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TAXI & LIVERY

TIMES

An Insider's Look at Both NYC TLC Regulated Industries

**PLEASE GET VACCINATED...
FOR YOU, YOUR LOVED ONES,
THE INDUSTRY AND THE NATION**



**VACÚNESE... POR USTED, POR SUS SERES
QUERIDOS, POR LA INDUSTRIA Y POR EL PAÍS**

**\$65M
Taxi Relief
Fund Stalled**

**FHV/Taxi
Access-a-Ride
Expanded**

**Cab, Driver
Shortage
Continues**

**Vaccine
Mandate
Updates**

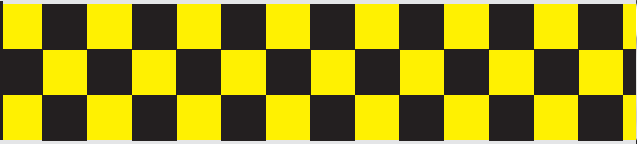
Vibrations in Our Lives

- BY "TAXI DAVE" POLLACK

Livery Base Sales Tax Update

- BY STEVEN J. SHANKER, ESQ.

EDITOR'S NOTES



IF YOU'VE BEEN VACCINE-HESITANT, PLEASE RECONSIDER NOW

A lot of misinformation has been spread around about Covid-19 vaccines, causing a dangerously significant portion of the nation to refuse to get the shot. The lies have often been disseminated through misleading memes on social media and by television commentators with a political axe to grind, many of whom actually received the vaccine themselves (something I truly do not understand).

If you've previously been concerned for any reason, please reconsider and get vaccinated – along with your family – as soon as possible. If you've gotten the shot but know people who are "vaccine hesitant," please circle back, reassure them and nudge them in the right direction. We are all counting on each other to get vaccinated, behave responsibly and follow any necessary Covid-19 protocols for public safety and the common good. *(See cover for the photo of the first TLC-Licensed Driver to be vaccinated at Citi Field.)*

If you have any questions, you can click [here](#) to access a NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene factsheet, which explains how COVID-19 vaccines save lives, why they work, how they are safe, who can get vaccinated, and how they were developed so quickly. The COVID-19 vaccine is free and has shown to be very effective at preventing severe illness, hospitalization, and death. Many millions of people have received it, and it's working... but more people still need to get them.

TLC licensees can take advantage of the Driver Resource Center, which provides details about sites in all five boroughs, where you can walk in and receive a vaccine without an appoint-

SI HA DUDADO DE LAS VACUNAS, RECONSIDÉRELO AHORA

Se ha difundido mucha información errónea sobre las vacunas Covid-19, lo que ha provocado que una parte peligrosamente significativa de la nación se niegue a recibirlas. Las mentiras a menudo se han diseminado a través de memes engañosos en las redes sociales y por comentaristas de televisión con intereses políticos ocultos, muchos de los cuales de hecho recibieron la vacuna (algo que realmente no entiendo).

Si ha estado preocupado anteriormente por cualquier motivo, reconsidérelo y vacúnese, junto con su familia, lo antes posible. Si ha recibido la vacuna, pero conoce a personas que "dudan en vacunarse", por favor, vuelva a tocar el tema, tranquilícelas e impúselas en la dirección correcta. Todos contamos unos con otros para vacunarnos, comportarnos responsablemente y seguir los protocolos Covid-19 necesarios para la seguridad pública y el bien común. *(Vea en la portada la foto del primer conductor con licencia de la TLC que se vacunó en Citi Field).*

Si tiene alguna pregunta, puede hacer clic [aquí](#) para acceder a una hoja informativa del Departamento de Salud e Higiene Mental de la ciudad de Nueva York, que explica cómo las vacunas COVID-19 salvan vidas, por qué funcionan, de qué manera son seguras, quién puede vacunarse y cómo se desarrollaron tan rápido. La vacuna COVID-19 es gratuita y ha demostrado ser muy eficaz para prevenir una manifestación grave de la enfermedad, la hospitalización y la muerte. Ya se la han aplicado muchos millones de personas y está funcionando... pero aún necesitan recibirla más personas.

Los titulares de licencias de la Comisión de Taxis y Limusinas (*Taxi & Limousine Commission, TLC*) pueden aprovechar el Centro de recursos para conductores, que brinda detalles sobre los sitios en los cinco distritos, donde puede presentarse y recibir una vacuna sin concertar una cita. También puede hacer clic [aquí](#) si desea usar el Buscador de vacunas de la ciudad para ubicar el sitio más cercano a usted, incluidos los que aceptan citas.


“LIKE” TAXI & LIVERY TIMES



FOR BREAKING NEWS STORIES

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ment. You can also [click here](#) to use the City’s Vaccine Finder to locate the site closest to you, including those that take appointments.

We all saw what happened early on in the pandemic in New York City, and we DO NOT want return to anything resembling the mayhem caused by what NYC Comptroller Scott Stringer described as “weaknesses in planning and preparation and failures to promptly make decisions when time was of the essence and every minute counted.” In August, Stringer’s office released an interim report critical of Mayor de Blasio’s Covid-19 preparedness efforts, despite a substantial public health infrastructure and budget. The report noted “key failures, including the city’s lack of completion of a citywide operational plan for responding to a pandemic before Covid-19; delayed planning for moderate to severe outbreaks even after the threat was known; inadequate or expired emergency resources, including personal protective equipment; and interagency confusion on planning and response.”

Things were headed in the right direction, until the delta variant caused a massive spike in cases, so make sure you are up to date on your vaccine and get a booster, as soon as it is feasible. Even with half the country vaccinated, Covid-19 continues to kill people faster than guns, car crashes and influenza combined, according to a review of mortality data, referenced in a July Crain’s New York Business article.

Daily cases have doubled from a low point in June, and hospitalizations are rising again. Meanwhile, the U.S. vaccination campaign slowed significantly, and far too many people have dug in their heels and are refusing to get vaccinated.

Please, for the good of us all, DON’T BE ONE OF THOSE STUBBORN, ILL-INFORMED PEOPLE putting at risk the huge progress the city has made this past year. Consult your physician, listen to the experts, and please, PLEASE get the shot, if you haven’t already!

Todos vimos lo que sucedió al principio de la pandemia en la ciudad de Nueva York, y NO queremos volver a nada que se parezca al caos causado por lo que el Contralor de la ciudad de Nueva York Scott Stringer describió como “debilidades en la planificación y preparación y fallas para tomar decisiones rápidas cuando el tiempo era crucial y cada minuto contaba”. En agosto, la oficina del Sr. Stringer publicó un informe provisional que criticaba las iniciativas de preparación para el Covid-19 del alcalde de Blasio, pese a contar con una infraestructura y un presupuesto considerables de salud pública. El informe señalaba “fallas clave, entre ellas, el hecho de que la municipalidad no hubiera completado un plan operativo para toda la ciudad a fin de responder a una pandemia antes del Covid-19; retrasos en la planificación para afrontar brotes moderados a graves incluso después de conocerse la amenaza; recursos de emergencia inadecuados o vencidos, incluido el equipo de protección personal; y confusión interinstitucional sobre planificación y respuesta”.

Las cosas iban en la dirección correcta, hasta que la variante delta provocó un aumento masivo en los casos, así que asegúrese de estar al día con su vacuna y aplíquese un refuerzo tan pronto como sea posible. Incluso con la mitad del país vacunado, el Covid-19 continúa matando personas más rápido que las armas, los accidentes automovilísticos y la influenza combinados, según una reseña de los datos de mortalidad citada en un artículo de Crain’s New York Business de julio.

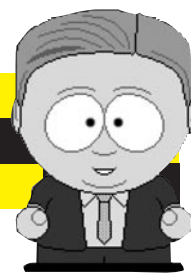
Los casos diarios se han duplicado desde un punto bajo en junio, y las hospitalizaciones están volviendo a aumentar. Mientras tanto, la campaña de vacunación de EE. UU. se desaceleró significativamente y demasiadas personas se han empeñado, negándose a vacunarse.

Por el bien de todos nosotros, NO SEA UNA DE ESAS PERSONAS OBSTINADAS Y MAL INFORMADAS que ponen en riesgo el enorme progreso que la ciudad logró el año pasado. Consulte a su médico, escuche a los expertos y, por favor, ¡POR FAVOR, aplíquese la vacuna, si aún no lo ha hecho!



FROM WHERE I SIT

VIBRATIONS IN OUR LIVES



BY "TAXI DAVE" POLLACK

An old friend of mine, Chip Stern, recently reminded me of Einstein's theory of special relativity: $E = mc^2$. We have matter, energy, mass and vibrations and the speed of light.

You should know that Chip is a better writer than I will ever be, and it wasn't uncommon to pick up the Daily News and see one of his stories or editorials. That said, we all know that for every action there is a reaction. We all should understand that everything vibrates, whether it be our voices, radio and T waves, all living things, even our consciousness.

Heavy, right? Even stationary things like rocks or mountains vibrate, but at a much slower pace than we can imagine. Hence, mountains grow each year, etc.

Did you ever find yourself meeting like-minded people in your taxi or anywhere? People on your "wavelength," if you will. It is part of that mc^2 theory where similar particles or vibrations attract. Hence the unknown energy after death.

None of us really think of energy or vibrations and their reactions while going about our daily lives, whether it be driving a taxi, parenting, working and solving business problems, or any other day in your lives. I do, however, know this proven theory: for every action, there is a reaction.

Strangely, sometimes an action is simply doing nothing. Standing idle as any person, any business, any city agency can have unfortunate results and reactions. Even a city agency with the mass of a blob of fat, and whose energy is ap-

parently less than an eye-blink, has and will often have zero positive reactions... only negative ones. One such instance of inaction led to a dozen driver and medallion-owner suicides just a few short years ago.

I always try to stay away from negative or toxic people and currently avoid the NYC Taxi & Limousine Commission (TLC), literally. But in this paper, I can write about the negative reactions caused by the most dysfunctional New York City agency since William "Boss" Tweed and Tammany Hall.

Don't get me wrong, the TLC didn't directly steal \$200 million, a number unfathomable in the 1800s, but they are the direct conduit – the reason for hundreds of millions of dollars being taken from unsuspecting medallion auction purchasers and the financial institutions that believed the bullshit of this agency's vibrations, when they literally bragged to the world about their "rock-solid, protected" values prior to such auctions. The current TLC is simply inefficient in every manner.

The internet allows us to choose the groups of people we "vibrate" with or are attracted to. But the internet can be misused as well. For example, when the TLC does not announce a certain meeting or hearings related to their mission and mission statement (which for some reason had to be rewritten under the TLC leadership of Bloomberg brown-nose David Yassky), there is a reaction, or lack thereof, clouded as it may be. (In all fairness, sometimes things are posted, but

not in a timely fashion.)

The TLC's vibrations are calculated based on whether they want the public and the transportation industry to understand their hidden political agendas and their hopeful goals. We know the TLC wanted the yellow medallion industry to be destroyed based on their actions and lack of equal regulation.

So, the TLC took a 100-year-old, thriving taxi industry, and in just a few short years – that some say felt like the speed of light – resulted in 7,000 medallions not serving the public, thousands of personal bankruptcies, thousands of foreclosures, the United States government taking over financial institutions and finally, a working class reduced to welfare and food handouts.

One thing is for sure: $E = mc^2$ proves we are a result of our actions or lack thereof.

PS: Another old taxi driving friend told me that a TLC analyst called him asking for statistics about his income for 2020, even though they have that information from the T-PEP systems used for every fare. When the analyst asked about his income for 2021, he had to tell the analyst his medallion was in fact, AT the TLC with 7,000 other medallions – not serving the public due to a lack of drivers.

What the current TLC does not know could fill every library in New York. The day after, another TLC analyst called my friend to say, "I'm calling to find out your medallion income for 2021." Need I say more?

David "Taxi Dave" Pollack is an industry veteran, spokesperson and advocate for drivers in New York City. He can be reached via email at taxihail@aol.com. He encourages people with comments or questions to reach out to him, and each month we publish those letters, comments and photos.

