

# VEHICLES FOR HIRE DRIVER'S MANUAL

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**VEHICLES FOR HIRE ADMINISTRATOR**

By regulation, the Administrator shall:

(a) consider staff's recommendations regarding suspension/revocation of Driver Permits and/or vehicle Permits:

(b) after consultation with the City Attorney, shall interpret the provisions of Chapter 55 of the City Code.

**VEHICLES FOR HIRE APPEAL BOARD**

By regulation, the Board shall:

(a) act as advisor to the Mayor and City Council on matters concerning the Vehicle-for-Hire industry and services;

(b) have the power to adopt rules and regulations to govern its operations and activities so long as such rules and regulations are consistent with Chapter 55.

(c) hear any appeals from an administrative decision or interpretations of the Vehicle-for Hire Administrator and Inspector(s).

**REQUIREMENTS FOR A VEHICLE DRIVER'S PERMIT  
TO OPERATE A TAXICAB OR VEHICLE FOR HIRE  
(CHAPTER 55.29)**

No person may operate a taxicab or a vehicle for hire without first obtaining a Vehicle Driver's Permit.

- A. An application for a Driver Permit shall be made to the Vehicles for Hire Section
- B. An application shall be submitted on a form approved by the Vehicle-for Hire Administrator in the applicant's own handwriting and shall be accompanied by:
  - 1. Receipt indicating that the fee as set forth by the City, has been paid
  - 2. Proof that the applicant currently holds a valid State of Florida driver's license
  - 3. Criminal history shall be secured through the Florida Department of Law Enforcement by an authorized agent
  - 4. Proof that the applicant is at least 18 years old
  - 5. Demonstration that the applicant is reasonably conversant in the English language

Under 55.29, the Vehicle's For Hire Administrator or his designee, shall issue a Vehicle Driver Permit to an applicant only if:

- A. The applicant has submitted a complete application as prescribed
- B. The applicant has not been convicted within the last five years of;
  - 1. Driving under the Influence of Drugs or alcohol,
  - 2. Vehicular manslaughter,
  - 3. Reckless Driving,
  - 4. Any crime which is designated as a felony,
  - 5. Any crime (felony or misdemeanor) involving the sale or possession of controlled substances as defined under Florida Statutes 893.03,

6. The Florida RICO Act,
  7. Exposure of the sexual organs and any crime defined under Chapter 796 of the Florida Statutes; or,
  8. Any crime defined as Prostitution under Chapter 796 of the Florida Statutes, or under Chapter 43 of the Code of the City of Orlando, including but not limited to , assignation or solicitation for prostitution.
- C. An expired Driver's Permit should be surrendered before a renewal permit will be issued.

**RENEWALS :**

- A. A Driver's Permit is valid for three (3) years from the date of issuance and shall expire automatically if an application for renewal is not received prior to the expiration date.
- B. An application to renew a Driver Permit shall be made to the Vehicle's For Hire Administrator or his designee, in the same manner as an original application.
- C. If at any time during the term of the Driver's Permit, the Vehicle's For Hire Section becomes aware that the driver no longer meets the requirements for a Driver's Permit, it will recommend revocation of such permit by the Board and will specify in writing to the applicant the reason for such revocation

**LOST/STOLEN DRIVER PERMITS**

If a driver permit is lost, the fee for a "Duplicate" driver permit shall be \$10.00. No fee will be charged where the driver produces documentation showing that the loss occurred during a robbery, vehicle theft, burglary, etc.

## **VEHICLE DRIVER OBLIGATIONS**

**Display of Permit.** Every Vehicle Driver shall have his/her Driver's Permit visibly displayed on the exterior of the driver's clothing or in such vehicle at all times when on duty and shall produce it upon demand of any passenger, the Vehicle-For-Hire Inspector(s) or City, County, State or GOAA representative. 55.30(2)

**Update Application Information.** If any of the information supplied by the Vehicle Driver in the application is no longer accurate, the Vehicle Driver shall then provide current and accurate information to the Vehicle For Hire Administrator or his designee within thirty (30) days of the date of change. The information filed with the Vehicles For Hire Administrator or his designee shall be assumed correct and exclusively relied upon as the correct address for all notices and enforcement proceedings herein. Failure to maintain the accuracy of the application information on file shall result in automatic suspension of said permit. 55.31(1)

