

New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission

2020 Annual Report

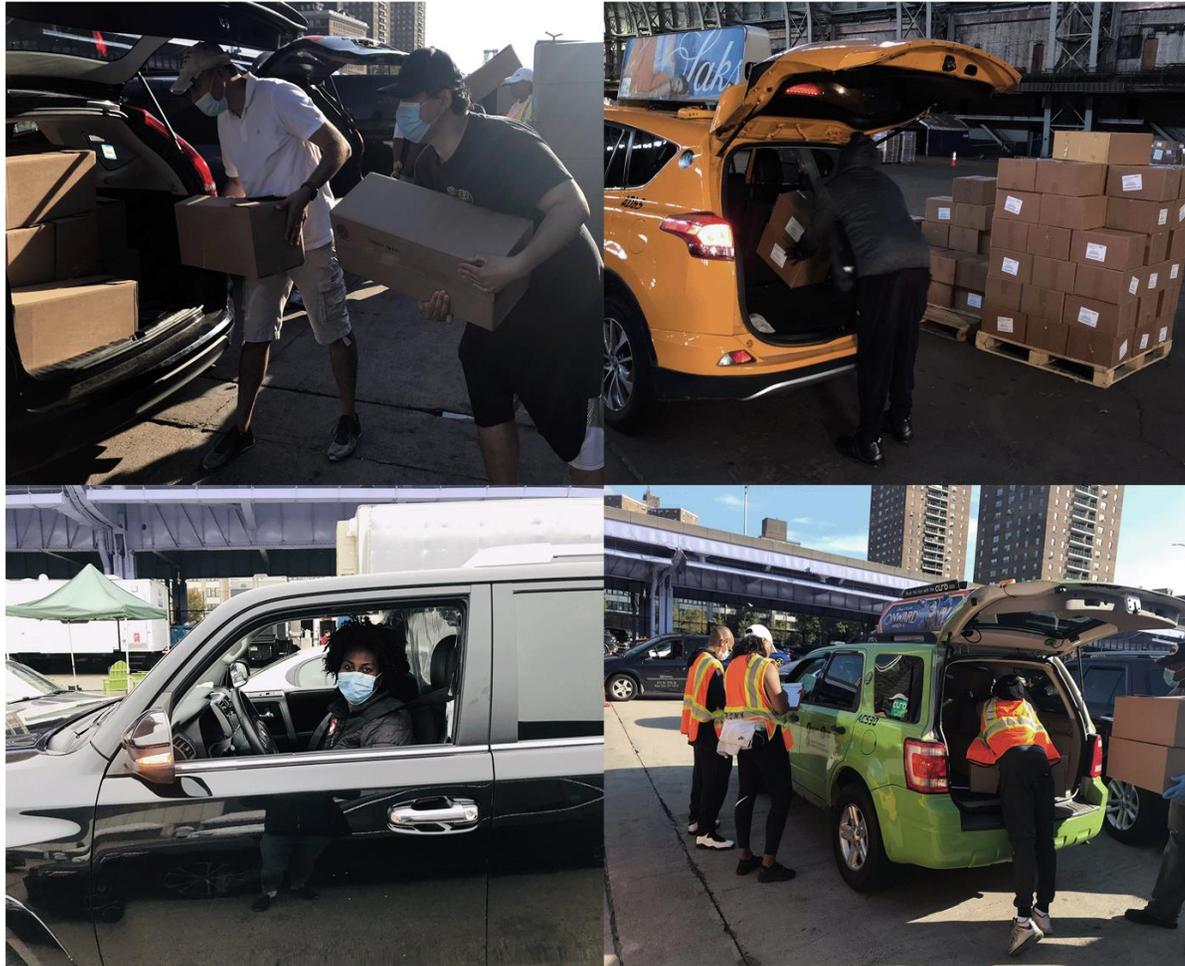


Table of Contents

1. [TLC's Mission and Structure](#)
 2. [TLC's Response to COVID-19](#)
 3. [Policy Updates, Projects, Initiatives, and Events](#)
 4. [Commission Meetings and Regulatory Highlights](#)
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Welcome

Dear Fellow New Yorkers:

Welcome to the New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission's 2020 Annual Report. This year was unlike any other for New York City, and I am grateful that in the face of the challenges that the COVID-19 global pandemic posed to TLC's Licensees and regulated industries, the Agency has remained committed to the health and well-being of the individuals and companies we license and the passengers we serve. From the very beginning of the pandemic, TLC-Licensees and employees have been deemed essential workers.

Despite the unprecedented challenges posed by COVID-19, the TLC has adapted quickly to remain fully operational and maintain critical Agency services while creating new opportunities for Licensees to help New Yorkers in need. We never stopped working or serving the City throughout the pandemic. The TLC Licensing and Vehicle Inspection facilities and Staff continued to serve Licensees throughout the worst of the crisis, with nearly 100,000 vehicles inspected and over 105,000 license applications processed since March 1. It was and is imperative to TLC that we continue keeping the public safe by making sure TLC-licensed drivers and vehicles meet our rigorous safety and educational standards. Our Uniformed Officers and many of our office staff were redeployed to staff food distribution sites across the City, to deliver critical PPE, and to assist the Sheriff's Office in keeping the City safe by ensuring that out-of-town visitors took measures to safely quarantine and protect New Yorkers. And throughout this time, our TLC Call Center and External Affairs teams continued to speak with Licensees, answer their questions, and make them aware of critical COVID services and benefits to help them and their families.

In March 2020, as COVID-19 began to take a serious toll on New York City, TLC joined several partner Agencies to set up the emergency GetFoodNYC delivery program, which ran until October 2020. Nearly 10,000 TLC-licensed drivers earned a total of \$40 million dollars while delivering meals to thousands of homebound or immunocompromised New Yorkers at the same time. The program was a true team effort, involving TLC staff from nearly all divisions, who staffed food sites, loaded meals into vehicles, signed up Licensees, coordinated payment, and answered inquiries. This program was successful not only because Licensees were able to make money during an unprecedented economic downturn, but also because Licensees and the Industry were able to pivot so quickly and seamlessly to serve their City. I am tremendously appreciative of the Licensees who participated, and to all the TLC staff who devoted their time to the emergency food program.

In 2019, the TLC announced the establishment of a Driver Resource Center, where TLC Licensees could receive financial counseling, legal assistance, public benefit assistance, and answers to questions about their license or TLC rules. Of course, public health concerns did not let us launch a busy, in-person center as initially planned. Instead, we launched the Driver Resource Center virtually so that Licensees could have immediate access to services from their homes. The Driver Resource Center has served over 750 drivers and over 450 medallion owners to date, and we intend to open the physical location of our Driver Resource Center in Long Island City, Queens when the City re-opens.

