

# New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission 2019 Annual Report





# Welcome

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Dear Fellow New Yorkers:

Welcome to the New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission's 2019 Annual Report. I am pleased to highlight the agency's accomplishments during this exciting year.

In 2019 our agency has remained committed to advancing and carrying out policies that foster greater accessibility and better working conditions for drivers. All of this has been based on the greater collection and integration of data into TLC decision-making.

This past year, the TLC implemented a new For-Hire Vehicle Driver Pay protection program, which has increased the average income of high-volume For-Hire Vehicle drivers by as much as \$750 per month. This first-in-the-nation policy is another example of TLC setting standards in For-Hire Vehicle regulation for the rest of the country.

In addition to pay protections, there have been many important licensing improvements that have a tremendous impact on drivers, vehicle owners, and other licensees, freeing up their time so they no longer need to visit our offices in-person. Vehicle transfer applications can now be self-scheduled online, and we installed 3 self-service kiosks at our Long Island City office. TLC UP now offers a License Snapshot that lets drivers check their license online for a real-time view, upcoming drug test dates, and current insurance and inspection information. These are just some examples of the innovations from TLC's Licensing unit in 2019.

2019 also saw the introduction of true wheelchair accessible service in the For-Hire Vehicle sector. TLC's rules continue to provide more transportation options for persons who use wheelchairs and can now call the car service in their neighborhood or use one of the High-Volume app companies. Car service companies must now dispatch a set percentage of trips to accessible vehicles, or meet a wait time standard when trips are requested through a TLC-approved dispatcher. A first evaluation report chronicling compliance with the TLC rules ([www1.nyc.gov/assets/tlc/downloads/pdf/fhv\\_wheelchair\\_accessibility\\_report\\_2019.pdf](http://www1.nyc.gov/assets/tlc/downloads/pdf/fhv_wheelchair_accessibility_report_2019.pdf)) indicated substantial achievement of its goals, and we hope to build on this progress in 2020.

TLC's work is built on a foundation of data, and the City's collection and analysis of taxi and For-Hire Vehicle industry data has enabled TLC to break new policy ground by holding the apps accountable. While TLC data has long been available on the City's Open Data website, TLC increased its accessibility when we launched a new Data Hub ([tlcanalytics.shinyapps.io/tlc\\_dash/](http://tlcanalytics.shinyapps.io/tlc_dash/)) that allows the public to access and visualize industry metrics in a way never before possible.

All TLC-licensed drivers must first attend Driver School and pass the TLC Driver License exam. In addition to centralizing all driver education exams with one authorized test provider, we also launched a new and improved course for TLC driver license applicants in Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, English, Russian, Spanish, and Urdu. Licensed drivers come from over 164 countries, and we have worked to eliminate language barriers so that they can work and support their families.

In August 2019, the Commission voted to extend by one year its cap on the issuance of For-Hire Vehicle licenses as part of a package of rules aiming to reduce congestion. Before this pause on new licenses, more than 2,000 inaccessible For-Hire Vehicles were added to NYC streets every month. We are now seeing a gradual decline in overall For-Hire Vehicles, which is important for reducing traffic congestion. Over 650 accessible For-Hire Vehicles have been added—there were only 170 on the road when the cap began. Despite some concerns about a potential reduction in vehicle availability, wait times for rides also decreased in every borough.

The TLC has also remained committed to its Vision Zero goals, Mayor de Blasio’s groundbreaking effort to eliminate traffic injuries and fatalities. This year we honored a record number of drivers and businesses through its annual Vision Zero Driver Safety Honor Roll ([www1.nyc.gov/assets/tlc/downloads/pdf/press\\_releases/press\\_release\\_10\\_17\\_2019\\_2.pdf](http://www1.nyc.gov/assets/tlc/downloads/pdf/press_releases/press_release_10_17_2019_2.pdf)). Drivers honored did not have a single crash resulting in an injury, a single traffic violation, or a single violation of TLC’s safety-related rules. This event is always one of our favorites, and it highlights the dedication to safety that so many of our drivers possess.

From inspections to field enforcement, the work that TLC’s Uniformed Services Bureau (USB) does is crucial to reducing serious injuries and accidents, protecting our licensees’ incomes from illegal operators, and ensuring the safety of the riding public. In 2019, USB graduated two new classes, and a new class of cadets began their training this fall. Our Enforcement staff will continue to perform crucial work citywide, protecting licensed drivers and passengers.

Our commitment to combatting service refusals, when passengers are denied trips based on illegal criteria like race and destination, has never been stronger as we opened the new Office of Inclusion. This ongoing problem was illustrated in a short film featuring Anchor/Journalist Errol Louis highlighting the real pain caused by service refusals ([www.youtube.com/watch?v=UI1hrPjovu4&t=232s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UI1hrPjovu4&t=232s)).

This has also been a year of progress in assisting our drivers to surmount the many economic burdens that market forces have placed upon them. Our External Affairs staff conducted more outreach events this year than ever before – over 150 events held in all five boroughs. Partnering with agencies including Department of Consumer and Worker Protection (DCWP), Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH), Department of Parks & Recreation, the New York Police Department (NYPD), Department of Education (DOE), and the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA), the TLC’s outreach team connected hundreds of drivers and passengers with information about our initiatives and other crucial city services. In 2020 we will open our Driver Assistance Center to offer financial and legal counseling to medallion owners to help them deal with debt.

As directed by Mayor de Blasio, the TLC undertook an investigation of the medallion broker industry, which culminated in a detailed report ([www1.nyc.gov/assets/tlc/downloads/pdf/broker-investigation.pdf](http://www1.nyc.gov/assets/tlc/downloads/pdf/broker-investigation.pdf)) and detailed a number of proposed regulations that would lead to positive change in both the medallion broker and lease agent industries ([www1.nyc.gov/assets/tlc/downloads/pdf/proposed-rules-broker-rules.pdf](http://www1.nyc.gov/assets/tlc/downloads/pdf/proposed-rules-broker-rules.pdf)). It will also lead to the creation of a Business Practices Accountability Unit (BPAU) that will routinely audit the practices and policies of TLC-licensed businesses.

