



**Seattle**



**King County**

<p>Department: <b>City of Seattle Department of Finance and Administrative Services</b></p>	<p>Rule No: FOR-HIRE TRANSPORTATION- 11-2024</p>	<p>Supersedes: Clerk Files 310158 and 321467</p>
	<p>Publication: 9/13/2024</p>	<p>Effective: 10/25/2024</p>
<p>Subject: Fares and Rates for Taxicabs and For-Hire Vehicles</p>	<p>Code and Section Reference(s): SMC 6.311.380  SMC 6.311.470 (rulemaking authority)</p>	
<p>Approved: <small>DocuSigned by:</small> <i>Both Gappert</i> <small>C72B064E640B4F1...</small></p> <hr/> <p>Division Director <small>DocuSigned by:</small> <i>Sherrri Crawford</i> <small>D0741553137C40F...</small></p> <hr/> <p>Business Unit Officer <small>Signed by:</small> <i>Kiersten Grove</i> <small>Z16EC6A2E8CB4AC...</small></p> <hr/> <p>Kiersten Grove, Acting Director</p>	<p>10/9/2024 _____ Date</p> <p>10/9/2024 _____ Date</p> <p>10/11/2024 _____ Date</p> <p>10/11/2024 _____ Date</p>	
<p><b>King County / Department of Executive Services</b>  <b>Document Code No.:</b> FHT-10-2024-PR  <b>Repeals:</b> LIC-8-7-PR  <b>Title:</b> Fares and Rates for Taxicabs and For-Hire Vehicles  <b>Effective Date:</b> October 16, 2024  <b>Authorities:</b> KCC 6.65.380 and KCC 6.65.470 (rulemaking authority)  <b>Keywords:</b>  <b>Sponsoring Agency:</b> Records and Licensing Services Division (RALS)</p> <p><small>DocuSigned by:</small>  <b>Director signature:</b> <i>Lorraine Patterson-Harris</i>  <small>8FC3E766E8FD408...</small></p> <p>10/15/2024  <b>Date signed:</b> _____</p>		

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

**City of Seattle Director’s Rule FOR-HIRE TRANSPORTATION-11-2024 and King County Public Rule FHT-10-2024-PR – Fares and Rates for Taxicabs and For-Hire Vehicles**

Pursuant to an interlocal agreement, the City of Seattle and King County work cooperatively to regulate for-hire passenger transportation. The Rule supersedes City of Seattle Clerk Files 310158 and 321467 and King County adopts this Rule as new.

- I. **Purpose.** To establish regional taximeter rates, alternate taxicab rate and fare types, and for-hire vehicle rate types.

City of Seattle and King County rules on an application dispatch system (ADS), which specify requirements for system approval and use, and taximeters and smart taximeters, which establishes testing and approval standards, shall complement this Rule.

- II. **Definitions.** For purposes of this Rule, the following definitions apply:
  - A. “Director” means the director of King County’s Department of Executive Services and/or the City of Seattle’s Director of Finance and Administrative Services, or their designees.
  - B. “Fare” means anything of economic value that is provided, promised, or donated primarily in exchange for services rendered.
  - C. “Upfront presentation” means the transitional regional dispatch agency or regional dispatch agency presents a taxicab trip rate, fare, or price to a passenger so that the passenger can consider it before deciding whether to confirm the trip.

III. **Requirements.**

**Regional Taximeter Rates, Alternate Taxicab Rates, and Fees**

1. The fare for a taxicab trip must be computed by a smart taximeter, or until March 31, 2026, a taximeter, except when a trip is provided under an alternate rate or fare type specified in this Rule as authorized by Seattle Municipal Code (SMC) 6.311.380.A.4 and King County Code (KCC) 6.65.380.A.4, or when the trip is dispatched via an ADS approved by the Director. This requirement applies regardless of how the passenger secures the trip.
2. The taximeter must be tested and approved by the Director pursuant to SMC 6.311.380.A.6, SMC Chapter 7.04, KCC 6.65.380.A.6, and FAS Director’s Rule For-Hire Transportation-07-2024/ King County Public Rule FHT-8-2024-PR on taximeters and smart taximeters.