In addition to the Food Delivery program and the Driver Resource Center, the TLC took several immediate actions to protect TLC-licensed drivers and passengers from COVID-19 and its economic impacts. TLC issued vehicle cleaning guidance, required face coverings for TLC-licensed drivers and passengers, and shared information with licensees about COVID-19 testing sites and common symptoms. TLC also allowed For-Hire Vehicles to install partitions, creating an additional level of safety for drivers and passengers in vehicles. For those For-Hire Vehicle drivers wishing to place

their vehicle licenses in storage, a policy was established allowing them to do so. In addition, we shared weekly updates with Licensees about local, state, and federal services, including unemployment benefits, food assistance, small business loans, eviction prevention and mental health support.

TLC-Licensee represent the best of New York City: they are resilient and determined. It encourages me to see increasing trip numbers and an increasing number of vehicles returning to service. This summer, the TLC issued a report on COVID-19 and its impacts on the Industries it regulates. The report illustrated the dramatic decline in the number of trips, which reached their lowest point in April 2020. The report also included data on the number of TLC-licensed drivers on the road, the number of working vehicles per month, as well as data on Licensee earnings and participation in the Food Delivery Program. We felt it was important to chronicle this difficult time for the taxi and for-hire industries in such a report, to contextualize the trip data that TLC publishes as well as Licensee experiences during this period.

Though 2020 was an unusual year, the TLC has also remained committed to Vision Zero, Mayor de Blasio's groundbreaking effort to eliminate traffic injuries and fatalities. Despite the impacts of COVID-19, we continued to honor hundreds of drivers and businesses through our annual Vision Zero Driver Safety Honor Roll, which we hosted [online](#) this year. Licensees honored did not have a single crash resulting in an injury, a single traffic violation, or a single violation of TLC's safety-related rules in 4 years. In addition to safe drivers and those who excelled in customer service for passengers with disabilities, this year we also honored many drivers who participated in the GetFoodNow program.

As our City has begun to reopen, we have been happy to see how TLC-licensed drivers have adhered to COVID-19 protections, including mask wearing, social distancing, cleaning of high-touch areas in vehicles, and opening windows or otherwise ventilation of vehicles in use. To educate the public about these efforts, the TLC launched a public service announcement campaign on Link NYC kiosks and social media. We hope that campaign is helping to educate the riding public about safety measures in TLC-licensed vehicles, but also remind them of the hard work and efforts of TLC-licensed drivers.

COVID-19 affected TLC-licensed drivers, vehicle owners, and businesses in many ways and these impacts will continue to be felt in 2021. 2020 was an incredibly difficult year for TLC licensees and staff who have lost family members and friends to this pandemic. We have been terribly saddened to learn of many Licensees who lost their lives during this COVID-19 crisis, and by the passing of our colleagues David Lui and Mukul Shukla, members of our Licensing division.

This was my first year as Commissioner and Chair of TLC, and even in the face of unprecedented economic disruption, I am proud of what the Agency was able to accomplish for its Licensees and how, throughout this time, the TLC has critically examined the future of the industry and begun to better align agency services and structure with the realities of the marketplace. In 2021, TLC will continue to think creatively and strategically as we continue this work and transition into a post-COVID world. I have been impressed and heartened to see the Industry and our staff work together to overcome many challenges in 2020, and I know this resilient industry and team of passionate civil servants will accomplish great things in the coming year.

Sincerely,
Aloysee Heredia Jarmoszuk
Commissioner/Chair

TLC’s Mission and Structure

Charter Mandate

The New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission (TLC) was created by Local Law No. 12 of 1971, and is charged with “furthering the development and improvement of taxi and livery service in New York City, establishing an overall public transportation policy governing taxi, coach and car services and wheelchair-accessible vans, and to establish certain rates and standards.”

Taxi and Limousine Commission Structure and Board Members

The Board of the Taxi and Limousine Commission has nine members, eight of whom are unsalaried. The Chair presides over the Board and acts as head of the agency, which carries out the Commission’s day-to-day licensing, regulatory and enforcement functions. Members of the Commission are appointed by the Mayor, with the advice and consent of the City Council, each to serve a seven-year term. One representative of each of the city’s five boroughs is recommended for appointment by a majority vote of each borough’s respective City Council delegation.

Aloysee Heredia Jarmoszuk

In January 2020, Aloysee Heredia Jarmoszuk was nominated by the Mayor to be the Chair and Commissioner of the Taxi and Limousine Commission. Prior to her time at the TLC, Commissioner Heredia Jarmoszuk served as the Chief of Staff to the Deputy Mayor for Operations, where she oversaw and coordinated 25 agencies and programs, including the TLC and the Department of Transportation. Prior to her time at the Mayor’s Office, Commissioner Heredia Jarmoszuk served as the Chief of Staff for Central Operations at the Department of Education, and has also worked in higher education, the nonprofit sector, and in investment management. Commissioner Heredia Jarmoszuk is a native New Yorker and the first-ever Dominican-American to oversee the TLC.

Bill Aguado

Commissioner Aguado was appointed by the Mayor on the recommendation of the Bronx delegation to the New York City Council in May 2015. A leading cultural and community activist in the Bronx, Commissioner Aguado retired in 2011 as Executive Director of the Bronx Council on the Arts (BCA), and since then, he is still called upon to lend his expertise on behalf of emerging artists, community cultural groups and community-based organizations.

Nora Constance Marino

Appointed by the Mayor on the recommendation of the Queens delegation to the City Council in 2011 and reappointed in 2016. Commissioner Marino is a former JAG Officer in the United States Army Reserve and maintains her own law practice.

Lauvienska Polanco

Commissioner Polanco was appointed by Mayor de Blasio in 2016 after serving as the Manhattan member of the Commission beginning in 2007. Commissioner Polanco serves as Principal Law Clerk at the Bronx Supreme Court.

Kenneth C. Mitchell

Appointed to the Staten Island seat by Mayor de Blasio on the recommendation in the New York City Council in November 2016, Commissioner Mitchell also serves as the Executive Director of the Staten Island Zoological Society, Inc., a position he has held since September 2011. Mr. Mitchell is responsible for the overall administration and the day-to-day operation of the Staten Island Zoo.

Thomas Sorrentino

Commissioner Sorrentino was appointed by Mayor de Blasio in 2017 on the recommendation of the Brooklyn delegation of the City Council. Sorrentino served as a member of Kings County Community Board 18 for approximately five years, where he chaired its Transportation Committee. Sorrentino is currently a partner in the accounting firm of PKF O'Connor Davies LLP and serves on the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors.

Steve Kest

Commissioner Kest was appointed by Mayor de Blasio in 2018. Commissioner Kest serves as Senior Advisor to the Center for Popular Democracy (CPD) and is a decades-long veteran of community organizing. Previously, Commissioner Kest spent 35 years at ACORN, ran the Fight for a Fair Economy program at the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) and was a Senior Fellow at the Center for American Progress (CAP).

