

December 19, 2025

**OFFICE OF THE HEARING EXAMINER  
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON**  
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**REPORT AND DECISION**

SUBJECT: King County For-Hire Licensing file no. 25837

**SHARMAAKE ABDIKADIR**  
For-Hire Driver Enforcement Appeal

For Hire no.: 149211

Appellant: Sharmaake Abdikadir  
*represented by Adan Mohamud*  
Drivers Union

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Tukwila, WA 98168

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Overview

1. After hearing the witnesses' testimony and observing their demeanor, studying the exhibits admitted into evidence, and considering the parties' arguments and the relevant law, we deny Mr. Abdikadir's appeal but reduce the length of the license suspension.

### Procedural Background

2. On October 6, 2025, King County For-Hire Licensing (Licensing) issued Sharmaake Abdikadir a Notice and Order of his For-Hire Permit Suspension and TNC Vehicle Endorsement Suspension. Ex. D7. Mr. Abdikadir filed a timely appeal on October 15, 2025. Ex. D8.
3. We went to hearing on December 8, 2025. Participating in the hearing were: Tyson Taylor representing Licensing, appellant Sharmaake Abdikadir, and Mohamud Adan from the Drivers Union. A Somali interpreter was provided for Mr. Abdikadir.

### Appeal Issues

Per the Notice of Hearing, the issues on appeal are as follows:

4. In Mr. Abdikadir’s October 15, 2025, appeal statement, he does not dispute that the temporary plate image submitted with his application materials had been altered to change the expiration date from September 13, 2025, to December 13, 2025. He argues that he submitted the falsified document unknowingly based on the representation of the vehicle’s owner.
5. The issue on appeal is whether the Department’s October 6, 2025, immediate suspension and revocation of Mr. Abdikadir’s for-hire driver’s permit is supported by a preponderance of the evidence and appropriate under the facts of this case.

### Factual Findings

Weighing all the evidence, the hearing examiner finds the following facts by a preponderance of the evidence:

6. The underlying facts in this case are undisputed. Mr. Abdikadir rented a 2016 Toyota Prius with a temporary license plate. Mr. Abdikadir registered the car with Uber and Lyft and it was endorsed as a TNC vehicle. Ex. D2.
7. On September 26, 2025, King County Licensing received applications from Uber and Lyft to add the TNC vehicle endorsement for the Prius to Mr. Abdikadir’s for-hire driver’s permit. Ex. D2. Upon review of the application materials, it was apparent that the expiration dates on the temporary plate images Mr. Abdikadir submitted to Uber and Lyft had been altered. Ex. D4.
8. Department of Licensing records showed the most recent temporary license plate with an expiration date of September 13, 2025. Ex. D3. The image submitted to Uber had an altered expiration date of December 13, 2025. Ex. D2. The image submitted to Lyft had an altered expiration date of “Nov-13-25” in one location of the document and the correct expiration date “13-Sep-2025” in another location. Ex. D4.

9. Additional review of the title for the Prius showed that it had been in an accident and was declared a “total loss” in another state. Exs. D5-002, D6-002. Under KCC 6.64.360.D, a vehicle that has been declared a total loss cannot operate as a TNC-endorsed vehicle until inspected by Washington State Patrol. Temporary plates were being issued by the Department of Licensing until this inspection took place and were issued from March 15, 2025, through September 13, 2025. Testimony of Mr. Taylor; Ex. D6. The Prius had not been inspected and cleared for use when Mr. Abdikadir applied with Uber and Lyft to have it endorsed as a TNC for-hire vehicle.
10. Acknowledging these facts, Mr. Abdikadir’s case focused on being new to the country and unfamiliar with the for-hire licensing practices and regulations. Ex. D8; Testimony of Mr. Abdikadir. Mr. Abdikadir testified that he had no knowledge that the temporary plates had been altered and was “naïve” to rely on the car owner’s representation that the license plate expiration was valid. He also did not know the car had been declared a “total loss.” Ex. D8; Testimony of Mr. Abdikadir.
11. Mr. Abdikadir is a “newer” for-hire driver and a recent immigrant with a heavy language barrier. He was renting the Prius from someone who was not honest with him about the condition or status of the vehicle. He stated that it was not his intent to betray anyone...it was him that was betrayed by the owner of the Prius. Ex. D8; Testimony of Mr. Abdikadir.
12. Mr. Adan stated that the drivers do not receive training on how to verify if the cars they rent are “eligible or ineligible to drive.” Testimony of Mr. Adan. They largely rely on friends to guide them through what is required and may be victims of bad information or advice. He also stated that new drivers are “completely unaware of all the regulations that they must follow.” Testimony of Mr. Adan. He requested that the suspension be changed to a warning.
13. Mr. Abdikadir appeared sincere in his testimony that he was unaware of any alteration to the Prius’ temporary plates or that the car had previously been totaled, rendering it unfit for use as a TNC vehicle. Mr. Abdikadir has no prior citations or warnings and indicated he now “fully understand[s] the gravity of this situation and takes complete responsibility for ensuring that all future vehicle documentation [he uses] is accurate, valid, and directly issued by the Department of Licensing.” Ex. D8-002.
14. Mr. Taylor reiterated that regardless of whether the licenses were submitted on Mr. Abdikadir’s behalf without his knowledge of tampering, and regardless of whether his TNC company provided any training on how to determine whether a vehicle had been deemed a total loss, “it remains his responsibility as a sub-contractor and holder of a TNC permit to ensure that any vehicle he operates on the platform meets the standards of Chapter 6.64.360.” It is further his responsibility to ensure that any documentation uploaded to his app and submitted to King County is accurate and legal. Being new to the country or a limited English speaker does not excuse violation of the requirements in Ch. 6.64 KCC.

