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D.C. OFFICE OF TAXICABS

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ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUANCE
Title: Implementation Date for DC TaxiApp
Series/Number: AI-2016-001
Approved: March 1, 2016
Revised: May 23, 2016
Effective: May 24, 2016

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I. BACKGROUND

The D.C. Taxicab Commission ("Commission") has statutory obligations: to promote the public interest in taxicab transportation by insuring that all rules, regulations, and laws specifically relating to taxicabs be vigorously and fairly enforced; to ensure that adequate and high quality taxicab service be provided throughout the District; to promote and maintain a healthy and viable taxicab industry; to promote and maintain policies which utilize and promote efficient methods of taxicab service; and to improve the delivery of taxicab service the community. *See* D.C. Official Code § 50-301.02. To achieve these ends, and to improve operator revenue, the Office of Taxicabs ("Office") has developed the DC TaxiApp. *See* 31 DCMR § 1613.3.

Although an operator is allowed to receive ride requests through the app of any digital dispatch service registered with the Office under Chapter 16 of Title 31 of the DCMR, the DC TaxiApp is the only app that gives passengers access to all on-duty vehicles, while also allowing requests for wheelchair service. To maintain the value of the DC TaxiApp to riders, it is therefore critical to maintain the synergy of having all on-duty vehicles on the App at all times. To this end, the Commission's regulations require each operator to be signed in to the App whenever the operator is on duty, so the operator is able to receive requests for service. *See* § 1612.1. The Commission also requires each taxicab owner to provide any equipment needed to ensure its associated operators are able to be signed in to the App whenever they are on duty. *See* § 1612.2.

Integration with modern taximeter systems (MTSs) is a new feature found only on the DC TaxiApp (see FAQs below). Integration means the DC TaxiApp will be directly linked to MTSs, offering new benefits to operators, the Office, and passengers. Operators will be able to receive ride requests through the App directly on the driver console (DIM) (PSPs that do not run the App on the PIM must provide their associated drivers with smartphones or cellphone-enabled tablets to run the App). Integration will also give the Office a single data stream of trip and payment information. And integration will give passengers more payment choices, allowing them to pay in the vehicle with cash or credit, in addition to paying through the App.

This administrative issuance establishes two implementation deadlines for the DC TaxiApp, to ensure that taxicabs are using only MTSs integrated with the DC TaxiApp: (1) all owners and operators using approved PSPs as of April 1, 2016 will be required to comply with §§ 1612.1 and 1612.2 not later than April 1, 2016, and (2) all owners and operators who are not using approved PSPs as of April 1, 2016 will be required to comply with §§ 1612.1 and 1612.2 not later than June 30, 2016. As of June 30, , 2016, all approved PSPs will be fully integrated with the DC TaxiApp. A list of approved PSPs is available on the Commission's website at: http://dctaxi.dc.gov/publication/payment-service-providers.

II.   PURPOSE

To establish two implementation dates for the DC TaxiApp, as follows: (1) all taxicab owners and operators who are using approved PSPs as of April 1, 2016 shall be in compliance with §§ 1612.1 and 1612.2 not later than April 1, 2016; and (2) all taxicab owners and operators who are not using approved PSPs as of April 1, 2016 shall be in compliance with §§ 1612.1 and 1612.2 not later than June 30, 2016.

III.   POLICY

Beginning with the implementation date of April 1, 2016, each taxicab operator shall be signed in to the DC TaxiApp whenever the operator is on duty. An operator who provides service while signed in to an MTS unit from an approved PSP shall be presumed to be in compliance with this requirement. Beginning with the implementation date of June 30, 2016, no operator may provide service using an MTS unit from a PSP that is <u>not</u> approved by the Office. A violation shall subject the operator to a civil fine of twenty five dollars ($25). *See* § 1612.1.

An operator shall demonstrate upon demand by a District enforcement official that the operator is in compliance with this administrative issuance and § 1612.1 if the operator is on duty.
Failure to comply with the instructions of a District enforcement official shall be treated as a violation of an oral compliance order pursuant to § 702.

Beginning with the implementation date of April 1, 2016, each taxicab owner shall provide such equipment as is needed to ensure its associated operators are able to meet their obligation to be signed in to the DC TaxiApp whenever they are on duty. This obligation shall ensure transitioning from a PSP not approved by the Office to one which has been approved by the Office. A violation shall subject the owner to the civil fine established by the regulations: fifty dollars ($50) per vehicle, as provided in § 1612.2.

IV.   DEFINITIONS

"AI: PSP/MTS Approval Process" – Administrative Issuance: Payment Service Provider/Modern Taximeter System – Approval Process, AI-2015-0003 (Nov. 9, 2015).

"Application" or "app" – a piece of software designed to fulfill a particular purpose, which is downloadable by a user to a mobile device, such as a tablet or smartphone. An app's purpose is assumed to be the digital dispatch of, or the digital dispatch and digital payment of, trips by vehicles-for-hire.

"District enforcement official" – a vehicle inspection officer (hack inspector) or other authorized official, employee, general counsel or assistant general counsel of the Office, or any law enforcement officer authorized to enforce a provision of Title 31 DCMR or other applicable law.

