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Seattle
Finance &
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City of Seattle **Department of Finance and Administrative Services**	FOR-HIRE TRANSPORTATION-03-2024	Clerk File 321466
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Subject: Uniform Vehicle Safety Inspection Report, Approved Mechanics and Failed Field Inspections for Transportation Network Company Vehicles	Code and Section Reference(s): SMC 6.310.270.R, .325.E, and .452.K SMC 6.310.140 (rulemaking authority)	
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Rule FOR-HIRE TRANSPORTATION-03-2024
Uniform Vehicle Safety Inspection Report, Approved Mechanics and Failed Field Inspections for Transportation Network Company Vehicles
(SMC 6.310.270.R, .325.E, and .452.K)

Uniform Vehicle Safety Inspection Report and Approved Mechanics

1. Each transportation network company (TNC) endorsed vehicle shall pass a uniform vehicle safety inspection, pursuant to this rule, certified by a mechanic approved by the Director of the Department of Finance and Administrative Services (FAS) or his or her designee (the Department Director) prior to providing services and annually thereafter.

2. Mechanics who sign a uniform vehicle safety inspection must be approved by the Department Director. A single approved mechanic or a group of mechanics at a single location must hold valid certificates of competency issued by the National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) in the following:

   a. engine repair,
   b. suspension and steering,
   c. brakes, and
   d. heating and air conditioning, or
   e. be currently certified as a master automobile technician.

   All certificates of competency must be current. If certificates expire, the approval issued by the Department Director shall be null and void. Approved mechanics may not own, lease, or drive a taxicab, for-hire vehicle or TNC endorsed vehicle. Approved mechanics must sign indicating approval or failure for inspections prior to the inspection being recorded in the Vehicle Safety Inspection Database (VSID).

3. The approved mechanic must verify that the decals, customer notices, and other markings, as required by the City are legible and properly displayed as specified in this rule. Further, the approved mechanic must verify a vehicle's license type aligns with its affiliated company or association; e.g., the TNC license type aligns with a TNC and not with a taxi association or a for-hire vehicle company.

Vehicle Type	External Markings	Interior Notices/Signs
TNC Endorsed Vehicle	**Endorsement Decal**: Fixed to inside surface of windshield in the center above rear-view mirror. The endorsement decal is not required for initial license inspections.	

4. All vehicle safety inspections require the mechanic to visually inspect under the vehicle. This shall be accomplished using a lift, pit or other procedure that allows the mechanic to get under the vehicle. Vehicle safety inspections shall include thorough inspection of the following safety items:

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Inspection Item	Criteria for Passing
a. Foot pedals	Must have rubber or comparable material foot pads in good condition (no metal showing).
b. Brake system	Must operate properly and have no defects. Emergency brake capable of holding vehicle on a 30-degree incline in neutral.
c. Suspension and steering	Must operate properly and have no defects.
d. Windshield and wipers	No chips or cracks larger than one inch. Wipers must operate properly and dispense washer fluid.
e. Rear window and other glass	No chips or cracks larger than one inch and must operate properly.
f. Heating and cooling	Must operate properly and have no defects.
g. Exterior lights	Covered with undamaged lenses and all bulbs operating properly including headlights, high beams, taillights, turn indicators, hazard lights, brake lights, high center brake light, back-up lights and license plate light.
h. Interior lights	Covered with undamaged lenses and all bulbs operating properly, including dome light.
i. Seats	Front seat adjustment mechanism operates properly. All seats are in undamaged condition and fastened securely.
j. Doors and hardware	Must operate properly and have no defects.
k. Horn	Must operate properly.
l. Instrument panel and gauges	Must operate properly and have no defects.
m. Bumpers	No sharp edges or any defect which is 1/2 inch at the deepest point of depression.
n. Muffler and exhaust system	Must operate properly and have no defects.
o. Tires including spare tire, tire jack, lug wrench, and jack handle or comparable equipment	Wheels (including spare) must be properly aligned, inflated, free of defects, and have a minimum tread depth of 2/32 inch. There must be a tire jack, jack handle, and lug wrench or comparable equipment to ensure vehicle can operate immediately after occurrence of a flat tire.
p. Interior and exterior rear-view mirrors	Free of cracks and defects.

