MORE THAN A GIG

A Survey of Ride-hailing Drivers in Los Angeles

UCLA Institute for Research on Labor and Employment
UCLA Labor Center | UCLA Labor Studies Minor | May 2018

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ride-hailing, also known as ridesharing and ridesourcing, is where drivers connect with passengers through Transportation Network Companies (TNCs), such as Uber and Lyft, through a phone app. This report, the first comprehensive study of ride-hailing drivers in Los Angeles County, is based on 260 surveys, 8 interviews and an extensive policy and literature review. It captures the reality of TNC drivers in the so-called "gig economy," foregrounds the experience of drivers, and describes what this labor entails.

Because of its high population density, an increased demand for service work, and an emergent desire for more independent working conditions, Los Angeles is an ideal site for on-demand ride-hailing companies. Yet the rise of TNCs and other online labor platforms has prompted concerns about the future of essential employment laws, the quality of available work, and whether an economy that works for everyone is attainable. Moreover, uneven regulation has allowed technology companies to flourish in the gray areas of workers' rights.

Ride-hailing is non-standard and often temporary work, and there are significant questions around how wages are determined, income instability, job security, and workplace safety. Drivers are currently classified as independent contractors, and thus absorb every risk associated with the work, while companies are freed from ensuring workplace benefits and other protections. In Los Angeles, Uber drivers actually earn less than the mandated minimum wage. Importantly, their classification prevents them from engaging in collective bargaining practices to address a wide range of issues.

In addition, TNCs operate under laxer regulations than those for taxis and other transportation operators. Many rules set for taxi operation, such as base fares and caps on vehicles, prevent the oversaturation of vehicles and provide a viable income for drivers. Other taxi regulations ensure that services offered are not discriminatory and provide access for those with disabilities. Ride-hailing also impacts public transportation, and has led to a 6% reduction in Americans using bus services and a 3% decline in the use of light rail service. This year, the number of people taking for-hire vehicles nationally is expected to surpass that of those taking the bus.

1. More than a Gig

Companies sell ride-hailing work as temporary or short-term. Our study finds that, on the contrary, many drivers are staying in the work for increasingly longer durations and are working more hours per day. For many, it is plainly becoming full-time work and their primary source of income.

- **Ride-hailing driving is neither supplemental nor temporary.** Close to half of drivers surveyed reported driving for a TNC as their only job.
- **For many drivers, ride-hailing is their main source of income.** Two-thirds of drivers depend on driving to support themselves and their families.
- **Among those with two or more jobs, over half are working in service occupations.** These jobs are largely low wage and signal that people are taking on additional employment just to make ends meet.
- **Aside from supporting themselves, drivers are supporting families and children.** More than half support one other person in their family, and 35% support families with at least one child present.
- **Some drivers rely on public assistance to sustain themselves.** Close to 1 in 5 receive some form of public assistance, such as food stamps or subsidized medical programs.

- **Many drivers are working full-time hours.** Almost half of the drivers are driving 35 hours or more, and 3 in 5 drive more than 5 days a week.
- **Workers are staying in the work for increasingly longer durations.** Our survey found that drivers have been on the job for 13 months on average.
- **Full-time drivers tend to be older, are more likely to be immigrants,** have been on the job longer, and are more likely to support families with children.
- **Additional income and the promise of a flexible schedule are the principal reasons drivers chose to join TNCs.** Close to half were drawn by the potential of earning extra income and 37% by a flexible schedule.

2. The Cost of Driving

The gig economy emerged during a period of national economic recession, and monetizing one's resources was one way to navigate that uncertainty. Yet, as drivers stay longer in this work, they invest funds in vehicles, accessories and other amenities while covering expenses for car maintenance, gas, and insurance. Many face financial hardships throughout their tenure.

- **Drivers are investing financially and becoming locked into the work.** Over one-third of drivers purchased or leased their cars in order to drive for the TNC. Those that have purchased or leased their vehicle are more likely to be driving full-time hours.
- **Many drivers incur additional expenses by purchasing extra accessories or amenities for their passengers.** The majority of drivers purchased car accessories such as cell phone mounts, mats, and seat covers, and 78% provided amenities such as water, phone chargers, and candy.
- **57% had major car maintenance costs,** such as tire rotation, alignment, or brake work. None of these additional expenses are covered by the TNCs, and they diminish drivers' net earnings.
- **Many drivers find it challenging to pay for work-related expenses.** Close to half have found it difficult to pay for gas, insurance, and maintenance costs. To compensate, many work additional hours, take out loans, or incur credit card debt.
- **Drivers' most pressing concerns are wear and tear on their cars and associated maintenance costs.**

- **Given the burden of work-related expenses and income instability,** 55% of drivers would prefer to earn a set hourly wage after expenses. The median hourly wage drivers would prefer to earn is $19.
- **A lack of transparency and vague and shifting conditions of employment** leave almost half of drivers feeling as if they are not receiving the income they have earned.
- **Constant notifications, monitoring and performance reviews also impose high costs** on drivers' well-being. More than half feel pressure to receive good reviews, and 63% have received negative reviews.
- **Drivers also face a threat of deactivation.** Close to one-third of drivers reported being afraid of deactivation, and one-fourth have been at risk of it.

3. Driving the Conditions of Work

The labor classification of drivers is central to the conditions of work for both drivers and companies. Presently, TNCs hire drivers as independent contractors because they offer drivers flexible hours and autonomy to set their own hours outside of rigid schedules set by employers. By classifying drivers in this way, drivers are not considered employees, and TNCs are thus released of any responsibilities for drivers' wages, work conditions, benefits, workplace protections, and safety. Drivers want to have agency over their work, access to benefits, and the ability to belong to a worker/driver organization.

- **Drivers want control over their work but also the benefits of employee status.** Close to two-thirds said the company was not their boss, yet over half of the respondents in our survey said they would like to become TNC employees.
- **The majority of drivers want to be able to negotiate their contracts.** More than half of the drivers said their contract had changed since they started driving.
- **Half of drivers are concerned about TNCs monitoring their movement** when the app is on.
- **Drivers experience stress from a TNC's ceaseless communication,** which is a form of 'soft control' that encourages them to drive. Almost half receive a notification when the app is off and one-quarter feel stressed from the contact.
- **Surge pricing is a key motivator for 38% of drivers.** In addition, 39% feel pressure to drive when they receive notifications of surge pricing.

- **All drivers want some kind of workplace benefit.** Fully 94% would like benefits such as workers' compensation and health insurance, and are interested in other benefits such as overtime, retirement, and paid time off.
- **Drivers would like to work collectively to address workplace issues.** Eight in 10 drivers surveyed would like to belong to a worker/driver organization to demand better wages and improve working conditions.

TNCs and their operations need a system of checks and balances to ensure that workplace conditions and protection, income and job security, fair access, and environmental and public impact mitigation are integrated into their business model. And while riders have access to a wider range of options and cheaper prices, the societal deficit is elsewhere pronounced. California historically leads the way in technological innovation, and must likewise innovate quality jobs for gig workers. Our findings show that gig workers in Los Angeles value flexibility, but also require a measure of predictability, safety, and income security, protections long available to their counterparts in traditional wage-earning work. To address this, we offer the following recommendations:

1. Ensure job quality, fair wages, and the health and safety of TNC drivers

Regardless of status as independent contractor or employee, a quality job, livable wages, and safe and healthy conditions must be accessible and a baseline requirement for all workers.

- Provide universal benefits that cover all residents and workers.
- Ensure independent contractors have access to fair work conditions and benefits.
- Give drivers the option to become company employees with benefits.
- Allow TNC drivers to organize and collectively bargain around their working conditions.

2. Level the regulatory playing field for all transportation systems

TNCs must be regulated to decrease unfair competition with taxis and other transportation providers.

- Regulate the industry to provide fair and sustainable work for drivers.
- Ensure that TNCs are offering accessible, non-discriminatory services.
- Protect public transportation infrastructure and jobs.
- Consider 'fair share' fees to mitigate TNCs' impact on public transportation, traffic, carbon emissions, and road maintenance.

3. Encourage fair, accessible and equitable uses of platform work

Promote a worker/driver-centered approach to technology, and increase drivers' agency over their work.

- Have a worker-centered approach to technology.
- Support worker-owned platforms that invest in drivers.
- Begin to address the future displacement of workers by technology.

4. Continue to expand research, evaluation and data

As this workforce grows, we must have access to timely and accurate data in order to monitor trends and tailor regulations.

- Expand government collection of labor data to include gig work.
- Make ride-hailing data transparent and accessible to researchers and other key stakeholders.
- Conduct further research on the current and future conditions of the TNC buness model and platform app work in general.

