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DELIVERY AND RIDE APPS: HALACHICALLY APP-ROVED?

RABBI ZVI GOLDBERG, KASHRUS ADMINISTRATOR

With the advent of the latest apps, a whole new world of halachic scenarios has arisen.¹ These include *shailos* about using food delivery services, working for a food delivery or ride app, and even calling and using a ride service. These various situations will be addressed here.²

ORDERING FROM MEAL DELIVERY APPS

Meal delivery apps like Uber Eats, Grubhub, DoorDash and Postmates have seen tremendous growth over the last few years. For our discussion, we will use Uber Eats as our example, but the concerns raised apply to the comparable apps.

A customer orders from a restaurant that has contracted with Uber Eats. When it is ready, an Uber Eats driver picks it up from the restaurant and delivers it to the customer. Here are some points to consider when ordering from a kosher restaurant:

Is the food properly sealed?

Delivered food must be properly sealed.³ Many restaurants do not seal take-out food, unless the restaurant itself arranges the delivery or sealing is requested by the customer. To seal every item would be very time consuming.

Meat, chicken, and fish require a double seal, while other foods suffice with a single seal. It is advisable to call ahead, or leave a note in the order, to ensure that the restaurant will properly seal the food.

Kosher restaurants *should* be sealing all third-party delivery orders as it can be assumed that the order will be delivered by an *aino-yehudi*. (STAR-K restaurants are instructed to seal every Uber Eats order that comes in via their app.) However, please be aware that:

1. Sometimes the restaurant does not know the order came in from an app, as some apps require the driver to come into the restaurant and place the order as any customer would. Restaurants might not seal the food in this instance if they are not alerted, as it can appear the delivery person is buying for himself.⁴

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1. This article should not be construed as STAR-K's encouragement or endorsement of the use of smartphones. The information being provided here is for those who do use these apps and seek halachic guidance. Note that kosher filtered smartphones also provide access to these apps.

2. The technology is quickly changing, and the changes may affect the *halachos* mentioned here. Services in other countries may operate differently.

3. The seal must indicate that it comes from the kosher restaurant. For details, see Rabbi Nisson Dov Miller's *Kashrus Kurrents* article, "Signed Sealed and Delivered," and Rabbi Dovid Heber's article "Kashrus in the Workplace," at www.star-k.org.

4. This can happen with the Postmates app which does not necessarily contract with restaurants. Even on Uber Eats, there are situations in which Uber lists a non-contracted restaurant, and the driver is instructed by Uber Eats to go to the restaurant, order as a customer would, and pay with the Uber Plus Card.



DELIVERY AND RIDE APPS

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2. Even if the restaurant knows the order came via an app, in a pressured environment they might not seal every order.

In the same vein, if a kosher consumer sends in someone who is either not Torah-observant or is an *aino-yehudi* (e.g., an office messenger or secretary) to a restaurant or deli to buy food from a counter, they should be instructed to ask that the food be sealed.

What if the food arrives unsealed?

If the food arrives unsealed, a rabbi should be consulted.⁵

What else should I be concerned about if ordering from a kosher restaurant?

Uber Eats assigns categories like *Kosher*, *Asian*, *Chinese* to the restaurants it serves. The categories are chosen by the restaurant and there are no guarantees that what the app categorizes as 'kosher' is actually kosher certified. Be careful especially when you are not in your hometown and are not familiar with the local kosher restaurants.

Some Uber Eats drivers put the pizza or food boxes in insulated containers to keep them warm for the customer. The containers may have residue of previous *treif* deliveries, and that residue can transfer to the kosher packaging. It will generally not be absorbed into the kosher food, but one should be aware and check the delivered box for residue.

DRIVING FOR A MEAL DELIVERY APP SERVICE

Is delivering for apps like Uber Eats an appropriate job for a Torah-observant person? Let's discuss some of the issues surrounding this question.

