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Contact: Eric Sell- Communications Director
esell@mt.gov
406.749.0107

Aug 4, 2015

Public Service Commission Approves Final Version of Ride-Sharing Regulations

HELENA, Mont. –August 4, 2015– Following weeks of public comment analysis, the Montana Public Service Commission on Tuesday unanimously approved the final version of regulations to allow ride sharing companies to operate in Montana. The rules implement Senate Bill 396, which passed the legislature last spring.

Approval paves the way for ride sharing companies, known as Technology Network Carriers (TNCs), to apply for a license to operate in Montana. The final rules create a new regulatory designation to operate under a Class-E license.

Additionally, the rules implement a change in the standard the PSC uses to determine whether passenger services may operate. Previously, a business had to prove it was “needed” in the market and that it would not compete against other businesses in the market. Today, after SB 396’s passage, the PSC only is required to determine that the business is fit to operate in order to grant a certificate.

“Moving forward with this rulemaking process encourages innovative businesses to provide new and useful services in Montana,” said PSC Chairman Brad Johnson, R-Helena. “There will be some wrinkles to iron out once this rule is put into practice, but the Commission will continually look for ways that we can improve these regulations to ensure an even playing field for transportation services in Montana.”

Although the rules are not in effect yet, TNCs that wish to operate in Montana are currently able to file an application with the PSC. The final rules will be submitted to the Montana Secretary of State for review and enrollment on August 17, 2015, and will be effective August 27, 2015.

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