1. INTRODUCTION

Los Angeles County, with over 10 million residents, is a sprawling region which has historically relied on private automobiles. But over time, the county has been rapidly expanding its public transportation system and exploring a range of mobility options such as carsharing, bikesharing and ride-hailing.[1] Ride-hailing, also known as ridesharing or ridesourcing, is a service in which drivers are contracted by transportation networking companies (TNCs) to provide on-demand services by using a personal or rented vehicle as a for-hire vehicle. Current TNC operators in California include Uber, Lyft, See Jane Run, Opoli, and others.[2] In this report, we focus on Uber and Lyft drivers in the greater Los Angeles region. Some TNCs have expanded services to include "ridesplitting," in which customers share rides with others on similar routes. The volume of those on TNC apps is vast: an estimated 1 million U.S. drivers are on the Uber app, 700,000 are on Lyft, and half a million are on both.[3]

Although it is not clear how many Angelenos rely on ride-hailing to traverse the city, estimates indicate that about 15-20% of Americans use them, largely in urban areas.[4] In the region, freelance work in transportation, which includes ride-hailing, doubled in 2015 and is experiencing "hyper-growth."[5] Large cities like Los Angeles have become ideal sites for on-demand companies and drivers because of high population density, the increased demand for service work, and an emergent desire for more independent working conditions.[6] Los Angeles has been particularly receptive to an expanded ride-hailing driver base and increased consumer demand for multiple reasons, among them the city's expansive geography, urban sprawl, and limited public transit coverage for many neighborhoods.[7] Though public transportation infrastructure is expanding, recent estimates indicate that only 9% of commuters take public transportation to work, and 70% drive to work alone.[8] Local government support for ride-hailing platforms to meet regional mobility needs has also contributed to the rise of TNCs in Los Angeles,[9] and many concede that the rise of these platforms has generally made mobility smoother for consumers. This is especially true in places such as Hollywood, Santa Monica and downtown, where a growing entertainment and nightlife environment have increased demand for ride-hailing services.[10]

But the emergence of TNCs and other online labor platforms has prompted questions about the future of essential employment laws, the quality of available work, and whether an economy that works for everyone involved is attainable. Concern about the consequences of the business model and corporate culture of TNCs — and Uber and Lyft in particular — is widespread.[11] TNCs argue publicly that they are merely a "platform" and not a transportation provider, yet they are dramatically reshaping the way people work and travel in our transportation systems. Community advocates, drivers, riders, and especially policymakers must monitor the quality of labor in the gig economy, and insist on clear assurances that workers are protected, treated fairly, and justly compensated. The following are some of the key areas for consideration:

Work conditions and classification. Gig work is the latest iteration of casual, contingent and precarious work — work that is non-standard, often temporary, and with lower wages, income instability, job insecurity, and higher rates of workplace injuries and health issues.[12] The work is often unrecognized as real work given "its invisibilization of money exchanges between driver and rider, non-branded fleet, and volunteeristic labor."[13] These conditions render drivers vulnerable to exploitative work conditions, particularly for those who rely on it as a primary job and source of income. TNCs often engage in aggressive marketing strategies to lure prospective drivers "with the promise of bonuses of several hundred dollars and high five-figure annual income, but without revealing the costs and risks associated with ride-hailing."[14] A 2015 Uber study asserted that drivers averaged more than $19 an hour before expenses.[15] Other studies that attempted to incorporate the cost of driving into income find that gross earnings are anywhere between $8.55 and $11.77, putting Uber drivers at the bottom fifth of wage earners.[16] As platform services and rates frequently shift, uncertainty becomes standardized, as does drivers' income insecurity and absence of benefits.[17] This uncertainty does not decline over time, as drivers are generally not better compensated due to seniority or tenure.[18] Furthermore, a recent study also found that women earn 7% less than men on Uber's platform.[19] In this form of work, drivers also face conditions that are stressful and can compromise their health and safety. Drivers report that they feel pressure to accept rides and extend their working day to avoid deactivation, or job loss.[20] Recently, Uber implemented limits to ensure rest because drivers were working overlong shifts.[21]

Currently, ride-hailing drivers are classified as independent contractors rather than employees. Employee status is broadly determined by how much control the employer exercises over a worker's job conditions and income. TNCs assert that drivers have flexibility, independence and autonomy over the work. Some, however, have argued that the level of control TNCs maintain makes this misclassification; the risks attendant to the work are misplaced onto drivers, while the company is freed from providing workplace benefits and protections.[22] A recent U.S Supreme Court case has simplified the criteria for classification that may fundamentally alter the independent contractor status for gig workers.[23]

As independent contractors, TNC drivers lack benefits such as minimum wage and overtime pay, health insurance, retirement accounts, unemployment insurance, workers' compensation, and legal protection from discrimination and sexual harassment. They are consequently excluded from recent labor gains such as a higher minimum wage, paid sick time, and fair scheduling practices. In Los Angeles, Uber drivers are currently earning less than the mandated minimum wage.[24] Significantly, the classification prevents them from engaging in collective bargaining practices to address these issues.[25]

(De)regulating ride-hailing services. Taxis and TNCs operate under a two-tiered system of regulations. This disparity sharply disadvantages taxi drivers and taxi companies, who abide by long-legislated regulations that are much stricter than those for TNCs.[26] Traditionally, taxi regulations have encompassed limits on the volume of taxis, "reasonable and nondiscriminatory fares," service standards, financial responsibilities such as insurance, and vital rules around non-discrimination and access for those with disabilities.[27] Most large cities limit the number of taxis in their markets and establish fares to assure a livable wage for drivers. An "open entry" market does not control the number of vehicles, which leads to an oversupply of cars, and subsequently, to revenues spread too thinly among drivers.[28] Currently, there are no caps for TNCs, which has predictably resulted in an oversaturation of vehicles and an undermining of the ability of TNC and taxi drivers to earn a viable income.[29] Furthermore, TNCs generally subsidize the cost of rides to ensure low fares and to recruit drivers and consumers. They likewise provide aggressive incentives like discounts, free rides, and promos to outprice their competition.[30] Subsidizing rides is a strategically unsustainable business model, and while fares will eventually rise, wages for drivers may not. Finally there is also serious concern that TNCs are not providing equitable access to those with disabilities, as well as low-income communities.[31]

In 1983, over 20 cities deregulated the taxi system and the results were startling: a massive influx of cabs emerged into the market. Driver income diminished, rates hiked, efficiency dropped, highway congestion, energy consumption and environmental pollution increased, service deteriorated, and administrative costs remained at their pre-deregulation levels.[32] These effects should be closely monitored as TNC services expand. The taxi deregulation experience was, in fact, "so profoundly unsatisfactory that virtually every city that embraced it" had, by 1996, "jettisoned it in favor of resumed economic regulation."[33] While many current regulatory practices around taxis have become outdated, the practice of deregulation plainly disarms vital workplace protections.[34] To create equitable conditions for taxi and TNC drivers alike, policymakers must address regulations that allow for safe, accessible and sustainable services for riders, drivers, employers, and the environment.

Ride-hailing and public transportation. Ride-hailing services provide rides when public transportation may not be available, such as late at night or in areas with limited public transportation service. At the same time, as a parallel service, TNCs may be negatively impacting transit ridership and increasing urban congestion. University of California, Davis' Institute of Transportation Studies found that 6 in 10 riders would have taken public transportation, biked, or walked had TNCs not been available. The study also found a 6% reduction in riders using bus services and a 3% drop in light rail services.[35] Most major cities are, in fact, experiencing an overall decline in their public transportation ridership.[36] Transportation expert Bruce Schaller predicts that, in 2018, the number of people taking for-hire vehicles on a national level will surpass those taking the bus.[37]

The effect of declining public transportation ridership on the broader economy is substantial. Public sector transit jobs for bus and rail drivers are unionized and consist of viable wages and benefits, while UberPool or Lyft Line drivers who provide a comparable service are not. Public transportation predominantly serves low-income people, and declines in public transit services disproportionately impact these communities.[38] The Eno Center for Transportation has warned that a two-tiered system in which transportation options such as TNCs are readily available to the relatively wealthy, but inaccessible to lower income people, will exacerbate challenges to accessibility and equity, and will inevitably harm the public transit system.[39]

TNCs and their operations require a system of checks and balances to ensure that workplace conditions and protection, income and job security, fair access, and environmental effects are integrated into the model. As Steven Hill (2018) has noted, "the legacy of these companies amounts to a warning to the public and policymakers: If you do not provide people with good transportation options, they will take bad ones."[40] And while riders may have access to a wider range of options and cheaper prices, the societal deficit is elsewhere pronounced.[41] We make several policy recommendations at the end of this report to address these multiple concerns.

About the study

The aim of this study is to capture the ride-hailing drivers' experience, document their schedules, expenses, and interactions with the company, and assess the impact on their lives of driving for TNCs. The study employed a participatory research approach to document the working experience of TNC drivers in the greater Los Angeles region. A cohort of 30 UCLA students enrolled in the Labor Summer Internship Research Program (LSRIP) conducted 260 surveys of TNC drivers in August and September 2017. In addition, 7 student researchers under faculty supervision, conducted 8 in-depth interviews to complement the survey findings. See Appendix A for full details on the methodology.

As a research team, we presented the findings to key stakeholders including TNC and taxi drivers, academics, labor and industry advocates, and local government staff. Researchers from the UCLA Labor Center analyzed and compiled the findings into this report. Section 2 examines the drivers' work schedule, conditions of employment, and reasons for driving for a TNC. Section 3 delves into expenses, including the impact of customer reviews and the threat of deactivation. Section 4 explores labor conditions such as employee and independent contracting classification, contract negotiation, and work benefits. The last section offers a set of recommendations for this widening sphere of work.

2. MORE THAN A GIG

Many of today's gig apps materialized during the Great Recession,[42] which created the conditions necessary for those who were unemployed or underemployed to turn to the gig economy[43] and monetize their cars, driving skills, or homes. For some, driving is a necessary bridge between other jobs or ways to supplement their income. Since the recession, many workers who once held high-wage jobs have, within a diminished field of opportunity, increasingly taken low-wage work.[44] This may explain why gig work is continually expanding as unemployment is reaching record lows.[45] A number of studies have reiterated the part-time nature of this work: one found that workers spend about 12 hours of platform work per week,[46] and another found that half of drivers work 15 hours or less a week.[47] Yet our study establishes that many drivers are presently staying in this work longer and are working more hours per day. This fact questions whether this work is actually short-term or if, for many, it has become full-time, primary employment.

Driving as only job and main source of income

According to Hahn and Metcalfe (2017), findings from Hall and Krueger's 2015 survey suggest that "[d]rivers who work with Uber may use it as a way of smoothing their income stream, and also provide some needed income when searching for another job."[48] The underlying assumption that this work is supplemental and temporary is contradicted by our survey; we found that 47% of drivers sampled report that driving for a TNC is their only job.