These are just some of the highlights from a busy year, and they reflect the passion and dedication of the TLC’s staff, who show great leadership every day. It is their skill, professionalism and perseverance that makes possible all of TLC’s accomplishments.

Sincerely,

Bill Heinzen  
*Acting Commissioner*

## **TLC's Mission and Structure**

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### **Charter Mandate**

The New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission (TLC) was created by Local Law No. 12 of 1971, and is charged with “furthering the development and improvement of taxi and livery service in New York City, establishing an overall public transportation policy governing taxi, coach and car services and wheelchair-accessible vans, and to establish certain rates and standards.”

### **Commission Board Structure**

The Board of the Taxi and Limousine Commission is comprised of nine members, eight of whom are unsalaried. The salaried Chair presides over the Board and acts as head of the agency, which carries out the Commission's day-to-day licensing, regulatory and enforcement functions, as well as functions associated with the adjudication of licensee rule violations. Members of the Commission are appointed by the Mayor, with the advice and consent of the City Council, each to serve a seven-year term. One representative of each of the city's five boroughs is recommended for appointment by a majority vote of each borough's respective City Council delegation. As of December 31, 2019, there were two vacant positions on the Commission.

#### **Jacques Jiha**

Commissioner Jiha currently serves as the Acting Chairperson of the Commission. He was appointed by the Mayor in August 2014. He also serves as Commissioner of the New York City Department of Finance. Prior to becoming Finance Commissioner, Mr. Jiha was the Executive Vice President/Chief Operating Officer and Chief Financial Officer of Earl G. Graves, Ltd., a multi-media company with properties in print, digital media, television, events and the internet.

#### **Bill Aguado**

Bill Aguado was appointed by the Mayor on the recommendation of the Bronx delegation to the New York City Council in May 2015. A leading cultural and community activist in the Bronx, Commissioner Aguado retired in 2011 as Executive Director of the Bronx Council on the Arts (BCA), and since then he is still called upon to lend his expertise on behalf of emerging artists, community cultural groups and community-based organizations.

#### **Nora Constance Marino**

Appointed by the Mayor on the recommendation of the Queens delegation to the City Council in 2011, and reappointed in 2016, Commissioner Marino is a former JAG Officer in the United States Army Reserve and maintains her own law practice.

#### **Lauvienska Polanco**

Lauvienska Polanco was appointed by Mayor de Blasio in 2016 after serving as the Manhattan member of the Commission beginning in 2007. Commissioner Polanco serves as Principal Law Clerk at the Bronx Supreme Court.

#### **Kenneth C. Mitchell**

Appointed to the Staten Island seat by Mayor de Blasio on the recommendation in the New York City Council in November 2016, Kenneth Mitchell also serves as the Executive Director of the Staten Island Zoological Society, Inc., a position he has held since September 2011. Mr. Mitchell is responsible for the overall administration and the day-to-day operation of the Staten Island Zoo.

## **Thomas Sorrentino**

Commissioner Sorrentino was appointed by Mayor de Blasio in 2017 on the recommendation of the Brooklyn delegation of the City Council. Sorrentino served as a member of Kings County Community Board 18 for approximately five years, where he chaired its Transportation Committee. Sorrentino is currently a partner in the accounting firm of PKF O'Connor Davies LLP, and serves on the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors.

## **Steve Kest**

Commissioner Kest is the Commission's newest member, appointed by Mayor de Blasio in 2018. Kest serves as Senior Advisor to the Center for Popular Democracy (CPD), and is a decades-long veteran of community organizing. Previously, Kest ran the Fight for a Fair Economy program at the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) and was a Senior Fellow at the Center for American Progress (CAP).

## **Scope of Regulated Industries**

The Taxi & Limousine Commission is responsible for licensing and regulating For-Hire transportation in New York City. The TLC regulates several sectors that each include drivers, vehicles, businesses and other related entities.

TLC-licensed vehicles are an essential part of the comprehensive transportation network of New York City. These vehicles transport over one million passengers each day. Over 133,000 vehicles are licensed by the TLC to serve the public, 13,587 of which are medallion taxicabs currently authorized to accept hails from passengers within the five boroughs. In addition to medallion taxicabs, more than 120,000 other vehicles serve the public through pre-arrangement and radio dispatch. These For-Hire Vehicles (FHVs) include community car service (or livery) vehicles, black cars, and luxury limousines with a seating capacity of up to 20 passengers. The black car sector is the largest and fastest growing segment of the For-Hire Vehicle category and includes app-based dispatch. Green cabs are For-Hire Vehicles with Street Hail Livery (SHL) permits which allow them to legally provide street hail service in areas traditionally underserved by yellow taxis. TLC also licenses and regulates paratransit vehicles (ambulettes) and commuter vans that are authorized to transport passengers within specific geographic zones. In addition, the TLC licenses and regulates the businesses that manufacture, install and repair the meters used in New York City taxicabs, brokers who assist buyers and sellers of taxicab medallions, and agents that operate taxicab medallions on behalf of owners. TLC also licenses Technology Service Providers, which develop and maintain the credit card readers, trip recorders, and Taxi TVs found in yellow and green taxis.

