

Meeting minutes: Governor's Committee on the Compensation, Wellbeing, and Fair Treatment of Transportation Network Company Drivers

Meeting date: **Aug. 15, 2023**

Minutes prepared by: Julie Klejewski

Location: Minnesota Room, Department of Labor and Industry (DLI), 443 Lafayette Road N., St. Paul, MN

Attendance

Members present

1. Eid Ali
2. Marianna Brown
3. Dawit Kassa
4. John Budd
5. Samantha Diaz
6. Steven Huser
7. Dan Meyers
8. Freddi Goldstein
9. Saahil Karpe
10. Carin Mrotz
11. Commissioner Nicole Blissenbach (co-chair)
12. Commissioner Grace Arnold (co-chair, online)

Absent: Shenika Chambers

DLI and Commerce staff members present

- Naheeda Hirji-Walji (DLI)
- Brittany Wysokinski (DLI)
- Ryan P. Anderson (DLI)
- Hared Mah (DLI)
- Jessica Stimac (DLI) – online
- Gretchen Longbehn (DLI)
- Julie Klejewski (DLI)
- Josiah Moore (DLI)
- Laura Zajac (DLI) – online
- Sara Payne (Commerce) – online

Agenda items

1. Call to order and roll call

Co-chair Nicole Blissenbach called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m. A roll call was taken and a quorum was present.

2. Approval of meeting agenda

A motion was made by Carin Mrotz and seconded by Dan Meyers to approve the agenda as presented. A vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

3. Approval of previous meeting minutes

A motion was made by Saahil Karpe and seconded by Marianna Brown to approve the July 25, 2023, meeting minutes with a revision under #5. *Schedule future meetings; item #9 – to now read: affordability for riders and counties, including those who RISE serves.* A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

4. Transportation network company (TNC) driver experience and perspective

Commissioner Blissenbach reminded members the meeting today will be focused on hearing from TNC drivers about their experiences and perspectives. The committee was asked a grounding question – for a commitment that all are in agreement to address the issues that are laid out in the Executive Order that was reviewed at the July meeting and to ensure all are on the same page in coming up with recommendations to the governor that address fair compensation, fair treatment and working conditions of TNC drivers in Minnesota. There was consensus. Blissenbach clarified it is OK for members to ask the drivers questions in response to their testimony.

The individuals listed below shared information about their experiences as drivers, including:

- bad behaviors of passengers, safety concerns, vulnerable to violent crimes, carjackings, some riders have weapons, such as guns;
 - background checks are done on drivers but not on riders, drivers do not know anything about the riders;
 - discrimination against drivers, racism, negative feedback from riders who could be intoxicated or do not tell the truth and it affects the driver's ability to continue on the platform;
 - process of deactivations – no reasons given, no due process;
 - working long hours, rates – mile/minute, trip radar, two drivers have same drop off/same pickup but one gets paid more than the other;
 - wages, low pay, struggles with finances and unable to support family;
 - attacked by rider and suffered injuries, no benefits, no communication from TNC;
 - damage to cars, car insurance – unaffordable and high deductibles;
 - some drivers shared screenshots of their phone app showing what the rider paid versus what the driver received – now the TNC stopped showing on the app what the rider paid;
 - riders upset with drivers when they think they will be charged \$150 (for example) for the ride when the driver may only be paid \$25, the rider thinks the driver is charging the money and they become upset, the driver has to explain the TNC is charging the money, riders show drivers a picture on their phone of what they have to pay so the driver is able to see;
 - want fair treatment from TNCs; and
 - drivers have a right to make decent living – the cost of everything has gone up (food, mortgages, cars, gasoline, maintenance, insurance).
1. Omar Ahmed – it was noted Ahmed is not a TNC driver, but is a representative of drivers through the Minnesota Rideshare Driver Association; he shared experiences heard from those drivers.

2. Shueb Mohamed, driver
3. Khaled Alhihi, driver
4. Moalin Abdulahi, driver
5. Farhan Beddal, driver
6. Adel Alhatabeh, driver
7. Abdullahi Abdi, driver
8. Ahmed Hirsi, driver
9. David Mutai, driver
10. Abdi Haybe, Service Employees International Union (SEIU)

The testifiers and the drivers who are committee members were thanked and appreciated for taking time out of their busy schedules, which means they have given up opportunities to work and earn wages, to attend the committee meeting. The stories they shared are very important to the discussions the committee is having and the ultimate recommendations.

A question was asked if this would be the only opportunity for driver testimony. Commissioner Blissenbach said the plan is to have the meetings be focused by topic areas. At the next meeting, Uber and Lyft representatives have been asked if they would come to talk a bit about how their platform runs from their perspective. After that meeting, the City of Minneapolis has been asked to come to talk about its regulation and, hopefully, the Metropolitan Airports Commission will come to address the committee about how it runs rides at the airport. When the committee moves into deeper discussions about topics such as deactivation and compensation, it will ask individuals who may have relevant information to come in to address the committee.

5. **Schedule of future meetings**

2023 dates (1 to 3 p.m.) – calendar invitations will be sent to committee members to reserve these dates.

- Thursday, Sept. 7
- Tuesday, Sept. 26
- Tuesday, Oct. 17
- Tuesday, Nov. 7
- Tuesday, Nov. 28
- Tuesday, Dec. 19

5. **Committee discussion of open forum**

The committee ran out of time; this item will be added to the Sept. 7 agenda.

Next meeting

Date: Thursday, Sept. 7, 2023

Time: 1 to 3 p.m.

Location: Minnesota Room, Department of Labor and Industry, 443 Lafayette Road N., St. Paul, MN

Adjournment

- A motion was made by Mrotz to adjourn the meeting and seconded by Brown; a vote was taken and passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 3:10 p.m.