Figure 1: Driving as only job

Source: UCLA Ride-hailing Driver Survey 2018

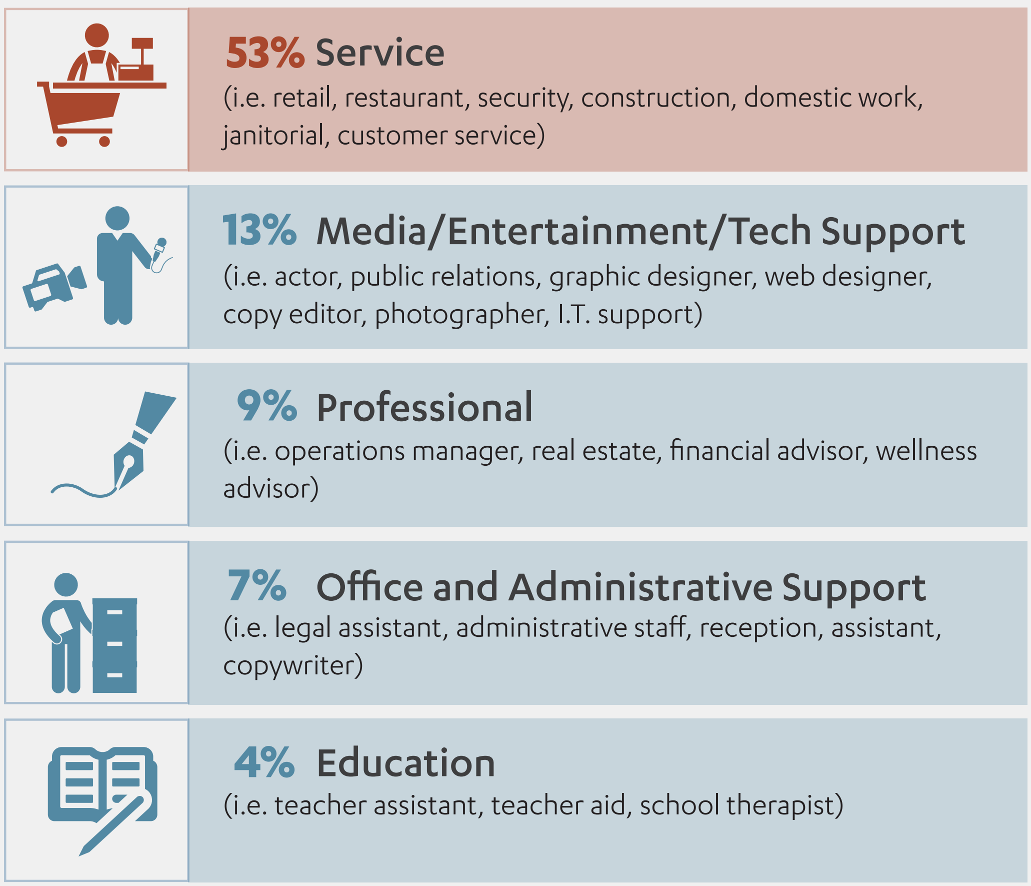
Even for those with other jobs, driving for a TNC is a significant source of income. Among all drivers in our sample, 66% depend on driving as their main source of income to support themselves and their families.

Figure 2: Main source of income

Source: UCLA Ride-hailing Driver Survey 2018

Among drivers with other jobs, half work in service sectors like retail, restaurant and construction. These jobs are largely low-wage and their mutual employment signals that they are not earning enough viable income at one job. Drivers reported additional employment including media, tech, and entertainment jobs, as well as administrative staff, teaching, and healthcare work.

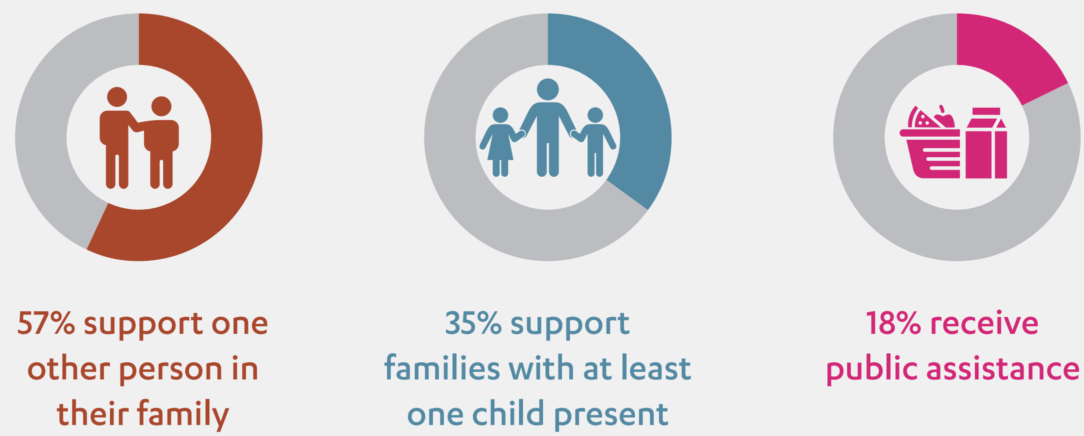
Figure 3: Top 5 occupations of drivers with multiple jobs



Source: UCLA Ride-hailing Driver Survey 2018

Drivers use their earnings to sustain both themselves and family members. Over half support at least one other person in their family, and over one-third of drivers support their family with at least one child present. Our survey also found that nearly 1 in 5 drivers receive some form of public assistance, such as food stamps, housing subsidies, and other assistance programs for low-income families.

Figure 4: People supported by driver's earnings and use of public assistance by drivers

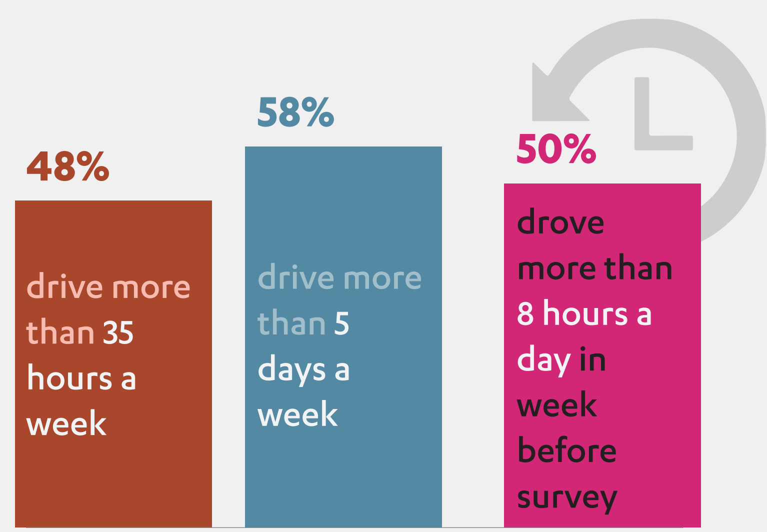


Source: UCLA Ride-hailing Driver Survey 2018

Hours worked and driving tenure

Since driving for the TNC is a primary source of income for many respondents, they drive full-time hours. Almost half of those surveyed reported driving 35 hours or more a week, and 3 in 5 drive more than 5 days a week. On average, respondents reported driving 7 hours a day, with half stating that they drove more than 8 hours a day during the week before the survey.

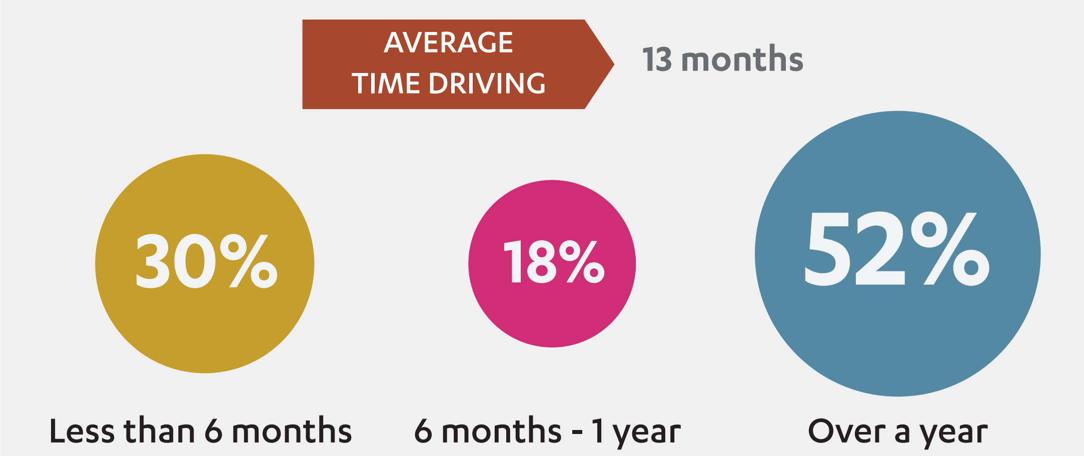
Figure 5: Days and hours of driving



Source: UCLA Ride-hailing Driver Survey 2018

According to a 2016 study, the on-demand economy has a phenomenally high rate of turnover.[49] "Workers typically use platforms in short bursts and for limited amounts of time: more than half (52%) of labor platform participants exit within a year and 40% within the first 6 months."[50] Our survey found a lower rate of exit within the first 6 months: only about one-third of those surveyed had driven for their current TNC for less than 6 months, while almost 2 out of 10 had driven between 6 months and 1 year, and more than half had driven for over a year. On average, TNC drivers have been on the job for 13 months.