CONFIDENTIAL
HELPLINE

If you or someone you know is suffering from depression, there is a free, confidential helpline called NYC Well that is always available and accessible in 200 languages. You can call 1-888-NY-CWell, or text "WELL" to 65173. However, if you are ever in immediate danger of harming yourself or others, please call 911.

QUESTIONS & COMMENTS

Dear Taxi Dave

I'm a yellow taxi driver. On August 3, at 4:32pm, I was dropping a passenger off at the Southeast corner of West 102nd Street and Central Park West, with my hazard lights on. Suddenly, a vehicle pulled up behind me and started honking continuously. The driver then came up to my window and started screaming at me, yelling a lot of bad words. He then pulled over on the next block, came out of his vehicle and started coming at me. Maybe his intention was to attack me. For my own safety, I drove north and made a left turn at West 107th Street and called police. I made a report. This is a crazy time. All drivers should be careful.

— Abul Asad Khan

Why can't I buy a Chevy Impala or Hyundai Elantra? Why can't I accept credit card payments with Square or PayPal? The TLC is manipulating the industry and molding it how they see fit to make revenue from Curb, Tesla, and other big companies.

I don't want handouts at JFK taxi appreciation day! I want fair justice of a taxi industry. I want to buy the vehicle I want and get paid with the credit card provider I want.

Look around. How many yellows are on the street now? Even if the pandemic ends and the economy gets better, what will become of the yellow industry?

Imagine just few hundred yellows on street... Uber and other app companies will inflate their prices to unheard of levels. Already, many mom-and-pop businesses have gone under.

Next, the TLC wants to push electric vehicles for their Democratic infrastructure push. Who will pay maintenance on those high-priced vehicles that a person can only get parts at a dealer? How long it will take to get parts for a failed inspection on these cars, meaning out of work until the repair is done?

What do we know of the batteries? Imagine

working and on the 10th hour, the battery runs out on 43rd St. and 3rd Ave.

The next administration will increase the surcharges to take the state out of debt from the pandemic. It's crazy. I'd rather have a passenger put a gun to my head and ask me for money and leave, because that's exactly what the city is doing to me.

— Taxi Solomon

Congestion Pricing Plan Unfair to NJ Drivers

"Under New York's proposed congestion tax plan, when commuters go across the GW Bridge and drive into Midtown, they will get whacked, not only with the \$16 a day toll at the GW Bridge, which is ridiculous, but now an additional \$15 dollars when they drive south of 60th Street. Yes, \$31 dollars a day or more just to drive to work in New York City – or to see friends or family. That's absurd double taxation at its finest. Even more galling: Unlike the shared Port Authority resources from the tolls on this bridge, that help New York and New Jersey, every nickel of that new Midtown congestion tax will go to New York, to their MTA, to help fix their subways. Not a cent will go back to the PATH or NJ Transit to actually help our state in any way."

— N.J. Congressman Gottheimer
Source: Insider NJ

Wrong-Way Congestion Pricing

"The Bloomberg administration balanced its budget by selling millions upon millions in taxi medallions after completing an Environmental Impact Statement which indicated there was room for a few thousand (not tens of thousands or even 100,000) more vehicles. From that time until the pandemic, there was essentially no increase in the number of commuter cars entering Midtown and no increase in yellow cabs. But at the

same time, there was a 100,000 vehicle increase in Ubers, Lyfts and other for-hire vehicles – which, unlike commuters, not only drive in but then drive around all day, adding to congestion exponentially. To raise money for the MTA, we should charge the real vehicles that cause congestion. Charge app-hail vehicles what the yellows pay and raise about half a billion dollars per year. The money can be raised just by passing a law, not by having to implement \$100 million of electronic tolling systems throughout Manhattan. It can be done without interrupting Manhattan's comeback."

— Lucius Riccio, Columbia's School of International and Public Affairs
Source: New York Daily News

One Thing Leads to Another

"Every trip is important. Any trip could be the one that makes your day, and any trip that you turn down could be the one that breaks the chain. Every driver needs to realize that, in our business, one thing leads to another."

— Joseph Rubino,
The Transportation Alliance

Speed Kills

"[On a weekend in August], we saw two high-speed, fatal crashes on our streets – both of which occurred within school zones, near speed cameras we aren't legally allowed to operate. Once again, we urge the state legislature to allow our cameras to operate 24/7. There must be consequences for dangerous drivers, no matter what time of the week they break the law. Speed cameras are an efficient, equitable way to reduce speeding, and we must do everything in our power to stop violence on our streets before it happens."

— Hank Gutman, DOT Commissioner

RECALL: GENERAL MOTORS, CHEVROLET BOLT

Summary: General Motors, LLC (GM) is recalling certain 2020-2022 Chevrolet Bolt EV and 2022 Chevrolet Bolt EUV vehicles. The high voltage battery could catch fire when charged to full or nearly full capacity.

Remedy: Defective battery modules will be replaced by GM, free of charge. Owners are advised to take the following interim steps: Set the Target Charge Level feature in their vehicle to limit the charge level to 90%, charge their vehicle more frequently, avoid depleting the battery to 70 miles range remaining, park outside after charging, and do not charge the vehicle indoors overnight.

Owners may contact the Bolt EV Concierge Team at (833) 382-4389.

This recall is an expansion of NHTSA recall 21V-560. GM's number for this recall is N212345940. Owners may also contact the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Vehicle Safety Hotline at (888) 327-4236 or visit www.nhtsa.gov.



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TAXI NEWS

YELLOW CAB SHORTAGE CONTINUES, COMPANIES STILL NEED DRIVERS

Despite the increased spread of the Covid delta variant, crowds are returning to New York City. Unfortunately, the swarm of yellow cabs that once cruised the streets of Midtown Manhattan in large part stalled amid the continuing pandemic, with vehicles sitting idle, parked in lots across Brooklyn, the Bronx and Queens.

Even the largest NYC taxi fleets are

running at half-capacity, at best – their other vehicles stowed away without license plates to save money on insurance, as they attempt to entice drivers back to work.

Taxi drivers out on the streets are benefitting from the lack of competition, but many are concerned that customers actively seeking out Yellow Taxis – who are turned off by app-hail surge prices – will simply give up and go back to companies

like Uber and Lyft out of frustration.

Others remain hopeful it's just a matter of time before more drivers return to the streets and the ubiquitous Yellow Taxis make up for ground lost in the past decade. NYC may not yet be 100% back on its feet, but plenty of Taxi companies are saying that the work is there for those who want it.

Source: WABC

NYC MOTORCYCLIST CRASHES INTO TAXI IN BROOKLYN

A motorcyclist was critically injured after crashing into a Taxicab in Brooklyn in the early morning hours of August 7, police said. The cyclist, 32, who was suspected of driving drunk and speeding, was zipping down Mermaid Ave. near W. 22nd St. in Coney Island around 4:00am when

his Kawasaki KLR motorcycle slammed into the yellow Taxi.

The motorcyclist was thrown from his bike and rushed to NYU Langone Hospital-Brooklyn in critical condition. The Taxi veered into a light pole, but its air bags deployed and the 66-year-old driver was un-

injured, officials said.

Investigators believe the motorcyclist blew a red light before crashing into the Taxi.

Source: New York Daily News

STRAY BULLET SHATTERS NYC CAB'S WINDSHIELD, STRIKES CUSHION NEAR PASSENGER'S HEAD

A passenger in a New York City Yellow Taxi is crediting the vehicle's headrest for saving her life after a random bullet shattered the back windshield of the car, missing her by mere inches. Hannah Warnaar told NBC New York that she was returning home from JFK International Airport just after midnight on July 26, when she heard a bang, as she was scrolling on her phone.

"Some glass hit me in the face, so I ducked down. I realized that I was bleeding," Warnaar recalled. She didn't immediately realize a bullet had entered the car.

The cab driver initially thought the loud noise was fireworks, but when he

turned around, he saw that the back windshield had been fully shattered, so he pulled off the Van Wyck Expressway and called police.

After getting out of the cab, Warnaar was shocked to see a bullet hole in the backseat headrest where she was sitting. She said: "If it had hit the headrest at just a slightly different angle or spot... it's literally exactly where my head was, so that's obviously a horrifying thought to think about."

It was unclear who fired the gun, although authorities don't believe it was aimed at the cab or Warnaar. The cab driver said he saw two cars that appeared to be racing one another on the highway

before the shot went off.

New York City mayoral candidates, Democrat Eric Adams and Republican Curtis Sliwa, have both expressed their concerns about the safety of residents and tourists as the five boroughs look to recover from the pandemic, but Warnaar says she won't let one shooting change how she feels about the city.

"I feel like it's such a random event to happen. It's like getting hit by lightning," she said. "The chance of it happening twice feels nonexistent. So, for this to cloud my perspective of New York would feel ridiculous."

Source: NBC New York



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TAXI NEWS

AFTER 6 MONTHS, NO MONEY FROM \$65M TAXI RELIEF FUND HAS BEEN ALLOCATED

A \$65 million plan, designed to rescue struggling taxi owners by restructuring the debt on their over-priced medallions, has seemingly stalled. Established in March, the rescue fund was supposed to help underwater taxi medallion owners renegotiate their loans with private lenders – but after six months, none of the relief money had been allocated.

Those eligible for the program were supposed to get a \$29,000 grant to help them refinance.

Medallion owners and drivers – many of whom are immigrants with limited English-language skills – are also reportedly having trouble contacting the New York Legal Assistance Group, the non-profit whose attorneys were tasked by the city to manage negotiations with lenders.

The relief plan “hasn’t made a mate-

rial difference for our drivers,” said Bhairavi Desai, executive director of the New York Taxi Workers Alliance. The lawyers “are looking at the fall to kick off disbursements. What have they done in five and a half months?”

NYC’s Taxi & Limousine Commission (TLC), which is overseeing the relief program and allocation of funds, said that it is still ironing out details of the program, but that “release of the program funds is underway.”

The plan has been criticized by drivers and lenders from the start, who argued \$29,000 was not enough of an individual commitment to induce lenders to lower loan balances that can reach as high as a half-million dollars.

TLC Chairwoman Aloysee Heredia Jarmoszuk held a call with skeptical

lenders on Aug. 18 to announce that the agency was turning the \$29,000 into one-time grant payments. Some lenders were still unsure whether it made sense to participate, but others seemed more interested once the program’s structure had changed.

According to Matthew Daus, former TLC chairman, people have been frustrated by the fact that the structure of the grant program lacked uniform guidelines.

“Having no standardized terms or guidelines seems very amorphous and inefficient for all involved,” Daus said. “The less red tape, the better.”

Meanwhile, taxi drivers continue to suffer as impatient lenders demand payments.

Source: Crain’s New York Business

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**FOR
BREAKING
NEWS!**

MAN HIT BY STRAY BULLET WAITING FOR CAB NEAR PENN STATION

Police were still searching for a suspect in late August that they say shot an innocent bystander outside Penn Station on August 23. The assailant missed his intended target, instead striking a man in his 50s who was waiting for a cab, around 5:45pm, near 31st Street and 7th Avenue by the entrance to NJ Transit.

Authorities said the intended target stayed at the scene and explained what happened. He told police he was waiting for his wife inside Penn Station when he got into an argument with the gunman over food. The dispute escalated when the gunman followed him outside and opened fire.

Taxi dispatcher George Harris was helping a customer get into a cab when he saw the victim fall to the ground. He immediately retrieved an officer, who raced over and applied a tourniquet to the victim’s leg. The victim was taken to Bellevue Hospital in serious condition but was expected to be OK.

Source: CBS New York

ELDERLY WOMAN CRITICALLY INJURED BY FHV

A Black Infiniti For-Hire Vehicle struck an elderly woman, critically wounding her, as she attempted to cross Amsterdam Ave. at W. 74th St. in the crosswalk at about 8:10pm, on the night of August 17, police said.

The driver remained on the scene as medics took the 90-year-old victim to Mount Sinai Morningside Hospital in critical condition.

