**Letter before action
Refused entry into a taxi because of a guide dog**

To: [minicab company’s name or black cab driver’s name if they are self-employed. If you used an app to call a taxi, this letter should be addressed to the company operating this app]
Address
Also by email

From: Your name
Your address:
Your phone:
Your email

[Date]

Dear [minicab company’s name or black cab driver’s name if they are self-employed. If you used an app to call a taxi, this letter should be addressed to the company operating this app]

**Re: Letter before action for Disability Discrimination – the Equality Act 2010**

I am writing this letter in accordance with the pre-action protocol of Civil Procedure Rules.

I am a Disabled person and you have discriminated against me. This is unlawful and you have to take steps to put things right. If you do not take these steps, I will take legal action and ask the court to order you to put things right. In this letter I will set out the events giving rise to this claim and the law.

**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 the impact it has on your ability to travel. For example: “I am blind and have a guide dog”]

**Events giving rise to this claim**

[Give details of what happened. For example: “On [X date] I was trying to take a taxi at [Station Y]. The station staff guided me to the taxi rink, where I approached your taxi, 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. This could include 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 taxies, I felt humiliated and like a second class citizen. I am now less confident approaching taxies 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]

**The law and how it applies to my situation**

You are 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**

The Civil Procedure Rules that the court follows in cases like this say that you (the proposed opponent) should provide relevant information and documents reasonably requested by someone in my situation. Please therefore provide me with the following information about the incident that I am complaining about:

* Your licencing agreement and any exemptions you have been granted.

**What you need to do to put things right**

I expect you to do all the things I would achieve if I took a case to court, including the following:

* an open acknowledgement that you have discriminated against me;
* a commitment from you to change the way you provide your service to ensure this does not happen to me or other Disabled people using your service again;
* Compensation for injury to feelings and any financial losses I have suffered as a result of the discrimination outlined above.

**Next steps**

Please acknowledge the receipt of this letter by email. I very much hope we can resolve this matter amicably. I look forward to hearing from you within the next 21 days.

I am happy to engage with you to explore alternative ways to resolve this dispute rather than going to court. However, if I do not hear from you, or if you deny that you are in breach of the Equality Act then I will issue proceedings in the county court to protect my interests. You could then become liable for my legal costs as well as the compensation I am seeking outlined above.

Yours sincerely