

# **Vehicle for Hire**

## **Rules and Regulations**

**Updated: March 2021**

**Table of Contents:**

**Chapter 1.....General**

**Chapter 2.....Board Rules**

**Chapter 3.....Taxicab Rules**

**Chapter 4.....Livery Rules**

**Chapter 5.....Pedicab Rules**

**Chapter 6.....Wheelchair/Specialty Taxi Rules**

**Chapter 7.....VFH Driver Licenses Rules**

**Chapter 1**  
**Department of Public Safety**  
**General**  
**Rules and Regulations**

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**1.1 Code Review**

1. Any changes to the Columbus City Code- Vehicle for Hire section will be reviewed 1 year after the date of enactment by the Vehicle For Hire Board and a report will be submitted to the Public Safety Chair of Columbus City Council.

**1.2 Fees/Renewal dates- 587.04 Columbus City Code**

Annual license fees are determined by the Director of Public Safety. These fees are subject to review by Columbus City Council every five (5) years at the request of the Public Safety Chair. The Vehicle for Hire Board may make recommendations related to the fee structure with the Director of Public Safety having the final say.

Taxicab	\$225.00	October 31
Livery	\$225.00	October 31
Pedicab	\$50.00	June 30
Horse-Drawn Carriage	\$150.00	April 30
Micro Transit	\$150.00	June 30
Quadricycle	\$150.00	June 30

Approved: March 202

**Chapter 2**  
**Department of Public Safety**  
**Vehicle for Hire Board**  
**Rules and Regulations**

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**2.1 Powers of the Board**

The Board shall advise the License Section on the rules and regulations governing the inspection of all vehicles for hire and their appurtenances and any other matters that rise under and are reasonably consistent with Chapters 585 through 594. The Director retains all authority to approve and promulgate rules and regulations pursuant to Chapter 501.

**2.2 Board Members**

All board members will be appointed by the Director of Public Safety based upon contributions and interest in the Vehicle for Hire industry. There will be a minimum of 1 representative for each category, per Code. Other board members shall be appointed based upon their nexus to the Vehicle for Hire industry (ie; Airport, Experience Columbus, etc.). Board appointments will be for three (3) years from date of appointment. Each board member shall have one (1) vote per member.

**2.3 Attendance**

Board members are expected to attend monthly meetings, when scheduled. If a member is absent three (3) consecutive meetings in a row, they shall be immediately notified, and may be removed from the Board and filled with a replacement of the same category as they represented. A board member who no longer wishes to serve on the VFH Board may resign by notifying the Chair of the Vehicle for Hire Board in writing with no less than 30 days' notice.

Approved: March 2021

**Chapter 3**  
**Department of Public Safety**  
**Vehicle for Hire**  
**Taxicab Vehicle**  
**Rules and Regulations**

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**3.1 Taxicab Vehicle Age**

1. No Taxicab License shall be renewed for any vehicle older than ten (10) years old, as determined by the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN).
2. As of January 1, 2013, no new Taxicab License issuance or vehicle transfer shall be granted to any vehicle:
  - a. With over 200,000 miles.
  - b. Older than six (6) vehicle years, as determined by Vehicle Identification Number (VIN)
    1. Consideration of the age of the vehicle will be waived on a Vehicle to Vehicle transfer if the replacement vehicle is newer than the vehicle being replaced.
  - c. Titled with a mileage discrepancy.
  - d. Titled with a rebuilt salvage.

**3.2 Mechanical Inspections of Taxicabs**

All taxicabs shall be inspected annually by a certified garage. All mechanical inspections shall be valid for sixty (60) days prior to the required submission date. Certified garages/inspectors is defined as "Automotive Service Excellence" or higher.