<b>By The Numbers Calendar Year 2019</b>	
<b>Active Licenses</b>	<b>334,201</b>
<i>(as of December 31, 2019)</i>	
<b>Drivers</b>	
TLC Driver License	197,998
Paratransit Driver License	1,260
Commuter Van Driver License	223
<b>Total Driver Licenses</b>	<b>199,481</b>
<b>Vehicles</b>	
<b>Street Hail Service</b>	
Medallion Taxis	13,587
Standby Vehicles	87
Street Hail Liveries (SHLs)	3,004
<b>Prearranged Service</b>	
For-Hire Vehicles	116,449
Black Car	103,291
Livery	9,661
Luxury Limousine	3,497
Paratransit Vehicles	190
Commuter Vans	215
<b>Total Vehicle Licenses</b>	<b>133,532</b>
<b>Bases</b>	
Black Car Bases	433
Community Car Services	374
Luxury Limousine Bases	127
Commuter Van Authorizations	47
Paratransit Bases	77
<b>Total Base Licenses</b>	<b>1,058</b>
<b>Businesses</b>	
Taxicab Brokers	20
Medallion Agents	71
Taxicab Meter Shops	26
Taxicab Meter Manufacturers	4
Technology Service Providers	3
E-Hail Providers	6
<b>Total Business Licenses</b>	<b>130</b>

## **Commission Meetings**

The TLC holds regular public meetings in which regulatory actions are discussed, public testimony is heard and action is taken by the Commission. As a result of TLC rulemaking in 2019, two new packages have been promulgated and two are pending.

## **2019 Rulemaking Actions**

<b>Date of Commission Vote</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Status</b>
August 7, 2019	High Volume For-Hire Service Congestion Rules	Effective August 2019
August 7, 2019	Technology System Provider Rules	Effective September 2019
Public Hearing held October 30, 2019 (Commission vote forthcoming)	Broker Enforcement and Oversight Rules	Effective Date Pending
Public Hearing held October 30, 2019 (Commission vote forthcoming)	Revised Taxi Vehicle Specification Rules	Effective Date Pending

## **Regulatory Highlights**

**Tackling Congestion and Market Over-Saturation** The corresponding TLC rules addressed congested streets and oversaturation of the For-Hire Vehicle market.

### *For-Hire Vehicle Drivers: Halting the Race to the Bottom*

More than 83,000 drivers now drive for the three largest For-Hire Vehicle companies in New York City, which operate through the apps Uber, Lyft, and Via (collectively the “Largest For-Hire Vehicle Companies”). These three companies account for over 91% of For-Hire Vehicle trips.

While there are now more For-Hire Vehicles than ever, more drivers than ever, and more trips performed than ever, the unregulated market was failing to provide better wages to drivers. Trip, fare and income data gathered by the TLC and labor economists indicated that driver earnings fell dramatically as the number of For-Hire Vehicle trips increased.

In 2018, the TLC responded with a first-of-its-kind Minimum Per-Trip Payment formula.

In 2019, the TLC implemented Local Law 147. Signed by Mayor de Blasio on August 14, 2018, LL147 required the TLC, in addition to conducting a congestion study with the New York City Department of Transportation, to periodically review and limit the number of For-Hire Vehicle licenses it issues. Critical exceptions will allow for the issuance of new wheelchair accessible vehicle licenses, as well as battery electric vehicle licenses. And the license issuance pause is subject to periodic, six-month reviews that will allow regulation to continue in an open-minded, nimble fashion.



TLC now has more tools to address a business model that was predicated on flooding our streets with more For-Hire vehicles than even the growing economy could support. Halting the race to the bottom for driver income, began in 2018 when, after two years of study, TLC announced its new minimum pay policy for High Volume For-Hire Vehicle drivers. Today the TLC continues a moratorium on issuing new FHV licenses, except for Wheelchair Accessible or Battery Electric Vehicles.

The rules also required the Largest For-Hire Vehicle Companies to decrease the percentage of time that For-Hire Vehicles dispatched by those companies cruise without passengers in Manhattan (“the Congestion Rules”).

### **Brokers: Strengthening the Regulatory Framework**

In response to reports of Broker misconduct, on May 20, 2019, Mayor de Blasio ordered a joint investigation by the TLC, Department of Finance (DOF) and Department of Consumer and Worker Protection (DCWP) into Taxicab Brokers practices. The purpose of the 45-day review was to identify and penalize Taxicab Brokers who violated existing TLC regulations and to develop novel regulatory improvements needed to address issues left uncovered by the existing regulatory framework.

The resulting rule package will provide new and meaningful standards of transparency, and more specifically it will:

- Increase certain penalties for violations of the TLC Broker rules to reflect the seriousness of the prohibited conduct;
- Provide restitution as a remedy to Brokers’ clients for TLC rule violations;
- Strengthen Brokers’ obligations to disclose interests in TLC-issued taxicab licenses and related taxicab business services that those brokers offer to provide to their clients;
- Required that disclosures include any interests held by spouses, children and other relatives of the Broker;
- Require in writing the disclosure of actual conflicts in any transaction to be completed on a form provided by TLC;
- Require written agreements between Brokers and their clients specifying all fees and costs charged by the Broker, informing clients of the Broker’s duty to act in their interest, disclose any facts the Broker knows that impact the value of a medallion as well as all offers to purchase, and disclose any fees paid to the Broker by a third party;
- Require that Brokers submit to TLC completed broker agreements including all agreement attachments required by TLC rules and copies of closing statements completed on TLC-provided forms;
- Require that Brokers complete for their clients, and submit within 30 days to TLC, a plain language explanation of material loan terms for any financing or refinancing facilitated by Brokers.

### TLC Data

In 2019, the TLC continued to be a leader in data-driven policymaking. In February, new data reporting requirements went into effect for all High-Volume For-Hire Services (HVFHS), including new data on driver pay and hours and passenger fares. Those data have been used to enforce the driver pay rules, which also took effect in February. In the first six months of the driver pay policy, drivers earned nearly half a billion dollars more than the same period last year.

