



Independent Workers Union of Great Britain

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United Private Hire Drivers' Branch of the Independent Workers' Union of Great Britain

Branch constitution approved by branch committee (10/11/2020) and IWGB Executive Committee (19/11/2020)

1. Branch Name

The branch shall be called "United Private Hire Drivers' Branch" of the IWGB and will henceforth be referred to as "the branch".

2. Objects

- A. To improve and protect the terms and conditions and livelihoods of the members;
- B. To improve, maintain and protect members' social standing and to work for the relief of poverty;
- C. To promote the primacy of members' own decision making in all matters covered by the branch constitution, and in the development of all of the branch's policies;
- D. To preserve, promote, and protect the independence of the branch;
- E. To settle disputes between the members and their licensing authorities, and/or regulators, and/or operators, and/or employers, and/or contractors; regulate the relations between the members and their employers through collective bargaining, withdrawal of labour, or otherwise; conduct negotiations;
- F. To initiate movements and campaigns to improve and protect the livelihoods of the members, for example: movements for increased rates of pay, for improved working conditions and regulations, for improved representation of the members with Operators, Regulators and Licensing Authorities on both an individual and collective basis, and/or movements against discrimination and racism;
- G. To engage in communications and publishing, for the purposes of furthering the policy of the Branch or its members;
- H. To promote opportunities for social association and recreation for the members;
- I. To provide advocacy and translation to all members including migrants;
- J. Cooperate, directly or indirectly, with the work of any organisation, local, national, or international, which holds objects or policies which are similar to those of the branch.

3. Membership

Open to all people who are currently licensed to work as private hire drivers in the United Kingdom, with the exception of those who also currently hold licenses as:

- a) private hire operators;
- b) black cab drivers;
- c) hackney carriage license holders.

4. Branch Structure

a. There shall be a branch Annual General Meeting, held once per year before the IWGB AGM (which is typically held in May), to elect officers and representatives for the branch and also discuss branch policy. This will be open to all members nationwide. The AGM shall be the Branch's supreme decision-making body.

b. The AGM shall need 25 members of the branch present to be considered quorate.

c. In addition to the AGM, the Chair can, at their discretion, convene a Branch General Meeting of all members nationwide with a minimum of 48 hours notice in order to consult members and make decisions on Branch policy, and elect officers and representatives to unfilled posts.

d. In the Chair's absence, the Vice-Chair and Secretary are also able to convene a Branch General Meeting.

e. A Branch General Meeting will be considered quorate when 25 members of the Branch are present.

f. Branch General Meetings will be open to all members, and every member has equal rights to voice and vote.

g. Ordinary members may convene an Emergency Branch General Meeting without the chair or vice-chair if need be. This meeting will need 50 members present to be considered quorate.

h. Outside of the AGM and Branch General Meetings, the Branch's supreme decision-making body shall be the Branch Committee, which is composed of Branch Officers, as well as Local Group Lead Representatives and National Company Committees Lead Representatives where these have been elected/appointed. The Branch Committee shall meet at a minimum once every month (currently it meets once per week). Branch Officers are elected by the membership at the AGM. Local Group Lead Representatives are elected by the members of the relevant Local Group. National Company Committee Lead Representatives are elected by the relevant National Company Committee. The Branch Committee meetings shall be considered quorate when no less than 3 of the Branch Committee members are present.

i. Local Groups are organised bodies of members sharing a common geographic region. The purpose of creating and distinguishing Local Groups within the branch is to promote autonomous activity on the local level. Local Groups will have the autonomy to run their own campaigns and assist in casework support for individual members of the group.

j. Local Groups can be set up when the following conditions have been met:

- There is a defined geographical area for the group associated with one local licensing authority;
- There are a minimum of 10 members of the group;
- The formation of the group has been approved by the Branch Committee;
- The group has elected a Local Chair and Local Secretary.

k. The Local Groups shall hold meetings at least once per month which are open to all members of the Branch in that area. All members should have equal voice and vote in these meetings.

l. Local Group meetings will be considered quorate if over 10 members are present OR if more than 50% of members are present (if local group has less than 20 members).

m. Local Groups shall be run by a locally elected Chair & Secretary. Locally elected Secretaries shall be responsible for the general administration of the groups.

n. Local Groups can also elect more representatives to Local Committees, in such roles as:

