



November 29, 2021

**Attn: General Government and Licensing Committee**

**RE: GL27.19 – Update on Outstanding Vehicle-for-Hire Directives**

Dear Chair and Committee Members:

WomanACT is a policy and planning body that works collaboratively to end violence against women through community mobilization, coordination, research, policy, and education. We have been doing this work for 30 years.

We are writing today to support the timely implementation of the City of Toronto's Vehicle-for-Hire Driver Training Program to ensure that ridesharing remains an accessible transportation option for women. We are pleased to see that the training content will include anti-racism and cultural sensitivity education.

### **Women and Ridesharing**

In a recent analysis from Uber Canada, more than half of women reported that they generally feel unsafe travelling home at night, while many found that nearby taxi services or public transit were not available. In these cases, rideshare services were often seen as the safest transportation option. Over 80% of women riders reported that safety was an important factor in their choice to take rideshares and many rideshare companies have incorporated features to prioritize women's safety.

Ridesharing can also offer flexible working arrangements for women. The ability to choose when and where to work can support women's participation in paid employment alongside other responsibilities. Flexible work hours and locations have been rated as top strategies to improve access to employment by Canadian women and a top reason that drivers choose to work for ridesharing services.



**Given the important role of ridesharing in women's safety and employment, WomanACT recommends that the Committee:**

- Accelerate the development and implementation of the Vehicle-for-Hire Driver Training Program to limit the impacts of the licensing issuance pause.
- Ensure education on women's safety and gender-based violence are core components of the mandatory training program.
- Apply a gender lens to decisions about licensing and training of Vehicle-for-Hire drivers, with considerations for both women riders and drivers.

Vehicle-for-Hire services are an important transportation and employment option for women. We encourage members of this Committee to consider the unique needs of and impacts on women in prioritizing the development and implementation of the Vehicle-for-Hire Driver Training Program.

Sincerely,

**Harmy Mendoza**

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