Figure 6: Driving tenureship



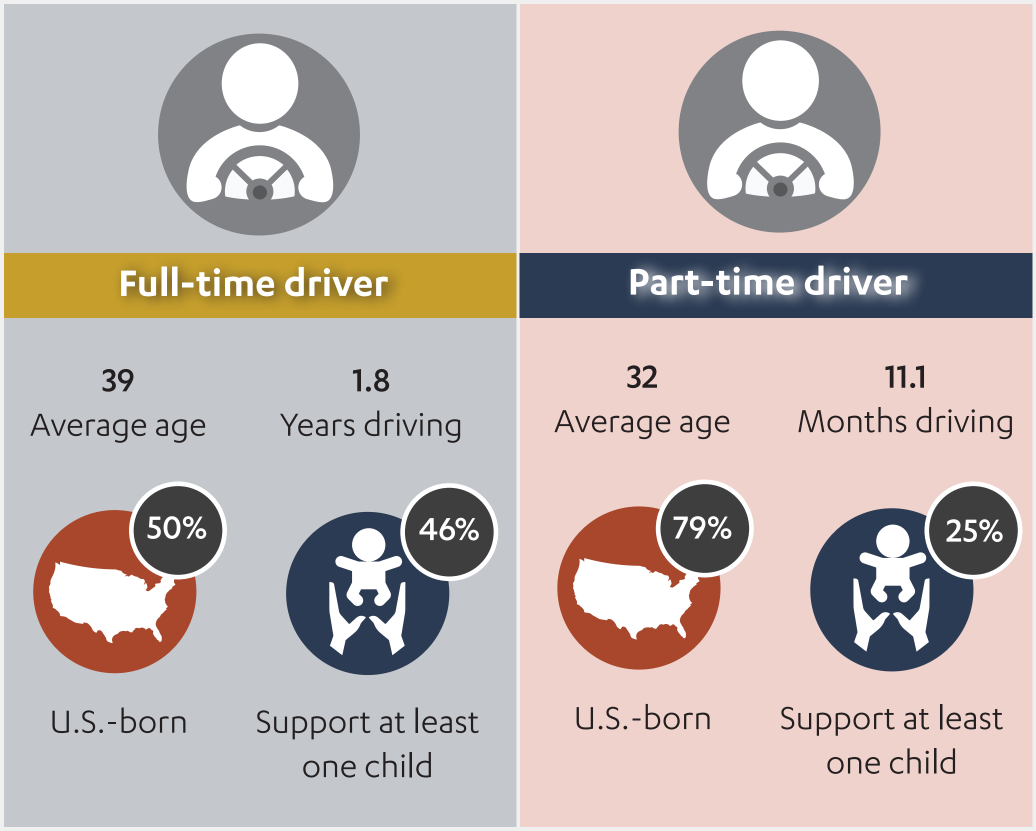
Source: UCLA Ride-hailing Driver Survey 2018

Worker characteristics and driving status

There are correlations among those for whom driving is their main source of income, who drive full-time hours, and who have driven for more than a year: they tend to be older, are more likely to be immigrants, hold driving as their primary job, and they stay in the profession for a longer timespan.

There are, however, distinct differences between part-time and full-time drivers, and by driving tenure. Part-time drivers are usually younger than their full-time counterparts, are more likely to be U.S.-born, have shorter driving tenures, and are less likely to support a child. Those that have driven for less than a year are more likely to be younger than their counterparts, work part-time hours, and not rely on driving as their primary job. (See Appendix B, Table 1 for a detailed description of worker characteristics by employment characteristics).

Figure 7: Selected driver characteristics



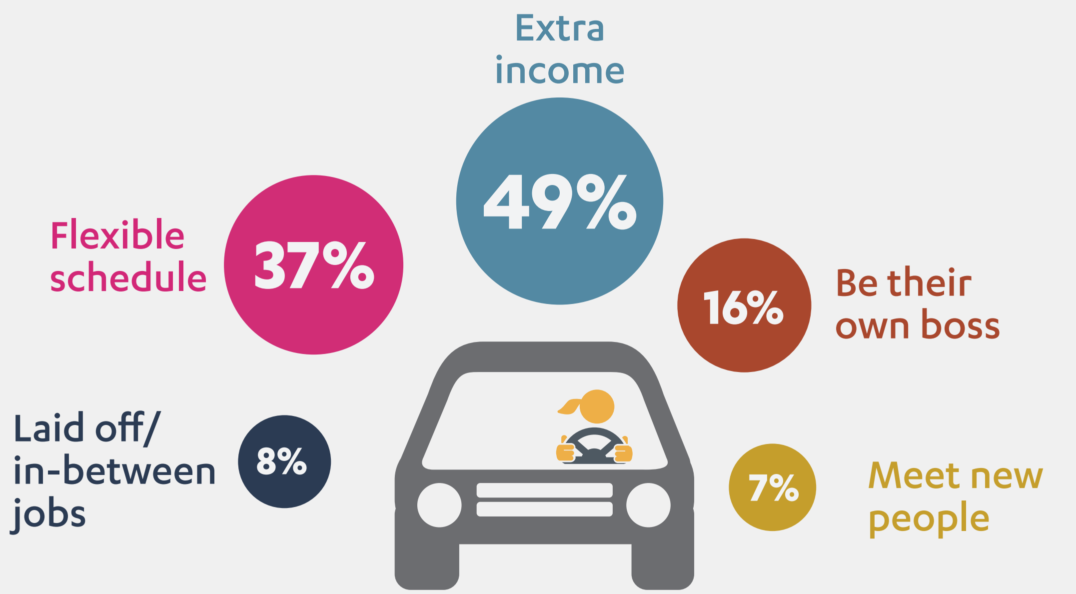
Source: UCLA Ride-hailing Driver Survey 2018

Reasons for driving

The principal reason drivers said they started driving for the TNC was to earn extra income while maintaining a flexible schedule. One TNC driver explained: *"I needed to find a job that would work around my internship, and most places didn't want to hire somebody just for evenings and weekends."*[51] Only one-quarter of respondents began driving with the intention of it becoming their main source of income. Yet it was the primary source for two-thirds of drivers. Others perceived driving for Uber as their only remaining option for work: *"I lost my business. Started school, but had health issues and had to quit. Driving is my last resort."*[52] A small number of respondents decided to work for the TNC because they wanted to be their own bosses and to meet new people.

A few drivers in our survey formerly drove taxis. One respondent lamented the increased market share of TNCs like Uber and Lyft: *"I used to drive taxis. Uber killed my business."*[53] Another reflected on the uneven competition between TNCs and cab companies, and the increased regulatory burden that the latter face: *"I used to be a cab driver, but [was] unhappy about paying for so many permits...Uber made it easier."*[54] The expansion of TNCs into U.S. markets has exacerbated the already precarious working conditions for taxi drivers, who have experienced dramatic reductions in income.

Figure 8: Top 5 reasons drivers chose to drive for a TNC



Source: UCLA Ride-hailing Driver Survey 2018

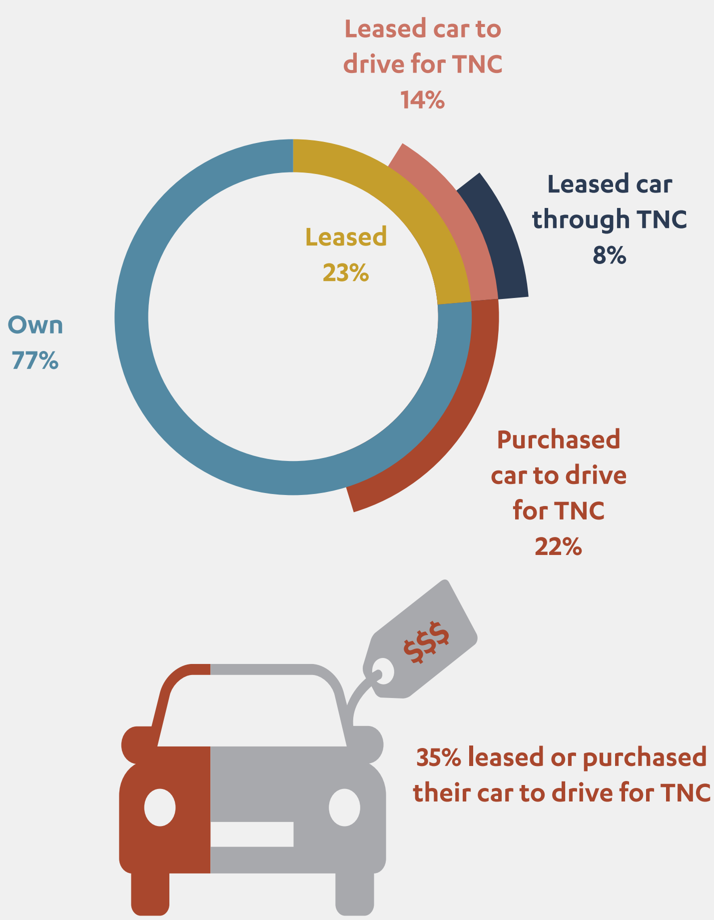
3. THE COST OF DRIVING

While taxis have a set meter rate based on an array of factors, such as the cost of living, TNC fares vary widely. Generally, TNCs create fixed, non-negotiated formulas that include a base fare, plus per-minute and per-distance rates for the time and distance from pick-up to drop-off, surge pricing, the company's fee, and whether other fees are applicable.[55] Recent studies have noted discrepancies between what the companies advertise as average hourly pay and what drivers actually earn.[56] Drivers, meanwhile, endure costs such as wear and tear on their vehicles, gas, car insurance, repairs, car maintenance, taxes, and additional expenses such as AUX cables, candy, and water. Estimates on work-related expenses incurred by drivers are difficult to measure. While studies on earnings are widespread, less is known about the hidden costs of driving. In this section, we will discuss costs associated with ride-hailing, the strategies employed by drivers to offset them, drivers' concerns over their earnings, and other stresses associated with this work.