TLC and the New York City Department of Transportation (DOT) also incorporated data reported on vehicles working for the HVFHSs to model out the impacts of policies meant to curb congestion related to these services. The final Congestion Rules, which came out of recommendations made in a study of For-Hire Vehicle congestion released in June, included new data reporting to capture vehicle movements into and out of the Manhattan Core area, where For-Hire Vehicles make up nearly 30% of traffic but travel without passengers 40% of the time. TLC planned to use trip and cruising data to measure companies' compliance with the new rules, which require each company to reduce cruising within the area to 31% of all driver time within the first year. Although a portion of the Congestion Rules were overturned by a court decision in late 2019, the TLC remains committed to continue to work towards policies that reduce traffic congestion as well as the time licensees spend working while not earning money.

TLC also released the [TLC Data Hub](#) this year to increase access to data and statistics on TLC-related industries. The Data Hub allows the public to visualize and understand the data the TLC collects about taxis and app-based services with a user-friendly tool that anyone can use.

### Driver Protection Unit

The TLC Driver Protection Unit (DPU) has continued to successfully prosecute complaints received from licensees. In 2019, the DPU processed more than 400 complaints and secured over \$140,000 in restitution for drivers. New initiatives have included enforcing the TLC's new Driver Pay and Lease Transparency Rules that went into effect on February 1, 2019. The DPU has prosecuted numerous Driver Pay Complaints and assisted drivers in recouping their earnings from High-Volume For-Hire Vehicle Bases. The DPU has also prosecuted complaints involving For-Hire Vehicle lease violations and is in the process of investigating major For-Hire Vehicle leasing companies. As part of this investigation, the DPU is meeting with each of these companies and reviewing their leases to ensure compliance with the TLC's Lease Transparency rules. The DPU has also been involved in the TLC's investigation of Medallion Brokers. In collaboration with various departments, the DPU conducted a review of Broker's Medallion sale and transfer records and prosecuted violations that were discovered as a result of the review. The DPU has also participated in several outreach events focusing on drivers' rights throughout the year. In 2019, the DPU continued to investigate and prosecute complaints from drivers regarding identity theft, driver earnings, and Taxicab and For-Hire Vehicle leasing.

### Office of Inclusion

TLC's Office of Inclusion (OOI) was created in 2019 by City Council. The Office is focused on preventing service refusals and other discriminatory behavior in the taxi and For-Hire Vehicle sector. It also helps drivers who experience discrimination on or off the road by connecting them with resources from the Commission on Human Rights (CCHR), which investigates and acts against such abuses. OOI has held over twenty focus groups with drivers to better understand why service refusals occur, as well as explain the TLC complaint and summons process. These focus groups are often held in collaboration with the New York City Police Department (NYPD) and the Commission on Human Rights (CCHR).

To ensure the riding public is aware of their rights as passengers, OOI has provided information to NYCHA buildings, elected officials and the Parks Department's recreation centers. OOI has presented information at senior

centers, tenant association meetings, and community board meetings all over the five boroughs on how to report a service refusal. OOI has also had Days of Action, where TLC staff have visited transportation hubs and TLC driver hot spots to inform the public and drivers about service refusals. The Office of Inclusion recognizes that New York City's greatest attribute is its diversity (of residents and visitors alike) and is working to reduce and ultimately eliminate service refusals.

### **Driver Education**

In 2019, TLC expanded and standardized its requirements to teach the 24-Hour TLC Driver License Education Course, creating an application process that allows TLC to select the best qualified education providers. Curriculum includes topics such as TLC rules that impact drivers the most, an overview of New York City geography, and an introduction to Vision Zero with tips to protect themselves, passengers, and pedestrians. Drivers also receive instruction on customer service, accessibility initiatives, and service refusals. The course is currently available to drivers in Arabic, Bengali, Simplified Chinese, Russian, Spanish, and Urdu. TLC is in the process of standardizing curriculum and requirements for other driver education courses as well.

TLC also selected a new E-testing provider, PSI, which administers the TLC driver license exam in 12 locations, with one in each of the five boroughs. The location expansion provides drivers with more convenience and flexibility when fulfilling their TLC driver license requirements. Several new testing benefits offered by PSI include increased security measures, the ability to toggle between English and their preferred language while taking an exam, and screen reading technology.

### **Accessibility Options in For-Hire Vehicles**

Increasing access to the New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission's fleet of over 130,000 licensed vehicles is an important step to make New York City a place that is truly accessible to all of our residents and visitors—including those who use wheelchairs.

Since 2012, wheelchair accessible green and yellow taxis have been incorporated into the City's fleet. To reach the For-Hire Vehicle sector—which transported a daily average of more than 760,000 passengers per day in 2018—the TLC began in 2017 to hold For-Hire Vehicle companies accountable for the requirement that they provide equivalent service to all New Yorkers and visitors with disabilities. After months of public engagement with members of the disability community and industry stakeholders, TLC passed rules establishing a trip mandate requiring that a certain percentage of trips be made in wheelchair accessible vehicles (WAVs), but the implementation of this rule was delayed by a lawsuit filed by several For-Hire Vehicle companies. Once the legal challenge was resolved, TLC's ground-breaking new rules on For-Hire Vehicle wheelchair accessibility went into effect in January 2019. As a result of these rules, For-Hire Vehicle bases must either dispatch a percentage of their total trips to wheelchair accessible vehicles or meet fixed response times when WAV trips are requested through a TLC-approved dispatcher.