**3.3 Advertising**

1. No passenger vehicle for hire shall display any advertising assemblies other than those outlined specifically by Rules and Regulations.
2. Each passenger vehicle for hire may display one advertising assembly. The advertising assembly may only be mounted on the top of the vehicle roof. All advertising

assemblies must be approved in advance by the Support Services Administrator prior to mounting on any passenger vehicle for hire. In reviewing advertising assemblies for approval, the Support Services Administrator shall approve only those advertising assemblies that:

- a) Do not obscure any required vehicle markings, including the color scheme.
- b) Do not add more than 18 inches to the overall height of the vehicle.
- c) Do not extend beyond the top of the front windshield or rear window.
- d) Are securely mounted to the top of the vehicle.
- e) Lighting cannot exceed 300 candle power.
- f) Do not present a safety issue to the riding public or driver.
- g) Do not interfere or alter the vehicles safety features.

### **3.4 Vehicle for Hire Standards**

#### **Seats:**

1. Seats must be firmly fixed and secure.
2. Seats must be clear of all materials, litter and debris.
3. No exposed wire or sharp edges either from metal or vinyl.
4. No broken springs, sagging or horizontal slippage are allowed.
5. Upholstery shall not have any visible stains or discoloration and free of offensive odors.
6. Upholstery must have no holes or tears on the seat surfaces or rear of front seats visible to rear passengers.
7. Seat covers must be permanently affixed to seat- no blankets or temporary coverings are permitted.
8. Seat belts and shoulder straps must have no visible damage and in good working condition.

#### **Floors:**

1. Covering materials will be secure and free of rips and folds.
2. Mats and carpet not have any visible stains or discoloration and free of offensive odors.
3. Floors will be clear and free of any objects.

#### **Other interior:**

1. No loose objects or externally mounted speakers on the rear seat deck.
2. No decorations or other objects, other than the city issued identification or a fragrance devise are permitted to hang from the mirror or other mounted fixtures.
3. Dashboards will be secure, undamaged with no loose objects.

4. Instrument cluster lights/ associated sounds must be visible, functioning and shall not indicate any safety problems with the vehicle.
5. Visors will be free of holes or tears, unstained and undamaged, with no taped repairs. Visors will match vehicle's interior as nearly as possible.
6. Headliner will be free of tears and will be secured to the ceiling- not sagging or loose.
7. Headrests will be unstained, damage free and functional.

**Body:**

1. Must shall only have minor imperfections- no major dents or other damage.
2. Must be free of rust, cracks, or other damage visible upon casual inspection. Any cited rust of damage must be repaired within 14 days of citation and re-inspected for compliance.
3. Paint must be in good condition showing no oxidation or chipping. Touch-up paint must match existing paint and blend smoothly.
4. Grilles may only have minor damage.
5. No torn, wrinkled, faded or missing lettering, striping or decals are permitted.
6. Four matching hubcaps are required.
7. No broken or cracked lights or lenses are allowed.
8. All moulding, mirrors and antennas must be securely attached and usable condition.
9. Bumpers must be properly attached and in good condition with no holes and free of unapproved stickers and decals.
10. Cruise lights must be securely attached, free of damage and tape and with no missing letters.

**Trunks:**

1. No flammable liquids or materials are permitted.
2. Trunk must be without major stains and odors, with some type of bottom lining.
3. Objects in trunk must be contained.
4. Trunk must have acceptable space for passenger luggage.
5. Trunk latch must be operable.

**Tires:**

1. Center tread must have a minimum tread of 2/32" and be free of all cuts or breaks- no bald spots.
2. Tires must be inflated to rated standards.

**Windows:**

1. No cracked or broken windows are permitted.
2. Windows must be without obstructions and transparent, without smudges.
3. Must be free of all stickers and deals except those recognized by the License Section.

4. Tinted windows must be in compliance with state law requirements.
5. All window switches and cranks must be operable.
6. Must be equipped with two front operable windshield wipers, non- streaking blades and functional windshield washing system.

**Doors:**

1. Inside and outside door locks and handles must be fully operational and intact.
2. Handles, knobs and armrest must be fully operational and intact.
3. Door panels must be without stains, odors and must be intact with no tears- they must match vehicle interior.
4. Door hinges and stops must function properly and securely.
5. Door seals and gaskets must be intact.

