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### **LDF Supports Taxi and Limousine Commission's Campaign to End Taxi and Ridesharing Discrimination**

This week, New York City's Taxi and Limousine Commission's (TLC or the Commission) Office of Inclusion launched a public education campaign to spread awareness about the persistent discrimination that many New Yorkers of color experience when trying to hail a cab or use a ridesharing service.

The NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF) has provided guidance and feedback to TLC and its Office of Inclusion on the office's proposed methods to end the longstanding practice of discriminatory ride refusals and cancellations. LDF applauds TLC's creation of this powerful campaign and recognizes TLC's efforts to create a public service campaign that appropriately centers the communities that experience ride discrimination most frequently.

For decades, drivers have refused to give rides to New Yorkers based on their race and/or destination. This long history of racial discrimination in transportation has impacted the mobility and livelihoods of Black commuters, including LDF's staff, who have experienced race-based ride refusals in New York City where its headquarters are located. Unfortunately, we know that many other people have experienced this same type of discrimination when attempting to hail NYC taxis or using rideshare apps such as Uber, Lyft, and Via this same type of discrimination through ride cancellations and pre-screening of passenger destinations.

TLC's campaign makes clear that ride discrimination by *any* service licensed by New York City—including yellow and green taxis, Uber, Lyft, Via, and livery—is strictly prohibited. Drivers who fail to offer services equitably will be thoroughly investigated and penalized. LDF urges New Yorkers who experience or witness discriminatory ride refusals or cancellations to immediately report the driver's conduct to 311.

“The insidious discrimination that Black and Brown commuters in New York face when trying to get from one point to another has persisted for too long and must stop now. Allowing drivers, licensed by the City of New York, to deny a segment of the community equal access to ride services based on their race and destination is

not only an attack on the dignity of every denied rider, but is also illegal,” said [Janai Nelson](#), Associate Director-Counsel at LDF. “TLC’s campaign empowers all New Yorkers to push back against this unseemly practice that sullies our city.”

While TLC’s campaign is an important step in the fight against driver discrimination, LDF asks that TLC use the increased reporting generated by this campaign to better understand when and where driver discrimination is most common and how biased drivers have escaped accountability and to share this information with the public. Critically, TLC’s public education campaign must be followed by transparent and definitive actions that hold biased drivers accountable. All of these measures are essential to demonstrate that TLC prioritizes the fair and unbiased treatment of all New Yorkers and is fully committed to preventing ride discrimination.

“One of the most impressive elements of TLC’s campaign to end discriminatory ride refusals is that it provides an easy reporting method—calling 311—to assist commuters in collectively identifying the extent, location, and perpetrators of New York’s pervasive ride discrimination,” [Katurah Topps](#), Policy Counsel at LDF, noted. “For too long, New York’s Black and Brown residents have borne the burden of knowing that, due to racism and stereotypes, the simple act of trying to hail a taxi is frequently uncertain. By reporting discriminatory driver conduct to TLC, communities can put drivers on alert that no longer will we accept discriminatory ride refusals and cancellations as the status quo.”

LDF will continue to advocate for policies and practices that will ensure all New Yorkers receive transportation services regardless of their actual or perceived race, gender, sexual orientation, ability status, religion, and destination.

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*Founded in 1940, the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF) is the nation’s first civil and human rights law organization. LDF has been completely separate from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) since 1957—although LDF was originally founded by the NAACP and shares its commitment to equal rights. LDF’s Thurgood Marshall Institute is a multi-disciplinary and collaborative hub within LDF that launches targeted campaigns and undertakes innovative research to shape the civil rights narrative. In media attributions, please refer to us as the NAACP Legal Defense Fund or LDF.*

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