August 2022

2020 REIMBURSEMENTS FROM THE WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE SERVICES FUND

This report provides an overview of reimbursements from the Wheelchair Accessible Services (WAS) Fund for the 2020 calendar year (Jan. 1 through Dec. 31, 2020). The WAS Fund, which is jointly administered by the City of Seattle and King County, is funded through a 10-cent surcharge on every taxi, for-hire vehicle and transportation network company (TNC, e.g., Uber, Lyft) ride originating in Seattle or King County. The fund's purpose is to help offset the higher operational costs incurred by owners and drivers of wheelchair-accessible taxicabs and for-hire vehicles.

Table 1 describes the categories of reimbursement and the reimbursement rates for Seattle (as established in the Facilities and Administrative Services (FAS) Director's Rule FOR-HIRE-TRANSPORTATION-04-2020) and King County (as established in FIN-10-3-2-PR).

Table 1. 2020 WAS Fund Reimbursement Categories			
Reimbursement Category	**Purpose**	**Recipient**	**Reimbursement Rates**
Dispatched trips to passengers using a wheelchair (TPW)	To offset the additional costs of serving passengers in wheelchairs (e.g., extra time required for wheelchair passenger loading and securement, costs associated with prioritizing TPWs regardless of pick-up and drop-off location)	Driver	Reimbursement rates are based on the zone in which the TPW originates and terminates. Urban, rural and suburban zones are based on zip code.[A] If a TPW originates and terminates in different zones, the greater reimbursement rate applies (i.e., if a TPW originates in the urban zone and terminates in the suburban zone, it is reimbursed by Seattle at the $30 rate). Payments are disbursed twice per month. • Urban TPW: $20 • Suburban TPW: $30 • Rural TPW: $40
WAV Fuel Costs	To offset the higher fuel costs associated with operating a WAV	Driver	$15/shift of four or more consecutive hours, disbursed once per month. Minimum trip requirement waived due to COVID for calendar year 2020.
Off-Peak Shifts	To offset costs of operating during off-peak hours when demand is low but accessible transportation must be available to improve equity of service	Driver	$45/shift that includes four or more consecutive hours between the hours of 9 p.m. and 5 a.m., disbursed once per month.
Additional Shifts	To offset costs incurred by vehicle owners for making WAVs available for additional shifts	Vehicle Owner	$30/shift (lasting four or more consecutive hours) that the WAV is operated by a second and/or third driver if the WAV owner or another driver also completed a shift in the same vehicle during the same 24-hour period, disbursed once per month.
Driver Training	To offset the costs of completing one additional WAV-related training	Driver	Drivers are reimbursed for the cost of the course, plus a stipend for the time it takes to complete the training at the taximeter rate of $30/hour. Payments are disbursed

	course per year, after completing the initial training required for WAT endorsement[1]		after drivers complete the course and submit a request for reimbursement.
New Vehicle Acquisition	To offset the costs associated with acquiring a new WAV	Vehicle Owner	Owners are reimbursed $6,000/year for six years ($36,000 total) for new (not previously titled) vehicles, disbursed monthly. Used vehicles are not eligible for this reimbursement.
Maintenance and equipment (M+E) costs	To offset the higher costs of purchasing, retrofitting and/or maintaining a WAV (e.g., vehicle conversions, ramps, brakes, axels)	Vehicle Owner	M+E costs are fully reimbursed (with receipts), up to $6,000/year for WAVs 0-6 years old; up to $48,000 for WAVs 7 years old; $3,600 for WAVs 8 years old; $2,400 for WAVs 9 years old; and $1,200 for WAVs 10 years old. Payments are disbursed quarterly, after the owner submits a request for reimbursement.

[A] Please refer to the zip code table and map included at the end of FOR-HIRE TRANSPORTATION-04-2020/Public Rule FIN-10-3-2-PR)

Table 2 displays the total number and dollar amounts of each WAS Fund reimbursement type for Seattle and King County in calendar year 2020.

Table 2. 2020 Total WAS Fund Reimbursements by Reimbursement Category*						
Reimbursement Type	**Seattle**		**King County**		**Total**	
	Total #	**Amount Paid**	**Total #**	**Amount Paid**	**Total #**	**Amount Paid**
TPW[A]	5,674 TPWs	$112,890.00	4,408 TPWs	$124,580.00	10,082 TPWs	$237,470.00
Fuel[B]	Please refer footnote "B" below for split between City and King County.				7,704 Shifts	$115,560.00
Off-Peak Shifts[B]					445 Shifts	$ 20,025.00
Additional Shifts[B]					466 Shifts	$ 13,980.00
Driver Training[B]	9 Trainings	$2,384.55	9 Trainings	$1,400.45	9 Trainings	$3,785.00
Vehicle Acquisition[B]	1 WAV	$3,780.00	1 WAV	$2,220.00	1 WAV	$6,000.00
M+E[B]	41 WAVs	$99,527.49	41 WAVs	$58,452.62	41 WAVs	$157,980.11
Total		$218,582.04				$548,800.11

*The COVID-19 pandemic significantly reduced ridership. Washington State implemented "Stay Home, Stay Healthy" starting March 24, 2020, and the phased re-opening plan, "Safe Start" was in effect through the remainder of the year. To ameliorate the impacts of the pandemic, trip minimums for fuel and off-peak shift reimbursements were suspended. In addition, the vehicle age limit was raised from 10 year to 12 years for vehicle acquisition and M+E reimbursements.

