



Commissioner's Corner

By New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission Chairman & Chief Executive Officer **Bill Heinzen**

December 2019

We hope you enjoy a happy and safe holiday season with your family, friends, and community, and that you have a wonderful year ahead! Here is the latest news from our wheelhouse.

New TLC Police Officers

One major complaint we often hear from licensees is that illegal operators are taking business from TLC-licensed drivers and businesses. Too often, unlicensed drivers take away trips and thus valuable income from drivers.

These drivers have taken the time to meet the TLC's standards, including driver education and drug testing. They have their records vetted for safety. Unlicensed drivers also put the public at risk since they have not been properly vetted. They may not have commercial insurance.

We are very pleased to share that we graduated a new class of TLC Police Cadets this fall. These new officers will significantly increase the TLC's field presence which is critical to stopping hustlers at the airports, taking action against illegal commuter vans, and deterring unlicensed operators.



A TLC enforcement car.

A Great Way to Earn More

If you are a yellow or green wheelchair accessible taxi driver, don't forget to sign up for the Taxi Improvement Fund (TIF) Driver Program. As of mid-November 2019, almost 5000 TLC-licensed drivers earned about \$12 million, up from \$8.5 million last year.

Any driver of a wheelchair accessible taxi can enroll. Once you are part of the program, you earn an additional \$1 for every trip taken regardless of duration. All trips qualify regardless of whether a passenger is using a wheelchair.

Once you earn \$20 or more in a two-week period, you will be paid through a Taxi Improvement Fund debit card. If you are interested, make sure to enroll as soon as possible at TLC Initiatives - TLC: <http://bit.ly/TaxiImprovementFund>. You will receive the money for trips after you enroll, not past trips.

Drivers of Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles

TLC's Accessibility Initiative for Drivers

Want to make more money each shift? As a driver taking part in this program, you can earn an extra \$1.00 per trip from the TLC for any trip you provide in a yellow or green wheelchair accessible taxicab. All the money you earn through the program will be deposited, at no cost to you, onto a TLC prepaid debit card by TLC staff.

The TLC's Taxi and Improvement Fund (TIF)/Street Hail Livery Improvement Fund (SHLIF) program also offers yellow and green wheelchair accessible vehicle (WAV) drivers a one-time \$100 signing bonus after completing their first 20 WAV trips.

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Driver Payroll Calendar

Calendar with paydays and enrollment dates for drivers who wish to participate in the program.

Payday & Enrollment Calendar (PDF)

https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/tlc/downloads/pdf/tif_driver_payroll_calendar.pdf

For more information visit **Taxi Improvement Fund FAQ: Newly Passed Rules and Pilot Programs - TLC**

<https://www1.nyc.gov/site/tlc/about/taxi-improvement-fund-faq.page>

Sign Up for the Program

1. Visit [LARS](#) system to ensure that your mailing address is accurate. Use this address, where the TLC will send your debit card, on your application.
2. Sign up by completing the Program Authorization (PDF). https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/tlc/downloads/pdf/tif_driver.pdf
3. Receive your personal TLC prepaid debit card in the mail.
4. Drive a wheelchair accessible vehicle.
5. Get Paid! Use your prepaid debit card anywhere VISA/MasterCard is accepted.



TLC staff member Yesenia Torres enters a wheelchair-accessible taxi.

Congestion Rules and Licensing Pause

The rules we passed last summer are pivotal to decreasing congestion in the busiest parts of Manhattan, as well as removing the race to the bottom resulting from adding about 2,000 new for-hire vehicle cars a month. This, as well depressed the income of professional drivers.

Some of the largest app companies have challenged our rules in court seeking to flood our streets again with new cars. Last month, a Manhattan judge threw out a suit from Uber

challenging the cap. It followed other legal victories the City has had this year, including against a lawsuit filed by Lyft and Juno who did not want to meet a minimum pay standard for drivers on trips.

We are pleased the courts continue to recognize the TLC's power to address the different problems the apps created when they over saturated the market. We will continue to fight better for drivers and less congestion on our streets.



A driver scans for cyclists as he opens his door.

Sharing the Street Safely

A great way to keep fellow New Yorkers safer is to watch for cyclists when opening vehicle doors. Remind passengers to do the same. An easy way to do this is to use your far hand, reach across your body, then turn look and look before exiting the vehicle. **When you use your far hand to open the car door, you automatically look out and scan for bikes and traffic. This move can save lives and prevents injuries.**

If you want to learn more Vision Zero safety tips, you can watch our Safety First video at bit.ly/safetyfirsttlc.