



NEW YORK CITY TAXI & LIMOUSINE COMMISSION

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TLC NEWS | PRESS RELEASES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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TAXI AND LIMOUSINE COMMISSION PROPOSES TAXI FARE ADJUSTMENT AND SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS

The New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission (TLC) will propose changing the taxicab rate of fare based on a review of industry fare increase petitions. The TLC is also considering several service enhancements and will hold public hearings in March 2004 on the fare increase issue and all proposed service improvements. If enacted, this would be the first fare increase in almost eight years. Currently, New York City has the 13th lowest taxicab fare of the 14 American cities with 1,300 or more taxicabs.

During mid-2003, fare increase petitions were filed by the Metropolitan Taxicab Board of Trade (MTBOT) and the New York Taxi Workers' Alliance (TWA). These petitions were reviewed and analyzed by TLC and Department of Transportation (DOT) staff, and shared with the TLC's Board of Commissioners. Based on this review, the TLC will propose a 26% fare increase to be distributed as follows:

	Present Fare	Proposed Fare
Initial Drop	\$2.00	\$2.50
Mileage Charge	\$.30 per 1/5 mile	\$.40 per 1/5 mile
Waiting Time	\$.30 per 90 seconds	\$.40 per 120 seconds
JFK Flat Fare to Manhattan	\$35.00	\$45.00
Newark Airport Surcharge	\$10.00	\$15.00
Night Surcharge (8 p.m. - 6 a.m. - 70 hours)	\$.50	None
Peak Hour Pricing (4 - 8 p.m. - 20 hours)	None	\$1.00

Under this proposal, a typical New York City taxicab ride consisting of approximately 2.6 miles with five minutes of waiting time would increase from \$6.85 to \$8.45 (\$9.45 during peak hours). This will increase driver earnings. For example, an owner-driver who completes 30 such trips during a shift would see an increase of revenue from \$205 to \$243, excluding tips, an increase of approximately \$3 per hour.

Under this proposal, passengers would pay no additional amount for waiting time on the meter. Peak Hour Pricing would be in effect for 20 hours each week, on weekdays only. The Night Surcharge, which is currently in effect seven days a week for a total of 70 hours, would be discontinued.

Along with a fare increase, the TLC is considering increasing customer service improvements that will utilize current technologies to bring the taxicab into the 21st Century, making taxicabs smarter, safer and more user -friendly.

The current 80-hour course, at a fee of \$325 including study materials and two examination sittings, will continue to be available at Master Cabbie Taxi Academy and HANAC N.Y.C. Taxi Academy for those who wish to take it.

The proposed service improvements include:

- **Credit/Debit Cards:** requiring all taxicabs accept debit and credit cards for payment;
- **Group Ride Stands:** authorizing the TLC to experiment with more group ride sites throughout the city, where taxicab riders going to common destinations would pay less and drivers would earn more per trip. For example, there is currently a successful group ride program that operates from the Upper East Side to Wall Street during weekday mornings.
- **Better Partitions:** requiring all taxicabs to be equipped with scratch free and resistant partitions, allowing passengers to more clearly see the driver's license and further enhance roadway visibility;
- **GPS Technology:** requiring the use of Global Positioning System (GPS) technology to be utilized for in-car mapping capabilities and automated data collection.

The TLC and DOT will explore various applications of GPS technology, including navigation equipment to enable drivers to more easily determine the most direct route to be traveled, as well as enabling passengers to visually track the taxicab's route on a map screen visible from the rear compartment.

"These improvements would enhance the taxi fleet's technological capabilities, passenger convenience and driver accountability," said TLC Commissioner and Chair Matthew W. Daus. "With some fine-tuning, we can bring the already high quality of taxicab service to the next level. We look forward to receiving public feedback on these proposals over the next several weeks."

"Taxi drivers need to earn a livable wage," said TLC Board Member Iris Weinshall. "An analysis conducted by TLC and DOT staff of the petitions suggest that an approximate 26% adjustment to the taxi rate of fare is appropriate and would restore an equity to the industry that had apparently been lacking for several years due to rising costs for maintenance and other expenses. We will also suggest that the evening surcharge be eliminated and shifted to the rush hour from 4 to 8 p.m. on weekdays in order to reach a better balance between supply and demand during these peak demand hours." Weinshall also acts as Commissioner of the NYC Department of Transportation and Special Advisor to the Mayor for Transportation Policy.

Proposed rule amendments relating to the rate of fare adjustment and service improvements will be posted on the agency's web site, www.nyc.gov/taxi and published in the City Record shortly, and will be discussed at a public hearing that will be scheduled during March 2004. If approved by the TLC's Board of Commissioners, these service improvements would begin to be phased into operation throughout and beyond 2004. The fare increase could become effective as early as April 2004.