

Response To States of Jersey Police Leaflet Recently Issued To Jersey Lifts Drivers

It came to our attention on 1st November that the States of Jersey Police have begun providing leaflets to users of the Jersey Lifts Facebook page (which, it should be noted, is unaffiliated with Itineris & the Jersey Lifts app). These leaflets warn users of the legal issues with profiting from ridesharing platforms, and threaten to report users to their insurance company.

We find it very unusual that the States of Jersey Police are getting involved in what should be a civil matter between policyholders and their insurance companies, in particular considering that these insurance companies could easily make their customers aware of these concerns directly. Until a user has profited from a ride, no offence has been committed and we feel that a recommendation to withdraw insurance coverage is neither appropriate nor within the remit of the police force. Having met with the police force prior to launching our app, their policy (as we understood it) was always supportive of legitimate not-for-profit ridesharing. Whilst their recent leaflet begins by ostensibly supporting ridesharing, it appears to quickly turn against it with what we believe to be a heavy-handed, oppressive, tone and vague information on legal repercussions.

Specifically, the assertion that drivers who charge more than 60p per mile will automatically, and necessarily, be breaking the law is incorrect. Drivers are entitled to collect for the running costs of their car, no more. Depending, for example, on the vehicle in question, insurance rates and car depreciation and so on, costs borne by one driver can vary significantly borne by another. Younger drivers, who may have only recently passed their test, typically have higher insurance premiums such that their costs per mile are much higher. If this is the figure States of Jersey intends to run with, we'd ask that they publish the parameters used in their calculations. In the meantime however, categorical statements of criminality of this sort cited in the police leaflet are, in our opinion, irresponsible.

In the leaflet, we also note that the States of Jersey Police seem to define a ridesharing scheme as "*driver led*" and "*single journey*". However, there are no specific requirements for a ride to be categorised as a rideshare other than two individuals, both traveling in the same direction, sharing a vehicle. Who initiated the request, the number of journey (or legs therein) and repeated trips do not play any part in the definition of ridesharing.

To reiterate: provided drivers do not make a profit, they have not committed an offence – regardless of the number of lifts they do, how often they do lifts, how many different passengers they have (up to 8) or how the lift is organised. To the extent that the policy leaflet suggests otherwise, it is simply incorrect and misleading.

We encourage drivers to offer rideshares as often as they desire, and will support the rights of our users to do so.

Itineris is dedicated to making ridesharing safer for everyone, which is why the Jersey Lifts app provides driver and passenger ratings, has a dedicated incident report system, and records location data for the duration of the ride. We have over 3,700 users, and handle hundreds of requests each month (to date with no reported incidents).

We are in regular contact with the Department for Transport, and are surprised that no attempt was made to reach out to us regarding the concerns outlined in the police leaflet.

For more information on the legal aspect, we advise all users of both our app and the Facebook page to read our legal advisory at <https://jerseylifts.uk/legal/advisory>.

ENDS.

Public Contacts

Facebook: <https://facebook.com/booklift>

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