"District of Columbia Universal Taxicab App", "DC TaxiApp", or "App" – an app developed by and owned by the District that allows passengers to book available vehicles by digital dispatch.

"Tour of duty" -- the period of time when an operator is signed into an MTS or digital payment system.

V. AUTHORITY

Sections 8(c) (1),(2),(3), (4) (7), (10), (11), (14), (16), (18), (19) and (20), 14, 15, and 20(j) of the District of Columbia Taxicab Commission Establishment Act of 1985, effective March 25, 1986, D.C. Official Code § 50-307; 31 DCMR Chapters 4 and 16.

VI. PROCEDURES

The DC Taxi Driver App is available for download at the App Store (for iPhones) and on Google Play (for Android phones). All operators are expected to download the Driver App and familiarize themselves in advance with its functionality, to ensure they are able to sign in and use the Driver App in the manner required by the applicable deadline.

In making the transition from one PSP to another, owners and operators are strongly cautioned: to comply with all applicable terms of their contracts with their former PSPs, to safeguard and promptly return all MTS equipment owned by their former PSPs, and to promptly pay any amount they owe to their former PSPs.

VII. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

FAQ 1: Why are PSPs required to integrate their MTSs with the DC Taxi Driver App?

Integration between the App and the MTS systems is an important new feature to enhance service and maximize customer choice. Integration provides more payment options for passengers, ensures more accurate collection of the passenger surcharge, and improves trip data integrity for research and compliance purposes.

FAQ 2: What are the deadlines for integration with the App?

There are two deadlines for integration. Which deadline applies to you depends on whether you are a customer of a PSP that has been approved to operate through August 31, 2016. Please check here for a list of these PSPs: http://dctaxi.dc.gov/publication/payment-service-providers.

If you are a customer of one of these PSPs, you (or your associated operators, if you are a company or association) must begin using the App at all times while on duty not later than April 1, 2016.

If you are a customer of a PSP that is NOT on the list, you (or your associated operators, if you are a company or association) must begin using the App at all times while on duty not later than June 30, 2016.

FAQ 3: I am a taxicab owner. How do I prepare for integration?

Don't wait for the deadline!   Regardless of whether you are a company, association, or independent owner, you must ensure that the driver will be able to be signed in to the App at all times while on duty. This means you must ensure that the MTS unit in your vehicle will display the DC Driver TaxiApp on the MTS driver console (DIM). Or, if the App is not displayed on the DIM, the PSP must provide a smartphone or cell-enabled tablet (Android or Apple) to run the App in each vehicle in which its MTS unit is installed. Companies and associations may also provide these devices to their associated operators, and operators may choose to use their own devices. The Office of Taxicabs does not provide these devices.

FAQ 4: I am a taxicab operator. How do I prepare for integration?

Don't wait for the deadline! If the DC Taxi Driver App is not running on your vehicle's DIM, you must have a device to run the App at all times while you are on duty. If you do not have a device, your PSP, company, or association must provide one to you. Next, you will need to download the App, set up your account, complete your activation and driver training at dctaxi.zendesk.com, and get ready to receive e-hails (digital dispatches)!

FAQ 5: I am a taxicab operator. How do I get the App?

The DC Taxi Driver App is free! You can download it at Google Play (for Android) and the App Store (for iPhones and cell-enabled iPads).

FAQ 6: I am a taxicab operator. How do I get paid for e-hail trips which start in the App?

Download and fill out the Driver ACH Agreement form to set up payment at dctaxi.zendesk.com.

FAQ 7: I am a taxicab operator. Where can I get support for the DC Taxi Driver App?

For DC Taxi Driver App support, please refer to the FAQs at dctaxi.zendesk.com and submit a support ticket if needed. For malfunctions with your MTS unit, please contact your PSP, or taxicab company or association.

FAQ 8: What is required for PSPs?

PSPs have important responsibilities for integration. PSPs must provide integration support to all customers in order to meet the April 1, 2016 deadline. The must ensure their MTS systems differentiate between street hails and e-hailed trips, including, specifically, DC Taxi Driver App trips. Ensure the DC Taxi Driver App launches from the DIM and that drivers can log in and operate the App from the DIM – or – make devices available to drivers who do not wish to run the App on their own devices, or who do not receive devices from their companies or associations (this is the driver's choice, not the PSP's choice).

FAQ 9: I am a taxicab driver. What is my penalty if I am not logged in to the App while on duty after the applicable deadline?

The success of the App depends on you! Drivers who are not logged in to the App while on duty after the applicable deadline face a civil fine of $25. Other penalties may apply after the first violation.

FAQ 10: I am a taxicab owner. What is my penalty if I do not meet the applicable deadline for integration?

The success of the App depends on you! Drivers CANNOT comply with the integration requirements if owners do not do their part. Therefore, owners (including companies, associations, and independent owners) who do not equip their vehicles for integration by the applicable deadline face a civil fine of $50 for each non-compliant vehicle. Owners also face other civil penalties including impoundment and suspension of vehicle licenses. Companies and associations that do not comply with the applicable deadline also face the suspension or revocation of operating authority.