**Miscellaneous:**

1. Taxicab and Livery owners have 30 days to produce vehicle title, but must show proof of purchase prior to issuance of a license.
2. Peddling from the vehicle is prohibited.
3. Taxicab identification numbers may not be transferred to other vehicles currently licensed as taxicabs.
4. Vehicles must be equipped with an operable heater and air conditioner, which must be used when transporting passengers, if requested.

**3.5 Soiled Interior Fee**

In the event that a Vehicle for Hire vehicle licensed by the City of Columbus soiled with bodily fluids or solids by an inebriated passenger, up to a \$75 clean-up fee may be added to the trip fare.

Notice of this fee must be posted in a location inside the vehicle that is plainly visible to the passengers and the taxicab driver must verbally advise the inebriated passenger of such fee and point out the posted notice prior to the beginning of the fare.

**Exemptions:**

1. Children or sober drivers that are ill or become ill
2. Childbirth

**3.6 Inspections**

With the exception of Taxi and Livery Vehicles for Hire, inspections are conducted at the time of license renewal.



Taxi and Livery Vehicles for Hire inspections are scheduled by the Support Services Administrator each year based upon coordination with other city services. These will be scheduled yearly between the months of April and June.

### **3.7 Vehicle for Hire Driver Standards**

- Clothing must be clean, without stains, discoloration or odor and without profanity or sexually suggestive images.
- Driver must treat clients respectfully, and without using profanity or unprofessional language.

Approved: March 2021

**Chapter 4**  
**Department of Public Safety**  
**Vehicle for Hire**  
**Livery Vehicle**  
**Rules and Regulations**

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**4.1 Livery Vehicle Age**

1. No new Livery License shall be issued or transferred to any vehicle older than six (6) vehicle years, and/or over 200,000 miles. Once in service they will not be renewed for any vehicle over eight (8) years old. The vehicle year shall be determined by the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN).

2. As of January 1, 2013, no Livery owner's license for New Licensed Vehicles or Vehicle to Vehicle transfer shall be granted to any vehicle:

a) With over 200,000 miles.

1. Consideration of the age of the vehicle will be waived on a Vehicle to Vehicle transfer if the replacement vehicle is newer than the vehicle being replaced.

b) Titled with a mileage discrepancy.

c) Titled with a rebuilt salvage.

**Exemptions**

The vehicle age requirement shall not apply to the following:

1. Busses defined as motor vehicles designed for the carrying of fourteen (14) or more passengers and used for the transportation of persons for hire.
2. Classic vehicles older than twenty-five (25) vehicle years may petition the Vehicle for Hire Board for a license. Issuance shall be at the discretion of the Board.
3. Wheelchair accessible vans.
4. Stretch limousines which have under 350,000 miles and approval from the Support Services Administrator.

## **4.2 Vehicle for Hire Standards:**

### **Seats:**

1. Seats must be firmly fixed and secure.
2. Seats must be clear of all materials, litter and debris.
3. No exposed wire or sharp edges either from metal or vinyl.
4. No broken springs, sagging or horizontal slippage are allowed.
5. Upholstery must be without stains and free from offensive odors.
6. Upholstery must have no holes or tears on the seat surfaces or rear of front seats visible to rear passengers.
7. Seat covers must be permanently affixed to seat- no blankets or temporary coverings are permitted.
8. Seat belts and shoulder straps must be without stains, frays and must be operable.

### **Floors:**

1. Covering materials will be secure and free of rips and folds.
2. Mats and carpet must be without tears, stains and offensive odors.
3. Floors will be clear and free of any objects.

### **Other interior:**

1. No loose objects or externally mounted speakers on the rear seat deck.
2. No decorations or other objects, other than the city issued identification or a fragrance devise are permitted to hang from the mirror or other mounted fixtures.
3. Dashboards will be secure, without tears and stains with no loose objects.
4. Instrument cluster lights/ associated sounds must be visible, functioning and shall not indicate any safety problems with the vehicle.
5. Visors will be free of holes or tears, without stains, and with no taped repairs. Visors will match vehicle's interior as nearly as possible.
6. Headliner will be free of tears and will be secured to the ceiling- not sagging or loose.
7. Headrests will be without tears and stains and fully functional.