Mar'is ayin

Consider that the delivery person often must walk into a non-kosher restaurant to pick up an order. Even if the food is brought to the car, it will be obvious that he is taking food from a non-kosher establishment. Is there a problem of *mar'is ayin* because people who see this may think he is buying it for himself? This issue could be remedied by the use of clear identifying markers that he is just the delivery service – for example, by wearing an Uber Eats jacket and/or by placing a sign on his car that says Uber Eats.⁶

Delivering to Jews

What if the person placing the order is Jewish and they order non-kosher food? Are you allowed to deliver it to them and thereby be responsible for their transgression? According to Halacha, one is permitted to assume that the customer is not Jewish since the majority of the population of the U.S. is not Jewish, and one is not obligated to investigate.⁷ Even if one were to surmise by the name or location that the customer is probably Jewish, there is a halachic basis to deliver the food.⁸

Schora/Business

According to Halacha, one is not permitted to "do business" with non-kosher food.⁹ One can argue that making money from non-kosher deliveries is like a business. Again, there is room to be lenient:

1. The delivery person never actually 'owns' the food and thus, according to the *Igros Moshe*, his service is not truly considered 'doing business' with non-kosher food.¹⁰
2. If he is delivering something that is forbidden rabbinically, like a cheese pizza, the prohibition of *schora* does not apply.¹¹

Delivering Basar B'cholov

Besides for the prohibition of doing business with any non-kosher food mentioned above, if the food is *basar b'cholov* (a cooked mixture of meat and milk), there is an additional halachic consideration: one is not permitted to have any *hana'a* (benefit) from *basar b'cholov*. Therefore, if the driver is delivering *basar b'cholov* and being paid for it, he is seemingly having a benefit from *basar b'cholov*, and this would be forbidden.¹²

5. The rabbi will take into account that the route of the driver is well monitored and doesn't leave time to go into another restaurant, buy similar food and switch it. Also, the consumer may have a *tevi'as ayin*, an ability to recognize the food from the restaurant. The rabbi may also suggest calling the restaurant to confirm the precise items sent.

6. See Rabbi Mordechai Frankel's *Kashrus Kurrents* article, "Insights from the Institute," Summer 2009, at www.star-k.org, discussing *mar'is ayin* regarding a non-kosher restaurant.

7. Even if the number of Jews and non-Jews in the population was 50/50 ("*kavuah*"), one could still be lenient, as the question involved is rabbinic in nature.

8. *Dagul Mervava Y.D. 151:Shach 6*. See also *MG"A 347:4* and *Igros Moshe Y.D. 1:72*.

9. *Y.D. 117:1*

10. *Igros Moshe Y.D. 1:51*. However, one reason for the prohibition to do business is to prevent one from eating non-kosher. There are reports that some 30% of Uber Eats drivers admitted they have tasted the food they are delivering, which would be cause for some concern regarding this Halacha. <https://tinyurl.com/3tv65ypj>

11. *Y.D. 117:1*

12. Delivery of non-kosher wine raises a similar issue as *basar b'cholov* since in general one may not benefit from non-kosher wine.

However, there are a few mitigating factors:¹³

- The Rambam¹⁴ holds that the prohibition of benefiting from *basar b'cholov* is only applicable if the meat is from a properly slaughtered animal. The meat used in a non-kosher restaurant is a *neveila*, an animal that was not slaughtered properly. Although it is certainly forbidden to eat it, according to the Rambam one can benefit from *basar b'cholov* made with it. While this lenient opinion of the Rambam is not generally relied on in practice by authorities,¹⁵ it can be considered in addition to other lenient factors.
- If the meat and milk mixture being delivered is roasted or fried together, as opposed to cooked together, it is subject to a dispute in Halacha whether it is considered *basar b'cholov*, and it may be permissible to derive benefit from it.¹⁶
- Any non-kosher species (such as pork) that is cooked with milk is not considered *basar b'cholov*.¹⁷
- Typically, *basar b'cholov* foods would be ordered along with other foods that are not *basar b'cholov* (e.g., sodas, French fries, onion rings, salads). The driver is not paid according to the order total; his compensation is the same whether or not there is *basar b'cholov* in the order.¹⁸ On the other hand, Uber Eats encourages tips, and since tips are generally a percentage of the total price, the driver could very well be benefitting from the *basar b'cholov* that is part of the order.