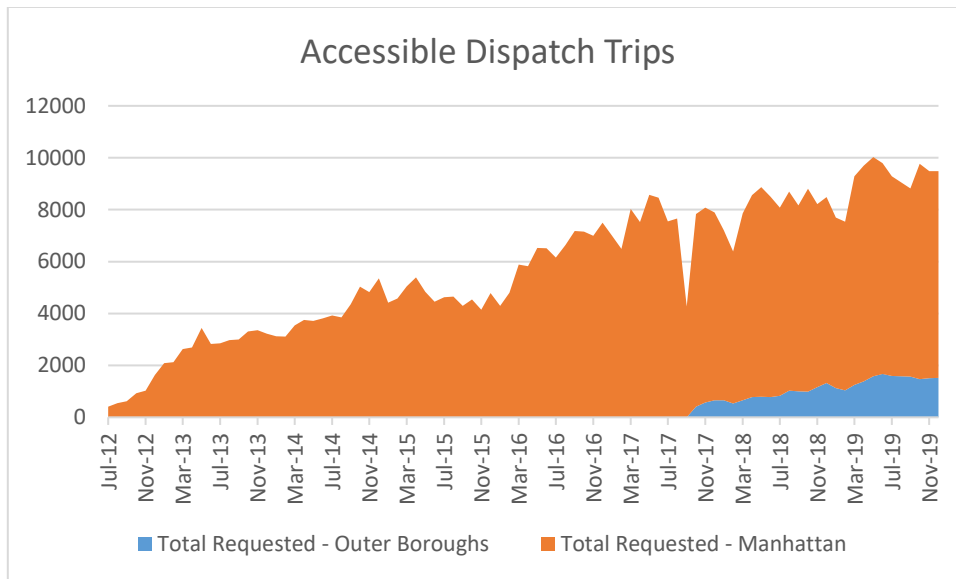
The TLC's new rules on wheelchair accessibility in the For-Hire Vehicle industry include companies ranging from small community-based car services to app-based dispatching providers like Uber, Lyft, and Via. TLC analysis of the first six months of the program shows that the rules have succeeded in increasing the number of WAVs on the road, and expanding For-Hire service options for passengers who use wheelchairs. Although this outcome is a tangible gain for hundreds of thousands of passengers who use wheelchairs across the City, it also highlights the long history of inadequate wheelchair accessible service available to passengers in For-Hire vehicles before TLC's rules went into effect. In its ongoing efforts to monitor and evaluate compliance with For-Hire Vehicle wheelchair accessibility rules, moving forward TLC will focus additional resources to ensure that all New Yorkers and visitors are aware that: (1) wheelchair accessible service must be available from all For-Hire Vehicle bases, and (2) passengers have a right to request a WAV trip in the same manner as they can request a non-WAV trip. To achieve equivalent service in For-Hire Vehicles, TLC will continue monitoring WAV dispatch and base compliance, enforce compliance as necessary, and partner with industry stakeholders and passenger

advocates on ways to expand and improve WAV options.

### Accessible Dispatch

Accessible Dispatch is a centralized dispatch service that enables customers to request a wheelchair accessible taxicab for pick-up. In January 2018, TLC launched its expanded Citywide Accessible Dispatch program, which is now available in all five boroughs and dispatches trips to both yellow and green taxis. Customers may call the dispatcher directly, use a smartphone application, use a dedicated website, or contact 311 to request an accessible taxi. Customers pay only the metered taxi fare, and there is no additional charge for the service. Drivers receive a dispatch payment on top of the metered fare to compensate them for both driving to the pick-up point and assisting the passenger into the vehicle.

Since January of 2019, the Accessible Dispatch program completed nearly 100,000 trips with a median wait time of approximately twelve minutes. Around 3,500 wheelchair accessible yellow and green taxis were available to pick passengers up and the average dispatch payment to drivers was \$17.10.



### High Volume For-Hire Service Providers

In December 2018, the TLC enacted rules governing High-Volume For-Hire Service (HVFHS) licenses pursuant to Local Law 149 of 2018, which created a separate licensing category for For-Hire transportation services that dispatch more than 10,000 trips per day.

Before receiving an HVFHS license, applicants must:

- Submit a list of bases through which the HVFHS will dispatch trips
- Pay a biennial licensing fee
- Submit a business plan, addressing the HVFHS’s past and anticipated vehicle count, trip volume, service areas, and compliance with the TLC’s accessibility requirements
- Assess the impact of the HVFHS on traffic congestion, local transportation, and noise
- Provide a description of all deductions they propose to charge For-Hire vehicle owners or drivers as well as estimates of gross hourly earnings of drivers, and
- Provide detailed trip and revenue data on an ongoing basis.

The TLC is currently evaluating the applications it received from Lyft, Uber, and Via. Juno applied for a license

but has since ceased operating.

### **Flexible, Upfront Fare in Taxicabs**

On March 29, 2018 the TLC approved the two-year Flex Fare Pilot, which allows E-Hail licensees to dispatch yellow taxis using rates other than the metered fare. This Pilot Program allows the taxi industry to adopt the upfront pricing structures that exist in the For-Hire Vehicle industry. In the past this has been impossible to do, because in yellow taxis and green Street Hail Liveries the taximeter calculates a passenger fare based on a specific formula (determined by the trip's actual duration and distance, with the fare only finalized at the end of the trip). By contrast, many For-Hire Vehicle companies offer binding, upfront fares before the trip even begins, basing that upfront fare on an estimate of the trip's duration and distance. Those upfront fare quotes offered by the For-Hire Vehicle companies make it easier for passengers to compare prices between services.

Under this Pilot Program, participating TLC-licensed E-Hail app companies are permitted to offer upfront fares to taxicab and Street Hail Livery passengers. The pilot officially began on June 27, 2018, when the first company was approved for participation. The TLC has not seen widespread adoption of the pilot by the industry. Only two of the six approved companies have launched their flat fare service to the public and the pilot is scheduled to end on June 27, 2020. TLC strongly encourages more companies to participate in this opportunity to innovate new business approaches.

### **Technology Requirements in Taxicabs**

The TLC requires all Taxicabs and Street Hail Liveries to be equipped with technology that: (1) allows passengers to pay the fare using a credit card; (2) automatically records trips; (3) enables the TLC to communicate with drivers; and (4) provides a monitor in the back seat to display information and content to passengers. TLC updated the regulations regarding contracts between the technology providers and medallion owners in order to give medallion owners greater flexibility.