- Local Group Treasurer (who can apply for funds from the Branch Committee, keep records of money spent, etc);
- Local Group Media & Communications (sets up and runs a local social media account, etc);
- Local Company Representatives (support members working for a given operator with issues and to campaign in the area, also takes part in the relevant National Company Committee).

o. Local Chairs and Local Secretaries shall by default be members of the UPHD Branch Committee as Local Group Lead Representatives. However, a Local Group may elect different Local Group members to represent them on the Branch Committee if they choose.

p. Local Group Committees shall meet at their convenience, in order to conduct their business.

q. Members working for an operator can organise themselves in their area. Members can elect (or, in exceptional circumstances, the UPHD Branch Committee can appoint) Company Representatives for their area. Company Representatives should typically cover an operator in a given licensing authority, or in a way that is consistent with the management of that company, for the purpose of facilitating collective bargaining on behalf of members.

r. Company Representatives will be elected by a show of hands vote by the members who work for the relevant Operator at any Local Group meeting or a meeting of drivers working for a given operator.

s. Members may elect as many Company Representatives as they wish.

t. The role of all Company Representatives is to organise and run campaigns at the operators for which they work. This can include, but is not limited to:

a. holding campaign meetings with their fellow members on workplace issues, especially for the facilitation of collective decision-making by their fellow members

b. organising demonstrations, protests and strikes,

c. organising outside support for their campaign,

d. liaising with the press and non-members,

e. supporting individual members with individual grievances where possible.

u. Company reps in different areas may form a National Company Committee (e.g. “National Uber Committee”), whose purpose is to coordinate nationwide campaigns, organising, strategy and action.

v. One Company Representative for each area may take part in the National Company Committee. This Lead Area Company Representative will be elected by the members in their area at a Local Group meeting. If an election has not been held by a Local Group, the Lead Area Company Representative can be appointed by the Branch Committee. The UPHD Branch Chair and Branch Secretary will also sit on this committee and have voting rights.

w. Once formed, a National Company Committee should be convened at least once per year, to discuss national campaigns, organising, strategy and action. It may elect a National Company Committee Lead Representative of its own to represent the committee on the UPHD Branch Committee and elsewhere where necessary, such as in the media. Any member of the Branch may attend and observe meetings of this Committee if they wish to, but will not have any voting rights.

x. Local Group and Company Representative elections must be facilitated and ratified by either the UPHD Chair, UPHD Secretary, UPHD Vice-Chair, or any IWGB National Officer. Facilitation and ratification may be delegated by any of these officers to a member of staff.

y. All elected representatives shall serve one-year terms (or for the remainder of the year until the next AGM).

5. Branch Officers

- All Branch Committee Officers shall be elected at the branch AGM for the period of one year. If an officer position becomes vacant between AGMs, any member shall be free to present themselves as a candidate for the vacancy, at a branch meeting, where they may duly be elected as a representative.
- All candidates will be invited to make a brief speech to the members on their candidacy. If a position is uncontested, the position will still need to be voted on in a “yes or no” manner. An uncontested candidate for an officer or representative position must receive a majority of “yes” votes in order to be confirmed.
- As the positions of Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary are ex-officio members of the IWGB Executive Committee, if these are contested, there will need to be a postal ballot in order to comply with the Trade Union and Labour Relations (consolidation) Act 1992. If the positions are uncontested then the elections will be run in the same way as those for other Branch Officers.
- The following officer positions and their respective duties are listed below:
 - e.i. Chair- This person will be the branch spokesperson and representative both within the IWGB and with the public at large. This individual will chair Branch Committee meetings as well as the AGM and will be expected to carry out branch business on a day-to-day basis. This person shall have the authority to convene branch meetings. This person will be a member of the IWGB Executive Committee. This person will also act as a delegate to IWGB AGM / conferences.
 - e.ii. Vice-Chair - This person will support the Chair to perform their duties and will act as a branch spokesperson and representative alongside the Chair. This person shall have the authority to convene branch meetings in the Chair’s absence. This person will be expected to carry out branch business on a day-to-day basis. This person will be a member of the IWGB Executive Committee. This person will also act as a delegate to IWGB AGM / conferences.
 - e.iii. Secretary- This person will assist the Chair in their duties and will act as Chair during their absence. This person shall have the authority to convene branch meetings in the Chair’s absence. This person will be in charge of membership records & producing minutes from Branch Committee meetings and the AGM (this may be delegated to staff), and other administrative duties as required. This person will be a member of the IWGB Executive Committee. This person will also act as a delegate to IWGB AGM / conferences.
 - e.iv. Treasurer- This person will be responsible for overseeing the finances of the branch.
 - e.v. BAME officer- This person will identify issues affecting BAME members of the branch, particularly issues of discrimination and racism, and aim to support and develop projects and campaigns around these issues. This person should also aim to support the IWGB national BAME officer. Only members from black and other minority ethnic groups are eligible to stand as and vote for the position.
 - e.vi. Campaign officer- This person will take an active role in organising campaigns for the branch.
 - e.vii. Recruitment officer - This person will take the lead on recruiting new members to the branch and promoting activism among members