After weighing these and other *halachic* concerns, Rabbi Moshe Heinemann *shlit"á* concluded that a Jewish person should not deliver for Uber Eats. If a person needs to take this type of employment for his livelihood, he should discuss it with his own rabbi.

YICHUD ISSUES OF RIDE APPS – FOR BOTH DRIVER AND PASSENGER

If a Torah-observant person drives passengers for Uber or Lyft,¹⁹ he should be aware of the following:

- Sometimes a male driver will pick up a female passenger,²⁰ and this can lead to a situation of *yichud*, seclusion. During the daytime, in any major city, there are enough people around that it would not be *yichud*. However, if traveling late at night on a dark, deserted street, questions of *yichud* could arise. Similarly, poorly lit dead-end streets or country roads would present a problem at night.²¹
- A driver should take this into account when choosing his hours and areas of driving.²² (The driver may not know where the ride is going until he accepts the ride or picks up the passenger. At that point, if the ride may cause a *yichud* concern, the driver can turn down the ride.²³)
- A driver might not realize that there is a *yichud* question until the ride has begun. A potential solution could be to have a 'shomer' at the ready who would be available to oversee his ride through a video call. The driver could call his wife or a friend who would be available to view the driver in real time while he finishes the ride.
- Of course, a passenger in an Uber or any taxi should likewise be mindful of *yichud* (and safety) issues when planning a ride.²⁴ A large majority of Uber drivers are male,²⁵ and a female rider should be extra cautious when the ride is late at night and her destination is a dark, deserted street.

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ORDERING FROM GROCERY SHOPPING APPS AND WEBSITES

Grocery delivery apps like Instacart have become increasingly popular, with a huge surge during the shutdowns necessitated by the coronavirus pandemic. While they have been helpful for many people, these too raise *kashrus* concerns.

- When using a grocery shopping app like Instacart, the customer orders groceries from a local store, and Instacart sends a personal shopper to shop and deliver the order. Since shoppers may substitute the brand that was ordered with another brand, all items should be checked before consuming to ensure that they have proper *kosher* certification. (It is recommended that consumers opt out of allowing the shopper to make substitutions without approval.)
- When purchasing grocery items online, exercise caution when basing your purchase on a photograph displaying a *kashrus* symbol. The product might not actually be certified as the photo might be outdated or incorrect. *Kashrus* agencies do their best to rectify these situations when notified, but – due to the sheer volume of products available online – it is impossible to ensure full accuracy. When the product arrives, carefully check the label to make sure it has a valid *kashrus* symbol before you use it.
- Remember to cancel any automatic deliveries (e.g., Amazon Subscribe & Save) of *chometz* products well before Pesach. If *chometz* does arrive during Pesach, do not bring it into your house. Check with your rabbi how to proceed.

13. See *Responsa Tzitz Eliezer* 17:33 in a response to Rabbi Dovid Cohen of Cong. Gvul Yaavetz, where he permits a nurse to serve *basar b'cholov* to her patients to avoid losing her job. However, the situation is not entirely comparable to an Uber Eats driver.

14. Quoted in *Dagul Mervava* Y.D. 87:3.

15. See *Pischei Teshuva* Y.D. 87:6.

16. Y.D. 87:1 and *poskim* there.

17. Y.D. 87:3

18. In addition, it is possible that if the restaurant would not be able to supply *basar b'cholov*, the customer would be satisfied with other foods. Therefore, it could be argued that the driver is not benefitting from *basar b'cholov*.