### **Taxi System Provider Rules**

These rules update and amend a previous rule package that was promulgated in May of 2018. That rule package updated in-vehicle technology requirements for yellow and green taxis. In August of 2019 those updates were improved upon by requiring that all available methods of payment be offered to passengers with a visual impairment and by providing greater clarity to the process of adding tolls and tips to the passenger's fare. The rules also lowered the maximum credit card processing fee that is paid by owner-drivers from 5.00% to 3.75%. Finally, the rule package gave taxicab fleet owners greater flexibility to switch between the Technology System Providers that provide the in-vehicle technology that fleet owners rely upon.

### **Taxi Vehicle Specification Rules**

This rule package, among other things, allows for greater vehicle choice for medallion owners and a broader selection of vehicles for passengers who use wheelchairs. These proposed rules would permit taxicab medallion owners who are required to, or choose to, hack-up with an accessible vehicle to use approved vehicle models in addition to the Nissan NV200 Taxi of Tomorrow.

## **Local Laws Affecting TLC Passed in 2019**

### ***Local Law 10***

- Requires TLC to survey medallion owners regarding the amount of outstanding medallion debt.

### ***Local Law 19***

- Establishes new procedural requirements for violations of New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission (TLC) laws or regulations adjudicated by the Office of Administrative Trials and Hearings (OATH).
  - Requires that a TLC representative be present at hearings, either in person or remotely, and that a respondent could appear remotely, through internet video. Allows OATH to reduce a violation, if it finds doing so be in the interests of justice, subject to a review by TLC. Requires that any duplicate notice of violation be automatically dismissed. Establishes hearing timeliness requirements to facilitate prompt adjudication of violations.

### ***Local Law 37***

- Amends the Administrative Code, in relation to enforcement of prohibitions against unauthorized commuter vans.
  - The bill clarified that for the purposes of enforcing prohibitions against unauthorized commuter van services, the definitions of “For-Hire Vehicle” and “commuter van” do not include a public bus service operating pursuant to a contract with the city, state or federal government.

### ***Local Law 41***

- Provides that commuter van license holders must not allow commuter vans to be operated by a driver without a commuter van driver’s license and establishes penalties for commuter van license holders and commuter van services that allow their vehicles to be operated by unlicensed drivers.
  - Requires commuter van service owners to have the same or more licensed drivers as registered vans. If the owner fails to produce sufficient proof, the TLC may suspend or revoke their authorization to operate the commuter van service or refuse to renew the authorization.

### ***Local Law 43***

- Requires rules regarding financial agreements drivers enter to obtain For-Hire vehicles.
  - Requires the TLC to promulgate rules regarding For-Hire Vehicle leasing, rental lease-to-own and conditional purchase arrangements. TLC is also required to consider mandatory disclosure requirements, consumer protection practices and setting caps on the amounts payable under these agreements, for example deposits.

### ***Local Law 137***

- Reduces the commercial motor vehicle tax imposed on medallion taxicabs from \$1000 to \$400 to be equal to the commercial motor vehicle tax imposed on all other For-Hire vehicles.

### ***Int. 1249-B-2018***

- Combines the TLC Critical Driver and Persistent Violator Programs under one title.
  - The legislation does not change TLC’s ability to suspend or revoke the TLC Driver License of drivers who accumulate too many TLC or Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) points for dangerous moving violations, and ensures TLC licensees understand their safety obligations as professional drivers.

## Agency Overview and Performance

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### **Budget and Headcount**

In Fiscal Year (FY) 2019, the TLC operated on a budget of \$49,317,576 (\$37,241,367 for Personal Services and \$12,076,209 for Other than Personal Services). The TLC had an authorized headcount of 618 for FY 2019. The FY 2020 budget is \$39,773,390 for Personal Services, and \$14,204,083 for Other than Personal Services, with an authorized headcount of 597.

### **Uniformed Services Bureau**

The Uniformed Services Bureau enforces TLC Rules and regulations for TLC licensed entities (owners, drivers, and businesses) by ensuring that illegal activity is addressed and that For-Hire-Vehicles are safe by administering stringent vehicle inspections as part of the renewal and application process. The bureau is comprised of the Enforcement Division and the Safety and Emissions Division. Supporting these Divisions are the Special Investigations Unit, Administration Unit and Training Unit.

### **Safety and Emissions Division**

To help improve air quality, all yellow taxi cabs, Street Hail Livery vehicles, and For-Hire Vehicles are required to have a Safety and Emissions inspection every four months. This Safety and Emissions inspection program helps make sure every vehicle registered meets the minimum standards for safe operation on public streets and highways. The inspections are performed on-site at TLC's inspection facility and off-site at Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) authorized inspection facilities. In 2019, the Safety and Emissions Division (S&E) performed 30,557 medallion DMV inspections, 80,677 For-Hire vehicle DMV inspections and 9,345 Street Hail Livery vehicle DMV inspections.

### **Enforcement Division**

The TLC's Enforcement Division continued its successful field operations pursuing Vision Zero initiatives through the use of LIDAR equipment, and collaborating with the New York Police Department (NYPD) through joint enforcement operations to address illegal and unlicensed drivers, including illegal commuter van operations. In 2019, TLC and NYPD conducted 148 joint operations to combat illegal For-Hire operators and reckless drivers. TLC Enforcement squads independently conducted 286 illegal commuter van enforcement operations yielding 4,366 summonses, 202 arrests and 74 vehicle seizures.

### **Investigation Unit and Base Enforcement**

The Uniform Services Bureau Enforcement Division Investigation Unit conducted Base inspections in 2019. These Base inspections, combined with field-based infractions, led to the issuance of 1,254 summonses in 2019, a -61% decrease over CY 2018. TLC also partners with the New York Police Department (NYPD) in response to vehicle collisions involving TLC-licensed vehicles where a person has died or is critically injured. In CY 2019 there were 33 incidents.