**Taxicab Vehicle Driver Service Requirement.** No Taxicab Vehicle Driver shall refuse any request for transportation from any orderly passenger, where the destination of the trip is within the Tri-County area. 55.31(2)

**Refusal or Termination of Trip.** Notwithstanding the previous section, any Vehicle Driver, including a taxicab Vehicle Driver, may request or demand payment up front prior to commencement of a trip, and refuse to initiate such trip and may terminate a trip and /or may request payment if (i) the Vehicle Driver has reason to believe the passenger(s) may cause bodily injury to him/her or (ii) the passenger(s) become unruly, rowdy or cause physical damage to the vehicle or the Vehicle Driver. 55.31(3)

**Most Direct Route.** A taxicab driver shall use the most direct available route on all trips unless the passenger specifically requests to change the route. 55.31(4)

**Providing Change.** A driver shall be able to provide a reasonable amount of change, and, if correct change is not available, no additional charge will be made to the passenger in attempting to secure the change. 55.31(5)

**Receipt to be given upon demand, fare payment in advance.** If demanded by the passenger, the Vehicle Driver shall deliver to the person paying for the hiring of the same, at the time of such payment, a receipt therefor in legible writing, containing the trade name of the Vehicle Permit-holder, the company car number and the driver's name, showing upon such receipt all items for which a charge is made, the total amount paid and the date of payment. 55.31(6)

**Taxicab stands.** A taxicab driver who occupies a taxi stand shall occupy it at the end of the line and move into the first out position on the stand in an orderly single file. Once obtaining the first out or loading position he shall accept the first request for transportation as provided previously except that a driver shall not be obligated to accept trips terminating beyond the Tri-County (Orange, Seminole, and Osceola Counties) Area. Such City of Orlando taxicab stands shall be for exclusive use by City of Orlando permitted taxicabs. 55.31(7)

**Trip reports.** The Vehicle Driver shall keep a trip report which shall show the following minimum information for each trip:

- (a) Name of the Vehicle Permit-holder;
- (b) The company unit number of the vehicle;
- (c) The name of the Vehicle Driver;
- (d) The date and time of trip origin;
- (e) The origin and destination of the trip;
- (f) The fare charged or the voucher number for the trip; and,
- (g) The number of passengers transported on the trip;

Each such trip report shall be consecutively numbered and shall be recorded on a form approved by the Vehicles For Hire Administrator.

Each Vehicle Driver shall, on a daily basis, submit such trip reports to the Vehicle Permit-holder, except for Vehicle Drivers who lease the vehicle(s) from the Vehicle Permit-holder for a period longer than one day may submit the trip reports at the end of the lease period or weekly, whichever is shorter. All trip reports shall be at all times open to inspection by representatives of the City of Orlando.

55.31 (8)

**Unlawful Solicitation of Vehicle For Hire Services.**

- (a) Unlawful solicitation occurs when ever any person, without being authorized by the City of Orlando, or the Greater Orlando Aviation Authority, or without having made a Prior Agreement to provide Vehicle for Hire services to a specific patron, offers to engage in any business, trade or commercial transaction involving the rendering to another person of any Vehicle for Hire services. Unlawful solicitation occurs when a driver solicits passengers:
- i. From a location other than the driver's compartment or the immediate vicinity of his Taxicab or other Vehicle for Hire;
  - ii. In a way that annoys or obstructs the movement of a person, or follow any person for the purpose of unlawful soliciting;
  - iii. In a loud, boisterous or annoying manner of voice, or by sign, or in any other annoying manner; or
  - iv. By paying an employee of another business to solicit passengers for or give preferential treatment in directing passengers to the driver's Taxicab or other Vehicle for Hire.
- (b) No person shall unlawfully solicit Vehicle for Hire services at any airport operated by the Greater Orlando Aviation Authority, hotel, motel, bed and breakfast, restaurant, retail or wholesale facility, government facility or center, any entertainment facility or center, transportation facility or center, or any other location of public gathering. 55.31.(9)

**Driver Conduct**

A vehicle driver shall not use obscene or profane language, nor be abusive to passengers. 55.31(10)

