

## **REASONS FOR DECISION OF THE TORONTO LICENSING TRIBUNAL**

---

**Date of**

**Hearing(s):** January 29, 2026

**Panel:** Verlyn Francis, Panel Chair

**Re:** Girma Hailu (Report No. 8057)  
Holder of Toronto Taxicab Owner's Licence No. V02-4948118;  
Taxicab Plate No. 02341

**Counsel for Municipal Licensing and Standards:** Catherine Oatway

**Counsel for Licensee:** Unrepresented

### **INTRODUCTION**

Girma Hailu ("Hailu") was first issued Toronto Taxicab Owner's Licence No. V02-4948118; Taxicab Plate No. 02341 by the City of Toronto on July 18, 2019.

Municipal Licensing and Standards ("MLS") referred this matter for a hearing before the Toronto Licensing Tribunal ("the Tribunal") to determine whether his Toronto Taxicab Owner's Licence should be renewed, suspended, or revoked in accordance with subsection 546-51 A of the Toronto Municipal Code ("the Code") because the vehicle being used as a taxicab is more than seven model years old and does not fall within the amendments made by Toronto City Council (Council).

This matter was first before the Tribunal on January 15, 2026 and, at the request of MLS, it was adjourned to today's date because the licensee, Hailu, did not appear for that hearing.

Hailu did not appear for today's hearing. The Tribunal's staff advised that on January 16, 2026, the Notice of Hearing setting out the date and time of today's hearing was sent to Hailu by email and regular mail to the last known address that the Tribunal has on file. This matter was scheduled to commence at 1:00 p.m. today. At 12:50 p.m., Tribunal staff telephoned the licensee's number that is on file and asked to speak to Girma Hailu. The person answering the telephone indicated that that was a "wrong number".

Subsection 545-5 F of the Code provides that:

"Any licence holder who changes his or her address shall, within 48 hours after such change, notify the Municipal Licensing and Standards Division of their new address..."

It is the responsibility of the licensee to update his or her contact information with MLS which sends that information to the Tribunal in the report attached to a request for a

January 29, 2026

hearing. The Tribunal uses the information in the report, including any updated contact information, to send out notices of hearing. The Report in this matter does not disclose if any updated contact information was provided by Hailu since the licence was issued in 2019.

Having satisfied itself that the Notice of Hearing was properly served on Hailu at the last known address provided by the licensee, the Tribunal ruled that the matter will proceed today in the absence of the licensee.

## **CITY'S EVIDENCE**

The only witness called by MLS was Danielle Molto, acting supervisor with the Business Licensing Unit of MLS. Ms. Molto testified that she has held that position for just over a year and she is in charge of back-end support which includes licensing. She is familiar with Report No. 8057 ("the Report") which was prepared by Mr. Yu whom she supervises. The Report was entered as Exhibit No. 1.

Ms. Molto testified that the screen shots on page 3 of the Report were taken from the MLS licensing system. The first screen on page 3 discloses that Girma Hailu was first issued Toronto Taxicab Owner's Licence No. V02-4948118 for Taxicab Plate No. 02341 by the City of Toronto on July 18, 2019. It was renewed on July 19, 2022 and expired on July 18, 2023. The taxicab licence and plate are currently suspended because Hailu has not provided an updated safety certificate since 2021. A safety certificate was required for 2022 but it was never submitted. There is a note "Taxicab Owner – Sale" which suggests that the owner was trying to sell the plate but there is no transfer recorded on the file. There was only one plate number associated with the licence.

By letter dated September 30, 2025, MLS advised Hailu that, in accordance with §546-51 A of the Code, all taxicabs that are seven years old are past the maximum age and are non-compliant. Since a postal strike was in effect at the time, the letter was emailed to Hailu advising that the registered vehicle replacement was past due and the matter would be referred to the Tribunal with the request to suspend the licence until Hailu came into compliance.

On page 3 of the Report, the second screen sets out the vehicle identification number (VIN) and describes the vehicle as a 2013 grey Toyota Camry. It shows that, instead of seven years replacement, there was an extension in 2022 and again in 2025.