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Inspection Item	Criteria for Passing
q. Safety belts and air bags	Must operate properly. Air bag indicator lights must operate per manufacturer standards.
r.	
s. Wheelchair accessible vehicles	Must meet the following from 49 Code of Federal Regulations §38.23, §38.25 and §38.31: • Design load – ramp shall be 30 inches or longer and shall support 600 pounds; • Ramp surface – ramp surface shall be continuous, slip resistant, have a clear width of 30 inches and accommodate both three-wheel and four-wheel mobility aids; • Ramp threshold – ramp shall have no more than 1/4 inch at transition from sidewalk to vehicle floor; • Ramp barriers – ramp shall have side barriers at least two inches high; • Attachment – ramp shall be firmly attached to the vehicle; • Stowage – mobility aid or wheelchair shall be secured from movement and present no hazard to the passenger; • Contrast – boarding edge of ramp shall have a band of color running the full width of the edge which contrasts from the ramp surface, either light on dark or dark on light; • Securement devices – when the wheelchair or mobility aid is secured, the securement devices shall limit the movement of an occupied wheelchair or mobility aid to no more than two inches in any direction under normal vehicle operating conditions; • Seat belt and shoulder harness – seat and shoulder harness shall be provided for each mobility aid or wheelchair and • Lighting – shall illuminate the ramp.
t. Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) Fuel Systems (inspection to be completed by a CSA Group Certified CNG Fuel System Inspector)	All vehicles with CNG fuel supply systems must meet the following requirements: • NFPA 52-6.4.4 Vents shall not exit into a wheel well; • NFPA 52-6.5.7 Fuel lines shall be mounted, braced, and supported to minimize vibration and should be protected against damage, corrosion, or breakage due to strain or wear; • NFPA 52-6.6.1 Every cylinder shall be equipped with a manual shut off valve; • NFPA 52- 6.6.2.4 Where a manual valve is used, the valve location shall be indicated with the words "MANUAL SHUTOFF VALVE"; • NFPA 52-6.11.1 Vehicles equipped with a CNG fuel system shall bear the following durable labels: a label readily visible and located in the engine compartment shall include the following:

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Inspection Item	Criteria for Passing
	○ Identification as a CNG-fueled vehicle; ○ System service pressure; ○ Installer's name or company; ○ Container retest date or expiration date; ○ Total container water volume in gallons; • NFPA 52-6.11.3 Vehicle must have a weather resistant, diamond shaped label located on an exterior vertical surface or near vertical surface on the lower right rear of the vehicle; e.g., on the trunk lid of the vehicle, but not on the bumper and • CNG fuel receptacles must be checked for wear with the Go No/Go gauge.

Note: All equipment must operate properly, and the vehicle owner has responsibility for ensuring all damage is repaired. Replacement equipment shall meet manufacturer's original specifications.

5. Regardless if the vehicle passes or fails, the inspection shall be entered into the *Uniform Vehicle Safety Inspection Database* on the same day of the inspection.

6. An approved mechanic shall not issue a passing *Uniform Vehicle Safety Inspection Report* until all inspection items meet the criteria for passing (above).

7. A vehicle that has been in a collision and determined by the insurance adjuster to be a "total wreck" or having the term "rebuilt" or other applicable brand noted on the certificate of ownership or vehicle registration per Washington Administrative Code Section 308-56A-530, shall not be placed in service, or back in service, as a TNC endorsed vehicle until an approved mechanic with a current ASE certification in “structural analysis and damage repair” has verified that there is no damage to the vehicle frame or an I-CAR Gold Class shop has verified that there is no damage to the vehicle frame. This inspection is separate from the uniform vehicle safety inspection completed each year.

8. A vehicle determined by the insurance adjuster to be a “total wreck” or having the term “rebuilt” or other applicable brand noted on the certificate of ownership or vehicle registration per Washington Administrative Code Section 308-56A-530, shall not be placed in service, or put back into service, as a TNC endorsed vehicle until an approved airbag technician has verified that the airbag system is working properly.

9. All vehicles with a CNG fuel system shall pass a CNG inspection annually completed by a CSA Group Certified CNG Fuel System Inspector. This inspection is separate from the uniform vehicle safety inspection completed each year. The inspector shall verify the tank is installed per NFPA standards and is still operating properly. A copy of the CNG inspection report shall be filed with the Department Director.

10. The Department Director will require a subsequent inspection if a vehicle has changed its affiliated company or association, has been replaced by another vehicle or was involved in an accident. In addition, a vehicle that has not passed a uniform vehicle safety inspection shall not operate until it passes a subsequent inspection.

