

## **TLC in 2023: Historic Strides, Including Driver Pay, Debt Relief, Safety and Sustainability**

*The Year Saw a Raft of Successful TLC Initiatives and Accomplishments Focused on Supporting Drivers; Improving Customer Service; Expanding Safety and Vision Zero, and Launching the Groundbreaking Green Rides Initiative*

**NEW YORK, NY** – As 2023 comes to a close, the New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission is proud to point to a substantial list of accomplishments over the past year, many of which support drivers and the continuing recovery of the industry. The remarkable year culminated with a historic initiative designed to make the city’s rideshare fleet the first in the nation to be 100% zero-emissions and wheelchair accessible by 2030.

“This year, we were able to roll out some very important and impactful initiatives, most of them designed to keep improving conditions and opportunities for our drivers,” **said TLC Commissioner David Do**. “I’m extremely proud and thankful to my TLC team for their hard work, and to Mayor Adams and Deputy Commissioner of Operations Joshi for standing behind us as we blazed new trails that will have long-term benefits for the city and the industry.”

Highlights of TLC’s 2023 accomplishments:

**Increasing Driver Minimum Pay:** In March, TLC was able to secure a minimum pay raise for its high-volume for-hire vehicle (Uber and Lyft) licensees, who were struggling with rising fuel, vehicle, and maintenance costs, as well as inflation. Coupled with an inflation adjustment, the raise amounted to a much-needed pay increase of about 9%.

**Providing Debt Relief to Small Medallion Owners:** TLC expanded the qualifying conditions for the Medallion Relief Program Plus (MRP+), which has provided critical debt-relief for thousands of medallion owners, preventing many from losing their homes. TLC launched MRP+ in 2022, and in 2023 added more than \$100 million in relief, so far totaling \$452 million for 2,293 medallions.

**Launching a Groundbreaking Sustainability and Accessibility Initiative:** The historic Green Rides Initiative launched in October and immediately received national recognition. The initiative requires all NYC rideshare trips to be either wheelchair accessible or zero-emissions by 2030. It will help drivers save money on fuel and maintenance costs, provide them a path towards owning their own small business, and be a catalyst for the city’s EV infrastructure. It will ultimately reduce 600 metric tons of carbon emissions, while also expanding accessibility.

**Hittin’ the Road with Van Hailin’:** TLC’s mobile outreach vehicle—Van Hailin’—was based on Mayor Adams’s commitment to improving customer service and came about with direct input from TLC licensees. It launched early in the year and has gone on to become hugely popular. Van Hailin’ has helped over 1,000 drivers with on-site drug tests, settlements, and licensing queries, saving them trips to the agency’s Long Island City office. The van will continue visiting a different borough every month in 2024, providing them with services right where they live and work.

**Revitalizing the Street Hail Livery (SHL) Sector:** [The SHL Pilot Program](#), passed in May, was designed as an option for SHL drivers who returned permits, eliminating costs associated with green taxis. Crafted with industry feedback, the 2,500 permits were a boost for livery bases, since drivers needed to affiliate with them. Importantly, it bolsters service in the outer boroughs — especially non-emergency medical transportation, which is a key part of the initiative.

**Expanding Yellow Electric Vehicle Options:** TLC expanded the criteria for what vehicles can qualify to be an electric taxi. Prior to 2021, only the Tesla Model 3 was eligible to be hacked up as a yellow cab. With new, less stringent [requirements](#), a larger number of vehicles qualify, easing the eventual transition to a cleaner taxi fleet and giving drivers more options.

**Honoring the Safest Drivers:** For the first time since the pandemic, TLC held an in-person [Vision Zero Honor Roll](#) ceremony, honoring the 500 safest TLC drivers, bases, fleets, and accessibility leaders for their outstanding safety, service and commitment to providing transportation to those who use wheelchairs. The drivers represented each borough and 78 nations of origin. TLC Honor Roll drivers completed over 7.4 million trips in a roughly four-year period, avoiding serious crashes and committing no traffic violations.

**Increasing Options for Liveries:** By removing the costly requirement for livery drivers to install a partition or camera in their livery vehicle, TLC was able to remove some costly, outdated hack up requirements for liveries. Thanks to this rule, passed in August, drivers can also choose from a more robust list of in-vehicle cameras and are not required to use specific cameras that were expensive and outdated.

**Doing the “New York Twist” for Public Safety:** Rock legend Chubby Checker and the TLC launched a catchy public safety announcement called [The New York Twist](#). The PSA, which features Checker’s 1961 hit song, “Let’s Twist Again,” demonstrates a fast, simple movement people can do to prevent dooring cyclists. You can watch – and learn – how to “Do the NY Twist” [here](#).

**Saving Drivers Toll Charges for the Verrazano & Rockaways Bridges:** To save drivers money, TLC [amended its rules](#) for how tolls to Staten Island and the Rockaways are paid. Too often, drivers who took trips to these areas were unable to pick up a returning fare and stuck paying the tolls out of their own pockets. Now, passengers going to those locations will cover the toll cost both ways, ensuring that drivers are not left shouldering the tolls.

**Providing FHV Drivers with a Storage Option:** The new, [short-term storage program](#) allows licensees to put their current FHV license in storage once every two-years for up to 90 consecutive days. This program will be helpful to licensees who may be traveling overseas for an extended period, or who may be experiencing issues with their vehicle.

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