

## **Chapter 46: Substitute Ordinance at a Glance**

### **Accessibility Provisions**

#### Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle Mandate

- Not less than two percent of all vehicles-for-hire (VFH) operating in Houston must consist of wheelchair accessible vehicles (WAV) or vehicles equipped to provide for hire transportation services to individuals who require the use of a wheelchair.

#### Charges for the Task Force

- The responsibilities of the Houston Transportation Accessibility Task Force (Task Force) will include but not be limited to :
  - Gathering empirical and anecdotal evidence about the quality of accessible VFH service in Houston
  - Suggesting guidelines for and evaluating the accessibility plans submitted by all VFH companies in Houston
  - Determining whether it is necessary to increase or decrease the City's WAV mandate
  - Providing targeted recommendations regarding the implementation of the City's WAV mandate across specific VFH classes
  - Creating standards for minimum driver training requirements
  - Assessing VFH response times for individuals with disabilities
  - Recommending further penalties and incentives to encourage compliance from both companies and drivers

#### Composition of the Task Force

- The administration shall appoint, subject to Council approval, an appropriate number of individuals to serve on the Task force. A majority of these representatives will come from the Houston disability community. Not less than two representatives from each VFH category will also be appointed to serve on the Task Force.
- The City Attorney shall designate a representative from the Legal Department to render legal advice and attend Task Force meetings but will not be a member of the Task Force.

#### Presenting the Recommendations to City Council

- The Director of ARA shall evaluate and report the findings and recommendations of the Task Force to City Council no sooner than six months after the effective date of the ordinance and not later than the first anniversary of the effective date of the ordinance.
- City Council shall evaluate all Task Force recommendations.

### Complaint Resolution

- Transportation Network Companies (TNC) must provide the name, phone number, and email address of their customer service liaison on both their mobile application and the receipt provided to the passenger in order to provide immediate customer complaint resolution.

### Incentivizing Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles

- WAVs may be operated beyond any applicable age and mileage requirements pursuant to passing a rigorous third party mechanical inspection.

### Non-compliance penalties

- The proposed ordinance contains strong non-discrimination language that specifically protects individuals with disabilities. It also references language in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to ensure that individuals with disabilities receive “consistent and equivalent transportation service.”
- The proposed ordinance removes the “three strike rule” for suspension and revocation hearings. Now a hearing to suspend or revoke a license, permit, or certificate of registration can be held after one instance of an egregious offense, such as discrimination. These hearings can suspend or revoke the operating authority of both drivers and companies.