Industries Regulated by TLC

The Taxi & Limousine Commission licenses and regulates For-Hire transportation in New York City, including drivers, vehicles, car service bases and related businesses.

TLC-licensed vehicles are an essential part of New York City's comprehensive transportation network and just prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, they transported over one million passengers each day. Over 115,000 vehicles are licensed by the TLC to serve the public, 13,587 of which are medallion taxicabs currently authorized to accept hails from passengers within the five boroughs. In addition to medallion taxicabs, nearly 100,000 other vehicles serve the public through pre-arrangement and radio dispatch. These For-Hire Vehicles (FHVs) include community car service (or livery) vehicles, black cars, and luxury limousines with a seating capacity of up to 20 passengers. The black car sector includes app-based dispatch. App-based companies that dispatch more than 10,000 trips per day on average are regulated as High-Volume For-Hire Services. Green cabs are For-Hire Vehicles with Street Hail Livery (SHL) permits, which allow them to legally provide street hail service in areas traditionally underserved by yellow taxis. TLC also licenses and regulates paratransit vehicles (ambulettes) and commuter vans that are authorized to transport passengers within specific geographic zones. In addition, the TLC licenses and regulates the businesses that manufacture, install and repair the meters used in New York City taxicabs, brokers who assist buyers and sellers of taxicab medallions, and agents that operate taxicab medallions on behalf of owners. TLC also licenses Technology Service Providers, which develop and maintain the credit card readers, trip recorders, and Taxi TVs found in yellow and green taxis.

By the Numbers Calendar Year 2020	
Total Active Licenses	291,936
<i>(as of January 4, 2021)</i>	
Drivers	
TLC Drivers	174,116
Paratransit Drivers	906
Commuter Van Drivers	160
Total Driver Licenses	175,182
Vehicles	
Street Hail Services	
Medallion Taxis	13,587
Standby Vehicles	93
Green Taxis (For-Hire Vehicles with Street Hail Livery Permits)	2,103
Prearranged Services	
For-Hire Vehicles (Not Affiliated with HVFHS)	22,325
Black Car	14,235
Livery	6,558
Luxury Limousine	1,532
For-Hire Vehicles (Affiliated with HVFHS)	77,279
Black Car	76,938
Livery	7
Luxury Limousine	334
Commuter Vans	68
Paratransit Vehicles	141
Total Vehicle Licenses	115,596
Bases	
Black Car	472
Community Car Service	340
Luxury Limousine	116
Commuter Van	43
Paratransit	68
High Volume For-Hire Service (HVFHS)	3
Total Base Licenses	1,042

Businesses	
Taxicab Brokers	19
Medallion Agents	66
Taxicab Meter Shops	20
Taxicab Meter Manufacturers	2
Technology Service Providers	3
E-Hail Providers	6
Total Business Licenses	116

Budget and Headcount

The City's Fiscal Year 2020 ended on June 30, 2020, and FY 21 began July 1, 2020. In Fiscal Year (FY) 2020, the TLC operated on a budget of \$53,508,669 (\$40,598,924 for Personal Services and \$12,909,745 for Other than Personal Services). The TLC had an authorized headcount of 596 for FY 2020. The FY 2021 budget is \$40,989,477 for Personal Services, and \$13,404,102 for Other than Personal Services, with an authorized headcount of 589.

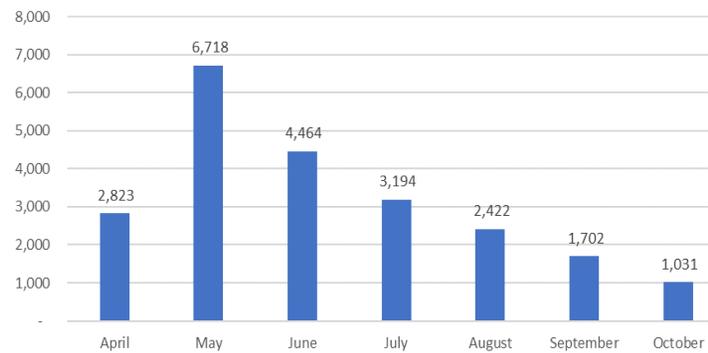
TLC's Response to COVID-19

2020 was a year unlike any other for the TLC, and much of our work this year focused on our response to the COVID-19 pandemic – through deployment of staff resources, creative new programs to help drivers and other New Yorkers, innovative data reporting, and outreach.

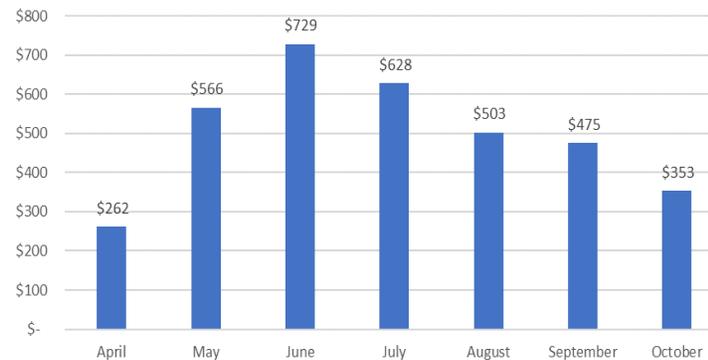
Food Delivery Program

The COVID-19 pandemic presented significant challenges to TLC-licensed drivers and to thousands of homebound and immunocompromised New Yorkers who needed food and medicine but could not risk leaving their homes. In response, TLC, alongside partner agencies NYC Emergency Management (NYCEM), Department of Sanitation (DSNY), Parks, and Department of Information Technology & Telecommunications (DoITT), worked to set up a massive meal delivery program to deliver daily meals to thousands of New Yorkers. TLC-licensed drivers delivered over 65 million meals throughout the five boroughs and earned themselves essential supplemental income during a time of historically low trips. Nearly 10,000 TLC-licensed drivers participated, earning over 40 million dollars.

Graph 1: Number of Unique Drivers Working Per Month



Graph 2: Average Monthly Earnings Per Driver



Every unit and every employee at the TLC was committed or redeployed to the program, staffing citywide food sites, directing traffic, organizing driver pay, loading boxes into vehicles, supporting technology development, and providing support to drivers with questions about program operations. The program, which ended in October, was a true partnership between agencies, Licensees, and TLC staff to improvise a solid plan helped so many New Yorkers during this time.



Emergency Initiatives to Continue Licensee Services and Protect Driver Health

As COVID-19 impacted the City’s health and economy, TLC communicated several new policies and initiatives to Licensees and the public. From the beginning, drivers and passengers have been required to wear masks at all times inside TLC-licensed vehicles, and we have distributed masks to drivers throughout the pandemic. TLC shared guidance with Licensees encouraging them to clean vehicles often, paying special attention to high touch areas such as door handles, seatbelts, and Taxi TV screens. Drivers and passengers are encouraged to open windows and maximize airflow during trips.