19. Or any rideshare app.

20. Or vice versa.

21. For a review of these *halachos*, see *The Halachos of Yichud* by Rabbi Dovid Ribiat.

22. In addition, tinted windows, which make it difficult to see inside the vehicle, should be avoided.

23. An Uber driver told us that he could turn down a customer upon hearing the destination, although he might suffer a bad rating by that customer.

24. For an interesting discussion of laws regarding *yichud* on a date, see *Friedman v. State of NY* 54 Misc. 2d 448 (N.Y. Misc. 1967), <https://casetext.com/case/friedman-v-state-of-ny>.

25. <https://tinyurl.com/5rw9psn4>



A HALACHIC GUIDE TO TEFILAS HADERECH

RABBI DOVID HEBER, KASHRUS ADMINISTRATOR

During the past year and a half, STAR-K *mashgichim* continued to conduct inspections in the United States and abroad in a manner deemed safe for them and factory personnel. STAR-K is very thankful for their tremendous *mesiras nefesh* to ensure that our certified products maintained the highest level of kashrus, even in the midst of a worldwide pandemic. Still, many consumers who frequently travel stayed home. With great *siyata d'Shmaya*, an effective vaccine was developed that has allowed us to resume our busy travel schedules and to once again recite *Tefilas Haderech* on a regular basis. Let us examine the *halachos* of this beautiful *tefilla*.¹

THE TEFILLA

Tefilas Haderech is based on the Gemara in *Brachos* (29b-30a), with some minor variations, depending upon one's *nusach*. The Gemara says it is recited in *loshon rabim* (plural; e.g., *shetolicheinu*, etc.).² When returning the same the day, the words *v'sachzireinu l'shalom* are added after *l'chaim, ul'simcha, ul'shalom*.³

The *bracha* is recited only once a day, even when traveling a long distance.⁴ 'Day' has the same guidelines as *Birkas Hatorah*: it begins after one wakes up in the morning and concludes when one goes to sleep. For instance, if someone drove 1300 miles from New York to Miami, leaving at 6:00 a.m. on Monday and arriving in Miami 20 hours later at 2:00 a.m. on Tuesday, he would recite *Tefilas Haderech* only once (i.e., upon leaving New York). The same is true if one left New York on Monday at 3:00 a.m.

If one travels over the course of a few days, *Tefilas Haderech* is recited every day that one travels. For example, assume someone drove from New York to San Diego and booked a hotel room in two cities along the way, with the following itinerary:

Sunday: New York to St. Louis (overnight in a hotel in St. Louis)

Monday: Spent the day touring St. Louis (overnight in a hotel in St. Louis)

Tuesday: St. Louis to Albuquerque (overnight in a hotel in Albuquerque)

Wednesday: Albuquerque to San Diego (arrived at destination)

In this case, *Tefilas Haderech* was recited only on Sunday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, since those were the travel days. It was not recited on Monday, as there was no travel outside the city, nor on the days after reaching the destination in San Diego (i.e., Thursday and onward until he departed from there).⁵ See below for when one should recite the *tefilla* on a multi-day journey.

WHAT DISTANCE MUST BE TRAVELED?

If one travels the distance of a *parsa* (2.8 miles) out of town, one should recite *Tefilas Haderech*. However, 'town' does not mean the city limits. Rather, to be considered a long enough trip, the traveler must meet both of the following two conditions:

1. He must travel a *parsa* (2.8 miles) past an open area where there are no houses.⁶
2. He must leave the general metropolitan area of the city (*ibura shel ir*).

Besides long-distance trips (e.g., New York – Detroit), this would include shorter 'out of town' trips, for example Lakewood – Monsey or Lakewood – New York, as these trips meet both of the above 'trip' conditions.

The following are three examples when *Tefilas Haderech* is not recited.

1. These *halachos* are based on the *psak* of HaRav Moshe Heinemann, *shlit"z*, Rabbinic Administrator of STAR-K. For a full discussion of this topic, see *Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim* (O.C.) and *Mishnha Brurah*, *siman* 110. Two excellent contemporary *seforim* are *Sefer Darchei Zmaneinu* by Rabbi Moshe Finkel and *Kuntres Tefilas Haderech* by Rabbi Aron Stauber.