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A person found operating a vehicle that has failed the inspection and has not passed a subsequent inspection shall be penalized because such a vehicle is considered unlicensed. The first offense results in a civil infraction with monetary penalties, and any subsequent violation could result in a misdemeanor charge.

11. All inspections must be entered into the *Uniform Vehicle Safety Inspection Database* provided by the Department Director on the same day as the inspections. If the *Uniform Vehicle Safety Inspection Database* is not operating properly, paper forms shall be provided by the Department Director. Paper forms should only be used when the database is down. City officials may audit these records on demand during normal business hours.

12. Approved mechanics are required to sign-off on or supervise vehicle safety inspections but are not required to perform the inspection. If another mechanic is performing the inspection, that mechanic's name shall be recorded in the *Uniform Vehicle Inspection Database*. The approving mechanic's name shall also be recorded.

13. Should an approved mechanic be found in violation of the procedures outlined in this Rule and of the SMC, the Department Director shall take the following steps. Violations could include, but are not limited to, incomplete inspections; failure to use a lift, pit or other procedure to inspect under a vehicle; failure to supervise a mechanic that is not certified, or substantiated complaints from drivers.

    a. **First instance** – the Department Director shall issue a verbal warning and inform mechanic that removal from the approved mechanic list could occur if there is another violation.

    b. **Second instance** (if it occurs within six months of the first instance) – the Department Director shall issue a five-day removal from the approved mechanic list and removal from access to the *Uniform Vehicle Safety Inspection Database* (after all inspections are entered into the system within 24 hours of notice of removal). Removal begins upon entry of all inspections. Failure to timely enter all inspections could result in a longer removal from the approved mechanic list.

    For removals of five days or longer, the Department Director shall require retraining before placing the mechanic back on the approved list. Any inspections completed within the suspended timeframe could result in permanent removal as an approved mechanic.

    In addition, the Department Director shall send written notice to any taxicab association, for-hire vehicle company and/or TNC known by the Department Director to be affiliated with the approved mechanic to inform it of the enforcement action taken against the approved mechanic.

    c. **Third instance** (if it occurs within six months of the second instance) – the Department Director shall issue a minimum 30-day removal from the approved mechanic list and removal from access to VSID (after all inspections up to that point are entered into the system).

    d. **Fourth instance** (if it occurs within one year of the third instance) – the Department Director shall issue a minimum one-year removal from the approved mechanic list and removal from access to VSID (after all inspections up to that point are entered into the system).

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The Department Director shall retain discretion to issue a removal longer than one year, including permanent removal from the approval list, based on the severity and/or pervasive nature of the violations. Mechanics subject to removals for one year or longer, including permanent removals, may appeal the removal to the Department Director. In the case of a hearing before a designee, that person cannot directly supervise the inspector who issued the removal.

The request for an appeal must be in writing and received by the Department Director within 10 calendar days of the date of the notice of removal. The removal is final if the mechanic fails to timely request an appeal to the Department Director. If the appeal request is timely, the mechanic will have an opportunity to provide evidence to refute or mitigate the removal. The appeal hearing shall be held no more than seven business days from the date received by FAS. The Department Director will issue an appeal decision within three business days of the appeal proceeding. The appeal decision is final and can affirm, reverse or adjust the length of the removal.

Failed Field Inspections

Summary suspension of the endorsement shall occur when a TNC endorsed vehicle fails a routine field inspection (outside of the annual inspection process) conducted by the Department Director.

The summary suspension notice shall be issued in person, by email or by first-class mail to the endorsement holder. A copy of the suspension shall be issued by email to the TNC(s) (based on vehicle trade dress displayed at time of inspection and/or the company identified in the vehicle's record in the *Uniform Vehicle Safety Inspection Database*).

The summary suspension remains in effect until the vehicle has either (1) passed a new uniform vehicle safety inspection, which shall be recorded in the *Uniform Vehicle Safety Inspection Database*, or (2) the Department Director receives satisfactory proof the violation has been cured.

A driver cannot continue to engage in the activity for which the endorsement is required pending an appeal of the summary suspension. A driver shall be penalized if found to be operating a vehicle under summary suspension because such a vehicle is considered unlicensed. The first offense results in a civil infraction with monetary penalties, and any subsequent violation could result in a misdemeanor charge.

The Department Director shall notify in person, by email or by first-class mail the endorsement holder once the violation has been cured. A copy of the notice shall be emailed to the TNC(s) with which the endorsement holder is affiliated.