



NEW YORK CITY TAXI & LIMOUSINE COMMISSION

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

[Press Release #01-02](#)
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TLC, CITY COUNCIL ANNOUNCE REIMBURSEMENT FUNDING PROGRAM FOR ACCESSIBLE FOR-HIRE VEHICLES AND TAXICABS

The New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission (TLC) recently promulgated a regulation that would require wheelchair accessible vehicle service to be available to users of for-hire vehicle service on request as of October 31, 2001. For-hire vehicle service providers have the option of dispatching wheelchair accessible vehicles themselves, or arranging for equivalent service on request. \$1 million has been budgeted by Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani and the City Council to facilitate the purchase or retrofit of accessible vehicles. While further research will be necessary before determining the final course of legislative action with respect to the inclusion of medallion taxicabs in the TLC's accessible vehicle program, monies will be available to the medallion taxicab industry as well as the for-hire vehicle industry to reimburse owners for the purchase of accessible vehicles.

TLC Chairperson Diane McGrath-McKechnie, City Council Speaker Peter F. Vallone and City Council Member Gifford A. Miller today announced the reimbursement program at a press conference held at the TLC's headquarters at 40 Rector Street. Immediately following the press conference, participants viewed a demonstration of wheelchair accessible for-hire vehicles and taxicabs.

Said TLC Chairperson Diane McGrath-McKechnie, "Thanks to the teamwork and dedication of all those who have worked on this program, as well as the leadership and guidance of Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, we are closer than ever before to the widespread availability of wheelchair accessible for-hire vehicles to serve persons with permanent and temporary disabilities. The fact that the Giuliani Administration is the first to have fostered such progress is nothing less than historic, and my message to all those persons with disabilities who have waited so patiently for this to become a reality is that we truly appreciate your patience and your invaluable input.

"The bottom line is that persons with disabilities have the absolute right, as do people without mobility impairments, to spontaneously arranged transportation to and from work, shopping, the theater, or anywhere they need to go in their lives. While public transportation can offer this to some, it is appropriate that the livery and taxicab industries join public transportation in becoming part of a truly comprehensive transportation network that offers this needed service to persons with disabilities."

Said City Council Speaker Peter F. Vallone, "Today we literally tear down the barriers that have kept thousands of New Yorkers from getting to work, visiting friends, or seeing a movie. I am extremely pleased that the Council and the Mayor were able to provide the funds to ensure that disabled accessible livery service will be available to all New Yorkers. The \$1 million we have jointly appropriated is a symbol of our commitment to ensuring that every citizen can participate fully in all New York has to offer."

Said Council Member Gifford A. Miller, "Until now, disabled New Yorkers have had two choices: take the bus or wait hours, and sometimes days, for Access-A-Ride. Now, every citizen of this city will have access to convenient, affordable transportation. I am pleased to have been able to work closely with the TLC, the disabled community, and the taxi and livery industry to make this day possible."

The monies will be allocated among the for-hire vehicle and taxicab industries by a formula that will use as its general guideline the number of licensed for-hire vehicle bases in each borough, as well as the most recent census data specific to the residency of wheelchair users.

For-hire vehicle and taxicab owners who recently purchased and placed into service wheelchair accessible vehicles (prior to this program's implementation) will be eligible to apply for reimbursement funding under this program.

Once they have been completed and distributed, application packages will be available from certified dealers and retrofitters. When finalized, a listing of certified dealers or retrofitters may be viewed at the TLC's web site at www.NYC.gov/taxi, or picked up at the reception desks of TLC's inspection facility in Woodside, Queens, or the TLC's 40 Rector Street headquarters.