



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
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MAYOR EMANUEL ANNOUNCES THAT TAXI ORDINANCE BRINGS HUGE IMPROVEMENTS TO CHICAGO'S TAXI INDUSTRY

*416 percent increase in fuel efficient vehicles just one year after passage;
Number of wheelchair accessible vehicles doubles;
Taxi ordinance meets Mayor Emanuel's goals with newer, cleaner, safer and more accessible cabs in Chicago.*

Today, Mayor Rahm Emanuel announced that the taxi ordinance passed by the City Council in January of 2012 has had wide reaching and positive effects on the entire taxi industry. The ordinance was crafted to support Mayor Emanuel's objectives to create a taxi industry in Chicago that is cleaner, safer and more accessible. The ordinance provides incentives for taxi medallion owners to improve the quality and accessibility of the fleet as well as increased responsibility in assuring safe drivers. The ordinance also provides several protections and benefits for drivers.

"We revamped the taxi ordinance to improve the industry for all of Chicago and the results are plain to see on the streets today," said Mayor Emanuel. "We have newer, more efficient taxis and more wheelchair accessible taxis to better serve Chicago's disabled and aged community. And, most importantly, with increased safety protocols we are making streets safer for drivers, passengers, pedestrians, and cyclists."

To promote the purchase of cleaner and more accessible taxis by medallion owners, the ordinance provides a longer vehicle life for fuel efficient and wheelchair accessible vehicles

put in to service. Since ordinance passage, the City has seen a 416 percent increase in fuel efficient and alternative fuel vehicles in the fleet. There are approximately 3500 fuel efficient or alternative fuel vehicles in the current Chicago taxi fleet, about 50 percent.

The number of wheelchair accessible vehicles (WAVs) in service has increased by 90 percent, from 92 to 173 WAVs serving Chicago's disabled and aged community. Because of the incentives built into the ordinance, the City expects the number of green and accessible taxis to continue to grow.

To improve public safety, the new ordinance holds medallion owners liable for leasing cabs to unsafe drivers. The Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP) publishes a regular list of suspended, denied and revoked drivers and makes available to lessors a list of drivers with 2 or more violations within the past 24 months. Leasing to a driver with 3 or more violations can result in liability and a fine for the medallion owner. The ordinance provides several protective clauses for drivers based on past complaints including: a uniform lease to protect drivers from lease overcharges, easier access for payouts, refunds on defective equipment rental, and a non-retaliation clause for drivers who register their complaints.

"We are proud of the improvements made possible by the Mayor's taxi ordinance. We will continue our work to make Chicago the safest, greenest and most accessible taxi industry in the nation," said BACP Commissioner Rosemary Krimbel,

The ordinance also provides a free medallion award each year to taxicab drivers who serve the disabled community by driving wheelchair accessible vehicles (WAVs). The average price of a Chicago taxi medallion is \$320,000.

This morning, Mayor Emanuel will present Imran Mirza, a 12 year taxi veteran, the 2012 Taxicab Driver Excellence Award. Mr. Mirza received 73 nominations from his customers and was chosen for the award by a panel lead by Commissioner Karen Tamley from the Mayor's Office of People with Disabilities (MOPD).

"In dedicating his career to drive a wheelchair accessible taxicab, Mr. Mirza provides not just a service but his work gives members of the disabled community the freedom that they deserve to comfortably travel the streets of the City of Chicago. I hope to see more drivers follow his exemplary lead," said MOPD Commissioner Karen Tamley.

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