Additionally, to protect both Licensees and passengers, the TLC temporarily allowed all vehicles without partitions the opportunity to have temporary partitions installed by approved partition installers. TLC also allowed FHV owners to place their vehicle licenses in storage for up to 180 days, which provided relief to vehicle owners and drivers who want to stay home during the pandemic and reduce expenses.



Driver Resource Center

In 2019, we were working hard to launch an in-person Driver Resource Center at our Long Island City office, but the need to protect Licensee and employee health prevented in-person service. Because it was crucial to provide assistance to Licensees, TLC accelerated the launch of the Driver Resource Center (DRC) by opening online in May. Since May 12, the DRC has been offering remote financial counseling, legal services, public benefits application support, and driver protection services. To date, the Center has assisted over 750 Licensees. The Center will open in person once we determine it is safe to do so.

Surface Transportation Advisory Council

As part of the City's larger reopening efforts, TLC participated in the Mayor's Surface Transportation Advisory Council. The Council met weekly in early Summer 2020 and discussed several topics pertinent to the City's reopening, including COVID-19 health and safety protocols, Open Streets, improved access to public transportation, and curb management. TLC also convened its own For-Hire Transportation panel, meeting in parallel to the larger Advisory Council, to discuss issues specific to the taxi and for-hire industries. We implemented several recommendations from members of both the Council and TLC-specific panel, including a public-facing PSA about vehicle safety and health precautions.

TLC Licensee Communications

Throughout 2020, communication with our Licensees has been frequent and informative. It is essential to the TLC that we share as much important information with drivers, vehicle owners, and businesses as possible. The External Affairs division sent dozens of informative emails to Licensees in 2020 on topics such as COVID testing, health updates, available resources, work opportunities (such as TLC Food Delivery), and agency updates. External Affairs staff personally spoke with hundreds of drivers, sharing information and answering questions. Additionally, staff shared information on our TLC website and social media, informing drivers in a wide variety of channels. We look forward to continuing this partnership and outreach with Licensees in 2021.

COVID Report

In order to better understand the rapid changes impacting the taxi and for-hire industries, TLC published a [report](#) on COVID-19 and the resulting decline in passenger demand and trip volumes. This report not only detailed the decline in the number of trips that mirrored the decline in economic activity but also indicated the sharp decrease in the number of cars and drivers working. The report provided crucial information for Licensees and City policymakers to better understand the impacts of the pandemic.

Policy Updates, Projects, Initiatives, and Events

Driver Protection Unit

The Driver Protection Unit (DPU) helps drivers get relief for complaints involving unpaid driver earnings, Taxicab and For-Hire Vehicle leasing issues and identity theft. With staff working remotely as necessary to protect public health in COVID, the DPU offered a full range of services to Licensees. In 2020, the DPU processed over 200 complaints from Licensees and was able to secure restitution for money owed to the Licensee or otherwise resolve the Licensee's issues. In April of 2020, the DPU began to receive driver complaints that a Base was not paying drivers what they were owed. After further investigation, DPU determined that the Base owed approximately 150 drivers over one million dollars in unpaid earnings. DPU worked for months, reached its largest settlement with an FHV Base to date and required the Base to pay all affected drivers in full on a schedule monitored by DPU.

Beginning in May of 2020, DPU began helping Licensees at the TLC's new Driver Resource Center (DRC). DPU has had over 80 DRC appointments with Licensees where DPU either was able to accept and investigate the Licensee's complaint or refer the Licensee to other TLC departments or resources. DPU has handled a wide variety of cases this year, including complaints of leasing rule violations, lease overcharges, receipt rule violations, base overcharges, failure to pay credit card fare earnings and High Volume For-Hire Service Base driver pay rule violations.

Additionally, in 2020, DPU worked with the new Business Practices Accountability Unit (BPAU) to investigate and resolve complaints from Medallion Owners against Agents and Brokers and to evaluate industry practices. As part of this initiative, DPU will work with Agents and Brokers to ensure compliance with the new Agent and Broker rules that went into effect in August of 2020.

Battery Electric Vehicles

In 2020, TLC approved a medallion from a Queens fleet with a 2020 Tesla Model 3 vehicle, the first Tesla used as a yellow taxi in NYC. This vehicle joins over 330 Battery Electric for-hire vehicles currently licensed by TLC. In the past few years advances in battery power and charging infrastructure have made possible the use of Battery Electric Vehicles (BEVs) for New York City for hire transportation. TLC believes that this is the start of an exciting new chapter where passengers will be able to ride in more environmentally friendly TLC-licensed vehicles.

Driver Education

TLC-authorized schools and test centers closed in March due to statewide COVID measures, but TLC worked hard to reopen them in October in compliance with the highest safety standards. TLC visited all locations to ensure safety protocols were in place prior to approving a location to reopen. Both schools and test centers are operating at reduced capacity to promote social distancing during the pandemic.

In 2020, TLC continued to improve driver education courses. New curriculum and provider authorization requirements were introduced for two more courses, raising the standard of training and increasing the number of schools that can offer the courses. Five schools were approved and authorized to teach the Distracted Driving Portable Electronic Device course, which launched on November 15, 2020. Seven schools were approved to offer the redesigned Passenger Assistance and Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle Training, which we expect to launch in early 2021.

TLC designed the new Passenger Assistance and Wheelchair Accessible Training course in collaboration with the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities and advocacy groups. We are excited to launch the updated course in early 2021, which will ensure consistent instruction and securement training using a wheelchair accessible vehicle.

Office of Inclusion

TLC's Office of Inclusion (OOI) was created in 2019 by Mayor de Blasio and the City Council and is focused on preventing service refusals and other discriminatory behavior in the taxi and for-hire vehicle (FHV) sector. It also helps drivers who experience discrimination on or off the road by connecting them with resources from the Commission on Human Rights (CCHR), which investigates such abuses.

In 2020, passengers raised a small number of complaints regarding COVID-19 and related health and safety protocols, such as mask-wearing. To date, the Office of Inclusion has received 362 complaints related to COVID-19, with most of those complaints (273) related to a driver's failure to wear a face mask. Once notified about a driver's failure to wear a mask, the TLC contacts the driver directly about the complaint, reminds the driver that they must wear masks while working for-hire and issues the driver a warning.

To combat service refusals, a citywide public awareness campaign was launched in February 2020. These posters inform the riding public of their rights as passengers and can be found in subway stations, bus stops and the Staten Island Ferry terminals. OOI continues to present information to the community, through online webinars and events with disability advocacy group meetings on how to report a service refusal. For more information on the Office of Inclusion and its work, visit [The Office of Inclusion's 2019 Annual Report](#).

