

\$20 for your first year  
Become a member

Cape Breton > News > Canada

## St. John's cab company fined again for refusing ride to passenger with service dog

Human Rights Commission adjudicator determined man's disability was likely factor in cab company's denial of service

**Tara Bradbury · Reporter** | Posted: 15 hours ago | Updated: 5 hours ago | 4 Min Read



City Wide Taxi cabs at St. John's International Airport. For the second time, the Newfoundland and Labrador Human Rights Commission has fined City Wide Cabs for discriminating against a person with a service dog.

ADVERTISEMENT

Ferry service resumes between P.E.I. and Nova Scotia | SaltWire



ST. JOHN'S, N.L. — City Wide Taxi has been fined by the provincial Human Rights Commission for a second time for discriminating against a passenger with a service dog.

The commission has also ordered the St. John's taxi company, once again, to participate in training regarding accommodating people with disabilities.

A man whose service dog assists him with mobility issues and trauma filed a complaint with the commission, saying he had approached a line of taxis parked at the corner of George Street and Adelaide Street around supper time Oct. 24, 2020. Since the driver of the first taxi in line, a van, wasn't in the vehicle, the man went to the second taxi, a car.

That driver told him City Wide's policy was to permit animals in vans only and gestured toward the empty taxi at the front of the line. The man said he offered to show the driver his medical documents, but the driver refused and told him he would have to wait for a van.

---

### Read more

[St. John's cab firm says driver who refused to take passenger is allergic to dogs](#)



ADVERTISEMENT

St. John's disability advocate denied ride by cab driver  
— again



The driver told the commission he had contacted his dispatch while driving away to request a van for the man and his dog. He said company policy is that all animals, including service animals, are allowed only in vans due to cleaning requirements.



As that taxi left, the man approached a nearby police officer for help.

When the van driver returned to his vehicle, he, too, refused to give the man a ride, but relented after speaking with the police officer, and drove the passenger and his dog to their destination.

Human Rights Commission adjudicator Allison Conway determined May 23 the man's disability was a likely factor in the cab company's denial of service, and he had not been reasonably accommodated.

**"My finding of discrimination is not found on his personal actions alone, but rather the systemic nature of the discrimination, exhibited by the (company) in this case."**

**— Human Rights Commission adjudicator Allison Conway**

While the driver had called for a van, "this falls below the standard of accommodation required," Conway wrote in her decision.

Conway said she believed the company had put the driver in a difficult position by instructing him not to take animals in his car.

"My finding of discrimination is not found on his personal actions alone, but rather the systemic nature of the discrimination, exhibited by the (company) in this case," Conway stated.

She noted it was City Wide's second incident of discrimination in a very similar circumstance: in 2016, the commission found the company had discriminated against a woman who had approached the taxi stand with her service dog, when two drivers refused to accept her fare and a third drove away.

In that case, the company was ordered to pay the complainant \$5,000 in compensation and to participate in training related to accommodating passengers with disabilities.

This time around, an increased penalty is warranted, Conway wrote, ordering City Wide to pay the man \$7,500.

"The evidence before me in this case is that the complainant suffered humiliation, harm to his dignity, and is in the position of uncertainty as to when

ADVERTISEMENT

She also ordered the company to participate in training, provided by the commission, including a review of company policy with respect to service animals.

It has been our privilege to have the trust and support of our East Coast communities for the last 200 years. Our SaltWire team is always watching out for the place we call home. Our 100 journalists strive to inform and improve our East Coast communities by delivering impartial, high-impact, local journalism that provokes thought and action. Please consider joining us in this mission by becoming a member of the SaltWire Network and helping to make our communities better.

[Click here for information on becoming a member](#)

[Click here to download the SaltWire app](#)

Share story:



“Our events are getting bigger and better every year, which means this summer is going to be the best George Street Festival yet,” says Don-E Coady, Marketing and Communications lead for the George Street Association.

SPONSORED BY GEORGE ST FESTIVAL

### Related Stories



St. John's cab firm says driver who refused to take passenger is allergic to \_\_\_\_\_ St. John's disability advocate denied ride by cab driver — again  
ADVERTISEMENT