

August 2025 Commissioner's Corner

Patience Pays Off

On June 25, in a room full of drivers, advocates and TLC staff, a vote on driver pay led the day.

That's when our Board of Commissioners unanimously approved our long-awaited minimum-pay raise for Uber and Lyft drivers. Applause and collective jubilation filled our Commission hearing room with the culmination of so much effort. I was happy to be a part of this slice of history.

The update to our minimum pay standards will give drivers a 5% increase and continue to ensure they are compensated properly for their expenses and their time. These new rules (official as of Aug. 1) provide a sensible pay increase as the cost of doing business rises. Importantly, they also go a long way to deter the rideshare companies from unfairly locking out hardworking drivers, requiring companies to give at least 72-hour notice before implementing any potential app restrictions. They also can't keep drivers off the apps for at least 16 hours once they've started accepting trips. The companies face a \$500 fine for each rule violation.

These are huge victories! I'd like to thank the driver community and the advocate organizations for their patience over the last year as we worked day and night to iron out the rules. Our licensees waited too long, suffering through harmful and unnecessary lockouts last year that forced them to worry about paying bills. None of that was acceptable. These rule amendments are designed to leave those days in the rearview mirror.

New York City is the birthplace of minimum pay rules for rideshare drivers. We've done more to protect their pay than any city in the nation. This is just one way this administration prioritizes making our city a more affordable place to live.

I also want to address another topic that has gotten some attention recently: autonomous vehicles. You might now begin to notice Waymo vehicles here and there around the city, as they map our streets with human drivers. Waymo has also applied for a DOT license to test in autonomous mode, again with humans sitting in the driver seat.

Like any sector we regulate, an AV rollout would be tightly controlled to ensure safety and equitable service with minimal impact on our driver workforce. Furthermore, TLC licensing standards would need to be met, and currently state law prohibits autonomous vehicles without a driver – let alone any for-hire trips. Lastly, there is a city-mandated vehicle cap in place, with the only exception being for wheelchair accessible vehicles (which MUST have a human in them to assist the passenger).

I understand that many taxi and FHV drivers might have concerns about the future. Rest assured, like we have done with driver pay and other rules and policies, we will continue to support licensees, as we have done time and again.

See you out there,

David Do
Commissioner, NYC Taxi and Limousine Commission