Source: New York Daily News

NYC CABBIE FINDS PASSENGER IS DEAD, NOT DRUNK

A taxi driver in Queens made a gruesome discovery on the morning of August 17, when his passenger turned out to be dead, rather than drunk, police said.

An unidentified person hailed the cab and directed the driver to take the victim to an address on Avery Avenue in Flushing. He claimed the woman was inebriated.

When the driver arrived at the destination, a friend came out to retrieve the woman from vehicle and noticed she was unconscious, authorities said. The taxi then transported the woman and her friend to New York-Presbyterian Hospital, where she was pronounced dead at 5:49am, according to police.

Police were still investigating the incident in late August.

Source: New York Post

The World's Largest No-Kill Animal Rescue and Adoption Organization



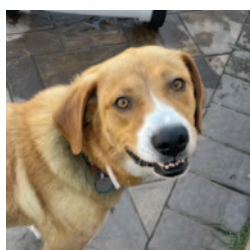
Every year, an estimated 2 million homeless pets are euthanized. Our goal: a no-kill world where all homeless pets find loving homes. Here are some sweet, beautiful animals that desperately need a home.
#GetYourRescueOn

When local heroes found **Franny** abandoned, they leapt into action to secure her a safe place in Bianca's Furry Friends Feline Adoption Center. We've given this frightened little lady all the loving care she needs to gain confidence and have discovered a delightful playmate when given the opportunity to settle into new situations. We'd love for Franny to continue growing her confidence in a quiet home with older kids. She'll feel safest as the only pet in her home which means she'll have nothing keeping her from expressing all of her gratitude for her ultimate hero—the one who makes her a part of their lives. #GetYourRescueOn



Angola's days of fending for herself outside are over now that she's safely tucked into a comfy bed in a very quiet space. We're looking for someone as devoted to her as we have been, providing her a peaceful life and all the time she needs to learn to trust humans again. A cat experienced home with older children will provide this wonderful lady with a great start to her new life. As shy as she can seem with her human friends, she comfortable around felines. Angola isn't looking for an exciting life; she dreams of a peaceful spot to be lazy in, with a caring family gently reassuring her she is safe and home. #GetYourRescueOn

Shea is an amazing 10 year old dog who has found herself without a home for the first time since she was a puppy. This playful girl is looking for a loving home with older children and a yard to play in. Shea is sweet, smart and loves people. She likes other dogs but prefers calmer ones. Will you open your home to an absolutely amazing senior like Shea? #GetYourRescueOn



Miracle is a young Shepherd/Lab mix who was rescued all the way from Tennessee. This southern belle is a delight everyone she meets. She would do best in home without any other pets but doesn't mind children in the home. Miracle is fun, playful and social so trips to the park would be great! Miracle is here waiting for you to come meet her! #GetYourRescueOn

For information on how to meet our adoptable pets, please e-mail kristied@animalleague.org, call 516-883-7575 or visit animalleague.org/adopt.

LIVERY NEWS

MTA ANNOUNCES EXPANSION OF FHV/TAXI ACCESS-A-RIDE PROGRAM, FUTURE ACCESSIBILITY UPGRADES

On July 26, the 31st anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, New York's Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) announced it is expanding its capacity of Taxis and For-Hire-Vehicles (FHV) and launching a new scheduling system to help it reach the next phase of Access-A-Ride's popular, on-demand e-hail service. The MTA also expanded its broker capacity by awarding a new contract.

As New York continues to recover from the pandemic, paratransit is providing customers with 85% direct service and approximately 70% of trips are on the MTA's enhanced broker service, which allows FHV and yellow and green taxis to provide Access-A-Ride service.

The MTA also announced plans for new upgrades to its fleet of buses, subways and paratransit vehicles in July.

"My mission at the MTA is showing that accessibility and equity are one and the same," said Quemuel Arroyo, MTA chief accessibility officer. "New Yorkers deserve the most equitable transit system in the world, and we must do everything we can to strive toward accomplishing that."

Source: SI Live

UPSIDE DOWN? MO. CAB COMPANY OWNER SAYS HE WON'T PICK UP VACCINATED OR MASKED PASSENGERS

Charlie Bullington, the owner of Missouri cab company, Yo Transportation Services, said he is refusing to pick up any passengers who wear masks or have received a COVID vaccine. He issued the "edict" in Aug, even as new cases surged in the state.

"We don't allow any type of masks in our vehicles," Bullington said. "We are very against the vaccine and don't allow people in our vehicle that did get the vaccine."

Bullington said he first verifies if passengers have had the vaccine and are wearing a mask before he dispatches a taxi. His 16-year-old company services St. Louis and other nearby cities. He said he's proud that Missouri is among the top three states with the lowest vaccination rates in the country.

Source: New York Post

DOZENS OF VEHICLES SEIZED FOR FAKE PAPER LICENSE PLATES IN BRONX CRACKDOWN

Deputy sheriffs seized dozens of vehicles with bogus paper license plates on Bronx streets during an overnight crackdown in Aug. Authorities swept the 45th Precinct in Co-Op City and the bordering 47th Precinct in the north Bronx between midnight and 6 a.m. — netting 76 illicit vehicles, New York City Sheriff Joseph Fucito said.

Officials used license-plate-reader technology to identify some of the offending vehicles, according to Fucito.

In a July Brooklyn sting, sheriffs seized 43 vehicles with bogus paper plates from the confines of the 69th, 63rd and 67th Precincts — which include neighborhoods like Canarsie, Flatbush and Mill Basin. The Aug overnight operation brought the total number of bogus-plate vehicles seized by the sheriff's office to 196. More than 100 people have been slapped with criminal and civil offenses related to displaying fake plates, Fucito noted.

"Having fraudulent plates on your vehicle opens up the motorist to a slew of vehicle and traffic and parking offenses, as well as potential tax offenses for not paying commercial motor-vehicle tax or motor-vehicle-tax usage," Fucito said. He added that the owners will be held responsible for any outstanding judgments for unpaid speed, camera, and parking-violation summonses, as well as criminal sanctions for their actions.

Source: The New York Post

LA MTA ANUNCIA LA AMPLIACIÓN DEL PROGRAMA ACCESS-A-RIDE PARA TAXIS Y VEHÍCULOS DE ALQUILER Y FUTURAS ACTUALIZACIONES DE ACCESIBILIDAD

El 26 de julio, 31.er aniversario de la Ley de Estadounidenses con Discapacidades, la Autoridad de Transporte Metropolitano (*Metropolitan Transportation Authority, MTA*) de Nueva York anunció la ampliación de su capacidad de taxis y vehículos de alquiler (*For-Hire-Vehicles, FHV*) y el lanzamiento de un nuevo sistema de programación para pasar a la siguiente fase del popular servicio de paradas electrónicas a pedido de Access-A-Ride. La MTA también amplió su capacidad de intermediación mediante la adjudicación de un nuevo contrato.

A medida que Nueva York continúa recuperándose de la pandemia, el paratransit brinda a los clientes un 85 % de servicio directo, y aproximadamente el 70 % de los viajes se realizan a través del servicio mejorado de intermediarios de la MTA, que permite que los FHV y los taxis amarillos y verdes presten el servicio Access-A-Ride.

La MTA también anunció planes para nuevas actualizaciones a su flota de autobuses, subterráneos y vehículos de paratransit en julio.

"Mi misión en la MTA es demostrar que la accesibilidad y la equidad son lo mismo", señaló Quemuel Arroyo, director de accesibilidad de la MTA. "Los neoyorquinos se merecen el sistema de tránsito más equitativo del mundo, y debemos empeñarnos al máximo para lograrlo".

Fuente: SI Live

¿TODO AL REVÉS? PROPIETARIO DE EMPRESA DE TAXIS DE MISURI DICE QUE NO RECOGERÁ A PASAJEROS VACUNADOS O CON MASCARILLA

Charlie Bullington, propietario de la compañía de taxis de Misuri, Yo Transportation Services, afirmó que se niega a recoger a los pasajeros que usen mascarillas o hayan recibido la vacuna contra el COVID. Emitió el "edicto" en agosto, aun en medio del aumento de nuevos casos en el estado.

"No permitimos ningún tipo de mascarillas en nuestros vehículos", afirmó Bullington. "Estamos muy en contra de la vacuna y no permitimos en nuestro vehículo personas que se la hayan aplicado".

Bullington dijo que antes de despachar un taxi verifica si los pasajeros han recibido la vacuna y están usando una mascarilla. Su empresa de 16 años de antigüedad, presta servicio en St. Louis y otras ciudades cercanas. Manifestó que está orgulloso de que Misuri se encuentre entre los tres principales estados con las tasas de vacunación más bajas del país.

Fuente: New York Post

INCAUTAN DECENAS DE VEHÍCULOS POR TENER PLACAS DE PAPEL FALSAS DURANTE OPERATIVO EN EL BRONX

Los alguaciles adjuntos confiscaron decenas de vehículos con placas de papel falsas en las calles del Bronx durante una redada nocturna que tuvo lugar en agosto. Las autoridades rastrearon el distrito 45 en Co-Op City y el distrito 47 limítrofe en el norte del Bronx entre la medianoche y las 6 a. m., secuestrando 76 vehículos ilícitos, informó el alguacil de la ciudad de Nueva York, Joseph Fucito.

Según el Sr. Fucito, los funcionarios utilizaron tecnología de lectura de matrículas para identificar algunos de los vehículos infractores.

En un operativo realizado en Brooklyn en julio, los alguaciles confiscaron 43 vehículos con placas de papel falsas de los confines de los distritos 69, 63 y 67, los cuales incluyen vecindarios como Canarsie, Flatbush y Mill Basin. El operativo nocturno de agosto elevó a 196 el número total de vehículos con placas falsas incautados por la oficina del alguacil. Más de 100 personas fueron citadas por delitos penales y civiles relacionados con la exhibición de placas falsas, señaló el Sr. Fucito.

"Tener placas fraudulentas en el vehículo expone al conductor a una gran cantidad de infracciones vehiculares, de tráfico y de estacionamiento, así como a posibles infracciones fiscales por no pagar el impuesto a los vehículos motorizados comerciales o el impuesto al uso de vehículos motorizados", explicó el alguacil. El funcionario agregó que los propietarios serán responsables de los juicios pendientes por citaciones no pagadas de cámaras de control de velocidad y violación de estacionamiento, así como de las sanciones penales por sus acciones.

Fuente: The New York Post

FEATURES

IF YOU'RE CONSIDERING AN ELECTRIC VEHICLE, YOU NEED A PLAN

Interest in Electric Vehicles (EVs) has never been stronger in the US, according to surveys that show at least two-thirds of American drivers are open to buying one. While many people still have concerns about cost, choice and charging, those barriers are fading fast and President Biden hopes to speed things along with tens of billions of dollars in incentives.

It can feel overwhelming and exciting to shop for an EV. The following tips will help you decide which one is right for you.

What's your charging plan?

The nation's charging infrastructure may be growing fast, but anyone looking to make the switch to an EV should have a charging plan. First, determine where you will typically charge it. Most people do it at home, but with new electric cars and trucks able to drive 200 miles or more on a full charge, some drivers choose to refuel as needed at work or public charging stations.

If you plan to charge at home, there are pitfalls. While EVs can be powered with typical household outlets, the process can take up to 24 hours (or more) to reach a full charge. Many owners opt to have an electrician install a faster 220- to 240-volt outlet, like those used by

clothes dryers.

Anyone without an easy way to charge should pay extra attention to the real-world range of the vehicle and how it might change in different conditions. Cold weather, for example, can cut a vehicle's range substantially.

Should I buy a Tesla?

Tesla sits atop the EV market in the US, and for good reason: Though they aren't without their problems, their cars are generally beloved. Its cars and technology have also been in use longer than EVs from other automakers, and the company even has its own easy-to-use charging network.

The landscape is changing fast, however, according to media outlet, Edmunds. Several new EVs hit the roads in early 2021, and many more are on the way. Several start-ups are expected to start selling cars, too.