[A] TPWs that originate in the urban zone are reimbursed by Seattle; TPWs that originate in the suburban and rural zones are reimbursed by King County.

[B] Reimbursement costs for these categories are shared between Seattle and King County based on the proportion of TPWs originating in each jurisdiction in the prior year. In 2020, Seattle covered 63% of reimbursement costs in these categories, and King County covered the remaining 37%. If the vehicle is licensed by only Seattle or only King County, reimbursement costs for these categories are covered entirely by the licensing jurisdiction. In 2020, the owner/operator of one County-only WAV was reimbursed by King County.

To assess the impact of WAS Fund reimbursements on the typical WAT driver or owner, it is necessary to calculate the average reimbursement amount per driver or owner. Average per-driver or per-owner reimbursements for calendar year 2020 were calculated on a monthly basis in the case of TPW and Shift reimbursements, and on a yearly basis in the case of M+E cost reimbursements.

Table 3 displays the average number of WAT drivers, the average number of trips dispatched to wheelchair passengers per WAT, the average number of shifts per WAT and the average reimbursements per driver or owner, all on a per-month basis (except average per-owner M+E reimbursement, which, as noted above, is reported on an annual basis).

Table 3. 2020 Average WAS Fund Reimbursements by Reimbursement Category (Seattle and King County)		
Reimbursement Category	**Average Units**	**Average Reimbursement**
Dispatched Trips to Passengers in Wheelchairs (TPW)	27 trips per driver per month (31 drivers per month)	$638.36 per driver per month
Fuel Reimbursements	12 fuel reimbursements per driver per month (53 drivers)	$181.70 per driver per month
Off-Peak Shifts	1 off-peak shifts per driver per month (31 drivers)	$53.83 per driver per month
Additional Shifts	3.25 additional shifts per WAV per month (9 WAVs)	$129.44 per owner per month
Maintenance and Equipment (M+E) Costs	41 WAVs	$3,853.17 per owner (annual)

Average reimbursement amounts reported in Table 3 were calculated in the following manner:

TPW. The average number of WAV drivers per month (owner-drivers or lease drivers) was derived from bimonthly data submitted to the City of Seattle by the taxicab associations. The average number of WAV drivers per month was 31 in calendar year 2020. The average monthly TPW reimbursement per driver was $638.36. This figure was calculated by dividing the average monthly TPW by the average number of drivers per month: ($237,470/12 months) = $19,789.16/31 drivers = $638.36.

Fuel reimbursements. The average number of fuel reimbursements was derived from monthly data submitted to the City of Seattle by taxicab associations. The average number of WAV drivers per month was 53 in the calendar year 2020. The average monthly fuel reimbursement per driver was $181.70. This figure was calculated by dividing the average monthly fuel reimbursement by the average number of drivers per month: ($115,560.00/12 months) = $9,630.00/53 drivers = $181.70.

Off-peak shifts. The average number of off-peak reimbursements was derived from monthly data submitted to the City of Seattle by taxicab associations. The average number of drivers doing off-peak shifts per month was 31 in calendar year 2020. The average monthly off-peak

reimbursement per driver was $53.83. This figure was calculated by dividing the average monthly off-peak reimbursement by the average number of drivers per month: ($20,025.00/12) = $1668.75/31 drivers = $53.83.

Additional shifts. The average number of additional shifts reimbursements was derived from monthly data submitted to the City of Seattle by taxicab associations. The average number of WAVs doing additional shifts per month was 9 in calendar year 2020. The average monthly reimbursement per WAV was $129.44. This figure was calculated by dividing the average monthly additional reimbursement by the average number of drivers per month: ($13,980.00/12) = $1,165.00/9 WAVs = $129.44.

Maintenance and equipment costs. Total M+E reimbursements for calendar year 2020 amounted to $157,980.11. The average annual M+E reimbursement per WAV owner was $3,853.17 ($157,980.11/41 WAV = $3,853.17). Of the 53 licensed WAV owners (including 49 dual-licensed WAT owners and 4 voluntary conversions, three of which are dual-licensed and one of which is licensed by the county only), 41 WAV owners received reimbursements in 2020. The 12 remaining WAV owners did not submit any invoices for reimbursement. The cap for this reimbursement in 2020 is set at $6,000 per WAV per year, depending on vehicle age.