## DRIVER DRESS CODE

Every Vehicle Permit-holder shall require that every Vehicle Driver:

(a) is hygienically clean, with his/her's body well groomed, neat, odor free and clean in appearance and the clothing clean and odor free; 55.10(a)

(b) if a beard or moustache is permitted by the Vehicle Permit Holder, ensure that it be well groomed and neatly trimmed at all times; 55.10(b)

(c) wear trousers or females may wear skirts or dresses providing that the hem is not more than two (2) inches above the top of the knee joint and is not strapless or halter type, a shirt with a collar and sleeves, shoes and socks and appropriate outer garments, and shall not wear T-shirts, underwear worn as outer garments, tank tops, body shirts, swim wear or bathing shorts, sweat suits, work out clothing, trunks or suits, or similar types of attire, or outer garments or footwear that are frayed, ragged, holed, open, except that females may wear open toe footwear providing that such footwear is high-heeled and is not clogs, thongs, shower shoes or sandals. 55.10(c)

## **Vehicle Safety and Equipment Standards**

Every Vehicle-For-Hire shall meet the following minimum safety and equipment standards under 55.09:

**Tires.** Tires shall be of the size appropriate for the Vehicle-For-Hire and with no mismatched tires. There shall be no cuts into the tire cord or sidewall area or localized worn spots that expose the ply. No tire is permitted with less than 2/32 inches remaining when measured in any two (2) grooves at three (3) equally spaced intervals around the circumference of the tire, or when the tire has tread wear indicators which indicate excessive wear.

55.09(1)

**Operational Horn.** The Vehicle-For-Hire shall be equipped with an operational horn with the actuating button mounted in the location designated by the vehicle manufacturer and operated in the manner designed and assembled by the vehicle manufacturer.

55.09(2)

**Windows.** The windshield, side and rear windows shall operate as designed and assembled with no breakage, cracks or pits that may impair visibility or hinder the safety of passengers. No windows on Vehicle-For-Hire shall be composed of, covered by, or treated with, any material which would cause the vehicle to be in violation of Section 316.295, Florida Statutes.

55.09(3)

**Doors.** All doors must have operating handles that allow opening from inside and outside. Handles, knobs and armrests are to be free of breaks and must be securely mounted. Door hinges and hold stops must function correctly. Door seals and gaskets must be intact and operating to seal water and odors from entering the passenger compartment from outside. All door panels must be intact to prevent accidental injuries on door and window mechanisms.

55.09(4)

### **Interior Condition.**

**General Condition.** All standard interior equipment shall be complete and intact, including, but not limited to interior lights, headliner, dashboard, head rests, window cranks, and gear shifts.

55.09 (5) (a)

**Seat condition.** Seat covers shall be permanently attached or fixed to all seats in the Vehicle-for-Hire and have no exposed wire or sharp edges either from metal or hardened vinyl. The

rear seat must be of a type, size and mounting approved by the vehicle manufacturer. No broken springs, sagging or horizontal slippage is allowable in any seat.

55.09(5) (b)

**Floor condition.** Floor covering material shall be secure and contain no rips or loose folds. The floorboard of the Vehicle-for-Hire shall be free of rust and holes.

55.09(5) (c)

**Loose objects.** No loose or moving objects or externally mounted speakers shall be placed on the deck behind the rear seat or on the front dashboard. No decorations or other objects will be permitted to hang from permanently mounted fixtures in a Vehicle-for-Hire.

55.09(5) (d)

**Seat Belts.** Each Vehicle-for-Hire shall have seat belts available for passengers in all seats except jump seats, spaces designed to accommodate wheelchairs or where the seat belts are not required by law. Seat belts shall be provided in operating condition and easily accessible by all passengers. For the purpose of this section, seat belts which are placed under the seat or between the lower and upper portions of the seat are deemed not easily accessible.

55.09(6)

**Windshield Wipers.** Each Vehicle-for-Hire shall have standard, operational windshield wipers for the entire front windshield which shall be controlled electronically or by vacuum and operated from the interior of the Vehicle-for-Hire. The wiper blades shall be in such a condition as to make firm contact with the windshield when operational, and shall not be torn or badly worn.