Owning, leasing, buying a car to work

The gig economy emerged during a period of national economic recession, and monetizing one's resources became a way to navigate that uncertainty. The majority of drivers in our sample are using their own car, with about a quarter leasing their cars. Over a third of drivers, however, purchased or leased their car in order to drive for the company: 22% of the drivers purchased and 14% leased in order to drive for the TNC. This heavy financial investment necessarily locks drivers into their work, and those who purchased or leased their car to drive for the company are more likely to work longer hours. More than half of those that purchased, and almost two-thirds that leased to drive for the company, work 35 hours or more a week. And our survey found that almost 1 in 10 drivers lease their car through TNCs, which raises concerns about how ride-hailing companies are increasingly taking on the role of financier.[57]

Figure 9: Car purchased or leased to drive



Source: UCLA Ride-hailing Driver Survey 2018

Additional expenses and costs

Many drivers incur additional expenses by purchasing accessories for their riders. Over three-quarters provide amenities such as water, candy, and AUX cables, and 8 in 10 purchased cell-phone mounts and mats. These are provided at no extra charge to riders, and some have come to expect them, and file unfavorable ratings to drivers who don't provide them.[58] An Uber driver expressed his concerns over these expectations: *"When passengers ask for water, I feel like I have to provide [it] as if it were conditions of a contract, even though it's not. I don't like how passengers think drivers should provide these for them."*[59]

Figure 10: Additional driving costs

80%
Purchased additional accessories such as a cell phone mount and seat covers

78%
Provide amenities such as water, candy, and AUX cables to riders

Source: UCLA Ride-hailing Driver Survey 2018

Moreover, drivers pay these costs without assistance from the TNC. More than half of the drivers in our sample report having had car maintenance costs such as tire rotation, alignment, or work on brakes while driving for the TNC.

Figure 11: Major car costs

57%

had major car maintenance costs, such as tire rotation, alignment, or brake work

Source: UCLA Ride-hailing Driver Survey 2018

Trouble paying for work-related costs

In addition to paying for general maintenance costs for their vehicles, drivers incur other major expenses such as gas and insurance, and almost half of drivers report experiencing difficulties paying for these various work-related expenses.

Figure 12: Difficulty paying for work expenses

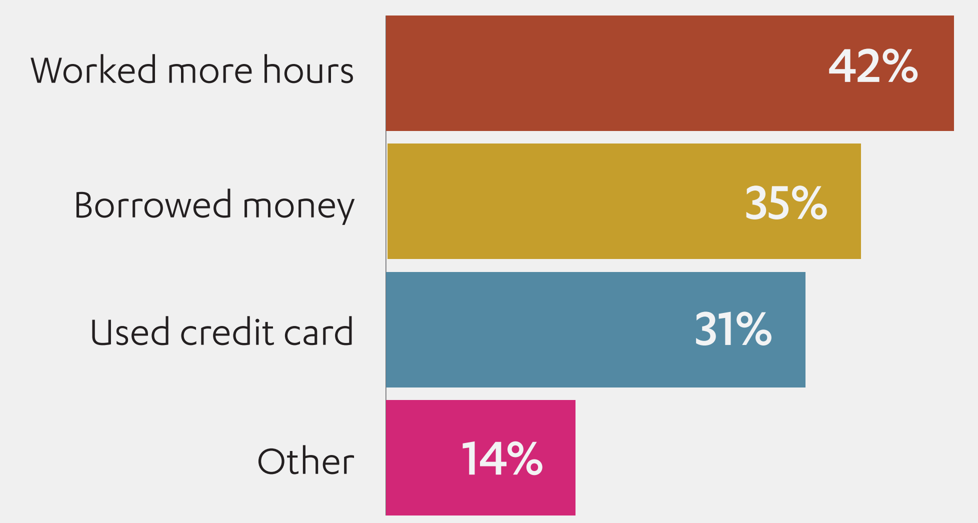
44%

of drivers report having difficulty paying for work expenses such as gas, insurance, and maintenance

Source: UCLA Ride-hailing Driver Survey 2018

To pay for these additional expenses, drivers report having to work more hours, using their credit cards, asking parents/friends for a loan, or taking out loans with another third party, and by other means including using savings, working more hours at a second job, or picking up additional gigs through other on-demand platforms such as Post-mates.

Figure 13: How drivers dealt with work expenses they were unable to pay



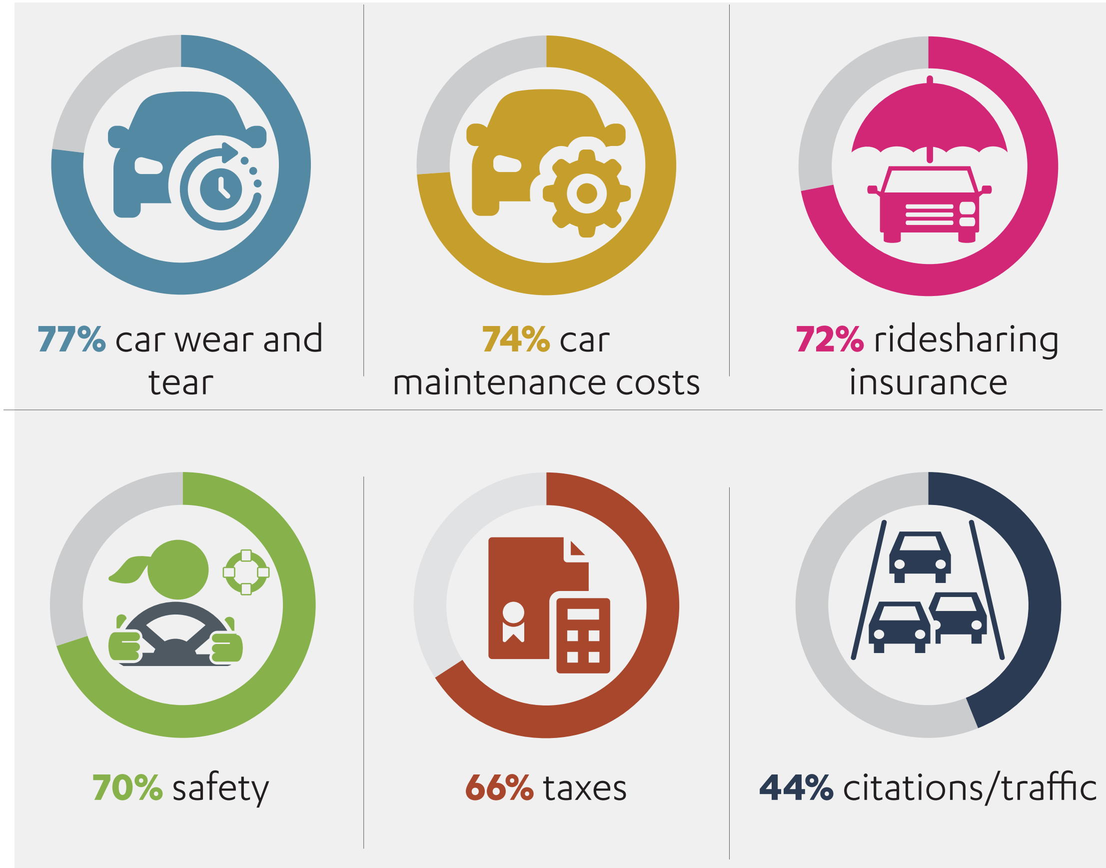
Source: UCLA Ride-hailing Driver Survey 2018

A study that tracked Uber driver testimonies and closely observed the physical and mental toll this work entails found that drivers are "buying and leasing cars explicitly to drive for Uber; and often commuting long distances to service-rich areas to work, often sleeping and eating in their cars in between driving opportunities."[60]

Concern about work-related costs

The most pressing concerns of drivers, even over issues like safety and the lack of training, are the costs associated with the job. More than three-quarters worried about the wear and tear on their cars. Most drivers are also concerned about their ride-hailing insurance coverage, safety issues, and taxes. And almost half express uneasiness about receiving a citation for a traffic violation, and over one-quarter over their lack of training.

Figure 14: Most pressing concerns related to the job



Source: UCLA Ride-hailing Driver Survey 2018

Although Uber and Lyft have driver rewards programs that offer discounts on tires or oil changes, many feel they are insufficient. As one driver shares, "*If you go to Autozone, you can get 10% off on your purchase, or if you get your brakes replaced by Uber-selected repair shops. The problem is that you pay more with their 10% discount than if you went to a regular repair shop around the corner from your house. The selected franchises by Uber always charge more. It's not always worth going to those places.*" [61]

Set wages and fair compensation

The out-of-pocket expenses incurred by drivers significantly diminish their earnings. One driver reports that "*Uber doesn't reimburse drivers for: 1) insurance, 2) cell phone, 3) data, 4) maintenance, 5) depreciation of car value, [or] 6) risk of driving and getting in accident.*" [62] Another driver raised concerns over not being able to earn the minimum wage:

"For what the riders pay and what the driver gets, Uber makes most of the money... But it's not fair and it is not right the amount that they get. Considering that the driver is the one that is risking everything and is using all the tools to get the job done, license, insurance and the company has nothing to lose... Like when I drive full-time ... I get between $700 to $1000 a week ... But when [you] take into consideration gasoline, the maintenance of your vehicle divided by the hours that you drove that week, then [the] wage is about $11 dollars an hour so it's not even minimum wage."[63]

A current Economic Policy Institute study found that Uber drivers earn less than the minimum wage in many major urban areas, including Los Angeles.[64] When we asked drivers if they would prefer to earn a set hourly wage after expenses, more than half said that they would.

