



**Seattle**



**King County**

<p>Department: <b>City of Seattle Department of Finance and Administrative Services</b></p>	<p>Rule No: FOR-HIRE TRANSPORTATION- 07-2024</p>	<p>Supersedes: Clerk File 322141</p>
<p>Subject: Taximeters and Smart Taximeters</p>	<p>Code and Section Reference(s): SMC 6.311.160, .260.A, .310, .340, .360, .380  SMC 6.311.470 (rulemaking authority)</p>	
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<p><b>King County / Department of Executive Services</b>  <b>Document Code No.:</b> FHT-8-2024-PR  <b>Repeals:</b> LIC-8-4-PR  <b>Title:</b> Taximeters and Smart Taximeters  <b>Effective Date:</b>  <b>Authorities:</b> KCC 6.65.160, .260.A, .310, .340, .360, and .380; KCC 6.65.470 (rulemaking authority)  <b>Keywords:</b> Taxicab, Taxi, Taximeter, Meter, Smart Taximeter, Weights and Measures, Application Dispatch System, ADS  <b>Sponsoring Agency:</b> Records and Licensing Services Division (RALS)</p> <p>Director signature: <i>Lorraine Patterson-Harris</i>  <small>8FG3E76CE8FD408...</small>          _____</p> <p>Date signed: 6/24/2024          _____</p>		

## City of Seattle and King County For-Hire Transportation Rules

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### City of Seattle Director’s Rule FOR-HIRE TRANSPORTATION-07-2024 and King County Public Rule FHT-8-2024-PR – Taximeters and Smart Taximeters

Pursuant to an interlocal agreement, the City of Seattle and King County work cooperatively to regulate for-hire passenger transportation. The following Rule supersedes City of Seattle Clerk File 322141 and King County Public Rule LIC-8-4-PR.

- I. **Purpose.** This Rule provides guidance for the testing and approval of taximeters, smart taximeters, and an application dispatch system (ADS) when it is part of a smart taximeter system. A taximeter or smart taximeter shall meter a trip using either an on-board diagnostic (OBD) connection or a global positioning system (GPS) connection or some combination of the two.

City of Seattle and King County rules on an ADS, which specify requirements for system approval and use, and rates and fares, which establishes permitted variations from regional taximeter rates, shall complement this Rule.

- II. **Definitions.** When used in this Rule, the following term(s) are defined as follows:
1. “Application Dispatch System” and “ADS” means technology that allows consumers, via the internet using devices such as, but not limited to, smartphone and tablet applications, either or both, to:
    1. Directly request dispatch of regional for-hire drivers for trips; and
    2. Accept payments for those trips.
  2. “Director” means for King County, the manager of King County’s Records and Licensing Services Division or designee, and means for the City of Seattle, the Director of Finance and Administrative Services or designee.
  3. “Smart Taximeter” means a system of hardware and software that integrates a taximeter and other components together to perform functions required by SMC chapter 6.311 and KCC chapter 6.65.
  4. “Smart Taximeter System” means the system a regional dispatch agency uses to dispatch trips to, communicate with, and track the location of, affiliated vehicles and drivers through the smart taximeter. A smart taximeter system may include an application dispatch system.
  5. “Taximeter” means any instrument or device by which the fare for a trip provided in a taxicab is measured or calculated either for the distance traveled by the taxicab or for waiting time, or for both, and upon which such calculated charges shall be indicated by means of figures.
- III. **Requirements.** In addition to the testing and approval process, all references to taximeters in Seattle Municipal Code (SMC) Chapter 6.311 and King County Code (KCC) Chapter 6.65 shall apply with equal force regardless of taximeter type.

#### *Analog or Digital Taximeters Not Part of a Smart Taximeter System*

1. An analog or digital taximeter shall pass a test at least once per year. Additional tests shall be required if:
  - a. The taximeter’s security seal is broken,
  - b. The taxicab owner is replacing the vehicle,

- c. The taxicab owner is changing the taximeter equipment,
- d. The taxicab owner is changing affiliation from one transitional regional dispatch agency (TRDA) or regional dispatch agency (RDA) to another, or
- e. The Director requires confirmation that the taximeter is functioning properly (e.g., is accurate or can produce an audit trail).

The Director reserves the right to change the frequency of testing at any time. No taximeter test shall occur during the change of vehicle process until the vehicle has passed its annual safety inspection as required by SMC and KCC.

- 2. Testing of an analog or digital taximeter shall be performed following procedures contained in the most recent version of Handbook 44 Specifications, Tolerances, and Other Technical Requirements for Weighing and Measuring Devices, as amended, published by the National Institute for Standards and Technology (NIST).
- 3. An analog or digital taximeter must have a Certificate of Conformance issued by the National Conference on Weights and Measures (NCWM) proving compliance with the National Type Evaluation Program (NTEP).
- 4. An analog or digital taximeter shall be configured to meet the following requirements:
  - a. Automatically print a receipt;
  - b. May automatically transmit a receipt via email or text message when the passenger provides information to receive the receipt in that medium;
  - c. Be disabled when there is no receipt paper, the system has lost the capability to issue an electronic receipt via email or text message, or the top light turns off when the taximeter is off;
  - d. Have statistical functions protected by a password issued by the Director to each taximeter technician; and
  - e. Activate the top light when in use as follows: the top light turns on when the taximeter is on but not operating on a trip, top light turns off when a trip is initiated, and top light turns on when the taximeter is cleared at the end of a trip.

