guide dog. The Equality Act says this can only be lawful if the service provider can demonstrate it is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. The driver did not give me any legitimate reason why I could not get in the taxi. I therefore believe this denial of service cannot be justified.

The duty to make reasonable adjustments requires you to make an exception to any rules about the carriage of animals in a car and to change the way you provide your service accepting passengers who use guide dogs.

**Obtaining Information**

Please provide me with the following information about the incident that I am complaining about:

* the licence agreement the driver has and any exemptions that have been made.

**What I would like to achieve by this complaint**

1. A written apology;
2. An action against the driver for breaching conditions of his licence, if the driver is not exempted from the requirement to take on the guide dog users;
3. A commitment from you to train all of your drivers about Disability Equality, their duties under the Equality Act;
4. Compensation for the discrimination and injury to feelings that I experienced, and compensation for the extra money I had to spend because of the discrimination.

**Next steps**

I very much hope we can resolve this matter amicably. I look forward to hearing from you within the next 21 days. If you believe you have not breached the Equality Act 2010, please give your reasons.

I am happy to engage with you to explore how we can resolve this dispute. However, if I do not hear from you, or if you deny that you are in breach of the Equality Act then I will consider taking legal action against you.

Yours sincerely