

Questions and Answers

Transportation Network Services – Ride-hailing in BC

A. Transportation Network Services / Ride-hailing basics

1. *What is a Transportation Network Service?*

A Transportation Network Service (TNS), commonly referred to as ride-hailing, means a service where an app (online platform) is used to connect drivers and passengers, who pay through the app.

TNS does not include carpooling or vanpooling where friends or colleagues share a ride when going to the same destination and any compensation is related to operating costs or a vehicle's wear and tear.

2. *What is the difference between a Transportation Network Service and Ride-hailing?*

There is no difference. In B.C., under the *Passenger Transportation Act*, ride-hailing companies are referred to as Transportation Network Services.

3. *What is the difference between a taxi service and a Transportation Network Service?*

Taxis can accept rides that are street hailed or booked by phone, website or app. Taxis must charge Passenger Transportation Board (Board) approved rates. These are usually metered rates.

Transportation Network Services (TNS) are arranged and paid for by passengers through an app. TNSs cannot be street hailed. TNS companies must charge a minimum rate set by the Board.

4. *Is it cheaper to use Transportation Network Services versus a traditional taxi?*

Not necessarily. App rates for Transportation Network Services companies can fluctuate based on demand. At high demand times, TNS rates may be higher than taxi rates. Taxis have flexibility to decrease rates in off peak times. When TNS rates are high, you may wish to check taxi rates to see if they are cheaper.

5. *Can Transportation Network Services operate in B.C.?*

Yes they can, as of September 2019. Amendments to the *Passenger Transportation Act* were recently made to permit the operation of Transportation Network Services (TNS) in B.C.

As of September 3, 2019, persons interested in operating a TNS can apply to provide this service. Once approved and a licence is issued, they can operate in BC.

6. *Will I be able to order a ride-hail (TNS) in BC on September 4, 2019?*

No. On September 3, 2019, TNS companies may apply to operate a TNS. The *Passenger Transportation Act* has specific requirements that must be followed in processing applications. [For more information, please refer to the TNS Application Package.](#)

7. *What is the province's role with taxi services and Transportation Network Services?*

The provincial government sets legislation and policy governing transportation regulation.

An independent tribunal, the Passenger Transportation Board, makes decisions on applications for taxis, limousines and Transportation Network Services (TNS). The Board is required to consider three things, whether:

1. the applicant is a fit and proper person and capable of providing the service;
2. there is a public need for the service; and
3. the application would promote sound economic conditions in the passenger transportation business in the province.

The province through the Registrar of Passenger Transportation in the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure issues licences, and ensures safety requirements are in place for vehicles, drivers and passengers. It also monitors compliance and enforcement. For further information on the regulation of ride-hailing in BC see <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/transportation/vehicle-safety-enforcement/services/passenger-transportation/transportation-network-services>

8. *What does allowing Transportation Network Services in B.C. mean for taxis?*

Citizens told the Province that they wanted more options. Transportation Network Services give citizens more transportation options while maintaining safety requirements. Taxi services will remain an important part of the transportation network in the province, including providing service to individuals who do not wish to use, or don't have access to an app.

B. Transportation Network Services Regulation

9. *How does a person become authorized to operate a Transportation Network Services in BC?*

Transportation Network Services (TNS) need a licence with Special Authorization. The Passenger Transportation Board makes decisions on Special Authorization applications. For information on [how to obtain a Special Authorization and obtain a TNS licence](#).

10. *How does a person become a driver for a Transportation Network Service?*

Drivers operate under the authority of a licensed Transportation Network Service (TNS). To become a driver, you need to be hired by a TNS company. TNS drivers must have a Class 4 commercial driver's licence, complete a criminal record check and ensure that his or her vehicle meets specified requirements.

For further information on these requirements see <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/transportation/vehicle-safety-enforcement/services/passenger-transportation/transportation-network-services>

11. *What obligations does a Transportation Network Service have for drivers?*

A Transportation Network Service (TNS) must ensure that drivers meet requirements for operating as a driver for a TNS including monitoring and verifying criminal record checks and providing a record check certificate that must be prominently displayed on the TNS platform. Drivers must also have a valid Class 4 drivers licence, and the vehicle they use for the TNS must be less than 10 years old.

12. *What enforcement measures are in place to ensure Transportation Network Services comply with the rules?*

A TNS that is not in compliance with the Act, regulations or terms and conditions of a licence may receive an administrative penalty of up to \$50,000 per offence per day or may have its licence suspended or cancelled.

Unlicensed TNS and drivers can be fined up to \$100,000 for operating without a TNS licence.

Transportation Network Services / Ride-hailing in B.C.

13. Why do taxis and Transportation Network Services have different areas where they can pick up passengers?

Transportation Network Services will have larger operating areas than taxis because they need this under their business model.

Taxi operating areas have been in place for many years. The Passenger Transportation Board needs data in order to modify taxi operating areas. It now has authority to collect the required data and will be undertaking analysis over time.

Transportation Network Service operating areas are as follows:

<p>Region 1: (Lower Mainland, Whistler)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metro Vancouver • Fraser Valley • Squamish-Lillooet 	<p>Region 2(Capital)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital Regional District 	<p>Region 3 (Vancouver Island, excluding CRD)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cowichan Valley • Nanaimo • Comox Valley • Alberni-Clayoquot • Strathcona • Mt. Waddington • Qathet (Powell River)
<p>Region 4 (Okanagan-Kootenay Boundary-Cariboo)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Okanagan-Similkameen • Central Okanagan • North Okanagan • Kootenay Boundary • Shuswap Cariboo • Thompson-Nicola • Columbia 	<p>Region 5 (BC North Central & other regions of BC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fraser-Fort George • Bulkley Nechako • Kitimat-Stikine • Peace River • Northern Rockies • North Coast • Island Trust • Sunshine Coast 	

TNS companies operating in Vancouver will be prohibited from picking up passengers in the immediate vicinity around Canada Place on cruise ship days. This is a safety measure to ensure that traffic can flow, and pedestrians can move safely. Coal Harbour will not be affected by this geo-fencing.

14. How are app rates determined?

The Passenger Transportation Board will set the minimum rate that a Transportation Network Service must charge based on taxi flag rates in the operating area. There is no upper limit on rates.

Transportation Network Services may not use coupons or discounts to charge below the minimum rate.

15. Why are there no limits on maximum pricing/Why has nothing been done to prevent surge pricing?

Allowing “surge” pricing expands supply to meet demand. The TNS customer will be provided with an estimate of the cost of the trip or the up-front price that will be charged before they accept a ride. Customers should do their research and make an informed decision. When app rates are high customers may consider street hailing or checking taxi rates to see if they are cheaper.

16. Will Transportation Network Services be required to provide wheelchair accessible vehicles?

No. Transportation Network Services may, however, offer wheelchair accessible vehicles as part of their services. Some apps may also offer other accessible services (such as services for individuals with hearing or visual impairments).

Many taxi services offer wheelchair accessible services.

The government has also established a \$0.30 per trip fee for all trips taken in non-accessible vehicles operated under a Transportation Network Service.

17. What are some suggestions for someone using a Transportation Network Service for the first time?

When you book a ride on the app, it will let you know what specific vehicle will be picking you up, and who the driver will be. Check to make sure that you are getting into that vehicle (check that the licence matches) and that the driver is the one whose photo is on the app. At the start and end of the ride, check the fare on the app. Read the reviews about the driver on the TNS app and submit your own review after a trip.

FOR MORE INFORMATION on driver and vehicle safety and compliance and enforcement go to <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/transportation/vehicle-safety-enforcement/services/passenger-transportation/transportation-network-services/tns-enforcement>