*Taximeters Part of a Smart Taximeter System*

- 5. A taximeter that is part of a smart taximeter system and has either a GPS connection or an OBD/GPS combination connection shall pass a test at least once per year. Additional tests shall be required if:
  - a. The taximeter's digital security seal, or similar, is broken,
  - b. The taxicab owner is replacing the vehicle,
  - c. The taxicab owner is changing the taximeter equipment,
  - d. The taxicab owner is changing affiliation from one RDA to another, or
  - e. The Director requires confirmation that the taximeter is functioning properly (e.g., is accurate or can produce an audit trail).

The Director reserves the right to change the frequency of testing at any time. No taximeter test shall occur during the change of vehicle process until the vehicle has passed its annual safety inspection as required by SMC and KCC.

- 6. Testing of a taximeter that is part of a smart taximeter system shall be performed based on the most recent version of Handbook 44 Specifications, Tolerances, and Other Technical

Requirements for Weighing and Measuring Devices, and a checklist developed by the Director.

The checklist shall cover taximeter drop; mileage; wait time; additional charges; rate variations and transparency; displaying of rate or rates by amount and type (e.g., ADS, flat, etc.); receipt issuance and audit trail/event logger; and security/user authentication. Testing shall occur prior to implementing a new smart taximeter system or if the RDA changes the vendor of its smart taximeter system.

7. The Director shall from time to time require individual taxicabs to undergo a compliance inspection of the installed taximeter that is part of a smart taximeter system. The inspection shall cover the taximeter's overall operability, accuracy when based on time or distance, fare and rate transparency, programmed regional taximeter rates and other alternative fares, and software version, among other items.
8. The Director shall develop and use a checklist to ensure the RDA's smart taximeter system complies with SMC 6.311.340.A.8 and KCC 6.65.340.A.8. As a condition of issuing an RDA license, the RDA's smart taximeter system must pass all elements of the checklist.
9. A taximeter that is part of a smart taximeter system and has either a GPS connection or an OBD/GPS combination connection must have a Certificate of Conformance issued by the NCWM no later than March 31, 2026.
10. A taximeter that is part of a smart taximeter system shall be configured to meet the following requirements:
  - a. Automatically print a receipt;
  - b. May automatically transmit a receipt via email or text message when the passenger provides information to receive the receipt in that medium;
  - c. Be disabled when there is no receipt paper or the system has lost the capability to issue an electronic receipt via email or text message;
  - d. Display the trip fare by the rate type applicable to the trip (e.g., ADS, flat, etc.);
  - e. Have security features to protect trip and customer payment data;
  - f. Restrict the programming of rates and fares to the system's vendor and/or RDA; and
  - g. Activate the top light when in use as follows: the top light turns on when the taximeter is on but not operating on a trip, top light turns off when a trip is initiated, and top light turns on when the taximeter is cleared at the end of a trip.
11. Any RDA using a smart taximeter system may vary its fares from the regional taximeter rates consistent with SMC 6.311.380 and KCC 6.65.380. Before doing so, the RDA must demonstrate to the Director, consistent with applicable City of Seattle and King County rules, how the fare presented is transparent to the passenger before the passenger confirms the trip. Variations from established regional taximeter rates must be configured into the smart taximeter system, which only the smart taximeter system's vendor and/or the RDA may program.
12. After March 31, 2026, only taximeters that are part of a smart taximeter system shall be used.

13. After March 31, 2026, unless a later date is approved by the Director, a smart taximeter system shall incorporate the use of for-hire transportation data standards, including the Mobility Data Specification (MDS) and the General On-Demand Feed Specification (GOFS).<sup>1</sup>

*General*

14. A taximeter test shall be scheduled by appointment only unless the Director conducts testing as part of field enforcement.
15. The Director shall consider a taximeter, regardless of type, to not be functioning properly unless it has receipt paper and automatically prints a receipt, or it has the capability to send a receipt via email or text message, at the conclusion of a trip. Any receipt, regardless of its medium or delivery method, must include the following information:
  - a. TRDA or RDA name (current),
  - b. Medallion number,
  - c. Date,
  - d. Start time of trip,
  - e. End time of trip,
  - f. Distance traveled,
  - g. Fare,
  - h. Any additional charges (e.g., additional passenger charge, tolls, temporary fuel surcharge, technology fee, convenience fee, etc.),
  - i. Total fare, and
  - j. Taxicab passenger hotline telephone number (206) 296-8294.
16. Any TRDA or RDA seeking approval from the Director to change the vendor of its taximeter or smart taximeter system to either add to or replace existing technology must submit an outreach and implementation plan to the Director. The plan shall address how the TRDA or RDA intends to communicate the change to its affiliated owners and drivers and to minimize technical issues during the new system's initial phase.

- IV. Implementation.** Unless specified otherwise in this Rule, these requirements take effect immediately after the Director files this Rule with the Seattle City Clerk and with the King County Archives, Records Management, and Mail Services Section (ARMMS).
- V. Rule Maintenance.** The Director shall periodically consult with industry stakeholders, including vehicle owners and drivers and TRDA or RDA representatives, on taximeter testing and the prevalence of using a smart taximeter system to vary fares other than the regional taximeter rates established by SMC or KCC. From this consultation, the Director shall determine the necessity of any changes to this Rule.
- VI. Rule Enforcement.** The Director shall follow the process outlined herein, as well as the process outlined in a separate rule on an ADS, to verify the compliance of taximeters and smart taximeter systems. The Director shall investigate any passenger complaints about lack of price transparency or other issues concerning taximeter or smart taximeter operation.

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<sup>1</sup> The MDS is available at <https://www.openmobilityfoundation.org/about-mds/mds-version-guidance/> and the GOFS is available at <https://mobilitydata.org/mobilitydata-is-accelerating-the-standardization-of-on-demand-transportation-with-the-gofs-project/>.

The Director shall communicate with the state of Washington to determine the appropriateness of a device registration fee for a smart taximeter. Please see SMC 7.04.645 for more information on device registration fees.