Regional Taximeter Rates and Temporary Fuel Surcharge	Description
<b>Drop Rate</b>	\$2.60 for first 1/9-mile increment.
<b>Distance Rate</b>	\$0.30 for each 1/9-mile increment after the first 1/9-mile increment [\$2.70 per mile] at speeds above 11 miles per hour.

Regional Taximeter Rates and Temporary Fuel Surcharge	Description
<b>Time Rate</b>	\$0.30 per 36 seconds [\$0.50 per minute] at speeds below 11 miles per hour.
<b>Per Passenger Rate</b>	\$0.50 per person for more than two persons excluding children under twelve years of age.
<b>Temporary Fuel Surcharge</b>	A per trip surcharge authorized by the Director pursuant to SMC 6.311.380.E.2 and KCC 6.65.380.E.2. Please see description in Section II.15 of this Rule.

3. Alternate taxicab rate and fare types specified in this Rule authorized by SMC 6.311.380.A.4 and KCC 6.65.380.A.4 may be used to price taxicab trips:

Alternate Taxicab Rate and Fare Types	Description
<b>Flat Rate</b>	<p>Flat rate based on trips from one address to another address (e.g., Colman Dock to Seattle-Tacoma International Airport (SEA)) or from one defined zone to another defined zone (e.g., ZIP code A to ZIP code B).</p> <p>The TRDA or RDA must comply with SMC 6.311.380.4.f and KCC 6.65.380.4.f for all flat rates established.</p> <p>This Rule does not establish any flat rate between downtown Seattle and Seattle-Tacoma International Airport (SEA) or between Seattle-Tacoma International Airport (SEA) and downtown Seattle. If desired, a TRDA or RDA may establish such a rate(s).</p>
<b>Contract Rate</b>	Rates established pursuant to contracts between a TRDA or RDA and a business, a non-profit organization, or government entity, whereby the amount or rate paid for transportation service is specified.
<b>Upfront Fare</b>	For hailed trips (i.e., trips not requested and accepted via an approved ADS, or not provided for via a contract), an upfront fare shall be based on the estimated time and distance calculated by the smart taximeter and multiplied by the regional taximeter rate. An upfront fare must: (1) include estimated surcharges, tolls, and fees; (2) be confirmed with the passenger before the trip begins; and (3) be the final charge to the passenger when the trip ends. An upfront fare excludes tips and excludes electronic

Alternate Taxicab Rate and Fare Types	Description
	payment convenience fees, if any, charged by the banking service provider.
<b>Dynamic Rate or Fare</b>	Rates or fares in place based on a static schedule that automatically updates based on time of day, day of week, etc., or, rates or fares calculated through the smart taximeter that include factors such as real time traffic data; trip routing; demand for service; supply of vehicles; special events; or calculations made by the TRDA or RDA that may use supply of vehicles, demand for trips, time of day, day or week, special event, or any other variable to price the trip.
<b>Split Rate or Fare</b>	The trip cost is divided equally among passengers who accept the invitation to split a fare, or divided proportionately, if the pick up or destination locations are different, among passengers who accept the invitation to split. An additional fee may be assessed for each portion of a split fare. The receipt shall indicate the total fare paid by each passenger for each passenger’s portion of the trip.
<b>Bid Trip Rate or Fare</b>	Rates or fares offered in response to a passenger’s request for multiple TRDAs and RDAs, including among drivers affiliated with the same TRDA or RDA, or providers like transportation network companies, to bid on a specific trip defined by that passenger. Trip bidding is typically facilitated through an app.
<b>Minimum Rate or Flat Rate Fare</b>	Rates or fares set by the TRDA or RDA at minimum amounts for specific trips. A minimum rate or fare is not the same as a drop rate.
<b>Vehicle Size Rate or Fare</b>	Rates or fares set by the TRDA or RDA based on the size of vehicle needed to safely transport the passenger or when specifically requested by the passenger. A rate or fare based on vehicle size shall not violate SMC 6.311.380.E.1 and KCC 6.65.380.E.1 as it concerns wheelchair accessible transportation.
<b>Seattle-Tacoma International Airport (SEA) Minimum Fare</b>	<p>The Minimum Fare for Taxicabs and For-Hire Vehicles at Seattle-Tacoma International Airport (SEA)</p> <p><b>Minimum Fare Requirement:</b> The minimum fare for any taxicab or for-hire vehicle trip originating from Seattle-Tacoma International Airport (SEA) is \$20, exclusive of any fees, surcharges, or tolls.</p> <p><b>Port of Seattle Fees:</b></p>