What can you afford? (Tax credits could help.)

The sticker price on a typical EV is higher than a similar gasoline-powered vehicle, but there are federal and state tax breaks, utility grants and other savings that can help to offset the cost. The federal government's \$7,500 tax credit for

EVs has run out for Teslas and GM cars, but it's still available for many other EVs. For example: A new basic model Leaf costs nearly \$32,000, but after the federal tax credit, the price drops to less than \$25,000. States, cities and even utility companies offer incentives for buying EVs or installing chargers at home.

EVs are also cheaper to own. A recent Consumer Reports study found the average EV driver spends 60% less to power their car, truck or SUV, and 50% less on repairs and maintenance, compared to the average owner of a gas-powered vehicle.

Buying used could also help reduce costs, but evaluate the car you are buying carefully, particularly the quality of the battery, because it will degrade over time.

Consider the alternatives.

As much as you may want an EV, they may not be for everyone, due to cost or a lack of room for gear and luggage. In those cases, it might be worth considering a plug-in hybrid, like a Chrysler Pacifica Hybrid minivan which gets 32 miles on a full charge, before switching to gasoline or a RAV4 Prime SUV, which runs for 42 miles before using gas. Plug-in hybrids often also qualify for federal tax credits.

Source: New York Times



TAXI AND FOR-HIRE VEHICLE RELIEF STANDS

Taxi relief stands allow drivers to park their vehicles for up to one hour. This affords drivers the opportunity to leave their vehicles and take care of personal needs. Taxi relief stands should not be confused with taxi stands, which are locations where drivers can wait, in their cars, to pick up passengers.

DOT is not responsible for regulating taxis. Taxis are regulated by the New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission. DOT regulates taxi relief stands.

The type column indicates if the relief stand is for taxis alone, or for both taxis and For-Hire Vehicles (FHVs).

Staten Island currently has no relief stands.

The following information was found at www.nyc.gov/html/dot/html/motorist/taxirelief.shtml (as of July 24, 2018). We recommend checking back periodically, in the event changes are made to these lists.

MANHATTAN		
Type	Street	Cross Streets
Taxi/FHVs	10 Ave (east side)	W 26 St & W 28 St
Taxi/FHVs	11 Ave (east side)	W 45 St & W 46 St
Taxi/FHVs	3 Ave (west side)	E 14 St & E 15 St
Taxi/FHVs	3 Ave (west side)	E 15 St & E 14 St
Taxi/FHVs	6 Ave (east side)	Thompson St & Grand St
Taxi/FHVs	6 Ave (west side)	W 22 St & W 23 St
Taxi/FHVs	6 Ave (west side)	W 38 St & W 39 St
Taxi/FHVs	6 Ave (west side)	W 39 St & W 40 St
Taxi/FHVs	6 Ave (west side)	W 55 St & W 56 St
Taxi/FHVs	8 Ave (west side)	W 46 St & W 47 St
Taxi	9 Ave (east side)	W 30 St & W 29 St
Taxi	Ave A (west side)	E 2 St & E. Houston St
Taxi/FHVs	Church St *E Rdway (west side)	Franklin St & White St
Taxi/FHVs	E 116 St (south side)	3 Ave & 2 Ave
Taxi	E 15 St (north side)	Irving Place & Union Square E
Taxi	E 23 St (north side)	1 Ave & 2 Ave
Taxi	E 26 St (south side)	3 Ave & 2 Ave
Taxi	E 27 St (south side)	Park Ave S & Madison Ave
Taxi	E 28 St (north side)	Park Ave S & Lexington Ave
Taxi/FHVs	E 29 St (south side)	Madison Ave & 5 Ave
Taxi	E 32 St (north side)	Madison Ave & Park Ave S
Taxi	E 77 St (south side)	1 Ave & 2 Ave
Taxi	E 78 St (north side)	Lexington Ave & 3 Ave
Taxi	E 78 St (south side)	Lexington Ave & 3 Ave
Taxi	E 86 St (north side)	Henderson Pl & York Ave
Taxi	E 87 St (south side)	1 Ave & 2 Ave
Taxi/FHVs	Grand St (north side)	Forsyth St & Chrystie St
Taxi/FHVs	Madison Ave (west side)	E 26 St & E 27 St
Taxi/FHVs	Maiden Ln (south side)	Front St & South St
Taxi	Park Row (east side)	Ann St & Beekman St
Taxi/FHVs	South St (west side)	Wall St & Gouverneur Ln
Taxi	University Pl (east side)	E 13 St & E 14 St
Taxi	W 33 St (north side)	9 Ave & 10 Ave
Taxi	W 39 St (south side)	8 Ave & 9 Ave
Taxi	W 41 St (north side)	10 Ave & 11 Ave
Taxi	W 55 St (south side)	10 Ave & 11 Ave
Taxi/FHVs	W 181 St (south side)	Pinehurst Ave & Fort Washington Ave
Taxi/FHVs	West St (east side)	Laight St & Vestry St

QUEENS		
Type	Street	Cross Streets
Taxi	31 St (west side)	34 Ave & 35 Ave
Taxi	31 St (east side)	37 Ave & 36 Ave
Taxi	31 St (east side)	38 Ave & 37 Ave
Taxi	34 St (west side)	37 Ave & 38 Ave
Taxi/FHVs	35 St (south side)	Starr Ave & Bradley Ave
Taxi/FHVs	36 St (east side)	Skillman Ave & 43 Ave
Taxi	43 Ave (north side)	35 St & 36 St
Taxi/FHVs	43 Ave (north side)	11 St & 12 St
Taxi	44 Rd (south side)	21 St & 11 St
Taxi/FHVs	43 Ave (north side)	36 St & 37 St
Taxi	49 St (west side)	Newtown Rd & Northern Blvd
Taxi/FHVs	45 Ave (south side)	Jackson Ave & 23 St
Taxi/FHVs	47 Ave (south side)	11 St & Vernon Blvd
Taxi	55 St (east side)	Queens Blvd & Roosevelt Ave
Taxi	64 St (west side)	34 Ave & 35 Ave
Taxi/FHVs	61 St (east side)	Roosevelt Ave & 39 Ave
Taxi	Queens Blvd (south side)	50 St & 51 St
Taxi/FHVs	Pearson St (west side)	Jackson Ave & DeadEnd
Taxi	Queens Blvd (north side)	55 St & 54 St
Taxi	37 Ave (north side)	32 St & 31 St
Taxi/FHVs	Van Dam St (west side)	Queens Blvd & Skillman Ave

BRONX		
Type	Street	Cross Streets
Taxi/FHVs	E 233 St (south side)	Carpenter Ave & White Plains Rd
Taxi	Park Ave (east side)	E 135 St & E 138 St
Taxi	Park Ave (west side)	E 135 St & E 138 St
Taxi/FHVs	Pelham Pkwy S (south side)	Wilson Ave & Eastchester Rd
Taxi/FHVs	W 231 St (north side)	Albany Cr & Broadway
Taxi/FHVs	West Kingsbridge Rd (south side)	Sedgwick Ave & Webb Ave

BROOKLYN		
Type	Street	Cross Streets
Taxi	4 Ave (west side)	3 St & 6 St
Taxi/FHVs	4 Ave (east side)	Prospect Ave
Taxi	N 6 St (north side)	Berry St & Wythe Ave
Taxi	New Utrecht Ave (north side)	55 St & 13 Ave



FEATURE

SIMPLE TIPS FOR HEALTHY AGING



It's more likely now than ever to live to age 80 and beyond, but the big question is, will you be alive AND well? Some risk factors for age-related diseases are out of your control, but the following tips can improve your health, life, and how you feel.

Exercise

Exercise helps you develop strong muscles and bones, keeps your heart healthier, and lowers your blood pressure. If you don't exercise regularly, set a goal to start moving more until you develop a consistent routine. Keep it simple – start by walking daily and work on stretching and balance. Then add strength-training by lifting light weights or doing bodyweight exercises. Biking, hiking, yoga and swimming are all great options, too. If you have any existing health issues, talk with your primary care provider for advice before starting a new exercise routine.

Eat well

Aim to eat a balanced diet that includes plenty of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and healthy fats from nuts and fish. If you need ideas for healthy eating, a registered dietitian can work with you to analyze your food preferences and help you come up with

a plan that works for you. A diet doesn't work if you can't stick to it. The key is to build a plan made up of healthy, nourishing foods, but that also leaves room for an occasional indulgence like chocolate or ice cream.

Weight matters

Don't take your weight for granted. Your metabolism changes as you get older, and it can become more difficult to maintain your ideal weight. But, if you're overweight or obese, you can still lower your health risks by making healthy food choices and exercising regularly.

Catch some ZZZs

Getting older doesn't mean you require less sleep. Seven to nine hours of sleep per day is critical for maintaining a healthy metabolism and managing stress. Lack of sleep has been linked to higher blood pressure, increased risk of stroke, and mood changes. Start by establishing a relaxing sleep routine. If you struggle with insomnia or snoring, a sleep study can help determine if you need expert assistance and treatment – some can even be done at home with a special monitor.

Manage stress

Exercise, massage, meditation, reading a good book, or relaxing with a cup of herbal or decaf tea are all simple techniques to de-stress, which helps improve blood pressure and eating habits. If you experience prolonged bouts of stress, anxiety, or depression, talk with your primary care provider about behavioral therapy and/or medications that might ease your symptoms and help you feel better.

Stay busy

Did you know that volunteering in your community, staying socially active, and finding ways to keep moving are more effective than brain games for preventing cognitive decline? These habits also help reduce depression by keeping you time-oriented and giving you a daily sense of purpose.

An ounce of prevention

No matter your age or stage of life, annual physical exams are essential to your ongoing health. Visiting your primary care provider for regular preventive care, screenings, and immunizations is one of the best ways to identify and treat health issues before they get worse.

Source: Virtua Health

“LIKE” TAXI & LIVERY TIMES



FOR BREAKING NEWS STORIES

FEATURE

UPDATE ON SALES TAX LIABILITY FOR LIVERY BASES

BY STEVEN J. SHANKER, ESQ.

For-Hire Vehicles (FHV) serve an array of customers, neighborhoods and needs that reflect the full diversity of New York. Traditionally, FHV have included three main categories of vehicle services. First is the neighborhood “car service” or Livery vehicles, which take residents to a myriad of everyday destinations, such as doctor appointments, work, shopping and airports. FHV also include “black cars,” which is a more expensive, premium type service that mostly caters to Manhattan’s business clientele. Finally, FHV include limousines, the most lavish end of the market.

Over the past 10 years, the lines between each sector have been blurred a bit but the distinction between each class of FHV remains the same.

In 2009, the State of New York had a record shortfall in its budget. To make up for such shortfall, the State decided to hit the FHV industry with a new sales tax. This provision, which is imposed upon passengers in NYC, added a 8.375% tax to rides. The purpose of the tax was to generate about \$25.6 million for Albany’s coffers and an equal amount for the city.

As expected, news of the added cost was not well-received by drivers and passengers who use local livery car services, many of which operate in the city’s poorer neighborhoods. The state budget didn’t actually create a new tax but expanded the targets of a service tax to include trips performed by FHV.

Several key industry organizations – such as the Black Car Assistance Corporation, the New York Limousine Association, the Luxury Based Operators’ Association, and the Western New York Limousine Association – attempted to get a temporary restraining order to halt the new tax until clarifications could be made as to what is included and how it would be collected. A judge ruled against the injunction.

In August 2010, the Legislature passed a bill that amended the tax law, excluding community car services and base stations (the Liveries) from the sales tax. The purpose of the amendment was to correct an error of placing all NYC Livery transportation services in this sales tax provision. The bill specifically excluded from the sales tax those community car services defined as “Livery” and “Base Station” by the NYC Taxi & Limousine Commissions (TLC). A Livery refers to the community FHV that are not Black Car or Luxury Limousine.

