

January 5, 2026

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

SUBJECT: King County For-Hire Licensing file no. 25-875

**AFRASA KIFLE**  
For-Hire Driver Enforcement Appeal

For Hire no.: 15471

Appellant: **Afrasa Kifle**  
[REDACTED]  
Federal Way, WA 98003  
Telephone: [REDACTED]  
Email: [REDACTED]

King County: King County For-Hire Licensing  
*represented by* **Tyson Taylor**  
King County For-Hire Licensing  
201 S. Jackson Street Suite 206  
Seattle, WA 98104  
Telephone: (206) 263-1373  
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Overview

1. After hearing testimony, reviewing the exhibits admitted into evidence, and considering the parties' arguments and the relevant law, Mr. Kifle's appeal is denied.

### Procedural Background

2. On October 20, 2025, King County For-Hire Licensing (Licensing) issued Notice of License Action - Denial to Afrasa Kifle. Ex. D2. Afrasa Kifle filed a timely appeal on November 13, 2025. Ex. D7.
3. We went to hearing on December 29, 2025. Participating in the hearing were: Tyson Taylor representing Licensing and appellant Afrasa Kifle. An Amharic interpreter was provided for Mr. Kifle.

### Appeal Issues

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

4. The issue on appeal is whether the October 20, 2025, denial of Mr. Kifle's application for a regional for-hire driver's license per KCC 6.65.090.H was 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:

5. On October 15, 2025, Mr. Kifle applied for a regional for-hire driver's license. Based on the standard review of Mr. Kifle's criminal background and driving record, Licensing determined that denial of his application was appropriate.
6. Mr. Kifle's driving record indicates that he was in an accident on January 1, 2024. It also reflects two violations associated with this incident, "Reckless Driving" under RCW 46.61.500 and "Admin Per Se" under RCW 46.20.308. Ex. D3-006. The "Admin Per Se" violation indicates that the accident was alcohol related.
7. Mr. Kifle's criminal record reflected a July 9, 2025, guilty plea and conviction for reckless driving. Ex. D4. Mr. Kifle's plea statement acknowledged willful disregard for the safety of property as shown by my crash into a guardrail after consuming alcohol." As a result of this accident his Washington State driver's license was suspended from January 27-April 26, 2025, and again from August 31 to September 9, 2025. Ex. D3.
8. Mr. Kifle's accident happened while he was operating his taxicab, although he disputes that he was working at the time of the collision. Ex. D7. A miscommunication, due to the language barrier, resulted in the arresting officer's belief that Mr. Kifle was working at the time of the accident. Kifle Testimony.

9. Mr. Kifle’s appeal was a request that the license denial be reconsidered in light of his clean driving record prior to this incident and the barriers, both language and financial, that he believes led to his conviction and warrant a “second chance.” Kifle Testimony.
10. The record establishes that a blood draw was conducted at approximately 0519, reflecting that Mr. Kifle’s BAC was .12 at that time. Ex. D6R-004, 007. The record also establishes that Mr. Kifle had legal representation at his plea hearing. Ex. D5-009.

#### Conclusions of Law

11. The hearing examiner has jurisdiction pursuant to KCC 20.22.040.
12. 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.
13. There is no dispute in this case as to the facts that support Licensing’s decision. Mr. Kifle pled guilty to “reckless driving” which is now a criminal conviction on his record. His plea acknowledged the consumption of alcohol prior to the accident and this was supported by the BAC test results showing he was well over the legal limit approximately 2 hours after the crash. Ex. D6R-004.
14. Regardless of whether Mr. Kifle was "on-duty" operating his taxicab at the time of the collision, the relevant facts establish that Mr. Kifle consumed alcohol and then drove a vehicle, resulting in a crash into a guardrail which he pled guilty to as “reckless driving.” Ex. D5-008. Even if the accident was not alcohol-related, the plea to reckless driving is an independent basis for denying Mr. Kifle’s license application.
15. Under the code, a reckless driving conviction results in a **mandatory** license denial. KCC 6.65.090 H; SMC 6.311.090.H. If an applicant's criminal background check reveals a conviction in the past five years for "reckless driving" or "any alcohol or drug related driving crime," the department **must deny** the license application. KCC 6.65.430 F.1; SMC 6.311.430 F.1.
16. Licensing has met its burden of proof to establish the violation and there is no discretion for Licensing, or the Examiner, to grant an exception for Mr. Kifle’s application denial.

#### DECISION:

Mr. Kifle’s appeal is DENIED.

ORDERED January 5, 2026.



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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 29, 2025, HEARING IN THE APPEAL OF AFRASA KIFLE, KING COUNTY FOR-HIRE LICENSING FILE NO. 25-875**

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	October 20, 2025, Notice of License Action – Denial
Exhibit no. D3	Safe Screener Background Report
Exhibit no. D4	King County District Court Judgement
Exhibit no. D5	Statement of Defendant on Plea of Guilty
Exhibit no. D6	King County District Court Case, Probable Cause
Exhibit no. D7	Appeal
Exhibit no. D6R	King County District Court Case, Probable Cause, clean version, redacted

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**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

SUBJECT: King County For-Hire Licensing file no. **25-875**

**Afrasa KIFLE**

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 January 5, 2026.



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Jessica Oscoy  
Administrator

**Bailey, Kendall**

Finance and Admin Svcs, Consumer Protection Div

**Cantu, Eddie**

King County For-Hire Licensing

**City of Seattle Hearing Examiner**

**Kifle, Afrasa**

Hardcopy

**Megow, John**

Finance and Admin Svcs, Consumer Protection Div

**Newhouse, Cregan**

Finance and Admin Svcs, Consumer Protection Div

**Stenson, Elizabeth**

King County For-Hire Licensing

**Taylor, Tyson**

King County For-Hire Licensing