Figure 15: Drivers that would like a set hourly wage

55% of drivers would prefer to earn a set hourly wage after expenses

Source: UCLA Ride-hailing Driver Survey 2018

Among those that would like to receive a set hourly wage, the majority want a guaranteed hourly rate of $15 or more. About 1 in 3 drivers would like to earn $21 an hour or more, and only 13% would like to earn less than $15 an hour. The median hourly wage that drivers would prefer to earn is $19.

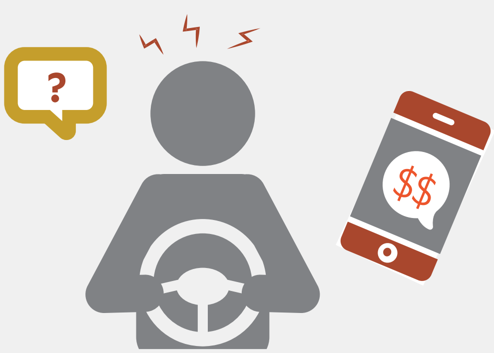
Table 1: Among drivers who would like to earn a set hourly rate

Median hourly wage drivers would like to earn:	**$19**	
Less than $15	**13%**	
$15-$17	**27%**	**87% would like to be guaranteed $15 or more**
$18-$20	**24%**	
$21 or more	**36%**	

As one driver explains, *"Driving is not an advanced skill, [but] it's at least a medium skill, and we should be getting about medium skilled pay, which I think the market dictates right now at about $18 to $25. I feel like that would be more appropriate given the fact that we're on the road and that we're engaging in those kinds of risks."*[65]

In addition to concerns over costs, close to half of drivers feel they are not receiving the entirety of the money that they earn.

Figure 16: Drivers feel they are getting paid less than they expected



47% are getting paid less than they expected

Source: UCLA Ride-hailing Driver Survey 2018

Some respondents expressed a desire for greater transparency around fares and earnings. One respondent explained, *"Another huge challenge ... when you get paid, you only get to see the amount you made, you don't get to see what Uber charged the person and the percentage or the cut that you get out of it."*[66] We asked respondents if they were aware of the portion of their earnings taken by the TNC for whom they drove. The majority of drivers reported knowing the percentage the company takes from each ride: more than half estimated the percentage to be between 25-30%, and one-quarter reported 20-24%. Only 6% estimated that it was more than 30%.

Table 2: What drivers think is the portion of earnings the company takes

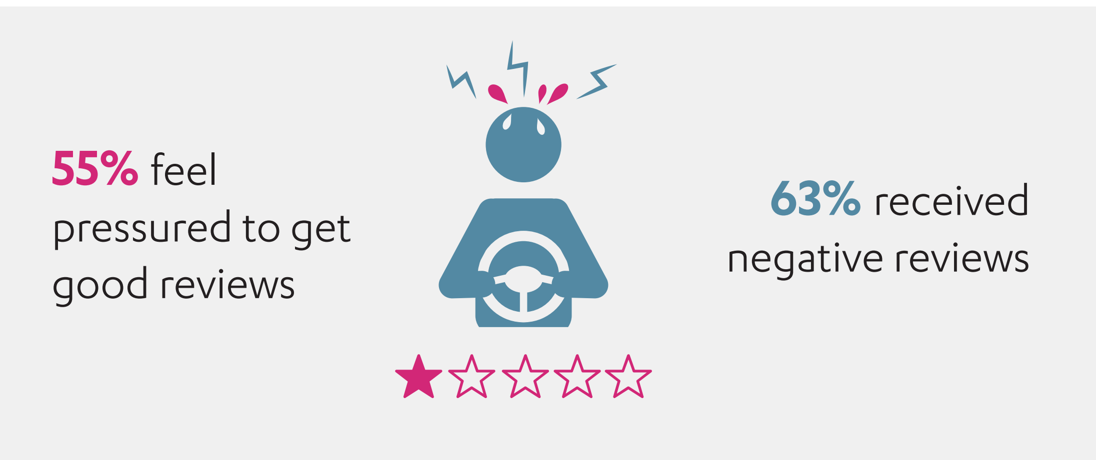
Less than 20%	**11%**
20-24%	**25%**
25-30%	**58%**
More than 30%	**6%**

Customer reviews and complaints can cost drivers

The pressure of the job is a significant, if less quantifiable, cost of the work. Much of the work of app-based drivers is monitored and evaluated on the app through which they work. Poor rider reviews, low acceptance rates, and customer complaints can deactivate drivers from their work entirely. This essential fact underlines the precarity of this form of work and necessarily endangers the well-being of the driver.

Both Uber and Lyft ask riders to rate their driver following the use of their service. Individual scores are then used to calculate an average score for each driver, and if a score falls below a certain point, then the company may issue a warning or deactivate — or fire — the driver from the platform. Our survey found that over half of drivers feel pressured to elicit good reviews, though the majority have received negative reviews.

Figure 17: Driver ratings and riders' reviews



Source: UCLA Ride-hailing Driver Survey 2018

Moreover, the potential for discrimination is embedded in user ratings. Recent studies have shown that the use of passenger ratings to assess driver performance exposes drivers to either the overt or implicit biases of passengers.[67] Driver ratings can be affected by aspects of a driver's identity, such as their race, religion, national origin, and/or gender.[68] Further, if a customer views a low rating for a driver, they may be predisposed to confirm it, and negative ratings can suspend or terminate drivers from their jobs.[69] When low passenger scores lead to drivers being deactivated, the supposedly neutral ratings systems of TNCs can facilitate discrimination.

Through this well-documented practice,[70] TNCs exercise "soft-control" by employing "the threat of dismissal for unsatisfactory customer ratings and noncompliance with company policies, which generally govern presentation, personal and vehicle cleanliness, interaction with customers, phone mounting, restricting drivers from accepting street hails, greetings, disallowing tips or cash, and other detailed instructions about how to conduct themselves."[71] Almost one-third of respondents fear deactivation and one-quarter reported that they have been at risk of it.

Figure 18: Pressure to get good reviews and threat of deactivation

30% are afraid of being deactivated

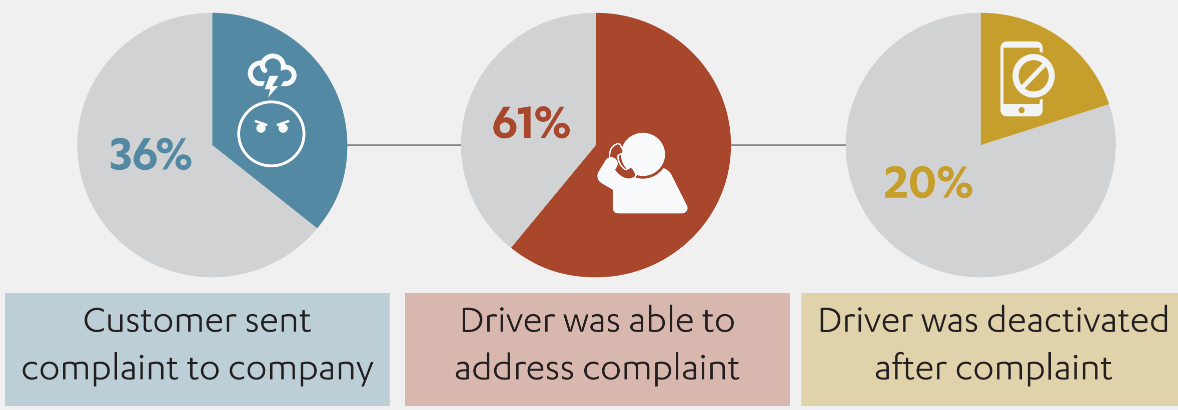
24% have been at risk of deactivation

Source: UCLA Ride-hailing Driver Survey 2018

These apps do not allow drivers to prefilter ride requests based on essential criteria, such as whether they want to take on ridespitting fares or how far they are willing to travel. The apps closely track driver acceptance rates and if drivers decline too many rides, they may be logged out of the app. One driver reported that "*if you don't accept a ride, your ratings go down … And when other people request rides, it shows your acceptance rate on your profile when other passengers are selecting an Uber driver … If somebody sees* *this person has a 60% reliability rate or acceptance rate, they might cancel the ride on you.”*[72]

Drivers can be also suspended or deactivated if a passenger files a complaint. Over one-third of drivers have had a customer complain to the company, and only half were able to address it. Among those who have had a passenger complaint sent to the TNC, 20% were deactivated. Many feel that their company did not provide an adequate recourse to contest the complaint, and were suspended from their account while the TNC investigated. One driver shared that *“as soon as the complaint was sent about the car having some scratches in the bumper [I] was cut off the app. I was not able to finish [my] bonus.”*[73] *Another driver indicated that these measures were unfair, and that the TNCs' approach to dealing with complaints was to “punish the drivers right away and investigate later.”*[74]

Figure 19: Customer complaints



Source: UCLA Ride-hailing Driver Survey 2018

Drivers also noted the lack of support they received in dealing with rude or unruly customers. Some reported their experiences dealing with verbally abusive riders, and their inability to cancel the ride once the passenger boarded the car. Others observed a need for training on how to navigate difficult interactions with riders that can be stressful and even dangerous for drivers. One survey respondent shared that drivers could benefit from learning *“how to interact with customers... [and] how to address different types of situations with the passengers, instead of getting mad or canceling the ride with the passenger. We are not prepared for that, we are regular people driving for someone else.”* [75]