- o e.viii. Media officer- This person will keep the branch's social media accounts up to date and will actively promote branch activity online, so that the Branch has a sustained online presence.
- o e.ix. Welfare officer- This person will promote the general welfare of members and those working in our industry.
- o e.x. Education officer - This person will work to develop training opportunities for members and facilitate discussions around organising.
- o e.xi. Womens & Non-Binary officer - This person will be first point of contact for women and non-binary members and to lead on issues at branch level relating specifically to these groups. The Women's Officer should also actively engage with and support the national Women's Officer on union-wide issues, projects and campaigns relating to these areas. Only members who identify as non-male are eligible to stand as and vote for the position

6. Branch Autonomy

1. The branch recognises that it is part of a larger union and that all actions and policies should be mindful of this. The branch shall not undertake any policies which bring disrepute to the IWGB nor which contravene the IWGB rules.
2. Considering the above, the branch shall have complete autonomy within the IWGB within the following areas:
 1. Ability to appoint officers in between annual elections;
 2. Ability to decide its own policy, in accordance with the objects of the IWGB;
 3. The branch shall elect its own negotiating committees for the purposes of collective bargaining;
 4. Social media- the branch shall have the ability to create its own website, Facebook page, and twitter account to promote the objects and aims of the branch.
 5. Ability to authorize, by majority vote at a quorate Branch Committee meeting or at the AGM, the formation of Local Groups, subject to conditions in 'Section 4: Branch Structure' being met.

7. Motions, Policy, and Altering the Branch Constitutions

- Motions or Branch policy must be proposed and seconded by Branch members at a quorate Branch General Meeting or by Branch Committee members at a Branch Committee meeting. With the exception of alterations to the Branch constitution, policy and motions may be passed by a simple majority in a show of hands vote.
- The Branch constitution may be altered at any time in a quorate Branch General meeting or AGM, with a two thirds majority vote.

APPENDIX 1: SUB-COMMITTEES:

The Committee can vote to set up Temporary Sub-Committees to deal with particular matters, such as Communications, Fundraising, Campaigning, Branch Management. The remit of each Temporary Sub-Committee shall be determined by the Branch Committee. Temporary Sub-Committees shall be subject to the following guidelines:

- There shall be a minimum of 3 and maximum of 7 members;
- Each sub-committee shall have a chair;
- Any member of the Branch Committee shall be eligible to join the sub- committee as long as approved by Branch Committee members;
- Branch members who are not members of the Committee can become members of the sub-committee upon the invitation of the chair of the sub-committee;

APPENDIX 2: MEMBERSHIP RIGHTS:

When a Private Hire Driver joins the IWGB:

- a. They are welcome to attend Branch General Meetings and Local Group Meetings (in person or remotely), have full voting rights within the branch, the ability to bring their own motions forward and the ability to stand for any positions for which they are eligible.
- b. They will have access to the legal department in line with union policy.
- c. They will be invited to join a Whatsapp chat related to their area or the operator they work with (i.e UPHD London) and can expect advice and support from their fellow members.
- d. They can seek advice from branch officers/organisers over the phone/email. If the member is located outside of London, branch officers/organisers will only be able to make face-to-face visits in exceptional circumstances. "Exceptional circumstances" includes, for example, when there is a small number of members but a larger level of wider organisation or struggle, in which this additional support could be instrumental in helping it develop, and encouraging people to join the IWGB.
- e. Expenses such as printing out leaflets, travel costs etc, will need to be agreed in advance with the Branch Treasurer.
- f. They may observe a National ("Company Name") Committee, whose purpose is to coordinate nationwide campaigns, organising, strategy and action, but will have no voting rights.