

## DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA TAXICAB COMMISSION

### PANEL ON RATES AND RULES

#### **NOTICE OF EMERGENCY AND PROPOSED RULEMAKING**

The District of Columbia Taxicab Commission (“Commission”), by its Panel on Rates and Rules (Panel) pursuant to the authority set forth under §§8(b)(1)(A), 9(b) and 18(a) of the District of Columbia Taxicab Commission Establishment Act of 1985, effective March 25, 1986 (D.C. Law 6-97; D.C. Official Code §§50-307(b)(1)(A), 50-308(b), 50-317(a)), hereby gives notice of its emergency rulemaking action on Wednesday, December 14, 2005, to amend Chapter 8 of Title 31 of the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations (“DCMR”), governing taxicab service rates and charges. Through its emergency rulemaking action, the Commission voted to amend Appendix 8-2 (Taxicab Zone Map and Charges) by adding an averaged increase of twelve percent (12%) to each current zone fare charge. The effective date of this emergency rule is 12:01 am Monday, January 9, 2006 and the emergency rule will expire after one hundred and twenty (120) days after its adoption, or upon publication of a notice of final rulemaking in the *D.C. Register* which supersedes the emergency rules, whichever occurs first. The rate increase does not apply to interstate fares. The last taxicab rate increase was effective April 23, 2004. The Commission also gives notice of intent to take final rulemaking action to adopt the proposed rules in not less than thirty (30) days from the date of publication of this notice in the *D.C. Register*.

The Commission previously took emergency rulemaking action on September 9, 2005, by adding a fuel surcharge to taxicab fares that is due to expire on midnight Sunday, January 8, 2006. A public hearing was held on November 9, 2005, regarding the fuel surcharge. Due to comments received at the public hearing, the Commission decided that it should address whether emergency rules should be adopted to increase the rates and charges due to rising operating costs incurred by taxicab operators in the operation of their vehicles.

Thereafter, a panel was convened by the Interim Chairperson to determine whether a rate increase was warranted. Based upon the recommendations of the panel, the Commission adopted the instant emergency rulemaking action as an attempt to offset the rising operating costs incurred by taxicab operators to operate their taxicabs. The Commission found that taxicab operators may not be able to continue to meet their public service obligations to provide vital transportation service to the public and preserve the status quo. The increased costs of operating a taxicab may cause many taxicab operators to leave the industry or discontinue taxicab service because they may not earn a fair return on their investment. Also, taxicab operators may not be able to meet basic health and welfare needs for themselves or their families. The potential termination of taxicab service may affect senior citizens and persons with disabilities who rely on taxicab service for medical care, extended health services, physical therapy, social, and other supportive services.

The fares enacted by the Commission in April 2004 and the current taxicab fares which include the one dollar and fifty cent (\$1.50) fuel surcharge that will expire on midnight Sunday, January 8, 2006 along with the proposed fares are set out below:

<u>Number of Zones</u>	<u>Fares as of April 2004</u>	<u>Current Fares w/Fuel Surcharge</u>	<u>Proposed Fares</u>
1	\$5.50	\$7.00	\$6.50
2	\$7.60	\$9.10	\$8.80
3	\$9.50	\$11.00	\$11.00
4	\$11.40	\$12.90	\$12.60
5	\$12.80	\$14.30	\$14.00
6	\$14.10	\$15.60	\$15.50
7	\$16.20	\$17.70	\$17.80
8	\$17.20	\$18.70	\$18.90

The Panel also proposes to increase other taxicab rates and charges as shown in Appendix 8-2 by no longer charging for waiting time for the initial first three (3) minutes. Thereafter, passengers will be charged one dollar (\$1.00) for every two (2) minutes or any fraction thereof. It also proposed to no longer charge for a stop enroute for the initial first three (3) minutes. Thereafter, passengers will be charged one dollar (\$1.00) for every two (2) minutes or any fraction thereof. The following charges will remain the same: rush hour, additional passenger, dismissal of a taxicab, radio dispatch service, hourly rate, and charges related to bags and luggage.

All persons desiring to comment on the subject matter of this proposed rulemaking should file comments in writing not later than thirty (30) days from the date of publication of this notice in the D.C. Register. Comments should be filed with Kimberly A. Lewis, Attorney Advisor, District of Columbia Taxicab Commission, 2041 Martin Luther King, Jr., Avenue, S.E., Suite 204, Washington, D.C. 20020. Copies of the proposed rulemaking may be obtained by writing to the above address.