4. DRIVING THE CONDITIONS OF WORK

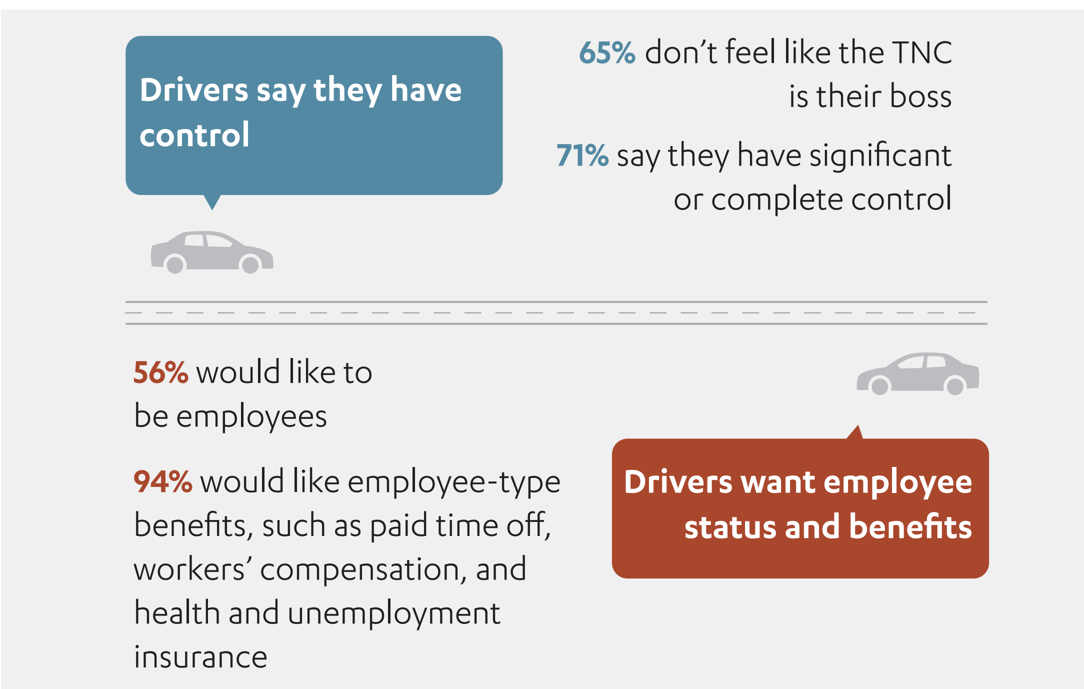
There is broad disagreement on whether TNCs drivers are independent contractors or employees. Legally, the classification of drivers deeply impacts the conditions of work for both drivers and companies. According to TNCs, drivers must be hired as independent contractors because they offer drivers flexible hours and autonomy to set their own hours, free from rigid schedules set by employers. But drivers classified as independent contractors are not considered employees, and TNCs are thus released from any responsibility for drivers' wages, work conditions, benefits, workplace protections, and safety. While drivers often agree to the TNC contracts, they rarely understand what their status as independent contractors fully means. The drivers we surveyed and interviewed want to have more stable and predictable salaries, the ability to negotiate their contract, to organize with fellow workers, and to receive more support and training from the TNCs while retaining their job flexibility and autonomy.

Independent contractor vs. employee

A pivotal question surrounding classification is exactly how much control TNCs have over drivers. Companies argue that they are platforms, do not exert control over the work, provide flexible work conditions, and do not supervise, provide uniforms, or pay salaries. Drivers use their own cars and can work for competitors. However, companies qualify and select drivers, sets rates, regulate and monitor the work, discipline and/or terminate drivers, and provide guidelines on behavior — much like an employer.[76] A recent California Supreme Court decision has simplified the criteria by which workers are classified, and may challenge what qualifies as independent contractor status in the gig economy.[77]

While drivers generally find flexible work schedules appealing, studies have found that many contingent workers would actually prefer to enter or rejoin the permanent workforce, but are prevented from doing so for multiple reasons: the rules of temporary employment agencies, a lack of choices due to economic need, or gaps in knowledge about the conditions of independent contract work.[78] Though our study found that drivers feel like they have control over their work, and close to two-thirds reported that the company was not their boss, over half said they would like to become TNC employees, and nearly all want workplace benefits.

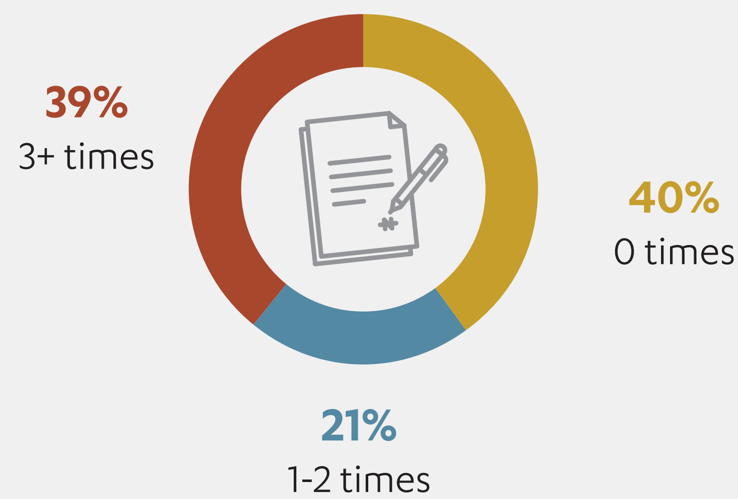
Figure 20: Driver attitudes about work status



Source: UCLA Ride-hailing Driver Survey 2018

Despite a business model that depends on drivers, Uber and Lyft "often [act] unilaterally toward its drivers, changing terms and conditions of their contracts at will, even when drivers have invested in cars in reliance on Uber's policies."[79] More than half of drivers in our survey have experienced a modification in their contract at least once, and for nearly 40% of workers, it changed 3 or more times.

Figure 21: Number of times the contract changed



Source: UCLA Ride-hailing Driver Survey 2018

Drivers cannot pick up passengers until they agree to the terms of contracts the TNC dictates.[80] In addition, each new contract includes language around arbitration that drivers must opt out of (and if they have not opted out before, their previous arbitration agreement is retained).[81] While contracts are now exclusively developed by the TNCs, 81% of drivers in our study want to be able to negotiate the conditions of their contracts.

Figure 22: The opportunity to negotiate contracts

Source: UCLA Ride-hailing Driver Survey 2018

Surges and company notifications and tracking

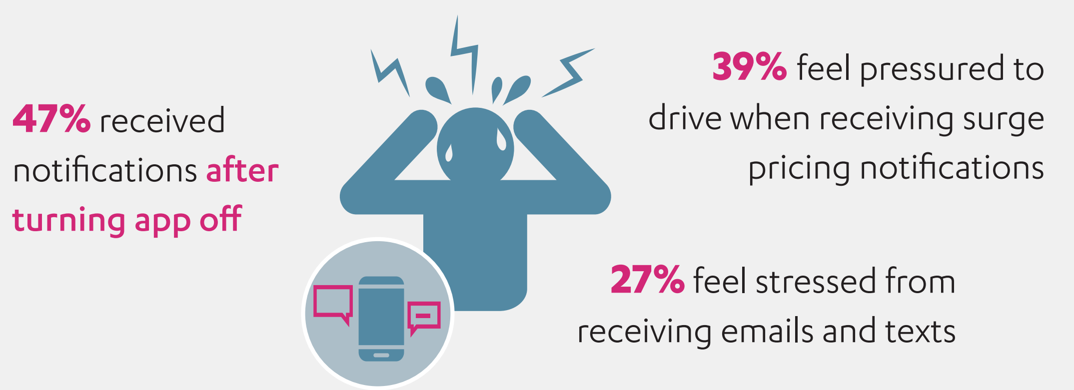
Companies indirectly control driver behavior through incentives, the threat of deactivation, and algorithms and rating systems. A 2016 study found that the Uber app's use of algorithmic labor logistics shapes drivers' approach to their work, performs electronic surveillance, and is instrumental in developing policies for performance targets.[82] Half of the surveyed drivers are concerned about how the apps with which they work track and surveil them.

Figure 23: TNC apps track drivers

Source: UCLA Ride-hailing Driver Survey 2018

Drivers loosely choose when and how many hours to drive, but TNCs offer additional incentives to push drivers to drive when demand is high, or in geographic areas where there are few drivers. This strategy — known as "surge pricing" among Uber drivers or "prime time" among Lyft drivers — balances supply and demand during peak periods or when the supply of drivers is too low.[83] A dynamic pricing algorithm calculates the multiplier surge and the app sends notifications and alerts drivers. Almost half of drivers said they have received notifications even after they turned the app off. Close to 4 in 10 drivers, feel pressured to work when they receive a notification. And one-quarter of drivers report feeling stressed about the stream of emails and texts sent by the TNC.

Figure 24: Company notifications



Source: UCLA Ride-hailing Driver Survey 2018

Surge pricing was, in fact, the leading motivation for how drivers chose when to work. One Lyft driver shared an anecdote about the perils of picking up a passenger based on a 450% surge: *"I saw the amount that I was going to make so I decided I was going to pick him up. Then I saw that he was going 30+ miles. I already picked him up – I couldn't drop him off randomly. And it was 4 in the morning and I was dead tired. But the money made me greedy and made me drive all the way up there. And I was [swerving] on the freeway a few times."*[84] Other motivations include peak hours, driving around hotspots, and public events.