2. Note, however, that the word *v'sitneini* is said by many in *loshon yachid* (singular, ending with 'ni' instead of 'nu'). See *Mishnah Brurah* 110:19.

3. There is a *machlokes Rishonim* (differing opinions amongst the early commentaries) as to whether *v'sachzireinu l'shalom* (we should return peacefully) is always part of *Tefilas Haderech*. The *Shulchan Aruch Harav* in his *Siddur* makes 'a compromise' by adding this only if "one's intention is to return immediately". The term 'immediately' is understood to mean the same day. Many have adapted the *minhag* of this *p'shara* (compromise). If one forgot to add these words on the day he was traveling round trip, *Tefilas Haderech* should not be repeated later on the way home as, *bidieved*, the regular *Tefilas Haderech* without *v'sachzireinu* covers the return trip if he traveled the same day.

4. The exception to this is if one stopped with an intention to stay overnight, and then the person changed his mind. For example, someone drove from New York to Cleveland and checked into a hotel intending to leave for Chicago the next morning. After hearing the weather report of a blizzard the next day, the person changed his mind and decided to leave immediately for Chicago. *Tefilas Haderech* would be recited for a second time that day. See *Shulchan Aruch* O.C. 110:5.

5. If after departing one continued traveling all night and then the next day, there is a question as to whether *Tefilas Haderech* is recited on the second day of the trip. For example, if one flew on Tuesday night from Newark to London and then on Wednesday morning boarded a plane from London to Tel Aviv, should he say *Tefilas Haderech* again on Wednesday morning? Another example: three people drove 1800 miles from Lakewood to Denver, left at 11:00 a.m. on Tuesday, drove all night and arrived at 1:00 p.m. the next day. Should they say *Tefilas Haderech* again on Wednesday morning? In these cases, Rav Heinemann is of the opinion that *Tefilas Haderech* is not recited on the second day. However, in order to satisfy all opinions, one should ideally insert *Tefilas Haderech* into the *bracha* of *Shma Koleinu* during *Shacharis Shemona Esrei* on Wednesday morning.

6. Warehouses, offices, and businesses would be considered part of the *parsa* [2.8 miles] of open area as no one lives at these locations.

- ▶ One drove 35 miles from Yeshiva Shaar Hatorah in Queens to The Yeshiva of Staten Island. Since the trip, albeit lengthy, was entirely in the city of New York, *Tefilas Haderech* was not recited
- ▶ One drove 5 miles from Telshe Yeshiva in Chicago to Yeshiva Bais Medrash L'Torah in Skokie. Although Skokie is a different city, it is in the metropolitan area of Chicago, so this does not constitute a trip that requires *Tefilas Haderech*. Furthermore, the entire route includes a built-up area.
- ▶ One drives 29 miles via the Hollywood Freeway (U.S. 101) from Yeshiva Gedola of Los Angeles to Mesivta of Greater Los Angeles near Calabasas. Since it is built-up along the way with houses, *Tefilas Haderech* was not recited as the driver never left the metropolitan area.

AT WHAT POINT IN THE JOURNEY IS TEFILAS HADERECH RECITED?

Once a trip is deemed long enough to require the recitation of *Tefilas Haderech*, one must determine the ideal place to recite it. The *Mishnah Brurah* states⁷ that it should ideally be recited within the first *parsa* (2.8 miles) after leaving the *ibura shel ir* – that is to say, after traveling slightly more than 70 *amos* (42 yards) past the last house of the built-up area of the metropolitan region. The latest time to say *Tefilas Haderech* is before reaching within a *parsa* (2.8 miles) of the metropolitan area of one's destination.