55.09(7)

**Brakes.** Each Vehicle-for-Hire shall contain an operational parking brake and a primary brake system which acts on all four (4) vehicle wheels. There shall be no visible leaks in the brake line, wheel cylinder or any part of the brake system and frayed cables. All primary brake systems shall demonstrate a reasonable total braking force when tested, using the "quick stop method" with the Vehicle-for-Hire operating at a speed of at least twenty (20) miles per hour. Brake linings and/or disc pads, when measured at the thinnest point shall not be less than one-sixteenth (1/16) an inch. Brake linings and/or pads shall also be firmly attached to the brake shoe and/or disc coupler. Disc brake rotors and brake drums shall be of a size and type of appropriate for the vehicle, with no cracks or other damage which change or impair the functional surface.

55.09(8)

**Headlights, turn signals, brake lights and tail lamps.** Every Vehicle-for-Hire shall be equipped with operational State of Florida-approved headlights, and turn indicating lamps or devices on the front and rear of the vehicle and a foot brake activated stop light on the rear of the vehicle. Each Vehicle-for-Hire shall also have a tail lamp so situated on the vehicles to illuminate the rear license plate with a white light and render it clearly legible. 55.09(9)

**Steering Mechanisms.** Steering mechanisms shall neither be worn or jammed, nor shall there be more than two (2) inches play to the left or right, measured at the steering wheel rim with the road wheels in a straight ahead position, on wheels up to eighteen (18) inches in diameter, or three (3) inches of play on wheels over eighteen (18) inches. 55.09(10)

**Exhaust Systems.** There shall be no leakage of exhaust gas at the manifold gasket, manifold and exhaust line gasket, muffler and muffler connections or at any other point in the exhaust system as determined through a visual and audible inspection. The tail pipe shall discharge exhaust from the rear and sides of the passenger and luggage compartment. No part of the exhaust system shall pass through or leak into the part of the Vehicle-for-Hire occupied by passengers, as determined by visual inspection. 55.09(11)

**Air Conditioning and Heating.** Every Vehicle-for-Hire shall be equipped with an adequately operating air conditioning, heating system and windshield defrost or defogging system, which controls the temperature of the interior of the vehicle between 68F to 78F. 55.09(12)

**Correction of Defects.** Every Vehicle-for-Hire Permit-Holder shall repair or replace any equipment, parts of the vehicle found to be worn out, defective or create a safety hazard by the vehicle inspection facility as a result of the inspection required in Section 55.21(b). 55.09(13)

**Taxicab Meters.** Every taxicab shall be equipped with mechanical or electronic devices commonly called "taxicab meter" or "meter" for registering the fare to be charged. Each taxicab meter shall be inspected, approved and sealed pursuant to Chapter 531 of Florida Statutes. 55.09(14)

**Location of Meter.** Every meter in use shall be Placed in the taxicab at a location that will be plainly visible at all times to the passengers of such taxicabs. Between the hours

of sunset and sunrise the dial of the meter shall be illuminated whenever the ignition of the vehicle is on. 55.09(14) (a)

**Operational Requirements.** Whenever a taxicab is not hired, the meter shall show no fare. When a taxicab is hired, the meter shall be in the calculating position. Upon the completion of the service by a taxicab, the meter shall be returned to the non-calculating position and its dial cleared. 55.09(14) (b)

**Duty of Taxicab Permit-holder.** It shall be the duty of the Taxicab Permit-holder to have the meter in good working condition and operating accurately as to the registration of mileage and fare. Such meters shall be sealed in a manner that will prevent any person from tampering with or changing the adjustment of the meter. 55.09(14) (c)

No other category of Vehicle-for-Hire shall be equipped, have installed, or possess within its interior, a taxicab meter or meter whether or not the meter is in operation.

**Posting of Consumer Signs.** It shall be the duty of the Vehicle Permit-holder to post the complaint/comment decal supplied by the city, on the lower left corner of the right rear door and the rate and/or surcharge sign as required by 55.17(2) (c). 55.09(15)

### **Child Restraint Devices**

Chapter 55 does not address this issue. However, Florida Statutes, Section 316.613 requires every operator of a motor vehicle transporting a child five (5) years of age or younger, to provide for the protection of the child by using a crash-tested, federally approved child restraint device. In Provision 2 of that section, the term "motor vehicle" is defined as NOT including a bus used for the transportation of persons for compensation. Chapter 316 defines "bus" as any motor vehicle designed for carrying more than ten passengers.