Driver Safety Initiative

In addition to this work, the Office of Inclusion launched the Driver Safety Initiative in July 2020, which assists TLC-Licensed Drivers who were victims of a crime on the job. Drivers transport the riding public throughout the five boroughs and the Driver Safety Initiative was created to advocate for these essential workers.

Once the Inclusion staffer is notified of the crime, he or she will contact the driver to get more details regarding the incident. The driver will be connected to the New York State Office of Victim Services (OVS) which provides help with medical bills, lost wages, and other appropriate resources. If the driver is unable to access any resources, the Inclusion staffer will provide detailed assistance to ensure the driver can complete the application process. TLC's Enforcement Division will contact NYPD regularly for case updates and the driver will be notified. If the case goes to trial, the driver will receive prosecutorial updates as well. From 7/23/2020 to 12/31/2020, the Office of Inclusion has assisted over sixty drivers who have suffered physical assault, verbal assault, or property damage. Additionally, justice has prevailed in seven cases that have been adjudicated.

Business Practices Accountability Unit

The Business Practices Accountability Unit (BPAU) was created to protect TLC Licensees by improving TLC oversight and enhancing regulatory and operational compliance with TLC rules.

To promote transparency and accountability, all TLC-Licensed Brokers were required to submit their first annual disclosure about the interests they hold in Medallions and their TLC Licenses. BPAU will thoroughly review the disclosures statements to protect Licensees from potential conflicts, and post results online. Going forward, the disclosure process will be done annually and will be incorporated into the TLC's licensure process and serve as a condition for a Broker to renew their respective licenses.

Additionally, BPAU will oversee new rules that require Brokers to submit ownership, business, and financial disclosures to both the TLC and their client whenever they do a Medallion Transfer.

Providing Accessible For-Hire Transportation

One of TLC's core missions is to ensure accessible for-hire transportation for all passengers, including those with disabilities. In 2020, TLC has worked on several related initiatives.

Taxis

There are 3,565 wheelchair accessible vehicles in the Yellow Medallion Taxi fleet and 157 wheelchair accessible vehicles in the Green Taxi fleet. TLC's yellow and green Taxi Improvement Funds offer incentive payments to owners and drivers of wheelchair accessible Yellow and Green taxis to offset purchase and operating expenses. Through 2020 owners and drivers of wheelchair accessible vehicles have received over \$19 million in incentive payments.

2020 TIF Payments to Owners and Drivers (All Payments Issued in 2020)

Total Payment	Unique Paid	Type	Name
\$6,533,125	5,044	TIF & SHLIF Driver Payment	Drivers
\$13,729,008	2,972	TIF Owner Payment	Owners
20,262,133	8,016	All TIF Payments	Owners & Drivers

Despite the pandemic, TLC’s Accessible Dispatch program continued operating in 2020. The program allows passengers to request a wheelchair accessible Yellow or Green taxi from anywhere in New York City for the price of a standard metered fare. Customers have several options to book a ride, including calling the dispatch center directly at 646-599-9999, dialing 311 (NY Relay: 711), booking online at accessibledispatch.com, or using the “Accessible Dispatch NYC” mobile application.



For-Hire Vehicles

TLC rules require wheelchair accessible service in the for-hire vehicle (FHV) sector, which includes companies ranging from small community-based car services to the app-based dispatching providers Uber, Lyft, and Via, have been in place for over a year. Every passenger can request a wheelchair accessible vehicle from their local car service, app-based company, or any other FHV company with the cost and service comparable to a

trip in a non-accessible vehicle. FHV companies must either dispatch a minimum percentage of its annual trips to wheelchair accessible vehicles or must work with an approved Accessible Vehicle Dispatcher to provide wheelchair accessible trips within certain wait times.

There are now 3 TLC- approved Accessible Vehicle Dispatchers (Uber, Lyft and Via). TLC has issued no new FHV licenses since 2018, with the exception of WAV and Battery Electric Vehicles. This has created an incentive to add more WAVs, and there are currently 1,760 wheelchair accessible vehicles in the FHV fleet. The TLC holds the approved Accessible Vehicle Dispatchers accountable to the FHV accessibility rules.

Celebrating TLC's Licensees for Safety, Accessibility and Service

TLC hosted its seventh annual Honor Roll Ceremony on December 1, 2020, recognizing the excellent records in safety, accessibility, and community service of drivers and businesses from across all industry sectors. This was the first time TLC held this ceremony in a virtual format, including congratulatory messages from TLC's Vision Zero partners from around the City. The virtual celebration video can be found on [TLC's YouTube Channel](#).

The 2020 Safety Honor Roll is comprised of 411 TLC-licensed drivers. TLC licensed drivers recognized for safety achievements in this year's Honor Roll did not have any safety violations over the past four years and were not involved in any serious collisions. Among our honorees, 202 drive yellow taxis, 230 drive for-hire vehicles, 16 drive green taxis, and 42 drive commuter vans. TLC also honored its safest business Licensees for their commitment to safety. Safety Honor Roll businesses have the lowest shares of vehicles involved in serious collisions in their industry sectors in 2020. The honorees include five yellow taxi fleets and twenty car service bases.

The TLC Accessibility Honor Roll recognizes drivers who have distinguished themselves as excellent providers of accessible service to our city's wheelchair users. This year's 21 yellow and green taxi driver honorees provided the most trips via the Accessible Dispatch program.

In addition, TLC also honors drivers for service to their community, and this year we recognized 25 TLC-licensed drivers have helped keep vulnerable New Yorkers fed during the COVID-19 pandemic, delivering over 65 million meals to those in need.

Informing the Public and TLC Licensees of New State Seat Belt Requirement

In November 2020, new State laws went into effect requiring all passengers in private vehicles and TLC-licensed vehicles, no matter where they sit, to buckle up. Under the new law, adult passengers may receive a fine. TLC and DOT coordinated a public awareness campaign titled "Everybody. Every Seat." to educate the public on their new responsibility and the safety benefits of seat belts in saving lives in the event of a crash. This campaign included press, social media, and LinkNYC kiosks around the city throughout the fall and winter. TLC targeted communication to its Licensees to remind them to encourage passengers to wear a seat belt always. To ensure passengers have a visual reminder to buckle up while riding in taxis and for-hire vehicles, TLC began issuing decals with messaging in multiple languages at no cost to all vehicle owner Licensees to post in their back seats.

DriveNYCTaxi

In December 2020, the TLC launched DriveNYCTaxi, a new initiative that helps connect TLC licensed drivers with available Yellow and Green Taxis. The tool allows drivers to sign up and submit preferences about the kind of vehicle they may be interested in leasing, with vehicle owners

submitting information about vehicles currently available for lease. If a “match” is found, the TLC will inform the drivers and vehicle owners so they can discuss leasing opportunities. The TLC looks forward to expanding this program in 2021 to help more drivers and vehicle owners connect.