Typically, *Tefilas Haderech* is recited during a long stretch of highway with no houses on either side, or when crossing a bridge over a wide river (a stretch of road that obviously has no houses). For example, when traveling from Baltimore to New York or New Jersey on I-95, the ideal location is when crossing the bridge over Big Gunpowder Falls (mile marker 70.2, about 6 miles after getting on I-95 from the I-695 Beltway), as that is the first area of the trip that is not built-up.

When traveling westbound on I-70 to Pittsburgh,⁸ Cleveland, or beyond, recite *Tefilas Haderech* when crossing the Patapsco River Bridge shortly after exiting the beltway. When traveling south on I-95 to Richmond or beyond, recite *Tefilas Haderech* on

the Patapsco River Bridge after I-195. When traveling to Ocean City, Maryland, recite *Tefilas Haderech* on I-97 after exit 10 as you cross the Severn Run.

If someone is traveling for a few days, *Tefilas Haderech* may be said in the hotel when preparing to leave, beginning with the second day of travel.⁹ For example, on a trip from New York to Atlanta, *Tefilas Haderech* would be recited on the first day on the Outerbridge Crossing, or on the Goethals Bridge from Staten Island to New Jersey. If the person stayed in Baltimore overnight, *Tefilas Haderech* could be said either in the hotel when preparing to leave or when driving through Baltimore City as he begins the second leg of his trip.

If traveling by air, the accepted *minhag* is as follows:

- ▶ If the airport is in town, one should ideally recite *Tefilas Haderech* on the runway shortly before takeoff. If one is concerned that he might forget, he may say it after the plane begins to taxi on the runway or even upon boarding the plane. *B'dieved*, if he forgot, he may also say it after takeoff.
- ▶ If the airport is out of town, one may say it on the way to the airport after leaving the built-up area. This is true even if one would not recite *Tefilas Haderech* when just driving to the airport (i.e., going to that airport does not constitute a trip in and of itself).

RECITING TEFILAS HADERECH

Ideally one should recite *Tefilas Haderech* while standing up and stationary. However, since it is

generally not safe to pull over to the shoulder (and certainly not to get out of the car on the shoulder of the road, unless it is an emergency), the accepted *minhag* is to recite *Tefilas Haderech* while driving.

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7. *Siman 110 seif katan 29*. The *Shulchan Aruch* (*ibid. se'if 7*) maintains that one should recite it when one is "*bichzik baderech*", and the *Rema* (*ibid.*) explains this to mean within the first *parsa* (2.8 miles) of the trip. The *Mishnah Berurah* then states this does not mean within the first *parsa* of one's home, but rather after leaving town. *B'dieved*, if one said it before leaving the city he is *yotzei*. See *Mishnah Berurah* 110:29.

8. In this section, we give examples of travel to some popular destinations. Indeed, if one travels towards Pittsburgh to, Breezewood, for example, one would still recite *Tefilas Haderech*. If you are not sure if your trip is long enough to require *Tefilas Haderech*, consult your *rav*.

9. See *Mishnah Berurah* 110:29.

TEFILAS HADERECH

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Because *Tefilas Haderech* does not begin with 'Baruch Ata Hashem', there is a *hiddur* (stringency) to first recite a "long" *bracha* immediately prior to *Tefilas Haderech*. Examples of long *brachos* include 'Me'ein Shalosh' and 'Asher Yatzar'.¹⁰ For instance, if someone ate dates and grapes at the beginning of the trip, at the time one is obligated to say *Tefilas Haderech*, one would first recite the *bracha* of 'Al Ha'eitz', thereby creating a *bracha hasmucha l'chaverta*, and then follow immediately¹¹ with *Yehi Ratzon* of *Tefilas Haderech*. But this is not mandatory.