## Top Ten Field Enforcement Summonses in 2019 Issued by Location

NYC Administrative Code or TLC Rule Violation	LICENSE TYPE	Borough Precincts					Airports		Third Party (i.e. PAPD, NYPD)	Total
		Manhattan	Brooklyn	Bronx	Queens	Staten Island	JFK	LGA		
80-13(a)(3) Hazardous Violations - Vision Zero	UNIV <sup>1</sup>	4,690	2,252	140	2,602	165	21	58	369	10,297
80-13(a)(2) Moving Traffic Violations	UNIV	5,344	561	196	1,352	8	327	200	692	8,680
59a-25(a)(1) Passenger Trips by Pre-Arrangement Only	FHV <sup>2</sup>	2,017	375	2,056	1,058	0	338	365	0	6,209
80-14(g)(1) Use of Electronic Communication Device	UNIV	2,761	996	221	996	12	538	416	56	5,996
19-506(b)(1) Operating Unlicensed Vehicle	A.C. <sup>3</sup>	447	1,704	482	775	5	1,295	693	180	5,581
80-13(a)(1) Parking Violations	UNIV	587	213	34	659	37	314	109	1,639	3,592
80-24(a)(2) Required Items in For-Hire Vehicle	UNIV	982	518	236	541	17	579	363	204	3,440
80-19(c)(1) Limits on Driver Solicitation of Passengers in FHV	UNIV	776	143	809	284	0	196	189	1	2,398
19-507(a)(4) Mandatory penalties	A.C.	688	102	762	249	0	111	151	0	2,063

<sup>1</sup> UNIV: Universal TLC Driver's License

<sup>2</sup> FHV: For-Hire Vehicle License

<sup>3</sup> Administrative Code of the City of New York



**Field Enforcement resulted in the issuance of 58,228 summonses in 2019:**

TYPE OF SUMMONS	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total 2019
ILLEGAL STREET HAILS (DRIVER)	371	294	406	322	439	414	333	425	407	541	236	267	4,455
ILLEGAL STREET HAILS (OWNER)	498	405	540	439	605	587	479	612	593	724	336	398	6,216
GREEN-ILLEGAL STREET HAILS (DRIVER)	0	1	0	2	8	1	3	0	0	1	0	2	18
GREEN STREET HAILS (OWNER)	1	1	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	6
UNLICENSED DRIVER	289	274	316	324	342	304	279	321	330	373	265	312	3,729
OWNER UNLICENSED OPERATION	279	293	357	416	357	245	273	259	293	385	343	310	3,810
OTHER OFFENSES	4,215	3,574	3,625	3,235	3,319	3,436	3,293	2,718	2,630	3,175	3,076	3,698	39,994
<b>TOTAL SUMMONSES</b>	<b>5,653</b>	<b>4,842</b>	<b>5,244</b>	<b>4,740</b>	<b>5,070</b>	<b>4,988</b>	<b>4,660</b>	<b>4,335</b>	<b>4,253</b>	<b>5,199</b>	<b>4,256</b>	<b>4,988</b>	<b>58,228</b>

**Consumer Complaint Unit**

The Prosecution Division houses the Consumer Complaint Unit (CCU) which investigates complaints from the riding and general public and issues summonses when warranted. In 2019, the TLC received 29,345 complaints.

Month	Summonses issued	Actual Hearings	Settlements accepted	Defaults	Guilty Pleas	Guilty Pleas (Mail)
January	415	74	674	40	7	1
February	586	92	715	45	3	
March	424	100	1,242	49	5	1
April	644	98	1,216	55	1	
May	650	94	1,117	51	3	
June	790	117	1,492	62	5	2
July	749	147	970	78	4	
August	663	95	860	94	3	
September	482	111	698	78	5	
October	316	139	942	76	8	
November	396	101	794	75	7	
December	463	123	684	188	6	
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,578</b>	<b>1,291</b>	<b>11,404</b>	<b>891</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>4</b>

## Licensing Division

### *Processing Volumes and Wait Time*

- The Licensing Division processed over 180,000 Driver and Vehicle related transactions in Calendar Year (CY) 2019.
- The average wait time in the Long Island City facility was 27 minutes.

### **Self-Scheduling of Appointments**

The TLC instituted a self-scheduling appointment system for the filing of all vehicle transfer applications in addition to the currently available on-line self-scheduling options. It allows our clients to minimize wait times and provide the customer with scheduling flexibility as they can choose a date and time that best meets their schedule and availability. TLC will continue to look to enhance and improve its self-scheduling options so that customers have more freedom to choose the date and time that best suits their needs for when they need to visit one of our facilities. We are continuing our work to enhance the process and we hope to be able to include self-scheduling options for Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) and visual inspections at our facility in Woodside and visual inspections at the Staten Island office in calendar year 2020.

We also put three self-service Q-matic kiosks in our Long Island City facility. These self-service kiosks allow visitors to our facility to come directly onto the floor and self-select the reason and purpose they are here and receive a ticket immediately based upon their selection. We will also enhance the capability of the system next year by adding a check-in system to the process. Our customers will be able to check themselves in simply by scanning the bar code found in the confirmation email. Our hope is that it simplifies and speeds up the process of issuing the Q-matic ticket and moving the client forward in the application process.

