


STATE OF MARYLAND
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

DATE: October 23, 2013
TO: All Baltimore City and Baltimore County Taxicab Associations
FROM: Christopher Koermer, Director of Transportation 
SUBJECT: Baltimore City Passenger-For-Hire Services Tax

In reference to the recently enacted Baltimore City Passenger-For-Hire Services Tax (please refer to Baltimore City Code, Article 28, Subtitle 24), the Transportation Division has received inquiries from several of the Associations and Permit Holders asking how the tax may be collected. The tax is imposed on "every person who operates a passenger-for-hire service within, from, or to Baltimore City" that provides limousine service¹, sedan service², and taxicab service³. For the purposes of authorizing the collection of this tax from passengers, the Commission's jurisdiction is limited to taxicabs and other passenger-for-hire services that are licensed by the Commission to operate in Baltimore City and Baltimore County.

There are several provisions of the Public Utilities Article (PUA) and the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) that govern the Commission's regulation of taxicabs.

Public Utilities Article 10-210 (a) states: (1) A taxicab permit holder shall post in each of its taxicabs a schedule of its fares on a rate card. (2) The rate card shall be printed and arranged in a way that allows a passenger to determine the exact fare payable by the passenger. (3) A person may not collect a fare other than a fare appearing on or determinable from the rate card posted in the taxicab. Additionally, COMAR states at 20.90.01.06 N that while driving a taxicab, a licensee "shall charge only the rate of fare or charge established by law."

¹ PUA §10-101(e)(1) states "'Limousine service'" means operating a motor vehicle for hire using a motor vehicle classified as a Class Q (limousine) vehicle under § 13-939 of the Transportation Article."

² PUA §10-101(j)(1) states "'Sedan service'" means operating a motor vehicle for hire using a motor vehicle designed to carry 15 or fewer individuals, including the driver."

³ PUA §10-101(h) states "'Provide taxicab services' means to operate a motor vehicle for hire that, in addition to other services: (1) is advertised or held out to the public as a taxicab or as providing taxicab services; (2) regardless of how or when engaged, provides for-hire service between points chosen by the passenger for service and for a fare that is based on the distance traveled, the time elapsed, or both; or (3) is engaged by the passenger for service between points chosen by the passenger that is provided through: (i) hail from the street or other locations; or (ii) request made at a taxi stand or other location where the motor vehicle is standing and waiting for service."

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Therefore, in order to collect any fare above the currently authorized rates, Taxicab Associations must file a petition with the Commission requesting approval to add the additional charge to the posted rate card.

In lieu of each Association submitting a new rate card for each licensed taxicab that clearly displays the new city tax, the Taxicab Associations may propose to the Commission, within 7 business days of this notice, a request for a single uniform sticker that will clearly inform passengers of the amount of tax that drivers are permitted to collect from each passenger, consistent with the requirements of Baltimore City Code, Article 28, Subtitle 24. Upon Commission approval, the new sticker will be affixed to the current, posted rate card of all operating taxicabs in Baltimore City and Baltimore County. To expedite the implementation of the new stickers, the Transportation Division will require Associations to self-certify with the Commission within 30 days that they have affixed the approved sticker to all current rate cards in lieu of an inspection.