TLC Kept Licensee Services Fully Operating During COVID

Uniformed Services Bureau

The Uniformed Services Bureau (USB) protects drivers and the public by enforcing TLC Rules and regulations for TLC licensed entities (owners, drivers, and businesses). The Bureau has two divisions: Enforcement and Safety and Emissions. Supporting these divisions are the Special Investigations Unit, Administration Unit and Training Unit. The USB played a crucial part in the agency’s COVID response in 2020, by ensuring that vehicles were inspected and could be on the road, helping Licensees earn income. Additionally, USB personnel played a crucial role in City relief and public safety initiatives, including the Food Delivery program.

Enforcement Division: Keeping New Yorkers Safe

The TLC’s Enforcement Division continued its successful field operations pursuing Vision Zero initiatives through the use of LIDAR equipment and collaborating with the New York Police Department (NYPD) through joint enforcement operations to address illegal and unlicensed drivers, including illegal commuter van operations. Since March of this year TLC Enforcement Officers have been assigned to assist in many different COVID related assignments. These assignments include preparing personal protection bags for drivers, loading meals at distribution sites, assisting the collection of traveler information at the Port Authority Bus Terminal and Penn Station, working with the Sheriffs at bridges and tunnels and doing business inspections throughout the City. Since October, Officers have also resumed normal enforcement activity. They are enforcing against unlicensed and illegal operators primarily in the Central Business District of Manhattan.



Investigation Unit and Base Enforcement

The Uniform Services Bureau Enforcement Division Investigation Unit conducted 141 Base inspections in 2020. These Base inspections, combined with field-based infractions, led to the issuance of 375 summonses in 2020, a -69% decrease over CY 2019, due to the pandemic. TLC also partners with the New York Police Department (NYPD) in response to vehicle collisions involving TLC-licensed vehicles where a person has died or is critically injured. In CY 2020 there were 26 such incidents.

Safety and Emissions Division: Helping Drivers and Businesses During the Pandemic

TLC's Safety and Emissions Division protects drivers and the public by inspecting vehicles to make sure they meet standards for road safety and vehicle emissions. The inspections are performed on-site at TLC's inspection facility and off-site at the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) authorized inspection facilities.

Although COVID presented significant challenges to TLC operations, these inspections are crucial for new and renewed vehicle licenses, and it was essential that TLC maintain its demanding workload, so Licensees could stay on the road and earn income. These inspections must be done in person, but the Safety and Emissions Division met that challenge in a way that maintained agency operations while protecting the health of Licensees and TLC employees. In March 2020, the Agency established and enforced health safety measures, including enforced social distancing guidelines to protect Licensees and employees. These allowed TLC Inspectors to continue to inspect inside and outside of vehicles, wearing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) while providing excellent customer service and maintaining a high standard of professionalism. This was done by implementing flexible scheduling and adjusting when needed to provide more service so that not only were vehicle inspectors at work their normal hours: 5am – 8pm, they were ultimately at work 6 days a week while still maintaining health and safety protocols.

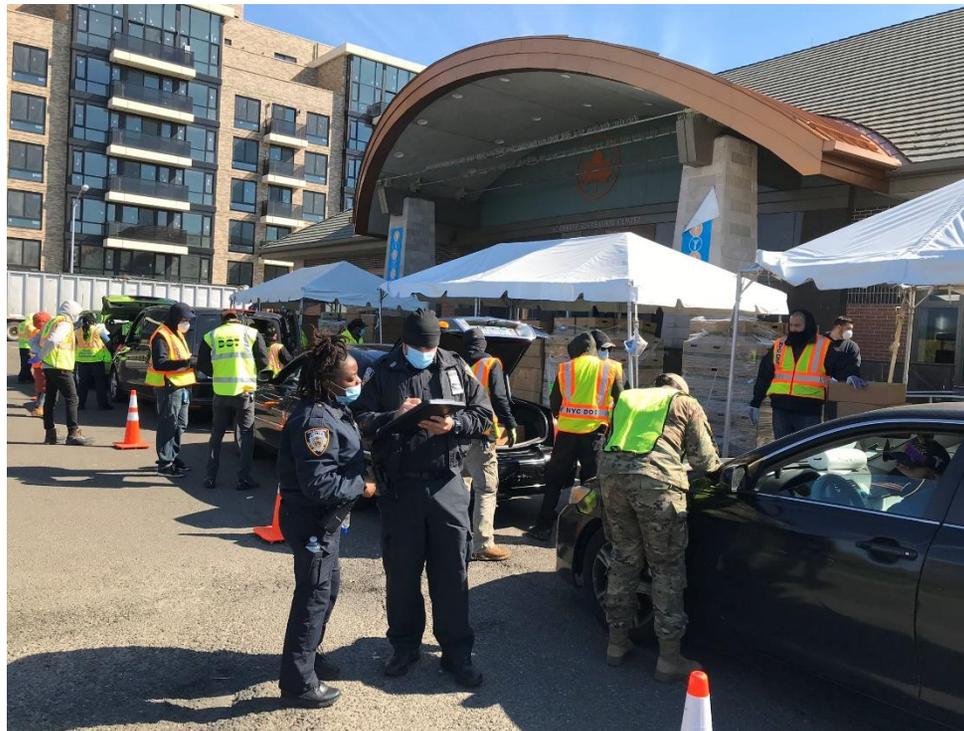
The results were impressive as TLC performed 95,857 vehicle inspections between January 1 and December 31, 2020: 16,839 yellow taxis, 72,145 For-Hire vehicles, and 6,873 Street Hail Livery (SHL) green taxis. During the same period last year, a total of 120,733 were completed. Despite the



pandemic and limited staffing due to social distancing requirements, we were able to complete 79% of inspections compared to last year during that same time period. This reduced amount is due to fewer vehicles brought in for inspection.

In the beginning of the pandemic, many Licensees were unable to make scheduled appointments due to COVID-19 - at times as high as 30-35%. Safety and Emissions and Licensing were able to reduce this “no show” rate with extensive outreach to Licensees before scheduled appointments, reducing the “no show” rates to below 15%. As economic activity partially resumed in New York City, TLC Safety and Emissions has experienced an increased volume of inspections due to FHV’s coming out of storage and those who missed inspections during the height of the pandemic.

In addition to keeping vehicle inspections going uninterrupted, Safety and Emissions played a key role in the City’s response to COVID and assisted with the TLC’s food delivery program. Inspectors worked at distribution sites to manage food delivery, and schedules were adjusted to allow for 25-30 inspectors to do weekend work when needed. Daily food site work included providing regular counts of TLC officers in each location, number of routes dispatched, drivers dispatched, and drivers waiting. Inspectors also distributed information about COVID safety measures as well as PPE at the Woodside facility.



