

Seattle Regulations

— part of a multi-departmental series on City services, permits and regulations

Transportation Network Company Endorsed Vehicle Information: Overview of Key Provisions for Operating in Seattle

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This information sheet gives a brief overview of key provisions that apply to operating a transportation network company (TNC) endorsed vehicle within the Seattle city limits. Please refer to Chapter 6.310 of the Seattle Municipal Code (SMC) at <http://bit.ly/seaforhirecode> for complete requirements. You may also find additional information on the City's administrative rules at <http://bit.ly/seadirectorsrules>. Finally, laws governing for-hire vehicle operation outside of the Seattle city limits can be found at <http://bit.ly/kcbusregcode>.

Driver requirements

- Must hold a valid for-hire driver's license (SMC 6.310.452.A).
- While active on the TNC dispatch system:
 - Shall not operate a vehicle that is unaffiliated with a TNC to transport passengers (SMC 6.310.452.C).
 - Shall possess a valid Washington state driver's license, a valid for-hire driver's license and documentation that they are affiliated with a licensed TNC (SMC 6.310.452.J).
 - Shall have evidence of vehicle insurance in their possession (SMC 6.310.452.D).
- Shall not be in control of a for-hire vehicle for more than 12 hours spread over a total of 15 hours in any 24-hour period (SMC 6.310.452.B).

- Shall maintain personal vehicle insurance (SMC 6.310.452.E).
 - Drivers are strongly encouraged to consult with their insurance carriers on how their personal vehicle policies cover TNC services.
- Shall not accept payment of cash fare; payment shall only be made electronically via the TNC's application dispatch system (SMC 6.310.452.G).
- Must pick up only customers dispatched through the application dispatch system (SMC 6.310.452.H).
- Shall permit the director to inspect the TNC endorsed vehicle upon request (SMC 6.310.452.K).
- Must obtain a City of Seattle business license; please see <http://bit.ly/seabuslicapp> for more information about how to apply for/renew a business license.
- Permit the TNC to submit, on the driver's behalf, the application for a for-hire driver's license.
 - The driver is not charged a fee for the license.
 - TNCs maintain information for drivers about obtaining a license.

Vehicle requirements

- Must be affiliated with a licensed TNC (6.310.325.B).
- Must be operated by a driver with a for-hire driver's license (SMC 6.310.325.C).
- Must hold valid vehicle insurance when not operating on the TNC app.
- Evidence of vehicle insurance as required by SMC 6.310.260 and RCW 46.72.050.
- Passed the uniform vehicle safety inspection as required by subsection 6.310.270.R (SMC 6.310.325.E).

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- The vehicle model year can be no more than 10 years prior to the license date (SMC 6.310.325.F).
- The TNC vehicle endorsement is not valid and effective until and unless the driver obtains a for-hire driver's license under this chapter (SMC 6.310.327.B).

TNC rates

- The application dispatch system rates shall be transparent to the rider before confirming the ride (SMC 6.310.530.C.1).
- The rate by distance and/or time is clearly displayed on the application upon requesting a ride but before confirming the ride (SMC 6.310.530.C.1).
- The cost of the ride is made clear to the passenger prior to confirming the ride through an alternative method deemed acceptable by the director (SMC 6.310.530.C.1).

Transportation network companies:

- Must hold a valid City license (SMC 6.310.130.D).
- Must provide passengers with a picture of the driver and a vehicle license plate number on their smartphones, tablets or other mobile devices used to connect with the application dispatch system before the trip is initiated (SMC 6.310.270.F).
- Must dispatch only licensed for-hire drivers (SMC 6.310.265.B5).
- Must dispatch only drivers operating TNC vehicles or licensed taxicabs or for-hire vehicles (SMC 6.310.265.B.6).
- Require affiliated vehicles to maintain the TNC's dress trade, if any, at all times while active on the application dispatch system (SMC 6.310.270.C).
- Must allow passengers to indicate whether they require a wheelchair-accessible vehicle and connect passengers to those services via a weblink, application or phone number.
- Must maintain required records for two years (SMC 6.310.540.A).
- Must submit required data on a quarterly basis to the director (SMC 6.310.540.C).

- Shall pay a per-trip fee for all trips originating in Seattle to cover the City's estimated enforcement and regulatory costs (SMC 6.310.150 and Director's Rule CPU-10-2016).
- Shall pay a per-trip fee for all trips originating in King County to cover the county's estimated enforcement and regulatory costs (King County Code 6.64.111 and 4A.750.100.C).
- Must collect and remit to the City's Wheelchair-Accessible Services (WAS) Fund a surcharge of 10 cents per trip originating within the Seattle city limits (SMC 6.310.175 and Director's Rule CPU-11-2016).

Penalties

- Unlicensed operation: \$513 first offense, criminal misdemeanor on the second offense in five years (SMC 6.310.600.A).
- Fines maybe assessed ranging from \$35 to \$1,000 for service, safety, conduct and operating violations (SMC 6.310).
- Suspension or revocation may occur for service, safety, conduct and operating violations (SMC 6.310).

Appeals process

- If issued a violation, suspension or revocation, the licensee may request a hearing within 10 days by contacting the City's Regulatory Compliance and Consumer Protection Division, located at 700 Fifth Ave., Floor 42, Suite 4200, Seattle, WA 98104. Instructions are on the reverse side of the notice of violation or license action.
- If issued a notice of infraction, the licensee must respond within 15 days from the date issued. Instructions will be on the reverse side of the notice of infraction. The Seattle Municipal Court handles payments or requests for hearings.

Questions?

If you have questions, contact our Regulatory Compliance and Consumer Protection division at consumerprotection@seattle.gov or 206-386-1267. Our office is open 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday.