

February 2025

Rules in the Making

While winter generally feels like a time to slow down, it's been a rule-making rush hour at the TLC to kick off 2025.

In January we held public hearings introducing several rule proposals, including streamlining the Taxi Improvement Fund (TIF), and the implementation of in-vehicle advertising. These were "round two" public hearings, meaning we were re-introducing rules after revisions based on public comment. I have said it many times: We take public comments seriously, and when rules are finally put to a vote they typically include adjustments based on public input.

As the pace continues into February, your feedback is more important than ever, because at 10 a.m. on the 5th we will be holding a long-awaited hearing on driver pay. Specifically, we are proposing rules to increase driver pay to account for higher expenses, and to adjust the driver minimum pay formula to deter rideshare companies from engaging in the unnecessary and unacceptable lockouts we saw over the summer.

A quick refresher on how we got here: In 2018, TLC commissioned an independent study that found that 85 percent of rideshare drivers were earning below minimum wage. This was unacceptable, and the following year we adopted our first-in-the-nation pay rules, which required the rideshare companies to pay drivers the equivalent of a minimum wage based on a formula that can be adjusted for increased costs and inflation. The formula also required the companies to pay drivers for time between trips, a caveat that would theoretically encourage them to manage their driver pools well and keep them busy.

The formula was working until last June, when Uber and Lyft—infamous for oversaturating markets with drivers—realized that they had onboarded too many. But instead of paying the drivers between trips, they decided to lock them out of the app, using a loophole to circumvent the rules. They said they were doing this "due to TLC regulations," which wasn't true. No such regulation exists; they did it because they didn't want to pay everyone.

We were able to get the companies to agree to a short-term solution that ended Uber lockouts in September, and meanwhile we've been working on a long-term solution in the form of the rule amendments we will discuss on February 5. The amendments incorporate findings from an [updated independent study](#) of driver expenses, and introduce safeguards against lockouts by changing the driver pay formula. Furthermore, we're requiring the rideshare companies to give at least 72-hours notice before cutting off access to the platform. Also, once a driver has been allowed to log on, they'll have a 16-hour window to work (barring any extenuating circumstances or situations).

That's a lot to talk about, and we want to hear from you! To participate in the hearing or submit comments email tlcrules@tlc.nyc.gov or call 212-676-1135 by February 4.

See you out there,

David Do
Commissioner, NYC Taxi and Limousine Commission