TLC also helped connect Licensees with vital services during the pandemic, including meter repair shops and partition installers. For-Hire Vehicle license holders were encouraged to install partitions to keep themselves and their passengers safe, an effort spearheaded by Safety and Emissions,

which continues to contact shops, update information on the TLC website, and provide mailings to keep the Licensee community informed. Safety and Emissions also worked to prepare for medallion inspections, working with owners to address concerns and make short term adjustments to our policies. Safety and Emissions worked with Legal and Licensing to assist owners during these times on retirement date extensions as well as rescheduling inspection appointments. Safety and Emissions is planning for a full resumption of inspections when the City's economy reopens, and we are confident that we will continue to keep inspections moving in a safe and timely manner.



Administrative Services Division / Office of Fleet and Facilities Management

The Administrative Services Division is responsible for the maintenance and operations at each of the agency's five locations (Beaver Street, LIC, Woodside, Staten Island, and JFK Airport). Administrative Services ensures that all departments/divisions at our facilities are supported by our staff to ensure they can perform their duties and responsibilities in the best possible manner.

Under optimal conditions and circumstances, this is a challenging task; however, since mid-March and the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, this task has become that much more difficult to accomplish. Administrative Services staff never stopped working to keep TLC facilities clean and prepared to meet COVID through hygiene and social distancing. They are the backbone of the agency, and their hard work kept TLC staff safe at our five facilities, as well as the Licensees with whom we interacted.

Among the many tasks performed by Administrative Services, they have ensured that staff working on-site, and any visitors are complying with State and City as well as TLC mandated COVID-19 guidelines for mask wearing and social distancing. The team has managed shipments and deliveries of PPE and supplied staff with Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) upon request (i.e., masks, gloves, wipes and hand sanitizer). They have also been responsible for reconfiguring the workspace for social distancing, including installing high sensitivity air filters, plexiglass shields in cubicles and open areas, installing hands-free wall mounted hand sanitizer dispensers; and ensuring that work stations and areas open to Licensees are continually sanitized. These are just some of what the Administrative Services team has done to protect employee and Licensee safety so that TLC can provide vital services uninterrupted.

Licensing and Standards Division

Although COVID-19 brought about some of the toughest operational challenges that TLC's Division of Licensing and Standards has ever faced, the Division's staff ensured that day-to-day operations continued and that the Agency's customers— TLC Licensees —received uninterrupted service. The Division was able to continue operations in a dynamic situation by adapting to meet the challenges of COVID-19 and maintain its longstanding commitment to improving customer service through technological innovation.

TLC's Investment in Licensing Technology

The Division has long been a trailblazer in bringing technological innovation to the Agency's Licensees. These innovations include both web-based applications—like the Agency's payment and application intake portal—and customer management infrastructure—like the Agency's queue management system, and integrated voice recognition (IVR) call tree. These are what enable Licensing to function efficiently in normal conditions, and they have been particularly crucial to maintaining services during the pandemic.

Licensing technology made a significant difference in 2020 because it created a platform to allow for rapid change so that operations could continue almost seamlessly. The transition of new and renewal applications to the web-based portal helped to fuel operations during the pandemic in a few ways. First, it continued to make it easy for Licensees to understand their outstanding requirements for their respective applications—reducing the need for email, in-person and phone-based inquiries. Second, digital communication of application issues to Licensees made in-person visits unnecessary. Third, a streamlined workflow made remote work collaboration easier. These benefits enabled staff to work effectively remotely processing over 105,000 applications during the pandemic.

During the pandemic, TLC staff work remotely from City-issued cell phones without reducing the quality of service to the Agency's customers. This continuity of services would not have been possible without the existing IVR routing enhancements, which enabled a single intake point to distribute calls to several phone numbers. One indication that TLC was able to continue services uninterrupted is that even though the Call Center received over 5,000 more calls than the prior year, wait times decreased by one minute and sixteen seconds.

TLC also modified the web-based payment portal so that Licensees could do more transactions online, including base and vehicle transfers—two processes that previously required in-person, face-to-face transactions. Licensees have benefitted from the convenience and safety of completing the transaction from their own homes.

Reducing In-Person Contact during the Pandemic

While TLC has been able to reduce the need for most Licensees to appear in person, certain transactions still needed to occur in-person at the Customer Service Center. TLC's Long Island City Customer Service Center remained open issuing DMV for-hire plates, while DMV offices closed throughout NYC. To minimize building occupancy and comply with social distancing city and state guidelines, Licensing leveraged the online appointment scheduling system as well as the self-check-in kiosks to ensure occupancy was within the appropriate levels. The Division served over 25,000 customers and issued 3,000 TC and YC DMV plates at its Customer Service Center since the start of the pandemic.

Licensee Services Projects

Despite COVID, Licensing also delivered two noteworthy projects already in the pipeline, which help Licensees get services and information while staff work remotely.

In 2020, TLC shifted the Agency's driver license printing to the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) vendor. This project was the culmination of several years of planning, design, and software development. This allowed TLC to better focus agency resources to help Licensees, and it also reduced the need for staff to physically report to the office to print and mail licenses, which fostered employee safety during the pandemic. The new licenses offered the added public benefit of being printed with enhanced protections against counterfeit licenses. To date, over 29,000 licenses were printed and mailed out by the vendor.

The second project was an enhancement to the Agency's web-based portal to provide Licensees information about the summonses, suspensions, and settlements that existed on their licenses. Until recently, Licensees did not have a centralized mechanism to determine what open suspensions and summonses existed on their licenses, which caused increased foot traffic at our Customer Service Center and more calls to the Call Center. TLC believes that by making the information transparent, Licensees will not only have better information about summons and settlement-related questions, but they also will be more aware of open infractions and take quicker action to avoid disruptions to their license status.

Continuous Improvement of Operations

From the beginning of the pandemic, the Agency was able to identify some major pain points that would impact the industry, and Licensing quickly developed solutions to address those needs. This is best demonstrated by how the Division implemented the for-hire vehicle (FHV) storage program to meet the need for some Licensees to take their for-hire vehicles out of service while passenger demand was at an all-time low. The Division spearheaded an interdivisional effort to operationalize the storage option from a technical, business, and communication standpoint. This quick planning and decisive implementation enabled TLC to offer the new storage option in just a few short weeks after the start of the pandemic.

Even during the pandemic, Licensing was able to push the envelope with two new and exciting offerings in the yellow taxi industry: the issuance of the DMV's new "Excelsior" YC plates and certify the industry's first Tesla Model 3.



