



Mr Jim Reid
Sent by email

Complaints Team
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Phone: -

Website: www.gov.uk/dvla

Our Ref: S02848192/ C90014677

Date: 29 July 2020

Dear Mr Reid

Thank you for your emails of 10 and 17 July about the performance of the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA). I have been asked to reply.

Please accept my apologies for the delay in our response. It is taking us longer than usual to reply.

I should advise you that the DVLA has remained open throughout the pandemic. We have had staff on-site but due to social distancing requirements there has been a greatly reduced number at any one time. Staff who have been on-site were initially focused on applications from key workers, to ensure that deliveries of food and other vital services were not impacted.

All of our online services have been running as normal throughout the pandemic and customers, including vehicle dealerships and traders, are advised to use them whenever possible. However, we are aware that not all applications can be made online, and we understand the impact that this has had on our customers.

Our Personalised Registration (PR) online service was set up to process the majority of applications that do not need further investigation. Due to the complexity of our vehicle records, it is not always possible for customers to use the online service. In such instances, customers are asked to make a paper application, which our PR Team can assess. A manual check of the vehicle record is made, and the application is processed if no issues arise.

We are based in Wales where the restrictions are being lifted more gradually than in England. The two metre social distancing rule is still a legal requirement in Wales, and many of our staff have been and are continuing to work from home. However, these staff are not in roles that process the paper applications posted to Swansea. Those staff must be physically on-site to safeguard data, to open and process mail, and to issue driving licences and Vehicle Registration Certificates (V5C'S).

As lockdown restrictions ease, we will continue to increase focus on the applications that we have so far been unable to process. Within the last few weeks we have been able to bring back more of the workforce on-site and we are actively pursuing other options to further increase the number of staff able to work on-site. We have already reconfigured our offices to accommodate more operational staff. That said there are significant delays to postal applications. We are striving to process the work as quickly as possible, but demand is extremely high and this will take time.

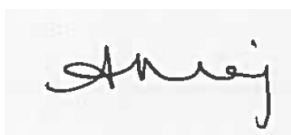
We are strongly committed to providing all our customers with the best service possible. It is not our intention to appear inaccessible. However, some services have been limited or temporarily unavailable due to reduced staffing levels. The Contact Centre is now open to all customers Monday to Friday 8:00-13:00 and 14:00-19:00, and Saturday 8:00-14:00. The telephone lines have been, and continue to be, extremely busy. Our telephone advisors are working hard to answer as many calls as possible.

We are aware of the effect that limiting our services has had on the public and we are not complacent in our efforts to process applications across all of the vehicles and drivers services as quickly as possible. As a Government Agency we take very seriously the needs and wishes of our customers. We welcome and encourage feedback to highlight the areas where we need to improve. We are reviewing all of our services as part of our continuous improvement programme.

Future developments will see more transactions become available online and the services combine to improve the customer experience. However, I am unable to confirm at present, when any future changes will be introduced.

As we have a limited number of staff on-site in response to the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic, I am currently working from home, and have therefore removed my work telephone number from this letter. If you have any further questions, please email me at ComplaintsTeam@dvla.gov.uk

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Allison', is displayed on a light grey rectangular background.

Allison Mainwaring
DVLA Complaints Team

Find out about DVLA's online services
Visit: www.gov.uk/dvla