15. On October 6, 2025, Mr. Abidkadir was issued a Notice that “for-hire permit #149211 is hereby immediately suspended.” Ex. D7-005. Licensing requests that Mr. Abdikadir’s “for-hire permit suspension remain in effect through the remainder of the licensing year, April 3, 2026.” Ex. D1-003; Testimony of Mr. Taylor.

#### Conclusions of Law

16. The hearing examiner has jurisdiction pursuant to KCC 20.22.040.
17. Licensing bears the burden of proving by a preponderance of evidence both the violation and the appropriateness of the remedy it has imposed. KCC 20.22.080.G; .210.B. We do not grant substantial weight or otherwise accord deference to agency determinations. Exam. R. XV.F.3.
18. When a person is given a permit as a for-hire driver with King County, the permit holder is required to know and comply with all of the regulations and requirements that pertain to that permit. Once the temporary license documents were uploaded into Mr. Abdikadir’s Uber and Lyft accounts, he was responsible for the representations made in those documents. By seeking to have the Prius endorsed as a TNC vehicle, he was representing that the information on the uploaded documents was accurate and that the vehicle met the safety requirements under the code.
19. KCC 6.64.360.D mandates that any vehicle that has been “deemed a total wreck or total loss shall not return to service until a structural analysis has been performed.” As the holder of a for-hire driver’s permit, Mr. Abdikadir is responsible for knowing this requirement and for knowing whether the car he is using has been deemed a total loss, requiring inspection and clearance for use as a TNC for-hire vehicle.
20. KCC 6.64.295.A requires the immediate suspension of a TNC vehicle endorsement upon determining that a violation of a vehicle standard exists that is found to be an immediate safety hazard. The suspension of TNC Vehicle Endorsement #D1235318 was appropriate and is supported by a preponderance of the evidence.
21. The suspension of Mr. Abdikadir’s for-hire driver’s permit is based on KCC 6.64.620, which allows Licensing to consider an applicant’s character, integrity, personal habits, past conduct, and general qualifications for determining an applicant’s suitability to operate as a for-hire driver. KCC 6.64.610.A.2. provides for the immediate suspension and nullification of a for-hire permit upon determining that a driver fails to meet the qualification of a for-hire driver.
22. There is no guidance on the appropriate duration of a suspension in Ch. 6.64 KCC. There is one prior examiner decision involving an allegation of tampering with license information. In *Hennings (2018)*, the driver intentionally altered his for-hire permit and, while Licensing originally revoked his permit, he was ultimately given a \$1000 fine.

23. Unlike the *Hennings* case, here I do not believe there is evidence or testimony supporting any intentional deception or active tampering of the licensing documents by Mr. Abdikadir. At worst the situation could be interpreted as willful ignorance. However, *Hennings* did not have the additional component of registering a car that was completely unsafe to drive, which is a very serious issue and highlights the need for all for-hire drivers to be aware of their obligations under the code. While it is certainly a challenge to learn a new regulatory framework when one is new to the country and dealing with a significant language barrier, these obstacles do not excuse a permit holder from their responsibilities under Ch. 6.64 KCC.
24. The seriousness of the violations here warrant more than a warning. But considering the lack of intent, Mr. Abdikadir's clean record, and the penalty given in *Hennings*, a reduction in the duration of the six-month suspension requested by Licensing is appropriate. A three-month suspension ensures the appellant understands the severity of the violations and promotes compliance with all applicable regulations going forward.

DECISION:

1. Mr. Abdikadir's for-hire permit #149211 will remain suspended until January 6, 2026.
2. The remainder of Mr. Abdikadir's appeal is DENIED.

ORDERED December 19, 2025.



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Devon Shannon  
Hearing Examiner

**NOTICE OF RIGHT TO APPEAL**

King County Code 20.22.040 directs the Examiner to make the County's final decision for this type of case. This decision shall be final and conclusive unless appealed to superior court in accordance with Ch. 7.16 RCW. It is the responsibility of the party seeking to appeal the examiner's decision to determine and meet the legal requirements for filing an appeal.

**MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 8, 2025, HEARING IN THE APPEAL OF  
SHARMAAKE ABDIKADIR, KING COUNTY FOR-HIRE LICENSING FILE NO.  
25837**

Devon Shannon was the Hearing Examiner in this matter. A verbatim recording of the hearing is available in the Hearing Examiner’s Office.

The following exhibits were offered by the department and entered into the record:

- |                |   |
|----------------|---|
| Exhibit no. D1 | King County For-Hire Licensing staff report   |
| Exhibit no. D2 | Temp Plate Image Provided to Uber – A8710301  |
| Exhibit no. D3 | DOL Records re: Original Temp Plate – A8710301                                      |
| Exhibit no. D4 | Temp Plate Image Provided to Lyft – A8710301  |
| Exhibit no. D5 | DOL Title Application Records   |
| Exhibit no. D6 | DOL Vehicle History Records   |
| Exhibit no. D7 | Notice and Order – For-Hire Permit Suspension/TNC Vehicle<br>Endorsement Suspension |
| Exhibit no. D8 | Appeal  |

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**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

SUBJECT: King County For-Hire Licensing file no. **25837**

**Sharmaake ABDIKADIR**

For-Hire Driver Enforcement Appeal

I, Jessica Oscoy, certify under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of Washington that I transmitted the **REPORT AND DECISION** to those listed on the attached page as follows:

- EMAILED to all County staff listed as parties/interested persons and parties with e-mail addresses on record.
- placed with the United States Postal Service, through Quadient-Impress, with sufficient postage, as FIRST CLASS MAIL in an envelope addressed to the non-County employee parties/interested persons to addresses on record.

DATED December 19, 2025.



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Jessica Oscoy  
Administrator