Commission Meetings

The TLC’s Board of Commissioners holds regular public meetings to hear public testimony on proposed rules and other issues of concern to Licensees. After a public hearing, the Board of Commissioners votes on whether or not to approve the proposed rules. In 2020, the Board of Commissioner approved four rule packages. Due to the unprecedented nature of the pandemic, TLC held two meetings online with full public accessibility to allow for public participation while protecting public health.

2020 Rulemaking Actions

Date of Commission Vote	Subject	Status
February 5, 2020	Broker Enforcement and Oversight Rules	Effective March 13, 2020
February 5, 2020	Revised Taxi Vehicle Specification Rules	Effective March 13, 2020
December 2, 2020	Summary Suspension Rules	Effective January 8, 2021
December 2, 2020	Miscellaneous Rule Amendments	Effective January 8, 2021

Regulatory Highlights

Brokers: Strengthening the Regulatory Framework

In response to reports of medallion Broker misconduct in 2019, Mayor de Blasio directed TLC to review the role of medallion taxi brokers and recommend policies to regulate Brokers and protect Licensees.

The resulting new rules, approved by the Board of Commissioners in February 2020, provide more transparency and accountability for the actions of medallion Brokers, including:

- Increased penalties for violations of TLC Broker rules;
- Providing restitution (requiring a Broker to return money given to them by a Licensee) as a remedy to Brokers' clients for TLC rule violations;
- Strengthened Brokers' obligations to disclose interests in TLC-issued taxicab licenses and any related taxicab business services that those brokers offer to provide to their clients;
- Required that disclosures include any interests held by spouses, children, and other relatives of the Broker;
- Required the disclosure in writing of any actual conflicts in any transaction;
- Required written agreements between Brokers and their clients specifying all fees and costs charged by the Brokers and disclosing any fees paid to the Broker by a third party;
- Required that Brokers submit completed broker agreements to TLC;

It is required that Brokers complete for their clients and submit within 30 days to TLC, a plain language explanation of material loan terms for any financing or refinancing facilitated by Brokers.

These Rules are monitored and enforced by the TLC's new Business Practices Accountability Unit.

Expanding Vehicle Choice for Licensees

These rules took effect in March 2020 and provide greater vehicle choice for medallion owners. They also provide a broader selection of vehicles for passengers who use wheelchairs, allowing medallion owners to choose vehicles in addition to the Nissan NV200 Taxi of Tomorrow.

Individualized Summary Suspension Hearings

On December 2, the TLC voted and approved processes to give TLC licensed drivers additional rights and protections if a Licensee is arrested for a suspected crime.

In the interest of public safety, TLC may temporarily suspend the TLC License of a driver who is arrested for a serious crime. TLC licensed drivers have the right to challenge suspensions before an Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) of the Office of Administrative Trials and Hearings (OATH). Following the hearing, the ALJ makes a recommendation to the TLC Chairperson regarding continued suspension based on whether the driver's continued licensure pending resolution of the criminal charges presents a public safety risk. The Chairperson reviews the recommendation and makes a final decision regarding the Driver's License suspension. The new rules specify various factors that an Administrative Law Judge can consider when assessing whether a suspended driver poses a public safety risk. The Administrative Law Judge will now make a more individualized review

and examine the Licensee's history holistically, including criminal history and driving record, community standing, the specifics of the alleged crime, and anything else that would support lifting the suspension.

The new rules also allow TLC Licensees to request a Summary Suspension Hearing any time after a suspension and create shorter timelines for the Administrative Law Judge's written recommendation and the issuance of a decision. The rule changes will benefit TLC licensed drivers by affording them additional rights and a faster decision.

Miscellaneous Rule Amendments Package

This rule package clarified changes for our Licensees and for the general riding public. Among other things, it:

- Updates language in our rules relating to passengers with disabilities, wheelchair-accessible service, and service animals
- Removes references to a discontinued license category, the Dispatch Service Provider license
- Allows FHV bases that have franchise agreements pursuant to New York State law to pay drivers and pass along summonses in accordance with those agreements
- Increases the number of taxi medallions that can receive Taxi Improvement Fund (TIF) payments

Local Laws Affecting TLC Passed in 2020

Local Law 92

· Creates the Livery and Black Car Task Force, which will begin meeting in 2020 to evaluate threats to the viability of the traditional livery and black car industries and make recommendations to address those threats. The Task Force will begin meeting in January 2021.

Local Law 109

· Requires person who has any interest in a taxicab license to submit annual financial disclosures to the TLC.

Local Law 110

· Requires the TLC to evaluate the character and integrity of taxicab brokers, agents, and Licensees.

Local Law 111

· Creates an Office of Financial Stability to evaluate best practices in the medallion industry.

Following this report is an Appendix containing complaint and summons information.

Table 1: Top Ten Consumer Complaints, Calendar Year 2020

Complaint Type	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Total
For Hire Vehicle Complaint - Driver Complaint - Non Passenger - Unsafe Driving	1100	1195	655	76	136	116	198	223	382	348	389	355	5173
Taxi Complaint - Driver Complaint - Non Passenger - Unsafe Driving - Non-Passenger	145	157	86	6	24	35	68	52	50	72	58	53	806
Lost Property - Electronics/Phones - Cell Phone	216	242	98	10	9	18	24	25	47	41	38	33	801
Lost Property - Bag/Wallet - Wallet	149	167	85		8		21	31	32	40	33	34	600
Taxi Complaint - Driver Complaint - Passenger - Discourteous	77	72	34	6	15	21	31	40	36	32	37	29	430
Taxi Complaint - Driver Complaint - Passenger - Fare/Tip Complaint	124	86	48	7	9	16	21	32	27		17	27	414
Lost Property - Other - Other	100	84	49		8	15			32	23	21	18	350
Taxi Complaint - Driver Complaint - Passenger - Fare/Tip Complaint - Credit Card	92	88	36	12									228
Taxi Complaint - Driver Complaint - Passenger - Refused Pick-Up	60	75	34			16	26						211
Lost Property - Bag/Wallet - Backpack	84	76	49										209
Total	2147	2242	1174	117	209	237	389	403	606	556	593	549	9222

Table 2: Outcomes of Consumer Complaints, Calendar Year 2020

Month	Summonses issued	Actual Hearings	Settlements accepted	Defaults	Guilty Pleas	Guilty Pleas (Mail)
January	636	105	1153	72	7	0
February	914	103	684	149	2	0
March	521	39	942	97	1	0
April	1119	0	340	4	0	0
May	346	0	167	1	0	0
June	206	0	69	5	0	0
July	89	1	100	155	1	0
August	164	9	245	355	3	0
September	171	33	301	402	4	0
October	195	29	413	496	8	1
November	216	28	257	380	5	0
December	210	5	369	0	0	0
2020 Total	4,787	352	5,040	2,116	31	1

Table 3 (next page): Enforcement Statistics, Calendar Year 2020

