

City of Watertown, Public Transit Program

Debarment, Suspension of Service, Passenger Eligibility Policy and Appeal Procedure

Introduction: The City of Watertown sponsors a Public Transit (shared-ride taxi) program for the benefit of the citizens of the City. The taxi service is paid for with funds from the Federal Transit Administration, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, the city and specific contributions designated for the program. Users of the program pay a user fee (hereinafter referred to as the fare). During hours when the program is open for business, all requests for service within the City limits are honored on a curb-to-curb basis per the eligibility criteria outlined in this policy. This paper also establishes reasons why individuals might be suspended from using the service, and also outlines the appeals process available to them.

POLICY PROVISIONS

Passengers Requiring Assistance

1. Minors under the age of 6 may not travel without accompaniment of a reasonable companion. A companion must be able to assist the passenger in paying the required fare and in getting from the pickup address to the taxi vehicles and a companion must also assist the passenger from the vehicle to the destination address.
2. Persons of any age judged to be incompetent may not travel without an aide who has authority to make decisions for that individual.
3. Individuals using wheelchairs and other mobility devices shall be eligible for assistance in boarding and deboarding the taxi vehicle provided they are able to get to the sidewalk level without assistance from the taxi driver.
4. In the cases of items (1) and (2) only one fare shall be charged, with the companion or aide being responsible to assure that the fare is paid.

Prohibited Behaviors

No one exhibiting any of the following behaviors may use the service:

1. Any illegal activity
2. Any violent act or threat of violent act.
3. Personal hygiene issues which may present a pathogen hazard or seriously effect well-being of the driver or other passengers shall be regarded as disruptive behavior.
4. Non-payment of the cab fare.
5. Excessive “no-shows”. Customers are encouraged to call at least 30 minutes in advance if they need to cancel a service request. Cancellations made less than 30 minutes prior to a scheduled pickup shall be regarded as a No-Show. A customer shall be considered to have excessive “no-shows” if that individual has more than two such occurrences during a 30 day period.

6. If, when requesting service, a person indicates the intent to act in any manner consistent with any of these prohibited behaviors.

Suspension of Service Due to Prohibited Behaviors

1. Any illegal, violent or disruptive behavior as described in the above section shall result in an immediate seven (7)-day suspension from service. After the suspension has begun, the manager of the taxi provider shall review the particulars of the incident. Upon the conclusion of this review, the suspension can be either sustained or lifted immediately.
2. If the suspension is for failure to pay the appropriate cab fare, the resulting suspension shall continue until the appropriate payment is made.
3. Excessive “no-shows” as outlined in (5) above shall result in a suspension from service as follows:
 - a. 1 or 2 no shows in 30 days not excessive, no suspension warranted
 - b. 3 no-shows in a 30 day period letter or warning sent
 - c. 4 no shows in a 30-day period three (3) day suspension of service
 - d. 5 no shows in a 30-day period seven (7) day suspension of service
 - e. 6 no shows in a 30-day period thirty (30) day suspension of service
 - f. Any subsequent violations will merit a 30-day suspension of service regardless of the original date of the no-show violations.

Appeals

Appeals to any suspension shall be made in writing (either by mail or e-mail) sent to the City Clerk at Watertown City Hall. The appeal shall include the words: “Appeal of Taxicab Suspension.” Any appeal must be filed within 30 days of the date of suspension to be considered. The City shall process any appeal received within 30 days of receipt, and may contact the appellant and others in conducting the review. If the appellant does not provide the requested additional information to the City, the City can administratively close the appeal. The appellant may choose to no longer pursue the appeal at any time during this process. When the City has concluded its review, it will issue a letter either modifying, affirming or erasing the suspension.

Additional Appeals

If an appellant wishes to dispute the decision of City Staff, they may file an appeal of that decision within 14 days to the Transit Commission of the City of Watertown. The Commission shall hear the appeal at its next scheduled meeting. The decision of the Commission shall be final and binding.

