



Comments Received by the Department of  
Consumer and Worker Protection on

Proposed Rules related to Implementation of Local Laws 80 and  
98 of 2021



The Yemeni American Merchants Association (YAMA) is a grassroots nonprofit social service organization founded in 2017. Our mission is to educate and elevate Yemeni American merchants and their families through education, civil rights advocacy, business, and social service support. Based in Bay Ridge, Brooklyn, we seek to advance policies that support New York City’s estimated 6,000 Yemeni American bodega owners and their families.

We applaud the New York City Department of Consumer and Worker Protection for proposing to add and amend rules to implement Local Law 80 of 2021 (“LL 80”) and Local Law 98 of 2021 (“LL 98”). LL 80 provides civil penalty relief for small businesses from certain sanitation, health, transportation, consumer affairs, noise control and building violations. Meanwhile, LL 98 increases penalties for certain deceptive and unconscionable business practices prohibited under the Department’s consumer protection law.

Local laws regarding small businesses have been a concern for many of our merchants throughout the city. We support the proposal on Local law 80 to provide civil penalty reliefs for small businesses. However, we do not support the proposal on Local Law 98 to increase penalties. Small businesses are still recovering from the pandemic. Many are still paying off their loans and backed up rent. Increasing any form of penalties on small businesses will only increase the burden.

As an organization that represents thousands of Yemeni merchants across New York City, we are proud to say we are dedicated to educating, advocating, and elevating our community. Our members run bodegas that are cornerstones of their communities. Our members’ businesses and their essential workers have continued to operate during the pandemic to ensure community members have access to basic necessities.

Endless rules and regulations to limit the revenues of small businesses continue to push out local businesses. Our bodegas owners, like all small businesses, were hard hit by the COVID-19 pandemic as designated essential businesses. Business declined with the drop in customers, leading to the need to lay off clerks and to take out loans to stay afloat. Our members are currently facing competing costs as they have to pay back the loans, pay their rent, manage their payroll, and support their families. It is important to note that our merchants not only have



financial responsibilities here but also back home due to the ongoing war in Yemen and limiting their sources of revenue is a disservice to them and their families.

YAMA is proud to continue our advocacy efforts on behalf of small businesses during these challenging times. Now more than ever, we need our partners in government to work alongside our members to assure small businesses are given the necessary tools to keep their businesses open and operating. We believe that the proposal is a step in the wrong direction.

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Comments on DCWP's Proposal to add and amend rules to implement Local Law 80 of 2021 and Local Law 98 of 2021:

2-133 Application

- (a) Industrial Laundry Deliver Vehicle Information. "Any changes to the vehicle information that an applicant is required to submit...shall be submitted with an application for renewal of such license. IT IS ASSUMED THE DCWP DOES NOT WANT A RENEWAL APPLICATION SIMPLY BECAUSE A VEHICLE IS REPLACED; THEREFORE, PLEASE CHANGE THE WORDING. REMOVE "an" AND REPLACE IT WITH "the next."

2-134 General Provisions

- (a) Disclosures

- (1) "Each licensee"..... THE REQUIREMENTS UNDER 2-134 (a), (b), AND (c)

**SHOULD NOT APPLY** TO INDUSTRIAL LAUNDRIES OR INDUSTRIAL DELIVERY LICENSEES. BY DEFINITION, INDUSTRIAL LAUNDRIES AND INDUSTRIAL DELIVERY LICENSEES ARE SERVICING OTHER COMPANIES AND DO NOT DEAL DIRECTLY WITH THE GENERAL PUBLIC. THESE RULES WERE INTENDED TO PROTECT THE PUBLIC IN A RETAIL VENUE. SINCE THE "RETAIL LAUNDRY LICENSEES" NO LONGER EXISTS, IT RECOMMENDED THE DCWP SHOULD APPLY 2-134 (a) through (c) ONLY TO RETAIL LAUNDRIES.

2-136 Prohibited Conduct

- (a) "No licensee may transact for laundry service or laundry delivery service with an unlicensed retail laundry.... THERE ARE NO RETAIL LICENSEES.

6 RCNY 2-13(v)(1) “requiring a laundry to post....” THE WORD “retail” should be added before “laundry.”

(5) The following provisions of Title 6 of the Rules of the City of New York constitute the mandates for which the opportunity to cure a first-time violation is available:

THE OPPORTUNITY TO CURE A FIRST-TIME VIOLATION PROVIDED IMPORTANT MANDATES FOR RETAIL LAUNDRIES; HOWEVER, THERE WERE NO OPPORTUNITIES TO CURE FIRST-TIME VIOLATIONS FOR INDUSTRIAL LAUNDRIES OR INDUSTRIAL DELIVERY LICENSEES. CONSIDERING THE COMPLEXITIES AS WELL AS THE SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF RULES FOR THESE LICENSEES, THEY, TOO, SHOULD HAVE OPPORTUNITES TO CURE FIRST TIME VIOLATIONS SUCH AS PAPERWORK, SIGNS, VEHICLE IDENTIFICATION AND ALL OTHER NON-HEALTH RELATED REQUIRMENTS.