Alternate Taxicab Rate and Fare Types	Description
	<p>Any portion of the fee assessed by the Port of Seattle for trips originating from SEA, which is allowed by the Port to be passed along to the passenger, shall be added to the minimum fare.</p> <p><b>Passenger Notification:</b> Taxicab and for-hire vehicle drivers must post a notice provided by King County, notifying passengers of the minimum fare. This notice may, at the discretion of the TRDA or RDA, be incorporated into the passenger-facing monitor of a smart taximeter system.</p> <p><b>Scope of Application:</b> This minimum fare applies to all trips originating from SEA, regardless of whether the trip is requested on-demand or prescheduled, including via online platforms, phone, email, text, smartphone apps, or ADS.</p> <p><b>Meter Usage:</b> The driver must start the meter for each trip departing SEA Airport, regardless of the destination. Upon arrival at the drop-off location:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the metered fare is less than \$20, the \$20 minimum fare applies.</li> <li>• If the metered fare exceeds \$20, the actual metered fare applies.</li> </ul> <p><b>Smart Taximeter Option:</b> When using a smart taximeter, the minimum fare may be configured as a unique flat rate. The driver must engage the smart taximeter by selecting the minimum fare.</p> <p><b>For-Hire Vehicles Without Smart Taximeters:</b> Until smart taximeters are implemented, the minimum fare from SEA Airport must be included in the published rate book for all applicable drop-off locations.</p> <p><b>Regulatory Basis and Adjustments:</b> This minimum fare is established by King County per KCC 6.65.380.D. Any adjustments to the minimum fare, unless otherwise established by the Port of Seattle, shall be made through an amendment to this Rule.</p>
<p><b>ADS Rate</b></p>	<p>Rates and fares, not required to be filed with the Director, displayed via the internet on mobile interfaces such as smartphone applications. Please see City of Seattle Director’s Rule For-Hire Transportation-13-2024 and King County Public Rule FHT-13-2024-PR for more information on ADS.</p>

4. A TRDA or RDA has the option to use an alternate rate or fare type. The TRDA or RDA determines the alternate rate or fare type, not the individual driver. An alternate rate or fare must be programmed into the smart taximeter system by the vendor of the smart taximeter

system and/or the RDA; the programming shall enable Upfront Presentation of the alternate rate or fare. Upon request of the Director, the TRDA or RDA must provide for inspection any alternate rate or fare type established.

5. Upfront Presentation of a rate or fare is required for any alternate rate or fare type established and used by the TRDA or RDA.
6. For an upfront fare, a passenger may reject the fare and ask the driver to apply the regional taximeter rates to the trip instead. For any other alternate rate or fare type requiring Upfront Presentation (e.g., flat rate, dynamic rate or fare, ADS rate, etc.), a passenger may reject or confirm the trip but may not reject the rate or fare.
7. To comply with taximeter and smart taximeter activation requirements at SMC 6.311.160.H and KCC 6.65.160.H, to minimize passenger confusion when a trip uses an alternate rate or fare, and as the technology used by the taximeter or smart taximeter system allows, the taximeter or smart taximeter shall be programmed to display from the time the trip is activated to the time the trip is completed the rate or fare charged to the passenger for that trip. Such programming allows for the price of the metered trip to be recorded while the alternate rate or fare is used to determine what the passenger pays.
8. If applicable to the trip, other fees established or passed through by a TRDA or RDA may be added to the fare:

