


BOARD REPORT
CITY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ITEM #6

Date: November 21, 2024

To: Board of Taxicab Commissioners

From: Laura R. Cornejo, General Manager 

Subject: **APPEAL OF AHMED EMARA CONCERNING THE DEPARTMENT'S AUGUST 27, 2024, DECISION TO RECOMMEND PERMANENT REVOCATION OF HIS TAXICAB DRIVER PERMIT FOR VIOLATING TAXICAB RULE BOOK SECTION 800, RULES 842 AND 843**

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Board:

1. **FIND** that on May 21, 2024, the Department investigated Ahmed Emara (Emara) due to an overcharge complaint submitted by a passenger. The investigation found that Emara violated Taxi Rule 842 (overcharge) 13 times on May 4, 2024. Emara was suspended for seven days on July 30, 2024.
2. **FIND** that on July 30, 2024, the Department decided to audit all of Emara's May 2024, airport working days to determine if there was an overcharge pattern.
3. **FIND** that the Department's investigation determined that Emara violated Taxi Rule 842 (overcharge) and Taxi Rule 843 (not taking the shortest, most economical route). Emara was issued Hearing Notice 066230 on August 20, 2024. On August 27, 2024, a hearing was conducted, and Emara was found guilty of violating both Taxi Rules.
4. **INFORM** Emara that he is permanently revoked from possessing a Los Angeles City taxicab driver permit due to the egregious violations he has committed.

INITIATED BY

On August 27, 2024, Ahmed Emara, Permit #629033, appealed the Department's decision to recommend the revocation of his taxicab driver's permit. On August 27, 2024, Emara submitted a "Request for Hearing Before the Board of Taxicab Commissioners" appeal form (Attachment 1) pursuant to Taxicab Rule Book Section 900, Rules 905.

DISCUSSION

The Department issued Emara his initial taxicab driver permit on September 11, 2023. The taxicab driver permit is valid for United Independent Taxi Cooperative Inc. 's (UITC) cab company and will expire on September 27, 2024. This is Emara's first taxicab driver permit to operate within the City of Los Angeles.

On May 21, 2024, Authorized Taxicab Supervision, Inc. (ATS) informed the Department that a complaint was submitted against Emara for an overcharge that took place on May 4, 2024. Investigative staff obtained trip records from UITC and cab report records from ATS. After cross-referencing ATS and UITC records, it was determined that Emara overcharged the complainant by starting his meter approximately 20 minutes before the passenger was loaded into the taxicab. On July 30, 2024, Emara was suspended for seven days for this violation. Further investigation into the matter also found that Emara started his meter early 13 times on May 4, 2024, resulting in overcharges.

On July 30, 2024, the Department decided to conduct a follow-up audit of the days that Emara worked out of the airport during the month of May to identify any patterns. Investigative staff examined 25 total trips that took place on May 22, 2024 (seven trips), May 24, 2024 (nine trips), and May 29, 2024 (nine trips). UITC provided records for all trips on the dates listed. The investigation determined that Emara started his meter early on all 25 trips, resulting in multiple overcharges (Taxi Rule 842). Furthermore, Emara was found to violate Taxi Rule 843 (not taking the shortest, most economical, and direct route) on four separate occasions, also resulting in overcharges.

On August 20, 2024, Emara was interviewed about the allegations brought against him. In regards to starting his meter early, Emara stated, "I do not know why it's saying that". Emara was asked to describe his process of picking up passengers at LAX and he stated, "I get my ticket from the ATS lot and then go to the passenger pickup area and I have the passenger type their address into my phone and then push the meter", indicating that he has a thorough knowledge of the pickup process. Emara was then shown trip records that contradict his passenger pickup process, such as his tendency to start the meter at the ATS holding lot located at the 6100 block of 98th St. In Addition, Emara was then questioned about four trips in which he did not take the shortest route to the customer's destination. Emara stated, "I only take my GPS on my phone". Emara was issued Hearing Notice 066230 and later found guilty of all charges on August 27, 2024.

CONCLUSION

Based on the information gathered and the totality of the findings, the Department recommends that Emara's LADOT driver permit be revoked permanently and be denied from holding any future City of Los Angeles driver or attendant permit.

APPLICABLE REGULATIONS

Taxicab Rule 842. A driver shall not request, demand, arrange for or collect any compensation in an amount greater than (overcharge) the taxicab rate applicable to the service provided. For any overcharge involving fraudulent Cityride scrip or credit/debit card activity, the penalty shall be revocation. (Major)

Taxicab Rule 843. A driver shall use the shortest, most economical and most direct available route on all trips unless otherwise specifically approved by the passenger. (Major)

Taxicab Rule 905. Appeal of Department Assessed Penalties - Driver and Taxicab Services Company Violations: A driver or Taxicab Services Company may appeal the decision of the Department by filing with the Department an Appeal Request Form within ten working days of the Department hearing. Such Appeal Form shall present the basis for protesting the decision of the Department.

SEC. 71.07. THE BOARD’S POWER TO REVOKE OR SUSPEND DRIVER, ATTENDANT, OR VEHICLE PERMITS.
(Title and Section Amended by Ord. No. 165,491, Eff. 3/19/90.)

The Board shall have the power after public hearing to deny, revoke, suspend or cancel any driver, attendant, or vehicle permit for which this article makes provision. The exercise of such power, except in an emergency situation involving public health and safety, shall be subject to the affected permittee having been given adequate notice of the hearing, the proposed action, the reasons thereof, a copy of the charges upon which the action is based, and the permittee shall have the right to respond, either orally or in writing.

SEC. 71.08. GROUNDS FOR DENIAL, REVOCATION, SUSPENSION OR CANCELLATION OF PERMIT.
(Amended by Ord. No. 150,456, Eff. 12/30/77.)

The following shall constitute grounds for denial, revocation, suspension or cancellation of any driver, attendant, or vehicle permit for which this article makes provision: (First para. amended by Ord. No. 165,491, Eff. 3/19/90.)

- (a) Arrest for the commission of any crime while driving a vehicle defined in Section [71.00](#) or any crime involving moral turpitude;
- (b) Violation of any rule or regulation of the Board, any section of the Los Angeles Municipal Code, Los Angeles Administrative Code and other ordinances of the City, any rule or regulation of the Department of Airports, and any section of a State Statute or Administrative Code, relating to the operation of a vehicle defined in Sec. [71.00](#) and for which a permit is required under this article.


Attachments

- 1. Appeal form
- 2. UITC 34 Dispatch & ATS records
- 3. Appellant's written statement

NA

Denied: 11/21/2024

Board of Taxicab Commissioners



Commission Executive Assistant