When being *motzi* others in *Tefilas Haderech*,¹² one must meet all the conditions of "shomei'a k'ona".¹³ Furthermore, when traveling in a group (e.g., on a bus), if one person recites *Tefilas Haderech* to be *motzi* others, it may not be recited over a microphone. If those in the back of the bus cannot hear the person in the front reciting *Tefilas Haderech*, an additional person should be appointed to recite it from the middle of the bus for those in the back to properly hear it and be *yotzei*. If one is on a bus and hears someone reciting *Tefilas Haderech* over a microphone, he should say it for himself.

It is no coincidence that when discussing *Tefilas Haderech*, the Gemara reminds us to recite it *b'loshon rabim* (something that applies to all *tefilos*). The Gemara is reminding us that even when alone on a trip in the most isolated places, far away from our families and *kehilos*, we are indeed part of the *heilige tzibur* known as *Klal Yisroel*. Internalizing this reminder gives us the *siyata d'Shmaya* to *bez"H* stay safe – physically and spiritually - wherever we travel. ☆

10. It is important not to delay the recitation of *Asher Yatzar*. If one used the restroom before departing, one should not 'save' the *Asher Yatzar* for later in order to precede *Tefilas Haderech*.

11. In this case, if being *motzi* others, do not say *birshus* between the *bracha* and *Tefilas Haderech*.

12. There is a discussion as to whether a *minyán* is required to be *motzi* others in *Tefilas Haderech*. The custom is to be lenient and allow one person to be *motzi* another even with no *minyán* present.

13. For example, the person reciting *Tefilas Haderech* must have *daas* (in mind) to be *motzi* others (his recitation allows others listening to fulfill their obligation) and those listening must have *daas* to be *yotzei* (have their obligation fulfilled). The person reciting must be on the same level of *chiyuv* (obligation) as the listener. Therefore, a child cannot be *motzi* a *gadol* (adult) in *Tefilas Haderech*. There are several other conditions (which also apply to *Kiddush* and other *tefilos*) that are beyond the scope of this discussion.

DELIVERY AND RIDE APPS

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ORDERING AN UBER OR A TAXI ON SHABBOS

Not too long ago, if one needed a ride on Shabbos (e.g., to get to the hospital for an urgent need, such as a woman going into labor), he would call a taxi. With the advent of Uber, taxis are not as common but are still available. Is it halachically better to order an Uber or call a taxi service?

- Either is acceptable, but it might be preferable to use Uber than to call a taxi. This is because thanks to the app, no money or credit card needs to be handled, and with a few clicks the ordering is done.²⁶ An Uber may also arrive faster which is an important factor during a medical emergency. Assuming that before Shabbos it is known that a trip may be needed, your address and the hospital's address should be entered into the app ahead of time. On Shabbos, simply click through the choices on the phone (using a knuckle to create a *shinui*) to place the order.
- When ordering an Uber on Shabbos, one would prefer a non-Jewish driver. Although one cannot choose the driver, one can assume the driver is from the general population, which is predominantly non-Jewish.²⁷
- With either Uber or a taxi, one should ask the non-Jewish driver to open and close the car door to avoid turning on or off the dome light.

CONCLUSION

As we have seen, using certain apps requires one to learn the *halachos* involved. STAR-K will continue to monitor changes in these and other technologies to keep the kosher consumer up to date.²⁸ ☆

26. If payment will be via a cash transaction, there a couple of ways to avoid directly handing money to a taxi driver: either placing cash in a hat and bringing it to the driver, or stashing it in a safe spot near the house and instructing the driver to take it and to keep any change.

27. In some cities, arrangements are made with taxi dispatchers by Jewish organizations to send a non-Jewish driver upon request and defer payment until after Shabbos. In the author's experience in years past, requesting a non-Jewish driver from such a taxi dispatcher was not always successful. The dispatchers did not always understand the request, which led to further delay.

28. Additional questions that will be addressed in future articles: (1) Uber runs a program called Uber Health to arrange rides to medical appointments. Is a male driver permitted to assist a female patient into and out of the car? (2) Is one permitted to complain to Uber Eats about a kosher restaurant? (3) If a Jewish car service is available, should one call them before choosing to hire an Uber?

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