The justification for excluding this sector of the FHV industry is that Livery/community car services are the actual taxicabs of the outer boroughs and upper Manhattan. The NYC Livery car industry developed the last 25 years into the community car services serving communities not serviced by yellow cabs. For these communities, the non-presence of yellow taxis disadvantage

seniors, people of color and persons living in underserved communities from attending to simple day-to-day activities.

There are many similarities between Manhattan “Yellow” taxicabs and TLC-defined Livery cabs and Base Stations. From the need for outside markings of both Livery and Yellow cabs, to the need for the display of license, insurance, and the Passenger Bill of Rights inside both Livery and Yellow cabs – and to the structure of fares, none of which exists with Black Cars or Luxury Limousines.

The black car and luxury limousine sectors of the FHV industry were quite upset to say the least, after learning that rival Livery cars were exempted from sales taxes in the revenue bill agreed to by the Legislature. Livery dispatch bases did not have to pay an added 8.375% tax on each trip. In a way, this gave Liveries a distinct advantage in terms of pricing – but, as the legislature rationalized, those who use Black Car service, as opposed to liveries, can I guess afford to pay the added tax.

Eventually, the Black Car sector accepted the tax and as intended, the cost of the tax was passed along to the customer. This did not really impact the Livery sector because, at the time the sales tax was imposed, the TLC has a rule that prohibited cross-class dispatches. In other words, Livery bases could only dispatch to Livery vehicles and Black Car bases could only dispatch to Black Cars (vehicles affiliated with a Black Car base).

Then a few years ago, the TLC removed the prohibition on cross-class dispatches. In other words, Livery bases could legally dispatch to Black Cars.

Since there are many more Black Cars in NYC than Liveries, some Livery base owners saw this as an opportunity to open up their supply of vehicles that would be available to send dispatches to and thus better serve their customer base.

A misunderstanding and a serious problem arose when certain Livery bases started to dispatch to Black Cars once TLC removed the prohibition on cross-class dispatches. Certain Livery base owners believed that since the Liveries were exempt from the sales tax, then if they sent dispatches to Black Cars, no sales tax was due. In other words, some members of the Livery industry believed that a Livery base is not responsible for collecting and remitting sales tax to the State when it sends a dispatch to a Black Car. **THIS UNDERSTANDING IS WRONG!**

Make no mistake, if a Livery base sends a dispatch to a Livery vehicle, then the Livery base, as the provider of transportation service, is exempt from the sales tax. On the other hand, if a Livery base sends a dispatch to a Black Car or any other vehicle other than a Livery, then the Livery base, as the provider of transportation service, is NOT

exempt from sales tax.

If you are a Livery base owner who sends even one dispatch to a Black Car, you MUST register with the State to collect sales tax and MUST remit payment of this tax to the State on each dispatch sent to a Black Car.

The New York State Department of Taxation and Finance TSB-A-13(23)S specifically addresses this situation. It states “a Livery base receives a request from one of its customers for transportation service in New York City. The Livery base does not have an AFV (Affiliated Livery Vehicle) available to provide the service and decides to refer the call to a Black Car (BC) base. The Livery base then calls the BC base, which dispatches the call to a BC driver affiliated with the BC base. And concludes by saying, “Because the service was provided using a Black Car, not an AFV, the service is within the definition of transportation service and is subject to sales tax.”

It is important to note that sales tax liability carries a personal liability to the State. In other words, if your company fails to collect any sales tax required to be collected and fails to pay such to the state, you become personally liable for that tax. In general, states will first seek to collect unpaid sales tax from the business directly. There are instances, however, when the business might not have the funds or assets to pay off the outstanding liability. In such event, owners, officers, directors, members, partners, and managers who are under duty to act for the business in matters of sales and use tax compliance can be held personally responsible for unpaid sales tax. Responsible persons can extend to non-owners and officers such as employees who have check signing authority.

It is also important to note that while the statute of limitations on a New York sales tax audit is three years, if you never filed a sales tax return but were supposed to, then the statute of limitations does not apply. Thus, if an auditor determines that sales tax was due but not paid, then the Livery base owner/operator is liable not only for the unpaid tax, but also late fees and penalties.

In this trying time of the COVID world, when the FHV business is picking up, but there remains a shortage of drivers on the street to send dispatches to, it must be kept in mind that there are no shortcuts in business and no shortcuts in life for that matter. If you are a Livery base owner or operator and you are sending dispatches to Black Cars, you MUST remit sales tax to the state whether you collect such tax from your customer or not. You do not want to find yourself in this predicament. Times are tough, but the Liveries must continue to compete by complying with the law. Failure to do so can lead to dire consequences.

FEATURE

UNEXPECTED UBER BACKGROUND CHECKS CAUSE ALREADY SCREENED NYC TLC DRIVERS TO LOSE OUT ON EARNINGS

Many NYC TLC drivers were subject to unexpected background checks by Uber last weekend, causing them to lose access to the app for days. Doesn't the NYC TLC already conduct such checks?

By DAWOOD MIAN

Last weekend, NYC Uber / Rideshare social media was filled with posts about unexpected background checks Uber decided to run on many drivers. The background checks were being done via service provider Checkr and temporarily deactivated drivers from the Uber platform. Some drivers had to wait up to five days in order to regain access to the Uber App. This obviously came as a surprise to many commercially licensed TLC drivers who lost out on multiple days of earnings.

Let me be clear, for the safety of passengers and the the broader community in general , background checks should be done. However, the issue I see here is two-fold:

1. The NYC Taxi & Limousine Commission (TLC) already has one of the nation's most stringent for-hire driver standards (including drug testing) and immediately suspends any TLC driver's license if any new criminal activity is reported (I have seen this first hand with a TLC driver). Under what circumstance could a NYC TLC driver be allowed to drive for-hire in NYC, but not for Uber?
2. If Uber wants to conduct a background check on ALREADY ACTIVE NYC drivers they need to give a driver notice well ahead of time so they can plan (i.e., maybe a driver decides to

take a mini-holiday during those days). In addition, if a driver is ALREADY ACTIVE on Uber's NYC platform it's confusing why a background check would take multiple days to conduct?

As the regulator, I believe the NYC Taxi & Limousine Commission (TLC) should inquire with Uber about what exactly went on during this past weekend. Drivers, already nervous about "guilty until proven innocent" deactivations, deserve answers.

It's been 4 days still waiting on background check

4

Like

Comment

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All Comments

They take 3-5 business days bro! Just do lyft in mean while. My account is on hold since trday as well.

1d

Call them, it goes faster if you call them.

17h

shared a link.

3d

I just checked Checkr website. My background check was done on september last year. Which means Uber is gonna hit me with background check on September. Check yours here.

CANDIDATE.CHECKR.COM

Candidate Portal

2

4 Comments

Like

Comment

View 1 more comment

All Comments

My background check it's in September too... they do it in the first week of September

3d

3d

Most background checks take 3 to 7 business days to complete, but some may take longer. Every background check is as unique as the individual applying, so the completion time varies with each report.

Checkr ETA, which is available in the [Candidate Portal](#), provides an estimate of when your report should be complete. Actual delivery time is not guaranteed.

Three common reasons your background check may be taking longer to complete include:

We are waiting for a piece of information from you. If this is the case, you should have received a communication from us.

The county court(s) being searched is/are taking longer than usual to return data. It's possible, for example, that there is a record request backlog in one of the counties or courts being searched. For more information on the county search process, please see [County Criminal Record Search](#) in the Checkr Help Center.

Your background check includes a screening, like employment or education verification, that depends on verifying information with third parties.

Dawood Mian is the Founder & CEO of AutoMarketplace. He covers the NYC for-hire transportation industry and related news. Search AutoMarketplace for cars, parts, tires, technicians, body shops, reviews, jobs & more.

“LIKE”

TAXI & LIVERY TIMES

f

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DEFENSIVE DRIVING

HOW MOOD AND AGE CAN AFFECT DRIVER SAFETY

This month, we focus on how your mood and age can affect the way you drive.

How Mood Affects Safety

- **Lateness.** Being late on a call can lead to unsafe driving and increase the risk of accidents. Always allow extra time for traffic and give passengers an ETA you can keep.

- **Upset.** Leave personal problems at home. Focus on safe driving and customer service.
- **Rage.** Do not get excited or angry with other motorists' aggressions.
- **Impulsivity.** Do not act on impulses without scanning the entire area.
- **Daydreaming:** Limit your daydreaming to when you are parked. Good defensive driving requires 100% concentration at all times.
- **Focus:** Avoid getting locked into radio stations which may cause you to have so much fun you lose your concentration.

How to Improve Seniors' Driving Skills (By Dale Buss, Contributor)

The dangers posed by senior drivers – combined with the difficulty of figuring out when they have reached the point of posing a risk – are spurring unprecedented efforts to come up with solutions. These initiatives to improve seniors' driving skills include more self-limited driving, improvement classes, vision adjustments, physical rehabilitation, cognitive-skills enhancement and tougher licensing laws. The following looks at some of what researchers, insurers, not-for-profit associations, health-care organizations, government agencies and seniors

are doing in each area.

Self-Limited Driving. Many members of the over-65 generation limit their own driving as they recognize some deterioration in their capabilities. Typical self-limiting includes avoiding crowded thoroughfares and taking alternate routes, though this makes trips longer. Seniors also try to find intersections with protected left turns.

The older a driver is, and the more physically and cognitively impaired he or she is, the more the senior tends to self-limit driving. In fact, seniors' tendency to self-limit is one of the main reasons that insurance rates are generally only slightly higher for drivers 75 or older than for the generation just beneath them – and far lower than rates for teenage drivers.

Driving Improvement Classes. Older drivers are finding more ways to gauge their own effectiveness behind the wheel. The American Automobile Association Foundation has an online self-rating form for drivers 55 and older. Several other organizations are making similar resources available via the internet.

More seniors also are taking it upon themselves to improve their driving by attending self-help classes. The American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) offers a driver safety program at sites around the country and online. The eight-hour class is for drivers 50 and older. Often, participants can take their certificate of completion and show it to their insurance company for a 5-10% discount on their premiums, according to Jack Stegeman, an AARP instructor in Michigan.

Vision Adjustments. The declining vision of seniors is the most difficult aspect of driving to mitigate. "Ninety to

95% of the information you get in driving is visual information," explains Dr. Philip Hessburg, president of the Detroit Institute of Ophthalmology. Yet many vision-impaired older people take a big swipe at the problem simply by declining to drive at twilight or later. Others realize major improvements after having cataract or other eye surgery. Some researchers believe that more diligent instruction of senior drivers actually can help them use their vision more effectively, even if they can't restore their eyes physically.

"A common problem with seniors is that they fail to scan appropriately by moving their eyes completely through the driving environment," said psychology professor, Richard Backs. Seniors may spend too long focusing on changing lanes, for example, risking an accident by not shifting their attention to traffic approaching in their rearview mirror. Some seniors invest in the handful of devices that have proven to improve senior road vision, such as special eyeglasses that reduce glare and have a telescopic function.

Physical Rehabilitation. The elderly can actually improve their driving skills and help stave off decline through various types of exercise and physical therapy. Research by the Yale University School of Medicine found that even a moderate regimen of physical therapy specifically designed for the task – only 15 minutes of exercises a day – could significantly improve flexibility, coordination and speed of movement of extremities in drivers 70 years old and older afflicted with various limitations, such as arthritis. The success of the therapy is projected to improve driving performance by at least an 8% lower crash occurrence over two years.



IATR OUTLOOK

EVs IN THE CITY:

Are FHV Diamonds Forever?



By MATTHEW W. DAUS, Esq.

NYC, and its Taxi & Limousine Commission (TLC), which was a leader in sustainable transportation in the 2000s by promoting alternative fueled vehicles, recently removed a major incentive for the use of Electric Vehicles (EVs). Innovative entrepreneur and EV believer, Elon Musk, CEO of Tesla, in response to this move tweeted: “?!”; drawing national attention to the latest TLC vote.

This article will cover the most recent actions of the TLC and its impact on the industry and the environment, chart the TLC’s history of clean air taxicabs and For-Hire Vehicles (FHVs), compare what has and is happening in the taxi and for-hire space with EVs, and explore the path forward in NYC with the new Mayoral Administration slated to start on January 1, 2022.