The City Attorney has determined that any taxicab or vehicle for hire driver can be cited for violation of FSS 316.613, if he or she is operating a ten passenger or less vehicle and transporting a child under five without providing such a device.

**ADMINISTRATIVE ENFORCEMENT-GENERAL**

Whenever there is reasonable cause to believe that a Vehicle Driver is violating or has violated the provisions of Chapter 55, the Vehicle-for-Hire Inspector(s) may initiate enforcement proceedings and request a public hearing before the Vehicles For Hire Administrator. The Vehicle Driver shall be advised in writing, of the date, time and place of such hearing, mailed to the address on file with staff, no later than fifteen (15) days prior to the date of the hearing. Failure to appear shall result in an automatic suspension of the particular Driver Permit. The Administrator shall conduct the hearing pursuant to 55.34 and 55.35. 55.33(1)

**SPECIFIC GROUNDS FOR SUSPENSION OF DRIVER'S PERMIT**

**Operation without public display of Driver's Permit.** If a Vehicle Driver who operates any Vehicle-For-Hire fails to visibly display his/her's Driver Permit on his/her outer garment or in such vehicle at all times when on duty.  
55.34(1) (a)

**Charging of rates inconsistent with established rates.** If a Vehicle Driver charges, receives, or obtains any fare from a passenger that is not strictly consistent with any rates and surcharges approved by the City. 55.34(1) (b)

**Charging of rates inconsistent with rates on file with the City.** If a Vehicle Driver charges, receives, or obtains any fare from a passenger that is not strictly consistent with any rates on file with the Vehicles for Hire Administrator.  
55.34(1) (c)

**Possession of prohibited electronic devices.** If a Vehicle Driver is in possession of or it is located within the interior of the vehicle, any electrical device such as radar detector/"fuzz buster", police two-way or similar scanners, or two-way radio frequency monitors. 55.34(1)d)

**Failure to possess printed schedules.** If a Vehicle Driver fails to have printed schedules of the current adopted rates and/or surcharges available at all times for inspection in all Vehicles-For-Hire. 55.34(1) (e)

**Driver trip reports.** If the Vehicle Driver fails to keep trip reports as required pursuant to 55.18. 55.34(1) (f)

**Operation of taxicab with meter in non-calculating position.** If a taxicab driver operates a taxicab with any passenger or occupant when the meter is in the non-calculating position, except when operating on an hourly or special trip rate. 55.34(1)(g)

**Tampering with taxicab meter.** If any taxicab driver tampers with or changes the adjustment of a meter. 55.34(1)(h)

**Operation of taxicab with inaccurate meter.** If the taxicab driver operates a taxicab with the knowledge that the meter does not accurately register the mileage and the rate as set by the Board. Evidence of the breaking of an official meter seal shall constitute prima facie evidence that a meter does not accurately register the mileage and rate required by City ordinance. 55.34(1)(i)

**Failure to produce driver permit.** If a Vehicle Driver operating any Vehicle-For-Hire fails to produce his/her Driver Permit upon demand of any passenger, the Vehicle For Hire Inspector(s) or Administrator, GOAA or law enforcement officer. 55.34(1)(j)

**Smoking by driver.** If a driver smokes a cigarette, cigar, pipe or other tobacco substance in the Vehicle while such vehicle is occupied by a passenger, unless the passenger(s) consents otherwise. 55.34(1)(k)

**Vehicle-For-Hire limited to driver and passengers.** If a Vehicle Driver allows or permits any person not a passenger, other than the driver him/herself, to occupy the Vehicle-For-Hire while it is hired. 55.34(1)(l)

**Hours of driving.** If a Vehicle Driver operates one or more Vehicles-For-Hire for more than twelve (12) hours within any twenty-four (24) hour period. 55.34(1)(m)

**Misleading passengers.** If a Vehicle Driver intentionally or knowingly misleads, by any act or word, a passenger or potential passenger about:

(1) the time or place of arrival or departure of a train, airplane, any vehicle-for-hire or bus; 55.34(1)(p)(i)

