

**ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUANCE:
TAXICAB DELIVERY DURING COVID-19
Series/Number: AI-2020-02
Approved April 4, 2020
Effective April 4, 2020**

I. BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The Department of For-Hire Vehicles (“Department”) is charged with the continuance, development, and improvement of the District’s public vehicle-for-hire industry, and with the overall regulation of for-hire vehicles. *See* D.C. Official Code §§ 50-301.07 and 50-301.13. Some of the consequences of the efforts to mitigate the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19) include fewer trips taken in taxicabs, suspended dine-in service at restaurants and bars, and an increase in carry-out and delivery orders from restaurants. As part of the COVID-19 Response Emergency Amendment Act of 2020, restaurants are allowed to sell close-contained alcohol with delivery and carry-out orders that include prepared food. There is an increased need for delivery of food due to recommended social distancing, deliberately increasing the physical space between people to avoid spreading illness. Additionally, pursuant to Mayor’s Orders 2020-053, Closure of Non-Essential Businesses and Prohibition on Large Gatherings During Public Health Emergency for the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19), and 2020-054, Stay at Home, respectively, taxis have been deemed essential transportation providers and food delivery has been deemed essential.

For these reasons, during the public health emergency due to COVID-19, the Department is: clarifying its interpretation of 31 DCMR § 815, specifically the meaning of “parcel” to authorize taxicabs to engage in prepared food delivery service; temporarily allowing taxicabs to prioritize delivery service; and specifying the charge for delivery service. Taxicab drivers are encouraged to use existing and newly enacted temporary pickup-drop-off zones (PUDOs).

II. AUTHORITY

D.C. Official Code § 50-301 *et seq.*; 31 DCMR §§ 801.7(c)(2)(C), 815, and 819.8; Mayor’s Order 2020-053; Mayor’s Order 2020-054.

III. PROCEDURES

During the declared public health emergency pursuant to section 5a of the District of Columbia Public Emergency Act of 1980, effective October 17, 2002 (D.C. Law 14-194; D.C. Official Code § 7-2304.0 1), and pursuant to 31 DCMR § 815, taxicab operators may engage in delivery service from commercial food delivery companies and may prioritize delivery services. When possible, delivery service should be limited to the front passenger seat, front passenger floor, or the use of the trunk.

Delivery services may be accomplished through direct registration with commercial food delivery companies by interested and qualified drivers.

Commercial Food Delivery Companies

DFHV is allowing taxicab drivers to use their taxi vehicles for food delivery through direct registration between taxicab drivers and commercial food delivery companies including, but not limited to, Grubhub, Postmates, Caviar, and DoorDash. To avoid complex regulatory and other implications associated with the for-hire industry, **taxicab drivers are only allowed to engage with commercial food delivery companies that operate exclusively as food delivery services.** Due to the public health emergency presented by COVID-19: a taxicab will not be considered available for hire when the driver is engaged in a prepared food delivery; a taxicab shall not transport passengers while carrying food for delivery; and each driver who undertakes to perform food pick-up and delivery service shall complete the delivery as soon as practicable. DFHV has no regulation or involvement with the establishment of these relationships and is only authorizing the use of taxi vehicles for this purpose during the pendency of the COVID-19 emergency. Likewise, DFHV cannot advocate on behalf of any taxicab driver who rents his vehicle or is otherwise affiliated with a taxi company. The fee for delivery service shall be established and paid by the commercial food delivery company and any division thereof is between individual taxicab driver and the respective commercial food delivery company.

Pickup-Dropoff Zones (PUDOs)

Taxicab drivers participating in delivery services are encouraged to use existing PUDOs for pick-ups and deliveries as well as the following newly enacted temporary Food Priority PUDOS:

Food Priority PUDOs

700 H Street NW	1500 7th Street NW
600 H Street NW	1200 9th Street NW
900 H Street NW	1300 14th Street NW
400 7th Street NW	1600 14th Street NW
900 17th Street NW	600 Pennsylvania Avenue SE
2000 Martin Luther King Avenue SE	500 8th Street SE
1300 Connecticut Avenue NW	4000 Minnesota Avenue SE
1500 Connecticut Avenue NW	600 H Street NE
2400 18th Street NW	3500 12th Street NE

1200 Wisconsin Avenue NW	2700 12th Street NE
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IV. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- **Does this A.I. from the D.C. Government now mean that taxicabs can deliver alcohol from liquor stores?**

No. This AI only allows taxicabs to engage in alcohol delivery consistent with COVID-19 Response Emergency Amendment Act of 2020, or more specifically, when it is a part of a restaurant’s prepared food order.

- **Can taxicab drivers transport alcohol that is included in restaurant orders?**

Yes, operators may transport alcoholic beverages in sealed containers, meaning the beverage’s top, cap, cork, seal, or tab must be intact, as long as it is included in a restaurant’s prepared food order. It is illegal to possess an alcoholic beverage in an open container in a vehicle. *See* D.C. Official Code § 25–1001(a)(2).

- **What commercial delivery services can taxicab driver participate in?**

The Department will not limit drivers from signing up with any company that operates exclusively as a food delivery service during the emergency period. **Drivers may apply to operate on platforms that exclusively offer delivery services** including but not limited to DoorDash, Grubhub, Caviar, Seamless, Delivery.com, and Postmates. This does not extend to platforms that also offer passenger transportation such as UberEats through Uber.

- **If I sign up with a commercial delivery platform, do I need to have my meter on when I deliver?**

No. Operators should turn their meter and dome light off when they are delivering food on a commercial food delivery service platform.

- **Can taxicab drivers accept passengers while performing delivery service?**


No. Due to the health concerns of transporting food, operators may not transport other passengers while carrying prepared food through a commercial food service delivery platform. However, while delivering a package from a grocery store that does not contain prepared food and the package or packages are housed in the vehicle’s trunk separate and apart from the passenger, drivers can engage in passenger transport.

- **Who pays the delivery fee for the taxicab driver?**

When operating on a commercial food delivery service platform, the operator is paid by that company he or she is working for.

SO ORDERED:

DEPARTMENT OF FOR-HIRE VEHICLES

By:  _____
DAVID DO
Director