The Most Recent Actions of the TLC

On June 22, 2021, the TLC abruptly changed its policy on electric FHVs. In a controversial 5-1 vote, the Commission formally removed the exemption for battery electric vehicles (BEVs) from the FHV-licensing cap, citing the agency’s fear that the number of applications under the BEV exemption would increase.

Before the vote, TLC Chair Aloysee Heredia Jarmoszuk said, “What we will not allow is the opportunity for another corporation – venture capitalists or otherwise – to flood our streets with additional cars.”

There are opinions on both sides of the issue, with some who promote clean air not seeing the situation as an all or nothing proposition, which is how the TLC presented it. The TLC did, however, leave the door open for existing FHV permit holders to convert their vehicles to EVs (as long as an existing licensed vehicle is being replaced).

The TLC added the BEV exemption in August 2019 – the first time the TLC was able to exercise its FHV capping authority, after the City banned the agency from issuing new licenses the year before. In August 2018, New York City enacted Local Law 147, imposing a one-year cap on the issuance of new FHV licenses, with limited exceptions for wheelchair accessible vehicles (WAVs) and certain lease-to-own situations. Local Law 147 also delegated to the TLC the authority to decide the number of FHV licenses the agency would issue after the one year passed, and any exemptions the agency deemed appropriate.

The TLC has maintained the FHV cap since it was first implemented three years

ago, a decision it now reviews every six months in February and August. In keeping the pause in effect, the TLC continued the exemption for WAVs and added BEVs to the exemption list in August 2019. Under the TLC’s own rules, every six months, the agency reviews whether additional FHV licenses should be issued and reports the results of that review and the number of FHV licenses to be issued in the succeeding six months. As recently as February 2021, the TLC decided to continue the BEV exemption for another six months “[i]n an effort to continue to increase the percentage of WAVs and BEVs in the FHV fleet.”

In an effort to increase BEVs in the taxi fleet, in May 2021, the TLC announced a pilot program to test whether these vehicles can be used safely and efficiently as yellow taxis (the “BEV Pilot”). TLC previously conducted a pilot program for BEV taxis between April 2013 and March 2015, which it deemed unsuccessful due to its limited scope and sample size and lack of charging infrastructure. However, according to the TLC, “[w]ith the number of BEVs and charging stations increasing throughout the City, the TLC believes it is time to expand the use of additional BEVs as taxis in NYC.”

The BEV Pilot is necessary because the TLC has strict rules regarding vehicles that may be used as taxis. Under the pilot, the TLC will allow medallion owners to apply to have a BEV certified for use as a yellow taxi, as long as the vehicle meets certain conditions. The pilot has not yet started, though the TLC is accepting applications now.

So, why the abrupt change for FHVs? EVs are becoming more affordable, battery range is increasing, and more models are hitting the market. According to the TLC, “[a]s charging infrastructure is constructed throughout the City and as BEVs become more commercially available, TLC anticipates the number of applications for a new FHV license under the BEV exemption will likely increase exponentially.” In other words, the TLC was only providing the BEV exemption for FHVs while no one was really using it.

Under the TLC’s new rules, in determining the types of vehicles to which the Commission will issue new FHV licenses, the agency will now consider “the availability and demand for BEVs” and “availability of BEV charging infrastructure,” among other factors. Assuming the TLC sticks to its six-month review cycle, the FHV cap is scheduled for review in August

2021. As of this writing, the TLC has not announced an August meeting.

It appears the TLC’s policy is now to allow EVs, but only if new vehicles are not added to the road. Despite the significant reduction in the number of FHV permits since even before the pandemic happened, and the claims of more infrastructure (when there is little to no infrastructure for fast charging EVs in NYC), the TLC’s current priority is to allow vehicle owners to buy EVs and add them to the road, as long as they are replacing another vehicle already in service.

The NYC TLC’s History of Clean Air Taxicabs vs. Other U.S. Cities

According to the NYC Department of Transportation (DOT), transportation is responsible for almost 30% of NYC’s greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs), with most of these emissions coming from passenger cars. BEVs offer the benefits of reduced Greenhouse Gas Emissions, which is a major goal for New York City. By 2050, the City aims to have 20% of new vehicle registrations be for EVs, and to reduce GHG emissions by 80%.

The City and the TLC have been attempting to alleviate greenhouse gas emissions through low-emissions and electric vehicles for years. In 2006, New York City introduced legislation mandating that at least 9% of new medallions for yellow taxis be set aside for hybrid or compressed natural gas vehicles, and incentivized the purchase of low-emission taxis by extending the allowed period of models classified as “clean air” by the United States Environmental Protection Agency.

When I served as TLC Chair, I helped develop the transportation segment of PlaNYC, former Mayor Michael Bloomberg’s signature sustainability initiative. A big part of that plan was to ensure that more clean air vehicles, including taxicabs and FHVs, were placed on the road – and at the time, the predominant alternative fueled vehicle was the hybrid-electric vehicle.

To implement this citywide policy, in 2007, the TLC adopted a rule that would have required all new taxis coming into service achieve a fuel-efficiency city rating of 25 miles per gallon or higher, rising to 30 mpg by Oct. 1, 2009. The rule would have resulted in a virtually all-hybrid fleet by 2012. However, a federal judge found the TLC’s rules were pre-empted under federal law, which reserve regulation of fuel economy and emissions standards to federal agencies. The United States Court

of Appeals for the Second Circuit later upheld that ruling, and the United States Supreme Court declined to consider an appeal by the city.

Following New York City's lead, many cities including Los Angeles, Las Vegas, Boston and Washington D.C. moved to create initiatives for greener taxis and hybrids. However, at every turn the cities faced the same obstacle as New York City, the ruling by the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit.

Cities proposed initiatives that provided incentives to encourage the use of hybrid taxis or proposed regulations and legislation to mandate the transition to hybrid taxicabs. Boston created the Clean Air Cab program, which promoted hybrid taxis as more fuel-efficient vehicles with lower costs and incorporated incentives such as airport privileges and grant awards to those who purchased hybrid cabs. However, this program was unsuccessful as drivers were not voluntarily switching to hybrid taxis, as a result, Boston decided to mandate the switch to hybrid requiring the entire fleet to convert to hybrid vehicles by 2015. In 2009, the mandate was struck down on the basis that it was expressly preempted by federal law.

Even without the clean fuel mandate for taxis, a 2019 study by researchers at the Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health and Drexel University found that the Clean Air Taxi rules are successful in cutting emissions and reducing air pollution. According to the study's findings, between 2009 and 2015, the fuel efficiency of the fleet of 13,500 yellow taxis more than doubled, leading to estimated declines in air pollution emissions.

In February 2020, Mayor Bill de Blasio signed an executive order that sets the City on a path to electrifying its entire municipal vehicle fleet by 2040, with 20% of the city fleet being electric by 2025. Currently, the City has the largest EV fleet in the U.S. (approximately 30,000 vehicles), and the largest EV charging network in New York State, which it is looking to grow.

The City is making a \$10 billion investment to install fast charging stations (with a full charge in 30 minutes) citywide through PlugNYC, a demonstration project to build a comprehensive network of publicly accessible Level 2 Chargers and Level 3 DC fast chargers in all five boroughs. In partnership with Con Edison, the City began installing 120 Level 2 charging ports at curbside locations across the city in June 2021.

Despite NYC's plans, when it comes to EVs and setting goals, the city is behind many of its peers. In California, Los Angeles is aiming to solidify its position as the modern-day Detroit of EVs and currently has 43% of California's massive EV industry. Los Angeles's Green New Deal aims to increase EVs in the city to 25% of vehicles by 2025, 80% by 2035, and 100% by 2050.

Los Angeles Cleantech Incubator (LACI) and the City of Santa Monica launched and deployed a first-in-the-nation Zero Emissions Delivery Zone within a one-square mile voluntary zone by partnering with tech companies, delivery companies and community organizations.

What Transportation Companies Are Doing Now with EVs in NYC & Other U.S. Cities

In April, Revel – the company known for its electric mopeds – announced plans to launch an all-electric ride-hail service in Manhattan and to build the necessary charging infrastructure. The company employs its drivers, providing them benefits not offered to independent contractors. The start-up received support from the Biden administration.

At a ribbon cutting ceremony at the company's electric vehicle charging hub, Energy Secretary Jennifer Granholm praised Revel, saying, "What you are doing to create jobs here, what you are doing to heal the planet here, is so important."

The Biden administration has ambitious plans to reduce emissions and install the first-ever national network of EV charging stations. In early August, Biden signed an executive order that sets a new target to make half of all new vehicles sold zero-emissions vehicles – including battery electric, plug-in hybrid electric, or fuel cell electric vehicles - by 2030.

Under the recently passed Infrastructure Bill, \$5 billion will be allocated to replace the yellow school bus fleet with low to zero-emission buses, and \$7.5 billion will be used to roll out EV charging stations, with the goal of reaching 500,000 charging stations along highways and in underserved communities by 2030.

In May, Gravity announced the expected debut of the first-ever zero-emission, fleet-based taxi service, bringing Tesla Model Y BEVs to New York City as yellow taxicabs. These zero-emission taxis will be available to riders at the same cost and rates set for all taxicabs by TLC; and are available to riders via street-hail or on-demand booking applications. Each of Gravity's zero-emission taxicabs will come equipped with Wi-Fi, artificial intelligence, night vision enabled surround view cameras, and interactive screens with built in media applications.

In order to develop this BEV pilot program, Gravity is working with Con Edison to identify areas capable of installing state-of-the-art BEV charging infrastructure. Gravity charging spaces will also be available for public use, in hopes of making BEVs accessible to everyone. The goal is to create sustainable transportation that is focused on safety, health and passenger experience.

Across the U.S., cities are experimenting with ways to increase the use of zero emission vehicles as taxis and rideshare services. The EV Shared Mobility project

brings together the U.S Department of Energy's Energy Efficient Mobility Systems program and major industry stakeholders with the cities of Seattle, New York, Denver, and Portland to test different electric shared mobility interventions.

The project began in early 2018, and the cities implemented their programs in phases over the course of three years. The City of Seattle, Washington, plans to achieve 30% EV adoption by 2030. To that end, the city tested whether the deployment of charging infrastructure at prioritized locations, along with supportive outreach and engagement activities, would increase the use of EVs in shared mobility services.

Under new legislation by Colorado's governor, rideshare rental programs qualify for an EV tax credit at the same level as consumers, which is up to \$5,000 per vehicle. Building on that, the city of Denver, Colorado is providing EVs directly to ride-hailing drivers and supply charging infrastructure. As a part of the EV Shared Mobility Project, the City and County of Denver will deploy EVs in ride-sharing services program which does not currently offer any EVs in the Denver Metro region and install DC fast charging stations to exclusively support these EVs.

As part of the EV Shared Mobility project, Portland, Oregon sought to promote EV use by transportation network company (TNC) drivers coupled with access to free, unlimited charging. The city partnered with Uber to pilot a program that systemically encourages drivers to use an EV. They also created a downtown DC fast charging depot with free unlimited access for TNC EV drivers.

The Path Forward in NYC with the New Mayoral Administration on January 1, 2022

In March 2020, I hosted and moderated a Transportation Talk with now Democratic Mayoral Nominee Eric Adams, the presumed next Mayor, who commented that the availability of battery charging stations is currently a barrier for the widespread deployment of EVs in the city. Adams said that, if elected, he would expand charging infrastructure to further incentivize drivers to go electric. Additionally, he told the New York Times that electric buses are an investment that will save the city money on fuel and maintenance. While campaigning, Adams said he would push the MTA to add more electric buses to its fleet to reduce pollution, saying that an electric bus fleet would be "an investment that will save the city money on fuel and maintenance."

Separate from EVs, Adams has plans to reduce the City's municipal fleet. In his "100 Steps Forward" plan, Adams says he would implement a municipal car share plan to reduce the municipal fleet, which will reduce congestion in the central business districts where many of NYC agencies

Continued from page 21

are located. In 2016, Adams proposed a similar plan for City agencies in downtown Brooklyn.

One idea worth thinking about for the incoming Mayoral Administration is the replication of the Federal government's procurement of TNCs to provide employee transport, to reduce the size of the NYC fleet – but instead of TNCs, use only FHV and Taxis that are EVs! In addition to car sharing, non-emergency workers for all city agencies could turn in their cars, and instead hail or call a taxi or FHV as part of a subsidized program.

Adams has many ideas about transportation policies for his administration. A compilation is available in the Transportation Voter Guide & NYC Mayoral Candidate Policy Report released in June 2021 by the University Transportation Research Center (UTRC) at the City College of New York of the City University of New York: <http://www.utrc2.org/publications/2021-Mayoral-Candidates-Forum>. What remains to be seen is what Adams will do about the TLC's EV policies, and whether he will reverse course or go in a completely different direction.

Are FHV Diamonds Forever?

Under the City rules, FHV licenses –

commonly referred to as a “diamond” due to the old shape of the permit – cannot be sold or transferred. However, if a license is held by a business entity, then that business may change ownership, and the new owner would retain the FHV license or licenses. The FHV cap effectively created a mini “medallion-like system” for corporate FHV licenses. Before the FHV cap, there was no need to buy or sell an FHV license – anyone who wanted one would simply apply and pay the annual fee. The same is not true for taxi medallions, of which there is only a limited number. Medallions can be sold, transferred, and assigned, and frequently are.

Ever since the FHV cap, there has been a marketplace for the sale of FHV licenses, and prices have surged since the TLC removed the BEV exemption. Currently, a one-plate corporation has an asking price of \$15,500. This is just for the plate – no car is included. A review of offerings available online, found an average sales price of \$9,179.10 in June and \$9,788.94 in July (adjusted for offerings with vehicles and plates). If the cap is ever lifted, the market for FHV licenses could disappear.

While taxi medallions had outperformed even “gold” as an asset in the past, its value was tarnished by Uber and Lyft's

exponential growth. So maybe the reference to FHV licenses as “diamonds” is a misplaced term. While diamonds are more valuable and everlasting when compared to gold, the same does not hold true for FHV permits. They are likely not forever, as the uncertainty surrounding TLC policies should be a lesson learned for those investing in FHV corporations that own permits.

Anything could happen at a moment's notice, and any tweak to the FHV cap could send the value of such entities up or down. The removal of the EV exemption did just that – but the new Mayor could reverse course completely and reinstate it. Anything could happen, so be careful out there!

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CONFIDENTIAL HELPLINE

If you or someone you know is suffering from depression, there is a free, confidential helpline called NYC Well that is always available and accessible in 200 languages. You can call 1-888-NYCWell, or text “WELL” to 65173. However, if you are ever in immediate danger of harming yourself or others, please call 911.

Arabic

إذا كنت تعاني أنت أو أي شخص تعرفه من الاكتئاب، فهناك خط مساعدة مجاني، وموثوق يُطلق عليه اسم NYC Well وهو متاح دومًا ويمكن الوصول إليه بـ 200 لغة مختلفة. يمكنك الاتصال برقم 1-888-NYCWell، أو كتابة كلمة “WELL” إلى رقم 65173. في حين، إذا كنت معرضًا لخطر محقق قد يؤدي إلى إيذاء نفسك، أو إيذاء الآخرين، فالرجاء الاتصال برقم 911.

Bengali

যদি আপনি বা আপনার পরিচিত কেউ হতাশায় ভুগছে, তাহলে তার জন্য NYC Well নামক একটি বিনামূল্যের গোপনীয় হেল্পলাইন আছে, যেটি সর্বদা 200টি ভাষায় উপলব্ধ। আপনি 1-888-NYCWell নম্বরে ফোন করতে পারেন অথবা 65173 নম্বরে “WELL” টেক্সট করতে পারেন। তবে, আপনি যদি নিজেকে বা অন্যকে আঘাত করবেন এমন পরিস্থিতি হয় তাহলে অনুগ্রহ করে 911 নম্বরে ফোন করুন।

Chinese

如果您或您认识的人患有抑郁症，可以使用一个叫做 NYC Well 的热线电话，此热线免费、保密，并提供200种语言，全天候可用。您可以拨打 1-888-NYCWell，或编辑短信 “WELL” 至 65173。但是，如果您当下正有伤害自己或他人的危险，请拨打 911。

French

Si vous ou l'une de vos connaissances souffrez de dépression, sachez qu'il existe un service d'aide téléphonique gratuit et anonyme appelé NYC Well disponible à tout moment en 200 langues. Appelez le 1-888-NYCWell, ou envoyez « WELL » au 65173. Toutefois, si vous risquez de vous faire mal ou de faire mal aux autres dans l'immédiat, appelez le 911.

Hindi

यदि आप या आपका परिचित कोई व्यक्ति अवसाद से पीड़ित हैं, तो NYC Well नामक एक निशुल्क, गोपनीय हेल्पलाइन है, जो हमेशा उपलब्ध रहती है और 200 भाषाओं में पहुंच योग्य है। आप 1-888-NYCWell पर कॉल कर सकते हैं, या “WELL” लिख कर 65173 पर टेक्स्ट संदेश भेज सकते हैं। लेकिन, यदि कभी भी आप खुद को या दूसरों को नुकसान पहुंचाने के तत्काल खतरे में हों, तो कृपया 911 पर कॉल करें।

Punjabi

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਜਾਂ ਤੁਹਾਡੀ ਜਾਣ-ਪਛਾਣ ਦਾ ਕੋਈ ਵਿਅਕਤੀ ਉਦਾਸੀ ਤੋਂ ਪੀੜਤ ਹੈ, ਤਾਂ NYC Well ਨਾਮਕ ਇੱਕ ਮੁਫਤ, ਗੁਪਤ ਹੈਲਪਲਾਈਨ ਹੈ, ਜੋ ਹਮੇਸ਼ਾ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਰਹਿੰਦੀ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ 200 ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਪਹੁੰਚਯੋਗ ਹੈ। ਤੁਸੀਂ 1-888-NYCWell 'ਤੇ ਕਾਲ ਕਰ ਸਕਦੇ ਹੋ, ਜਾਂ “WELL” ਲਿਖ ਕੇ 65173 'ਤੇ ਟੈਕਸਟ ਸੰਦੇਸ਼ ਭੇਜ ਸਕਦੇ ਹੋ। ਪਰ, ਜੇ ਕਦੇ ਵੀ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਖੁਦ ਨੂੰ ਜਾਂ ਦੂਸਰਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਨੁਕਸਾਨ ਪਹੁੰਚਾਉਣ ਦੇ ਤਤਕਾਲ ਖਤਰੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਹੋਵੋ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ 911 'ਤੇ ਕਾਲ ਕਰੋ।

Russian

Если Вы или кто-то из Ваших знакомых страдает от депрессии, бесплатная конфиденциальная телефонная линия помощи NYC Well всегда доступна на 200 языках. Вы можете позвонить по телефону 1-888-NYCWell, или отправить смс “WELL” на номер 65173. Однако, если Вы оказались в непосредственной опасности и можете навредить себе или другим, позвоните по номеру 911.

Spanish

Si usted o alguien que usted conozca sufre depresión, existe una línea telefónica gratuita y confidencial llamada NYC Well que siempre está disponible y accesible en 200 idiomas. Puede llamar al 1-888-NYCWell, o enviar un mensaje de texto con la palabra “WELL” al 65173. Sin embargo, si existe el riesgo inmediato de lastimarse o dañar a otros, llame al 911.

Urdu

اگر آپ یا آپ کا کوئی جاننے والا افسردگی (ڈپریشن) کا شکار ہے، تو NYC Well کے نام سے ایک بلا معاوضہ اور رازدارانہ ہیلپ لائن موجود ہے جو ہمیشہ دستیاب اور 200 زبانوں میں قابل رسائی ہے۔ آپ 1-888-NYCWell پر کال کر سکتے ہیں یا 65173 پر “WELL” ٹیکسٹ کر سکتے ہیں۔ تاہم، اگر آپ کو کبھی بھی اپنے آپ کو یا دوسروں کو نقصان پہنچانے کا فوری اندیشہ ہو تو براہ کرم 911 پر کال کریں۔



By LARRY FISHER

THE FISHBOWL

A FREE COUNTRY

As a young boy, a “free country” was frequently invoked whenever someone wanted to do something outside the norm or without permission. There was some truth to the expression. In matters of speech, assembly, and press, we were largely a free country.

Unfortunately, there were then – and still are now – people and institutions who have malign interests and are hellbent on manipulating the freedoms we enjoy.

The hubbub over the Covid19 vaccination is just the latest conflagration that pits the Libertarian vs the Community at Large. Fox News, Newsmax, and One America News are only too willing to give oxygen to the anti-vaxxers who claim that their freedoms are being usurped by an overreaching government.

The hypocrisy is apparent. if not alarming. Shall we return to the days of my college years? As a smoker, I could light up anywhere. In class, in elevators, in restaurants, in my dorm room with a roommate who was not a smoker. My freedom to smoke anywhere was significantly altered in the 1990s when reports about the dangers of second-hand smoke caused businesses to reassess the impact smoke was having on non-smoking patrons and employees. Waiters and waitresses would report that their clothes would stink from

smoke after a night’s work.

As drivers (taxi and otherwise), we are required to carry liability insurance in order to protect ourselves and other drivers in case of an accident. Is that governmental overreach?

If there are standards that we must comply with in order to protect the health and liberty of the community, as well as ourselves, does that mean it is an assault on my personal freedom?

Motorcyclists are required in some states to wear a helmet. It is a requirement to wear seatbelts, to have a car seat for children. Are these laws limiting our personal freedoms?

Libertarians want few laws and prefer that the marketplace of goods and ideas rule the day. This would amount to anarchy, in my opinion.

Although it is useful for libertarian dogma to be a check on the growth of intrusive government, the marketplace for goods in the taxi world is an excellent example for how libertarian ideals fail. By allowing the unfettered growth of taxi-like vehicles in New York City, the city has become a morass of congestion, worsening air pollution, and the destruction of an industry that was viable for nearly 80 years. The marketplace did no favors for anyone not named Travis Kalanick in the last seven

years.

A free country for whom is a mantra I frequently hear. Are my freedoms curtailed when those in my community refuse to be vaccinated or wear a mask? With a global pandemic, my freedoms are potentially in jeopardy when those in foreign countries, let alone my community, are unvaccinated and unmasked. My grandchildren under the age of 12 are innocent victims of these refuseniks. Their freedoms are severely limited by the promotion of the liberty of the anti-vaxxer, anti-masker crowd.

Maybe there is a silver lining in this “free country” business. It’s good to know that the anti-vaxxers and anti-maskers are PRO-CHOICE.

Larry Fisher entered the NYC transportation industry in 1982 as a yellow taxi driver, and has also worked as a black car driver.

In 1987, he became a lender for Progressive Credit Union, then took the position of lending supervisor in 2003 for Melrose Credit Union – which he held until he retired in 2016. Currently, Mr. Fisher is a consultant for his own firm, LAF Consulting Services Corp. He can be reached at: lafisher292@gmail.com.



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THE TAXI ATTORNEY



BY MICHAEL SPEVACK

Hello everybody... This month, I want to talk about driver license suspension reform which recently became effective in New York State. This new law became effective on June 29, 2021 – and in many instances prohibits DMV from suspending your driver license for nonpayment of fines or suspension termination fees. In general, DMV cannot suspend your driver's license for failure to pay a traffic ticket fine or surcharge.

Below, I have gathered information from the New York State Department of Motor Vehicle website to answer a few common questions regarding the new law.

Q: I am currently suspended for failure to pay a traffic ticket. When will my suspension be lifted?