### **License Improvement Initiatives**

- Applications for both a new TLC issued driver license or vehicle license continue to be processed completely on-line. The system is available seven days a week, twenty-four hours a day and Driver applicants can then arrange for their needed appointments with our partner vendors to complete the other application requirements (e.g., drug testing, fingerprinting, education and training) on dates and times convenient to them and with their choice of multiple convenient locations throughout the city. We are continually looking to improve upon the applicant and licensee experience and make the process more convenient and time efficient. We have recently made changes to the decals that are printed and affixed to a vehicle when it is licensed that will result in an end to the requirement for Vehicle owners to bring their vehicles to our Woodside facility for new decals when a Base Transfer application is completed here at our Long Island City facility. We are now moving forward with putting the entire Base Transfer application process on-line in the upcoming year. This will eliminate the requirement to process the physical application in Long Island City.
- TLC's Document Upload Portal or TLC UP (launched in June of 2017) is a quick, easy, and simple way for new driver and vehicle applicants to submit documents to the TLC that are needed to complete the licensure process. TLC UP gives the applicant an individualized portal through which they can upload documents, stay informed on the status of each of their submitted documents and easily see if a document has been accepted, rejected or is currently under review. In our continuing efforts to enhance TLC UP to provide more functionality for our clients we have:
  - recently added new functionality to TLC UP that allows renewing Driver and Vehicle licensees to manage the renewal process and document upload process entirely in TLC UP. They can cleanly and efficiently upload any document needed for the renewal of their license
  - been actively working on adding a full contact information update section to TLC UP that will allow a client to proactively make changes to their contact data in an accessible and easily manageable

manner.

- been working towards adding information pertaining to summons, suspensions and settlements to TLC UP. This functionality is expected to be live in early 2020 and will enhance the client experience and allow them to manage more of their license related actions on-line without having to physically come to Long Island City.
- The Business Unit continues its outreach efforts with their Base Orientation class for new and renewing Base License Applicants. The class is given by one of the Base Application Specialists in the Business Unit and covers the wide range of requirements associated with holding and managing a Base license. The class is available to renewing Base license holders as well as new applicants. The Business Unit also successfully worked with IT and Policy in setting up and formalizing the High Volume For-Hire Service (HVFHS) application and license structure for this new license class.
- Licensing continues to use email and text messaging as a mechanism to notify our applicants and licensees of needed requirements and/or upcoming events such as the need to take their annual drug test or as a reminder of an open application. Email confirmation in TLC UP was a key factor in improving that process. We will continue to look at additional ways that text messaging can be used to keep our customers aware of what is happening with their application or license so that the process is as transparent as possible.
- Licensing, working closely with the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles (NYS DMV), successfully opened a satellite DMV office at our Long Island City Facility in March 2018. The satellite office, staffed by TLC employees, handles all Yellow Taxi related transactions from registrations to plate issuances and surrenders as well as plate transfers and surrenders for For-Hire Vehicles. It has made the Yellow Taxi and For-Hire Vehicle plate transfer process easier and simpler for our clients and saves them an additional trip to a DMV office. The benefits are huge for the client as they can now complete an entire TLC vehicle transaction in one location and then walk out with their new plates in hand.
- License Snapshot, which launched in December of 2018, was modified in February of this year to improve navigation and the layout of client information. License snapshot allows all TLC licensees to see a real time view of their license the same way we see it internally. They can view open and closed summonses, settlement offers and suspensions as well as giving additional license specific information such as last and upcoming drug test dates, Base affiliations and Green Taxi affiliations for vehicles as well as a vehicles' current insurance and inspection information. It allows Yellow Taxi Agents to review the list of Yellow Taxis they manage, and Bases to review the Vehicles and Green Taxi permits that are affiliated to their Base and the current status of each. The view is individualized, unique and specific to the licensee logging in whether an individual Driver or Vehicle owner or a Business such as a Base or Yellow Taxi Agent.
- The launch of the new Vehicle Automated Inspection System provided Licensing with a new scheduling system that allows for better management and monitoring of the inspection scheduling process and a more robust communications process (clients are emailed their appointment confirmation form when they are scheduled and then receive two reminders prior to their upcoming appointment date). Enhancements to this scheduling component are on-going and may eventually allow all clients to self-schedule their own inspection appointments.
- Enhancements were made to our on-line application and payment portal (LARS) that allow a client a cleaner interface to the various fees that might be due on any license they have been issued by the

Agency. This new view pulls fees from various sources into a single view for a client so that they do not have to sign in and select each open item individually. They have a more robust interface that collapses fees owed on one license under the individual license number making it easier for a client to see everything that might be open and due on their license.

The License Application, Renewals and Summons (LARS) system was also successfully modified to allow for the on-line filing of Base affirmations and vehicle applications for vehicles that met the qualifications as a purely battery electric vehicle. This system enhancement allowed vehicle owners seeking to file an application for a battery electric vehicle to do so completely on-line without needing to make and appear for an in-person appointment in our Long Island City facility. The change integrated a vehicle identification check that easily identifies and confirms the fuel type of a vehicle which then allows the application process to proceed.

### **Call Center and Integrated Voice Response System (IVR)**

The Integrated Voice Response System (IVR) which allows any licensee or applicant to obtain the status of and basic information on, their license was recently enhanced and improved with some additional features to make information on summonses, stipulations and settlements easier to obtain. The enhancement, which went live at the end of December 2019, added a Prosecution skill group to the IVR that now not only provides more detailed information and instructions on how to manage summonses, suspensions or settlements but allows a client to directly connect with an attorney or member of the Prosecution Unit who can answer summons specific questions. It's a feature that will help alleviate a client needing to visit the facility to get summons and settlement information. Of the 369,666 calls answered and handled in CY2019, 123,508 calls (an average of 10,292 calls per month) were managed by the IVR alone and another 144,312 calls (an average of 12,026 calls per month) were handled directly by an Agent. Our average call handle time has remained consistent at approximately five minutes or less. We have continued to improve agents' ability to deliver quality customer service by enhancing training and quality assurance reviews. Call Center supervisors monitor and review calls monthly with agents to improve the agents' performance, and TLC's new Quality Assurance Unit also reviews calls and gives feedback to the Call Center. TLC continues to look for ways to enhance our level of customer communications to improve the client experience.