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**Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities (DPU)
Summary of Proposed Rulemaking Changes
for Transportation Network Companies and Drivers**

The DPU regulates rideshare companies, also known as Transportation Network Companies (TNCs) and rideshare drivers operating for the companies. To enhance the safety of both drivers and passengers, the DPU proposes to update its current regulations (220 CMR 274). The proposed regulations will change the DPU's Suitability Standard for TNC Drivers to promote the safe, equitable, and efficient administration of driver suitability determinations. In addition, the DPU proposes to update its regulations on Driver Suitability Hearings, TNC Deactivation Review, and electrification of vehicles operated by drivers.

More information on the proposed regulation changes can be found below, including a table comparing the current rules to the proposed changes to the Driver Suitability Standard.

You are welcome to submit written comments on the proposed regulations. Please send your comments by July 2, 2026, in an email to dpu.efiling@mass.gov and Zachary.Caunter@mass.gov.

The DPU is also holding public hearings on the changes:

- June 8 at 10:00 a.m. on Zoom and in person at DPU offices
1 South Station, 3rd Floor Hearing Room,
Boston, MA 02110
- June 11 at 2:00 p.m. on Zoom or in person at the Lawrence Public Library Sargent Auditorium
51 Lawrence Street,
Lawrence, MA 01841

Driver Suitability Hearings and TNC Deactivation Review

Proposed regulations (220 CMR 276.00) would remove the ability for initial Driver applicants—*those who currently do not have a Background Check Clearance Certificate*—who are disqualified by the DPU due to a presumptive or discretionary disqualification to be entitled to an appeal hearing. Instead, the regulations would allow the DPU to use judgment based on public safety and its discretion under existing authority to determine which applicant appeals get a hearing. Proposed regulations would also require the TNCs to establish a Driver Deactivation appeals process that would provide drivers with sufficient notification on the reason for their deactivation and allow drivers the opportunity to challenge their deactivation.

The DPU recognizes that many drivers’ primary source of income is through rideshare services. Therefore, the DPU proposes these changes to create a more fair and transparent appeals process for drivers.

Transportation Network Vehicle Electrification

Massachusetts laws have established new requirements for vehicles used for rideshare services. The 2022 Clean Energy Act requires a new program aimed at reducing the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from rideshare vehicles. Including in the proposed regulations (220 CMR 277.00) are requirements for the TNCs to establish plans and financial support programs to assist drivers in the transition to electric vehicle use.

In order to reduce the financial burden for drivers making the transition to electric vehicles, the state current offer multiple incentive programs, including The Massachusetts Clean Energy Center’s [Ride Clean Mass program](#). Ride Clean Mass gives rebates to drivers that significantly reduces upfront costs for rideshare drivers when they purchase or rent electric vehicles. Through the program, eligible drivers can receive up to \$14,000 towards the purchase of a new electric vehicle, up to \$6,500 for a used electric vehicle, and funds to rent an electric vehicle used to provide rideshare services.

220 CMR 275.00 Suitability Standards for Transportation Network Drivers

	<u>Current Rules</u>	<u>Proposed Changes to Rules</u>
<u>Mandatory Disqualification, denial of certificate</u>	Not Specified.	Suspended or revoked driving privileges in any U.S. jurisdiction during time of background check
<u>Mandatory Disqualification, denial of certificate</u>	Not Specified.	Driver’s license is temporary, junior operator, subject to ignition interlock, subject to restrictions on times of operation, or other similar restrictions during time of background check

<u>Mandatory Disqualification, denial of certificate</u>	Not Specified.	Suspension of a driver's license due to findings of "Responsible" for 3 speeding tickets in the preceding 1 year
<u>Mandatory Disqualification, denial of certificate</u>	Suspension of driver's license for a reason related to the operation of a motor vehicle in the previous 5 years.	Suspension of passenger driver's license for any reason related to the operation of a motor vehicle in the preceding 1 year, unless otherwise specified.
<u>Mandatory Disqualification, denial of certificate</u>	Allowing or attempting to allow another person to provide Transportation Network Services on the Driver's behalf is not a mandatory disqualification.	Allowing or attempting to allow another person to provide Transportation Network Services on the Driver's behalf in the preceding 1 year.
<u>Mandatory Disqualification, denial of certificate</u>	License suspension for Surchargeable Incidents, as defined by the Division of Insurance, in the preceding 5 years	License suspension for Surchargeable Incidents, as defined by the Division of Insurance, in the preceding 3 years
<u>Mandatory Disqualification, denial of certificate</u>	Driver assigned to court-ordered alcohol or controlled substance education, treatment or rehabilitation program, in the preceding 7 years is currently identified by statute: M.G.L. c. 159A½, § 4(b)(vii).	Added to Suitability Standard: Driver assigned to court-ordered alcohol or controlled substance education, treatment or rehabilitation program, in the preceding 7 years.
<u>Presumptive Disqualification, Division may undertake an individualized assessment of the disqualification</u>	Alternative or withheld adjudications (such as a continuance without a finding, or "CWOFF") for felony offenses not otherwise addressed by Suitability Standards, in preceding 7 years are not disqualifying.	Alternative or withheld adjudications (such as a continuance without a finding, or "CWOFF") for any felony offense not otherwise addressed by Suitability Standards, in preceding 7 years.
<u>Mandatory Disqualification, denial of certificate</u>	Convictions for: illegal use or possession of a weapon; felony breaking and entering in the nighttime (G.L. c. 266, § 16) or daytime (G.L. c. 266, § 18); indecent exposure and annoying or accosting another person (G.L. c. 272, § 53), in the preceding 7 years.	Convictions for: illegal use or possession of a weapon; felony breaking and entering in the nighttime (G.L. c. 266, § 16) or daytime (G.L. c. 266, § 18); indecent exposure and annoying or accosting another person (G.L. c. 272, § 53), in the preceding 10 years.

<u>Mandatory Disqualification, denial of certificate</u>	Convictions for: Unarmed robbery (G.L. c. 265, § 19); sexual conduct for fee (G.L. c. 272, § 53A(b)); Soliciting prostitute (G.L. c. 272, § 8); child endangerment (G.L. c. 265, § 13L); stalking (G.L. c. 265, § 43); multiple driving offenses (220 CMR 274.21), any time in the lifetime of the individual.	Convictions for: Unarmed robbery (G.L. c. 265, § 19); sexual conduct for fee (G.L. c. 272, § 53A(b)); Soliciting prostitute (G.L. c. 272, § 8); child endangerment (G.L. c. 265, § 13L); stalking (G.L. c. 265, § 43); multiple driving offenses (220 CMR 274.21), in the preceding 10 years.
<u>Mandatory Disqualification, denial of certificate</u>	<u>Not specified.</u>	Convictions for: strangulation or suffocation (G.L. c. 265, § 15D(b)); assault and battery with a dangerous weapon (G.L. c. 265, § 15A(b)), in the preceding 10 years.
<u>Mandatory Disqualification, denial of certificate</u>	<u>Not specified.</u>	A disposition of not guilty by reason of insanity or a dismissal for incompetence for any offense, any time in the lifetime of the individual.
Presumptive Disqualification, Division may undertake an individualized assessment of the disqualification	<u>Not Specified</u>	An alternative or withheld adjudication (such as a CWOFF) for an offense, if 10 or more years have passed since the entry of the alternative or withheld adjudication.
<u>No Disqualification</u>	<u>Not specified.</u>	Division will not consider a juvenile delinquency disposition as factor for disqualification.