Tolls and Other Fees	Description
<b>Tolls</b>	Tolls or charges established for roads, bridges, tunnels, or ferries while a passenger is being transported are not required to be displayed on the smart taximeter or taximeter but may be added to the passenger’s total fare except when the fare was presented to the passenger before the trip began.
<b>Technology Fee</b>	<p>A per trip fee authorized by the Director only at the written request of the regional dispatch agency (RDA). The fee shall apply fleet wide and be used to offset the cost of obtaining and maintaining a smart taximeter system and related technology and to reduce the operating expenses of the RDA and its affiliated owners and vehicles.</p> <p>The technology fee may cover, for example, technology related software licensing fees, cost of equipment required in conjunction with a smart taximeter system, wireless communication and data service related fees, and repair or replacement of hardware.</p>
<b>Convenience Fee for Electronic Payment of Fares</b>	A per trip fee authorized by the Director only at the written request of the TRDA or RDA. The fee shall be applied fleet wide by the banking service provider and not by the TRDA or RDA and shall be in lieu of additional merchant fees charged to the TRDA, RDA, or driver. Trips paid for by cash, voucher, or other payment method shall not be assessed a convenience fee.

Tolls and Other Fees	Description
	Although the TRDA or RDA may choose a convenience fee model, the convenience fee itself can only be collected and retained by the banking service provider used by the TRDA or RDA.

**For-Hire Vehicle Rates**

9. Per SMC 6.311.380.C.3 and KCC 6.311.380.C.3, for-hire vehicle rates shall remain in effect until the for-hire vehicle transitions to a taxicab or until March 31, 2026, whichever occurs sooner. After March 31, 2026, all for-hire vehicles shall have transitioned to taxicabs and shall be subject to the regional taximeter rates and ADS rate requirements under SMC, KCC, and this Rule.

The flat rate alternate taxicab rate or fare type specified in this Rule may be used on an exclusive basis should the TRDA or RDA choose. In doing so, however, the TRDA or RDA must still comply with all smart taximeter requirements established by SMC, KCC, and applicable rules, including programming regional taximeter rates into a smart taximeter system.

- 10. Non-ADS rates shall be (1) kept current and made available for inspection upon request of the Director and (2) available for review in a rate book provided by the TRDA and located conspicuously within the for-hire vehicle.
- 10. For-hire drivers may not ask, demand, or collect any rate other than the rate established by the TRDA or RDA. Investigations or audits shall be based upon rates made available for inspection upon request of the Director. Drivers of for-hire vehicles may accept tips.
- 11. Rate information shall be displayed in a rate book that is readily accessible to the passenger and is easy for the passenger to understand. The rate book may be in paper or electronic format (e.g., tablet in back seat area).
- 12. The rate book shall always be in the for-hire vehicle and accessible to the passenger.
- 13. Hourly or zone rates may vary by time of day. Variable rates shall be clearly marked and distinct from standard rates.
- 14. For-hire vehicles must charge for service based on one of the following types:

For-Hire Vehicle Rate Types	Description
<b>Flat Rate by Address</b>	Flat charge by address. Rate from one specific address to another (e.g., rate from Colman Dock to Seattle-Tacoma International Airport). Rates are available to the passenger through a rate book in the vehicle.
<b>Flat Rate by Zone</b>	Flat charge by zone. Zone boundaries will be the same as for ZIP code zones and include all ZIP codes in the area served by the TRDA and a rate for a trip within the same ZIP code zone.

For-Hire Vehicle Rate Types	Description
	<p>Flat rate may vary by time of day. Rates are available to the passenger through the rate book in the vehicle.</p> <p>The rate for the trip shall be based on the variable rate effective at the time the trip began. Rates are available to the passenger through the rate book in the vehicle and must be easily discernable from standard rates by zone.</p>
<b>Contract Rate</b>	Rates established pursuant to written contracts between a TRDA and a business or a non-profit organization whereby the amount or rate paid for transportation service is specified.
<b>Hourly Rate</b>	<p>Hourly rate. Minimum increment of ½ hour. Hourly rate may vary by time of day. Rates are available to the passenger through a rate book in the vehicle.</p> <p>The rate for the trip shall be based on the variable rate effective at the time the trip began. Rates are available to the passenger through the rate book in the vehicle and must be easily discernable from standard hourly rates.</p>
<b>ADS Rate</b>	Not required to be filed. Please see City of Seattle Director’s Rule For-Hire Transportation-13-2024 and King County Public Rule FHT-13-2024-PR for more information on ADS.