A: *Under the new law, on June 29, 2021, open suspensions for failure to pay traffic tickets will be terminated without the need to pay the \$70 suspension termination fee.*

Q: Can my driver license be suspended for failure to pay a traffic ticket?

A: *Yes. While the recent amendments eliminate most license suspensions for failure to pay traffic tickets, they did not eliminate all types. For example, a driver license will still be suspended if you fail to pay a traffic ticket which resulted in a default conviction from not appearing in court in response to that ticket, and for not paying the fine or surcharge resulting from an oversize/overlength violation in New York City.*

Q: Is there any kind of driver license suspension that this law does not apply to?

A: *Yes. The change in the law applies to most traffic tickets, but not other matters. Below is a list of common reasons your driver license might be suspended:*

- *failure to appear in court*
- *failure to maintain auto insurance*
- *impaired driving*
- *failure to pay child support*
- *probationary violations*
- *mandatory suspensions resulting from certain convictions*
- *permissive suspensions from courts and hearing officers*
- *failure to pay state income tax*
- *speeding in a work zone*
- *failure to pay the statutory "driver responsibility assessment"*
- *bad check presented to DMV*
- *failure to file crash reports*

It is especially important to note for NYC taxicab and FHV drivers that failure to appear in New York City traffic court – otherwise known as the DMV Traffic Violations Bureau or TVB – will still result in a DMV driver's license suspension. Please contact a qualified DMV attorney like me if you receive a traffic ticket in New York City or anywhere in New York State for that matter.

Q: Do I have to pay my Driver Responsibility Assessment (DRA)? Why?

A: *Yes, DRAs must still be paid. This law did not change Driver Responsibility Assessments. The DRA is a tax and not a fine. It must be paid to DMV and you cannot get a payment plan for it at the current time.*

Regarding payment plans:

Q: When are payment plans going to be available?

A: *You will be able to apply for an installment payment plan starting June 29, 2021. These plans will be provided at no charge.*

Q: How do I set up an installment/payment plan?

A: *It depends on where you received the ticket.*

- *For tickets returnable to the NYC traffic violation bureau (TVB): An application process for establishing a payment plan was added to the official NYS DMV website on June 29, 2021.*
- *For tickets returnable to all other courts: You need to work directly with the court/municipality where your traffic ticket was issued.*

This law is a welcome addition for professional driver's struggling to make ends meet. However, please pay attention to your DMV summonses, just as you would previous to the enactment of this law as your job and driver's license remain in jeopardy if attention is not paid to your tickets, either through accumulation of points or a nonappearance in court.

Thank you for reading my article. Until next month, be well.

Michael Spevack is a 1992 graduate of NYU School of Law and has been a lawyer in good standing in New York State since 1993. He has been helping for-hire vehicle drivers in New York City since 1995, when he opened his own law firm dedicated to "helping individuals, not large corporations." Mr. Spevack can be reached at 212.754.1011; he also welcomes visitors to his office at: 97-77 Queens Blvd, Suite 1120, Rego Park, NY 11374.

NEWS

VENUES WEIGH OPTIONS FOR VACCINE MANDATE, SMALL GROUP FILES LAWSUIT, HEFTY FINES EXPECTED FOR NON-COMPLIANCE

Mayor Bill de Blasio and New York City announced a vaccine mandate on indoor venues as the Covid-19 delta variant surges nationwide. The executive order, which was enacted August 16, has restaurants, bars and gyms scrambling to decide which tech options they will use to enforce the rules.

Enforcement is scheduled to begin Sept. 13. After that, violations will incur penalties of at least \$1,000, which will rise to at least \$2,000 for a second violation and at least \$5,000 for a third. The city has said it will send out 570 canvassers to all businesses in the city to help them understand the plan, followed by inspectors from various agencies to check compliance. Venues must display signage communicating the vaccination requirement.

The mayor's "Key to NYC Pass" offers a combination of options for proving you have been vaccinated: the city's Covid Safe app, the state's Excelsior Pass app and the paper card issued by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The state launched the Excelsior Pass in March with the help of IBM at a cost of \$2.5 million. The app, which exceeded 2 million downloads in July, connects to the official records of vaccinated people in New York state, and issues a pass with a QR code as certification. People submit their name, zip code, birth date and the county they were vaccinated to get the pass. Some restaurants, the Knicks, the Yankees and Springsteen on Broadway have used the app.

Some individuals have reported difficulty in confirming their vaccination status through the app. Privacy experts have also criticized its lack of clear guidance on how user data is protected.

NYC launched a competing offering, called Covid Safe, in late July, designed by the Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications. The city's app operates much more simply than the state's, allowing users to upload a picture of their vaccine card. The information is stored nowhere but the person's phone, according to the app's user agreement – potentially alleviating privacy concerns. But it also eliminates the ability of a third party to verify the vaccine card, leaving it up to each venue to scrutinize the images.

Private companies are also offering ways to track vaccine status.

Clear Secure, a Manhattan technology company, has landed some city partners for its Health Pass app. It has an option to upload a CDC vaccine card and connects to some vaccination and Covid-19 testing databases for verification. Users take a selfie outside the venue they wish to enter. If the health data they uploaded matches the venue's requirements – such

liance was cautiously supportive of the mandate, but a spokesperson said it can create a difficult operational challenge for restaurants. On top of tech help, restaurants need buy-in from customers.

Shortly after the mandate was announced in mid-August, a handful of outer-borough mom-and-pop shops – including a gym and a few restaurants – said they are suing the mayor and the city, claiming their businesses are being unfairly targeted. They are seeking a permanent injunction against the executive order, calling it arbitrary and capricious. However, Bill Araiza, a professor at Brooklyn Law School, said he believes the mandate will stand.

Restaurants, bars and indoor venues may face up to \$5,000 fines if they don't require patrons to show proof of vaccination under the mayor's executive order. All indoor venues will have to check that everyone age 12 and up who enters their premises shows proof of vaccination, and that proof must match the information on their official identification document, which they must also show.

The executive order defines a wide range of indoor venues that must check for vaccine passes, including movie theaters, casinos, indoor portions of botanical gardens, adult entertainment spaces, commercial event and party venues, museums, aquariums and zoos, sports arenas and indoor stadiums, convention centers and exhibition halls, bowling alleys, arcades, indoor play areas and billiards halls, as well as any indoor part of a restaurant, and all indoor gym and fitness settings, including pools, dance studios and hotel gyms.

Certain spaces and actions have been left exempt, including outdoor dining. Those who do not wish to show proof of vaccination can enter a venue if they need to use the bathroom or make deliveries or pickups, whether as a customer or a vendor. Restaurants that only offer takeout, with no indoor seating, do not have to card.

Venues can enforce stricter rules than the city's requirements, if they so choose.

Sources: Crain's New York Business, Crain's New York Business, Crain's New York Business



as vaccination or a recent negative test – you receive a green “pass” on your phone to show venue staff. Clear's partners include Shakespeare in the Park, Danny Meyer's Union Square Hospitality restaurants and the Metropolitan Opera House.

SevenRooms, a software provider for restaurants, has added a feature that allows restaurants to require customers to attest they are vaccinated before making an indoor reservation online. They would need to show further proof once they arrive.

Venues with vaccine mandates already in place have largely adopted all of the above, plus a physical Covid-19 vaccine card. Some even accept a photo of a vaccination card. The proof of vaccination is inclusive of foreign vaccines as long as the official record is presented.

The New York City Hospitality Al-

NEWS

NEW YORK AUTO SHOW CANCELED AS COVID-19 CASES RISE

The New York International Auto Show was canceled a couple weeks before it was set to start, as COVID-19 cases spread and after the announcement by state and local officials of new safety measures. This is the second-straight year the show was canceled due to the coronavirus.

J.D. Power's Auto Forum New York, scheduled for Aug. 18, was also canceled.

"The COVID pandemic has challenged our city, the country and the entire world, but just like the automobile industry, we know that the New York Auto Show will rebound and be bigger and better than before," organizers said in the statement. The show is expected to return in April.

The Chicago Auto Show was held in July without issue, but the delta variant of the virus has caused a spike in cases nationally. Organizers of the Detroit auto show have chosen to hold a smaller, outdoor event, instead of the normal show.

Source: Crain's New York Business



GOTTHEIMER ANNOUNCES FEDERAL LEGISLATION TO BATTLE NY'S CONGESTION TAX AND ACHIEVE PARITY WITH NJ RESIDENTS

In August, U.S. Congressman Josh Gottheimer (NJ-5) announced bipartisan federal legislation, the Anti-Congestion Tax Act, "to fight New York's proposed congestion tax and protect hardworking New Jersey families who drive into Manhattan." While this tax burden will be placed on New Jersey drivers, Gottheimer says the State of New Jersey and its transit and infrastructure systems will not benefit.

Gottheimer also announced he would be writing to incoming New York Governor Kathy Hochul, urging the reversal of the proposed congestion taxes on NJ residents.

Gottheimer joined New Jersey Senator Joe Lagana (LD-38), Lodi Mayor Scott Luna, and Lodi Deputy Mayor Vince Martin in August, to highlight how the bipartisan bill would ensure that New Jersey drivers who commute into New York City are not hit with a new \$3,000 a year tax,

that they call regressive and punitive.

"The relationship between New York and New Jersey is a driving economic force, not only in the country, but in the world. Our states are deeply intertwined, and it is tradition for New York and New Jersey to work together. That is why the proposed \$3,000 a year congestion tax is such a slap in the face to New Jersey commuters," said Congressman Josh Gottheimer (NJ-5). "Even more galling is that unlike the shared Port Authority resources from the tolls on the GW Bridge, that help both New York and New Jersey, every nickel of that new Midtown congestion tax will go to New York, to their MTA, to help fix their subways. Not a cent will go back to the PATH or NJ Transit to actually help our state in any way."

The Anti-Congestion Tax Act takes two key actions:

- The Anti-Congestion Tax Act would

prohibit the Secretary of Transportation from awarding any new Capital Investment Grants to MTA projects in New York until drivers from the New Jersey crossings into Manhattan receive exemptions from this new congestion tax.

- The Anti-Congestion Tax Act would amend the Internal Revenue Code to offer drivers a federal tax credit at the end of the year equal to the amount paid in congestion taxes entering Manhattan from any of the three New Jersey crossings. This would protect Jersey drivers from double taxation.

Gottheimer has also joined Congressman Bill Pascrell, Jr. (NJ-9) to request that U.S. Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg require a comprehensive review of the congestion tax's burden on NJ commuters, as well as public hearings.

Source: Insider NJ

FHV DRIVER FARHAN ZAHID KILLED IN TRAGIC ACCIDENT IN JULY

A 32-year-old For-Hire Vehicle (FHV) driver, Farhan Zahid of Bay Shore, was among five people who died in a head-on collision in the Village of Quogue on July 24. One passenger survived.

According to Quogue Village Police, a Nissan Maxima, driven by Justin Mendez, age 22, of Brookhaven, was westbound on Montauk Highway, near the intersection of Quogue Street East, when it crossed the center line into the oncoming lane and crashed head-on into Mr. Zahid's Toyota Prius, at around 11:20pm.

Zahid's passengers included four friends, who were reportedly headed to a dance. A 22-year-old Garden City woman was the sole survivor of the crash. She was rushed to the hospital in critical condition.

Police said speed may have been a contributing factor to the fatal accident. As of August, the accident was still under investigation by authorities.

Source: The Legal Advocate

MAN STABBED WAITING FOR FHV IN THE BRONX

A man was stabbed on Hegeman Avenue near Bristol Street, on the night of August 21, holding a box of pizza while waiting for the Livery vehicle he had just booked. Video of the crime can be viewed by clicking [here](#).

In the footage, the attacker, who is wearing a blue sweatsuit, can be seen lunging at the 25-year-old victim and stabbing him in the face and abdomen before running off. The victim was taken to a local hospital. He was expected to make a full recovery, police say. The attacker was not known to the victim.

Anyone with information regarding this incident is asked to call the NYPD's Crime Stoppers Hotline at (800) 577-TIPS. All calls are strictly confidential.

Source: News 10 The Bronx

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