### **Body:**

1. Must shall only have minor imperfections- no major dents or other damage.
2. Must be free of rust, cracks, or other damage visible upon casual inspection. Any cited rust of damage must be repaired within 14 days of citation and re-inspected for compliance.
3. Paint must be in good condition showing no oxidation or chipping. Touch-up paint must match existing paint and blend smoothly.

4. Grilles may only have minor damage.
5. No torn, wrinkled, faded or missing lettering, striping or decals are permitted.
6. Four matching hubcaps are required.
7. No broken or cracked lights or lenses are allowed.
8. All moulding, mirrors and antennas must be securely attached and in good condition.
9. Bumpers must be properly attached and in good condition with no holes and free of unapproved stickers and decals.
10. Cruise lights must be securely attached, free of damage and tape and with no missing letters.

**Trunks:**

1. No flammable liquids or materials are permitted.
2. Trunk must be without major stains and odors, with some type of bottom lining.
3. Objects in trunk must be contained.
4. Trunk must have acceptable space for passenger luggage.
5. Trunk latch must be operable.

**Tires:**

1. Center tread must have a minimum tread of 2/32" and be free of all cuts or breaks- no bald spots.
2. Tires must be inflated to rated standards.

**Windows:**

1. No cracked or broken windows are permitted.
2. Windows must be without obstructions and transparent, without smudges.
3. Must be free of all stickers and seals except those recognized by the License Section.
4. Tinted windows must be in compliance with state law requirements.
5. All window switches and cranks must be operable.
6. Must be equipped with two front operable windshield wipers, non- streaking blades and functional windshield washing system.

**Doors:**

1. Inside and outside door locks and handles must be fully operational and intact.
2. Handles, knobs and armrest must be fully operational and intact.
3. Door panels must be without stains and intact with no tears- they must match vehicle interior.
4. Door hinges and stops must function properly and securely.
5. Door seals and gaskets must be intact.

**Miscellaneous:**

1. Taxicab and Livery owners have 30 days to produce vehicle title, but must show proof of purchase prior to issuance of a license.
2. Peddling from the vehicle is prohibited.
3. Taxicab identification numbers may not be transferred to other vehicles currently licensed as taxicabs.
4. Vehicles must be equipped with an operable heater and air conditioner, which must be used when transporting passengers, if requested.

#### **4.3 Livery Driver Standards**

- Clothing must be clean, without stains, discoloration or odor and without profanity or sexually suggestive images.
- Driver must treat clients respectfully, and without using profanity or unprofessional language.

#### **4.4 Soiled Interior Fee**

In the event that a Vehicle for Hire vehicle licensed by the City of Columbus soiled with bodily fluids or solids by an inebriated passenger, up to a \$75 clean-up fee may be added to the trip fare.

Notice of this fee must be posted in a location inside the vehicle that is plainly visible to the passengers and the taxicab driver must verbally advise the inebriated passenger of such fee and point out the posted notice prior to the beginning of the fare.

##### **Exemptions:**

1. Children or sober drivers that are ill or become ill
2. Childbirth

**Chapter 5**  
**Department of Public Safety**  
**Vehicle for Hire**  
**Pedicab Vehicle**  
**Rules and Regulations**

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**5.1 Pedicab Driver Standards**

- Clothing must be clean, without stains, discoloration or odor and without profanity or sexually suggestive images.
- Driver must treat clients respectfully, and without using profanity or unprofessional language.