**Temporary Fuel Surcharge**

15. The temporary fuel surcharge is intended to help offset the for-hire driver’s cost of fuel (i.e., regular unleaded gasoline) when that cost exceeds certain levels. The surcharge applies to all trips provided by a taxicab or for-hire vehicle when not operating under contract. A for-hire driver is authorized to add the surcharge as an “extra” item at the end of the trip, regardless of how the trip was priced, in an amount consistent with the following table:

Fuel Price (per gallon)	Temporary Fuel Surcharge (per trip)
\$4.00	None
\$5.00	\$1.00
\$5.50	\$1.50
\$6.00	\$2.00
\$6.50	\$2.50
\$7.00	\$3.00
\$7.50	\$3.50



The per trip surcharge will continue to increase in \$0.50 increments for every \$0.50 increase in the price of fuel beyond the value shown in the table.

If the trip fare was calculated using an approved smart taximeter, the temporary fuel surcharge may be added automatically by the smart taximeter and shall be clearly described on the passenger's receipt. A for-hire driver shall not add a temporary fuel surcharge to a fare when the temporary fuel surcharge has already been included by the smart taximeter.

The current price of fuel must remain at or above a trigger level in the table for 14 consecutive days before a surcharge, or an increase in the surcharge, may be authorized by the Director. Fuel price will be based on reports from the American Automobile Association website for the Seattle-Bellevue-Everett area as available at <https://gasprices.aaa.com/> or a successor website.

The Director will provide each TRDA or RDA with printed fuel surcharge notices that must be placed on the dashboard of each affiliated vehicle so that they are visible to all passengers. The notices must be returned to the Director when the surcharge is changed or removed. The printed notice will carry the heading "Fuel Surcharge" and read as follows:

A TEMPORARY FUEL SURCHARGE IN THE AMOUNT OF \$X.XX PER TRIP WILL BE ADDED TO THE TAXIMETER FARE DUE TO RECENT FUEL PRICES (CITY OF SEATTLE DIRECTOR'S RULE FOR-HIRE TRANSPORTATION-11-2024 AND KING COUNTY PUBLIC RULE FHT-10-2024-PR).

Fuel surcharges may be removed or reduced after the current price of fuel remains below a level in the table for 14 consecutive days.

Fuel surcharges do not apply to trips using contract rates.

#### **Additional Charges to Transport Persons with Disabilities Prohibited**

16. Unless part of a contract rate, establishing special vehicle service rates or additional charges for the transport of persons with disabilities is prohibited.

#### **Discriminatory Charges Prohibited**

17. Per SMC 6.311.380.E.4 and KCC 6.65.380.E.4, a TRDA or RDA or one of its affiliated drivers may not impose discriminatory charges on any passenger who falls within a protected class as defined by City of Seattle or King County law.

#### **Fare Transparency to Drivers**

18. Per SMC 6.311.370.C and KCC 6.65.370.C, the TRDA or RDA shall make known to the affiliated regional for-hire driver the amount of the fare for each trip by that driver regardless of the rate or fare type used to price the trip.

#### **Fare Data**

19. With the transition to smart taximeter systems and an increased ability to collect and report trip data, the Director may periodically request from TRDAs and RDAs data on total fares for trips under two scenarios – one where the regional taximeter rate was used and another where an alternate taxicab fare or rate type was used – to see how the total fares compare.

- 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 will periodically review available data and will consult with industry licensees, including taxicab and for-hire vehicle drivers and TRDA and RDA representatives, on the prevalence of varying fares from the established regional taximeter rates and which alternate rate and fare types have been used to vary fares to determine the necessity of any changes to this Rule.
- VI. Rule Enforcement.** The Director will follow the process outlined herein, as well as the process outlined in a separate rule on ADS usage, to verify compliance with the allowances permitted under this Rule. The Director will investigate any passenger complaints about not being presented a trip rate, fare, or price for consideration before confirming a trip; trip, fares, rates, or prices themselves; and related issues.