



City of Edmonton - Vehicle For Hire Summer 2023 Update



Edmonton

2023 Vehicle for Hire Bylaw Amendments

On June 13, 2023, Council approved amendments to the Vehicle for Hire Bylaw 17400. The highlights of the changes to the bylaw are:

1) A New Mandatory Training Requirement for all Vehicle for Hire Drivers

Training is now required for all Vehicle for Hire drivers. The City of Edmonton will develop training content requirements and will also develop the training program. The Vehicle for Hire industry will be responsible for delivering the training. Completion of training requirements will be a condition of new licences and licence renewals beginning in April 2025.

2) The Removal of Restrictions on the Size of International Symbol of Access

Size restrictions for the international symbol of access have been removed to allow for increasing the size of the decal to improve visibility to passengers.

3) An Update to Edmonton International Airport Zones

The zones and fares in the southern part of the City have been revised on the flat rate map to account for distance traveled to those zones. As well, a taxi zone rate table has been introduced to allow for more addressing detail on the map. Going forward, drivers will need to refer to the table for the taxi rate. The updated map is attached along with the taxi zone rate table.

4) An Update to Ride Refusal Reporting Requirements and Reasons for Refusal

The bylaw has been updated to clarify that a driver may refuse service if a deposit that has been requested is not provided by the passenger. Ride refusal reports are now required to be provided to The City of Edmonton within seven calendar days.

5. Motion for Insurance Advocacy

Mayor Amarjeet Sohi, on behalf of Edmonton City Council, has sent an advocacy letter to the Provincial Government regarding the impact of provincial insurance changes on the Taxi industry.

If you're interested in additional details regarding the most recent bylaw changes, or the discussions that took place at Council and Committee - the report and amendments to the bylaw can be viewed at the following [site](#). The Vehicle for Hire report was item 6.3 on the [June 13th agenda](#). The recording of the Council meeting can be viewed at this [link](#). Details can be viewed at the following time stamps:

- Introductory Remarks 1:22:08
- Councillor questions to Administration 1:23:17
- Councillor Wright's Motion to Advocate for Insurance Changes 1:41:12

Drivers Training Implementation

The Vehicle for Hire team has begun work on developing the driver training plan. This project will involve extensive discussions with all of Vehicle for Hire industry partners, and is expected to begin in September 2023. The Vehicle for Hire team will be reaching out to you to arrange engagement sessions. The goal is to finalize the training program for delivery to dispatchers by the second quarter of 2024.

Fare Review

The Vehicle for Hire team has begun a comprehensive review of fares and fees within the Bylaw. This body of work includes a review of the current fares, conducting research and a best practice review across the Vehicle for Hire Industry, the development of a new fare schedule, and the development of a new pricing model to be used for future and ongoing fare adjustments to the Bylaw. Industry stakeholder engagement is scheduled to begin in Q4 2023.

Letter of Advocacy: Taxi Insurance Legislative Amendments

The Mayor, on behalf of City Council, has sent a letter to the Provincial Minister of Finance regarding taxi insurance, advocating for:

- Legislative changes to exempt taxis from the direct compensation for property damage insurance model
- Approval of an alternative insurance policy option that provides coverage and benefits comparable to the S.P.F. No. 9 policy applicable to transportation network vehicles, as this industry is an extension of the public transportation system.

The letter will be posted on the Mayor's website at <https://www.mayorsohi.ca/advocacy>.

Service Animals in Vehicles for Hire

The City of Edmonton has received an increase in volume of complaints related to taxi ride refusals for customers with Service Dogs. We ask that you review the following information and work with your drivers where necessary:

What is a Service Animal?

There are two categories of Service Animals recognized in Alberta:

1. Service Dogs help people with specific tasks relating to visible and non-visible disabilities, such as epilepsy, PTSD, diabetes or mobility limitations.
2. Guide Dogs are specifically trained to assist people who are blind or visually impaired.

Service and Guide dogs are not pets - they require highly intensive standardized training.

Provincial Regulations and Direction

- By law, qualified service dogs have the right to access any location where the public is allowed - including Vehicles for Hire.
- The rights of all Albertans must be considered in a respectful and tolerant manner
- If other persons are present in a Vehicle for Hire who are allergic to dogs, afraid of dogs, or avoid them for religious reasons, the rights of both parties must be taken into account. A reasonable compromise should be found to accommodate both parties.
- A Vehicle for Hire driver who is unable to transport the person and the service dog should request another vehicle for hire from the dispatcher and ask that a priority response be provided to the customer.

The Province of Alberta regulates service dogs and guide dogs through the Service Dogs Act and the Blind Persons' Rights Act. Therapy dogs and emotional support dogs are not included in the legislation. Additional information can be found on the Province of Alberta's 'Service Dogs in Alberta' website at <https://rb.gy/abizeu>.

The City of Edmonton's Regulations

Section 12 of The City of Edmonton's Vehicle for Hire Bylaw states:

- (1) A person driving a vehicle for hire must not refuse a request for service from a potential passenger.
- (2) Notwithstanding subsection (1), a person driving a vehicle for hire may refuse a request for service from a potential passenger if, based on the circumstances, the person reasonably believes there is a danger to their personal safety or of serious damage to property or the service would contravene this bylaw.
- (3) The fact that a potential passenger is accompanied by an assistance animal cannot be used to support a reasonable belief as referred to in subsection (2).
- (4) If a request for service is refused pursuant to subsection (2), the person driving the vehicle for hire must:

- (a) immediately provide verbal notice of the refusal to the dispatcher that either arranged the refused request or is otherwise providing dispatch services to the vehicle for hire at the time of refusal
- (b) within 7 days of the refusal, provide a signed written report of the circumstances of the refusal to the City Manager.

Contact Information Displays in Vehicles

The Vehicle for Hire Enforcement Team has encountered an increased number of vehicles that do not comply with information display requirements. As a reminder, the dispatcher's name and contact information must be displayed in every vehicle. This can be on a mobile application, in the interior of the vehicle, or on the exterior of the vehicle.

We look forward to meeting with you in the coming months. Thank you again for your contributions to Edmonton's Vehicle for Hire service. Please feel free to reach out to our office at vehicleforhire@edmonton.ca or 780-442-5054 if you have any questions, concerns or suggestions.

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