DEPARTMENT OF FOR-HIRE VEHICLES

NOTICE OF EMERGENCY RULEMAKING

The Director of the Department of For-Hire Vehicles, pursuant to the authority set forth in Sections 8(c)(3), (4), and (19) of the Department of For-Hire Vehicles Establishment Act of 1985, effective March 25, 1986 (D.C. Law 6-97; D.C. Official Code §§ 50-301.07 (c)(3), (4), and (19) (2014 Repl. & 2019 Supp.)), hereby gives notice of the emergency amendments to Chapter 6 (Taxicab Parts and Equipment) of Title 31 (Taxicabs and Public Vehicles For Hire) of the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations (DCMR).

The emergency rulemaking amends Chapter 6 to allow the Department of For-Hire Vehicles ("Department") to reinstate the requirement of a safety partition in taxicabs to minimize the spread of infectious disease, particularly COVID-19, which necessitated a global pandemic and Public Health Emergency. This emergency rulemaking is necessary to protect the health, safety, and well-being of taxicab drivers and passengers in the District of Columbia.

The emergency rulemaking was adopted on September 10, 2020, took effect immediately, and will remain in effect for one hundred twenty (120) days after the date of its adoption, (expiring January 8, 2021), unless earlier superseded by an amendment or repeal by the Department.

Chapter 6, TAXICAB PARTS AND EQUIPMENT, of Title 31 DCMR, TAXICABS AND PUBLIC VEHICLES FOR HIRE, is amended as follows:

Section 601, TAXICAB VEHICLE PARTITION, is amended as follows:

Subsection 601.9 is amended to read as follows:

601.9 Effective October 19, 2020, each taxicab shall be equipped with a safety partition between the front and rear seats for the purpose of minimizing the spread of infectious diseases. The partition may be temporary or permanent and can be hard or flexible. The partition shall be installed so that it:

(a) Does not obstruct the vision of the driver to the rear or the vision of the passengers to the meter;

(b) Includes an opening that allows the driver and passenger to transact payment and receipt exchange;

(c) Does not impede entering into and exiting from the taxicab;

(d) Is not a hazard to passengers in the rear seat in case of an accident;

(e) Provides coverage between the front and rear seats with gaps no larger than four (4) inches at the edges;

(f) Can be easily cleaned;

(g) Can withstand air flow if the windows are open while the vehicle is in motion;

(h) Does not hinder passenger access to use of the passenger console, if applicable; and

(i) Meets all standards that the Department may issue in an administrative issuance.

Copies of this emergency rulemaking can be obtained at www.dcregs.dc.gov or by contacting the Department of For-Hire Vehicles, 2235 Shannon Place, S.E., Suite 3001, Washington, D.C. 20020.