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Your Ref: Democratic Services
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Date: 10 December 2021

Dear Ms McCullagh,

Thank you for your letter of 15 November to Julie Lennard about possible vehicle tax concessions or exemptions due to the difficulties in obtaining a MoT appointment in Northern Ireland. I have been asked to reply.

It may help if I explain that the law requires every vehicle that is used or kept on a public road to be taxed. If the vehicle tax is not being renewed, the registered vehicle keeper must notify the DVLA that the vehicle is off the road by making a Statutory Off Road Notification.

The law also requires a valid MoT must be in force on the day vehicle tax is taken out. It is also a legal requirement that a valid motor insurance policy is in force and checked before vehicle tax can be issued to customers in Northern Ireland.

I understand that since July 2021, the Driver and Vehicle Agency (DVA) reinstated normal vehicle test times in Northern Ireland, with increased vehicle testing capacity across the network of test centres.

The DVA's advice to customers who require a MoT to tax their vehicle and cannot secure a date before the MOT expires is:

- book the earliest available appointment;
- keep checking the booking system for an appointment before their MOT expires

Customers are advised to contact dva.customerservices@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk if their MoT is due within five days. The DVA will do their best to secure an urgent appointment for their vehicle. To date, all customers who have contacted the DVA in these circumstances have been offered an earlier appointment slot.

Given the measures that DVA has introduced, there are no plans to introduce any concessions or exemptions in Northern Ireland to the legal requirements.

Anyone that uses a vehicle on a public road without vehicle tax, a valid MoT and motor insurance is committing an offence.

I hope this helps to clarify this matter.

Yours sincerely

Unsigned sent via email

Sarah Steadman
Interim Head of Vehicle Policy
Strategy, Policy & Communications Directorate