(2) the location of any building or place, or the distance between two points; 55.34(1)(p)(ii)

(3) information on the cost, availability or quality or

another Vehicle Permit-holder or Vehicle Driver. 55.34 (1) (p)  
**Unauthorized use of streets.** Except as provided in Chapter 55, if a Vehicle Driver allows the Vehicle-For-Hire to remain, park, or occupy any space on the streets for the transaction of business other than the picking up of passengers and letting out of passengers. 55.34(1) (q)

**Operation of permitted Vehicle-For-Hire for non-permitted service.** If any Vehicle Driver operates, or causes to operate, the permitted Vehicle-For-Hire in a category of vehicle service which is not the category authorized by the Vehicle Permit. 55.34(1) (r)

**Possession of sign.** If the Vehicle Driver violates Sec. 55.14(1) or (e) or 55.14.(3)9c) or (d) with the possession of an improper sign or top light. 55.34(1) (s)

**Failure to update application information on file with the city.** If a Vehicle Driver violates 55.31(1) by failing to provide the most current application information to the Vehicles-For-Hire Administrator. 55.34(1) (t)

**Taxicab stand misconduct.** If a Vehicle Driver violates any of the provisions of Sec.5531(5), regulating conduct of taxicab stands. 55.31(1) (u)

**Passenger receipts.** If a Vehicle Driver violates Sec. 55.31(6), regarding the issuance of receipts. 55.34(1) (v)

**Wrongful termination or refusal of trip.** If the Vehicle Driver wrongfully terminates or refuses a trip for any reason not listed in Sec. 55.31(3). 55.34(1) (w)

**Driver conduct.** If s Vehicle Driver uses obscene or profane language or is abusive to passengers. 55.34(1) (y)

**Unlawful Solicitation.** If the Vehicle Driver engages in the unlawful solicitation of passengers. 55.31(9).

**All provisions of Chapter 55.** If the Administrator determines that any violation of Chapter 55 has occurred, the Administrator may suspend any driver permit. 55.37

If the Administrator chooses to suspend a Driver's Permit, the Administrator shall set a time certain for the period of suspension. The suspended permit must be surrendered to staff and during the period of suspension the driver shall not operate any Vehicle-For-Hire. **The reinstatement fee for a suspended Driver's**

**Permit shall be one-hundred dollars (\$100.00).**

**GROUND FOR REVOCATION OF DRIVERS PERMIT**

**Multiple suspensions.** If a Vehicle Driver is suspended three or more times in one 365 day period, then the Drivers Permit shall be revoked. 55.34(2)(a)

**Altering of Drivers Permit.** If a Vehicle Driver willfully alters, defaces, obliterates or destroys any Drivers Permit issued herein, or causes the same to be defaced, obliterated or destroyed, then the Drivers Permit shall be revoked. 55.34(3)(b)

**Operation of Vehicle-For-Hire with suspended Drivers Permit.** If the Vehicle Driver who has had the Drivers Permit suspended operates a Vehicle-For-Hire, then the Drivers Permit shall be revoked. 55.34(3)(c)

**Driver convicted.** If any Vehicle Driver is convicted of any of the crimes listed in paragraph 55.29(4), then the Driver's Permit shall be revoked.

**Revocation of Drivers Permit.** If the Administrator chooses to revoke a Drivers Permit, the driver shall return the Drivers Permit to the Vehicle-For-Hire Administrator within five (5) working days of the date of revocation. Any such driver whose permit is revoked shall not be eligible to apply for a Drivers Permit for twelve (12) months from the date of revocation. After twelve (12) months, the former Vehicle Driver shall be required to re-apply as a new applicant in order to obtain any Drivers Permit issued herein. The former Vehicle Driver shall pay the full permit fee for a Drivers Permit.

**All provisions of Chapter 55.** If the Administrator determines that any violation of Chapter 55 has occurred, the Administrator may revoke any driver permit. 55.37

**Appeals.** If the Administrator chooses to suspend or revoke a Driver Permit, the Driver Permit Holder may appeal such action by filing notice of appeal with the Secretary of the Board within ten (10) days of the Administrator's decision. Failure to file such notice within the ten (10) day period shall operate as a bar for review. 55.04(6)