Appendix 2, page 4 of the Report, was taken from the City of Toronto's website regarding City Council's approval of extensions of the time when taxicabs had to be replaced. This information was also publicly available to the licensee. The date that this vehicle could continue to be used as a taxicab was August 29, 2025 because it was 2013 model year vehicle.

Ms. Molto testified that MLS does not have the plate in question in its possession, and the licensee has not registered a vehicle with MLS which would comply with the age requirement set out by City Council.

January 29, 2026

---

## **LICENSEE'S EVIDENCE**

As set out above, the Licensee did not appear for this hearing and did not provide any evidence or submissions in the matter.

## **SUBMISSIONS**

Ms. Oatway submitted on behalf of MLS that §546-51 A of the Code states that a taxicab shall be no older than seven years. In March 2025, Council provided an extension for vehicles that would have otherwise been required to be replaced in 2023. This extension applies to Hailu's Camry which means that the taxicab associated with this owner's licence and plate should have been replaced in August 2025. The plate has not been returned to MLS and another vehicle has not been registered.

MLS therefore asks that the Tribunal temporarily suspend the licence until one of the following conditions are met:

1. Registration of a vehicle that complies with the By-law, or
2. The plate is dropped off at MLS for safekeeping.

## **DECISION**

The issue before the Tribunal is whether Girma Hailu's Taxicab Plate No. 02341 associated with Toronto Taxicab Owner's Licence No. V02-4948118 should be revoked, suspended, or have conditions placed on it, in accordance with §546-51 of the Code.

Pursuant to By-law 332-2025, in March 2025, Chapter 546-51A of the Code was amended by §546-51 A and D as follows:

- A. A vehicle used as a taxicab shall be no more than seven model years old. Despite the foregoing, a vehicle that was registered with ML&S as a taxicab as of December 31, 2024 and no more than ten model years old by year date may continue to be used as a taxicab until December 31, 2028. An accessible vehicle used as an accessible taxicab may be up to ten model years old by year date.
- D. Despite Subsection A, and §546-122, a vehicle that was registered with ML&S as a taxicab as of December 31, 2024 and exceeded its model-year maximum on January 1, 2025 may continue to be used as a taxicab until August 29, 2025.

The uncontroverted evidence before the Tribunal is that since 2021 no safety standards certificate has been submitted to MLS for the vehicle registered by Hailu as a taxicab. Exhibit 1, page 3, indicates that the registered vehicle is a Model Year 2013 Toyota Camry. Hailu has not registered a replacement for that vehicle.

Subsections 546-51 A and D do not give the Tribunal discretion to decide when a taxicab has to be replaced. The replacement times set out in the Code are mandatory. In this

January 29, 2026

particular case, even with the extensions that have been granted by Council, a vehicle with a 2013 model year cannot be used as a taxicab after August 29, 2025.

The preamble to By-law 332-2025 indicates that in amending the subsections of the Code, Council considered “the regulation of these transportation services to be important in promoting public safety, consumer protection, and the economic, social, and environmental wellbeing of the City”. The vehicle in question does not fit within the parameters set out by Council.

Having carefully considered all the evidence before it, along with the submissions of MLS, in accordance with §545-4 A (4) and (5), the Tribunal finds that there are reasonable grounds to believe that:

1. The equipment in respect of which the licence is required has not complied, or will not comply, with the provisions of this chapter or any other law; and
2. The applicant has infringed or would infringe the rights of other members of the public, or has endangered, or would endanger their health or safety.

Pursuant to §546-9C (2), the Tribunal orders that Toronto Taxicab Owner’s Licence No. V02-4948118, Taxicab Plate No. 02341, be immediately suspended and remain suspended for failure to comply with §546-51A and D until Girma Hailu either:

1. Registers a vehicle that complies with the Code; or
2. Taxicab Plate No. 02341 is delivered for safekeeping to MLS at East York Civil Centre, 850 Coxwell Avenue, Toronto, Ontario M4C 5R1.

*Verlyn Francis*

---

Verlyn Francis, Panel Chair

Reference: Minute No. 28/26

**Date Signed: 3 February 2026**