**5.2 Pedicab Standards**

1. Identification of pedicabs, the name of the owner or the business (DBA) and the pedicab number must be placed on the top rear of the pedicab. The lettering shall comply with the required specifications in Columbus City Code 592.03.
2. No Vehicle for Hire which carries passengers shall display any advertising assemblies other than specifically state by Rules and Regulations.
  - a. The advertising assemblies or sign(s) shall not obscure any required pedicab markings, lighting or decals.
  - b. The advertising assemblies or sign(s) shall not interfere or alter the pedicab's safety features.
3. In reference to Columbus City Code 592.06- Protective Helmet- the required sign shall be no smaller than an 8" x 11" landscape orientation and the font shall be at least ¼" in size. The required sign shall be posted in the passenger area and the pedicab driver shall also advise the parent or guardian of the helmet requirement in CCC 2173.02(b) before the loading of any passengers.

Approved: March 2021

**Chapter 6**  
**Department of Public Safety**  
**Vehicle for Hire**  
**Wheelchair/Specialty Taxicabs**  
**Rules and Regulations**

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**6.1 License Requirements**

1. All owner applicants for a license to operate a Vehicle for Hire defined as a Wheelchair/Specialty Taxicab shall submit an Ohio Medical Transportation Board or successor agency Ambulette license and shall provide adequate documentation that the vehicle and each driver has met the training and qualifications required by the Ohio Administrative Code Chapter 4766-3 or successor agency at the time of application to the License Section.
2. Owners/Operators of such taxicabs shall provide 24/7 dispatch service to the riding public.
3. Owners/Operators of such taxicabs shall provide priority service to passengers requesting Wheelchair/Specialty taxicab service.

**6.2 Vehicle Requirements**

1. No Wheelchair/Specialty Taxicab License will be issued to any vehicle:
  - a. That is older than 6 years as determined by the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN).
  - b. With over 200,000 miles.
  - c. Vehicle titles with Mileage Discrepancy.
  - d. Vehicle titled as Rebuilt Salvage.
2. All owners of taxicabs licensed as Wheelchair/Specialty Taxicabs and drivers of such taxicabs shall comply with all existing Columbus City Codes and Vehicle for Hire Rules and Regulations pertaining to taxicab owners/taxicab drivers.

3. All taxicabs licensed as Wheelchair/Specialty Taxicabs shall be required to accept debit/credit cards as fare payment and shall maintain the appropriate device for processing such payments within the taxicab.
  - a. The credit card transaction device must be accessible to the passenger at the time of the transaction.
4. Owners/Operators must submit trip sheets upon demand to the License Section at any time as ordered by the License Section.
5. Wheelchair/Specialty Taxicab License shall not be transferable.
6. The owner of the Wheelchair/Specialty License shall notify the License Section immediately upon expiration of the Ambulette license and of any suspension, revocation, or investigation by the Ohio Medical Transportation Board or successor agency.

### **6.3 Inspections**

With the exception of Taxi and Livery Vehicles for Hire, inspections are conducted at the time of license renewal.

Taxi and Livery Vehicles for Hire inspections are scheduled by the Support Services Administrator each year based upon coordination with other city services. These will be scheduled yearly between the months of April and June.

Approved: March 2021



**Chapter 7**  
**Department of Public Safety**  
**Vehicle for Hire**  
**VFH Driver's Licenses**  
**Rules and Regulations**

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**7.1 License Fees and Expirations**

VFH Driver	\$35.00	Final day of the month 12 months from issuance
Required ID License Badge	\$5.00	N/A

**7.2 Qualifications for the Professional VFH Driver's License**

1. Five (5) years as a licensed City of Columbus VFH driver.
2. Successful completions of the CTA (the Greater Columbus Tourism Ambassador Program) training class.
3. Must not be in 6 point warning status on your Bureau of Motor Vehicles abstract at any time while holding this designation.
4. No unresolved complaints with the City of Columbus.

**7.3 Professional VFH license is a three (3) year license, but to maintain the license, the holder must within sixty (60) days of the yearly anniversary of the issuance of the license:**

1. Present their BMV Driver's Abstract (not over 30 days old) to the License Section.
2. Complete their BCI background check at the License Section Office or any other authorized BCI Webcheck outlet.
3. Present proof of their CTA renewal completion to the License Section.

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