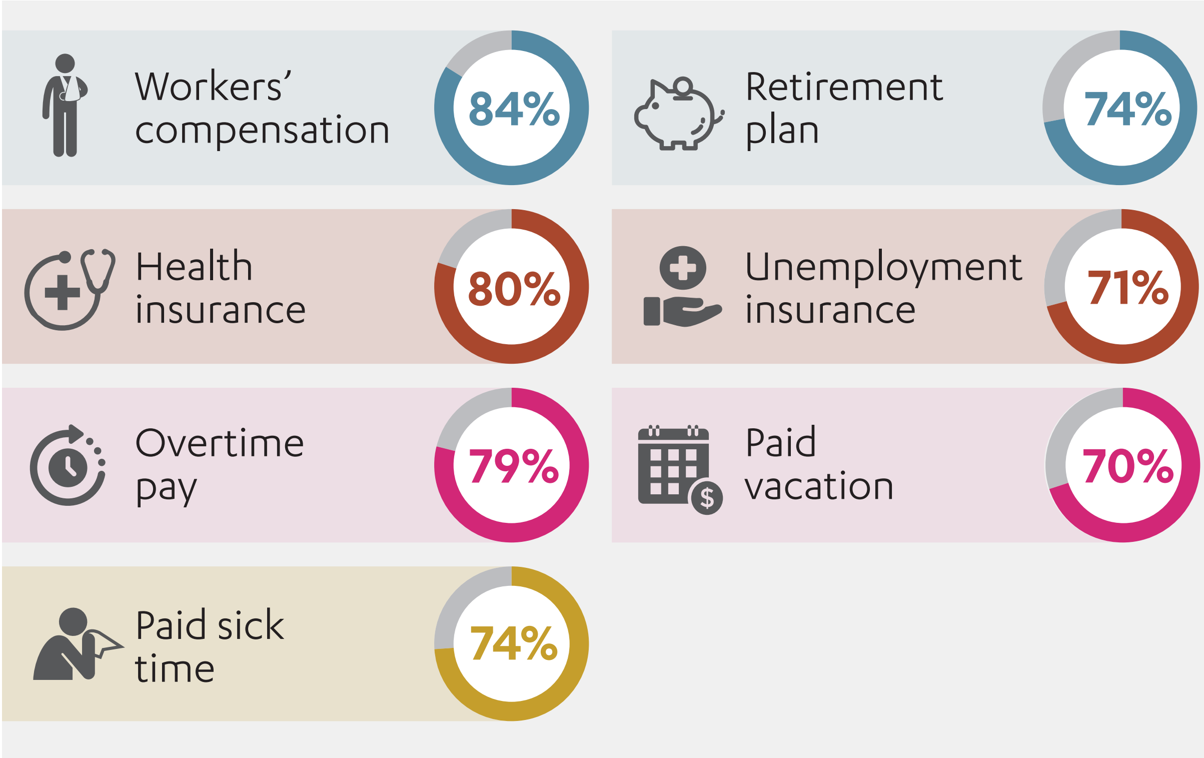
Figure 25: Schedule motivators

Source: UCLA Ride-hailing Driver Survey 2018

Workplace benefits and support

Drivers want the workplace benefits associated with employee status. As independent contractors, TNC drivers lack minimum wage protection and overtime pay, paid sick time, health insurance, retirement accounts, unemployment insurance, and workers' compensation. Four in 5 drivers, for instance, want workers' compensation, which provides workers with wage replacement and medical benefits if injured on the job, and health insurance. Independent contractors are typically able to structure these costs into their prices, but when companies set fares, this is not possible.

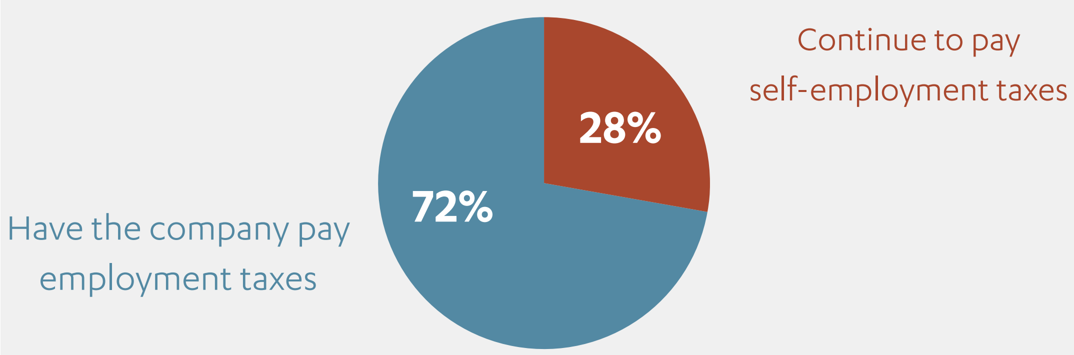
Figure 26: Drivers want workplace benefits



Source: UCLA Ride-hailing Driver Survey 2018

Other key issues for drivers include understanding their taxes as independent contractors and keeping records of expense details such as mileage, gas, and car maintenance costs. As one Uber driver notes, "*Taxes are confusing. [I] would have liked to have been advised and walked through the process. [I] also was not aware of saving information like miles driven, gas, insurance in order to get money back from taxes.*"[85] Research suggests a substantial proportion of gig workers are unaware of their tax obligations. A failure to correctly report independent contractor 1099 income is the primary reason tax filings fail to match information reported by employers or third parties.[86] Independent contractors participating in the gig economy are among those most at risk to fail to accurately report the entirety of their income.[87] Our survey found that 7 in 10 drivers prefer that the company pay employment taxes rather than pay self-employment taxes themselves. Even among those who want to be classified as independent contractors rather than employees, 60% want the TNC to pay employment taxes.

Figure 27: Paying employment taxes

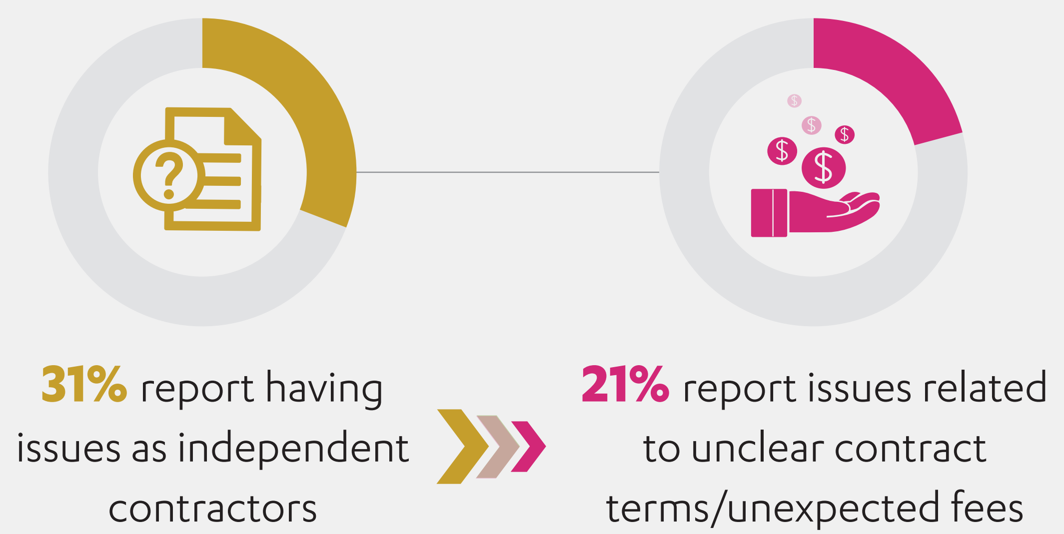


Source: UCLA Ride-hailing Driver Survey 2018

Improving working conditions

Our survey found that nearly one-third of respondents have had work-related issues as independent contractors. Paramount among driver complaints is the lack of transparency around pay rates. About one-fifth of those who reported having issues with pay rates indicated that payment terms are not clearly defined, and the TNC took unforeseen fees from the drivers' share.

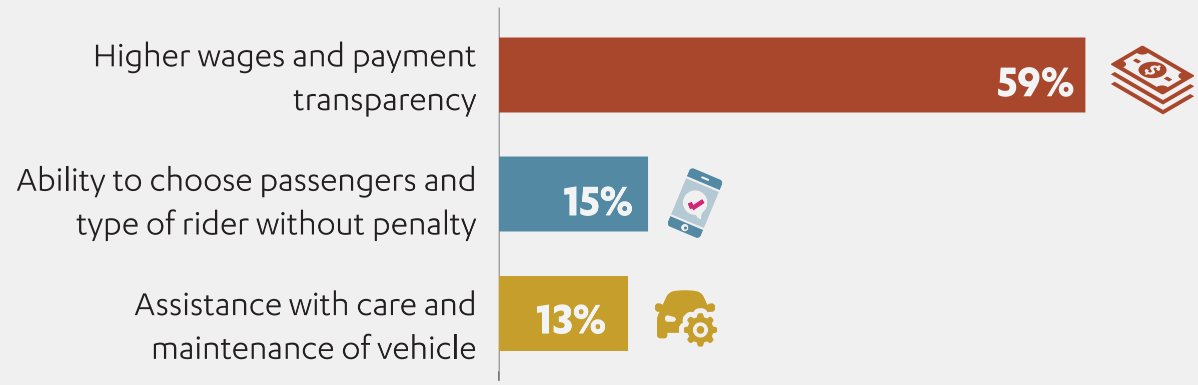
Figure 28: Issues as independent contractors



Source: UCLA Ride-hailing Driver Survey 2018

We asked drivers how to improve working conditions in the industry. Nearly 3 in 5 drivers want to earn higher wages and have transparency around the terms of payment. About 15% want more agency over their driving experience by being able to choose passengers and types of ride (e.g. UberX, Lyft Line, etc.) without penalties, and to be aware of destinations before accepting rides. And 13% of drivers would like to receive assistance with the care and maintenance of their vehicles, either by enhancing driver discount programs at auto-related service centers and selected retailers, or by providing reimbursements for maintenance and gas.

Figure 29: To three ways to improve working conditions



Source: UCLA Ride-hailing Driver Survey 2018

In addition to their inability to negotiate their contracts, because independent contractors are excluded from the National Labor Relations Act, drivers can be fired for organizing to improve their working conditions. Drivers we surveyed adamantly want the ability to come together with other drivers to advocate for themselves; 8 in 10 drivers want to join a worker or driver organization. One driver reported, *"[I] really would like to see the ridesharing crowd come up with their own independent union ... I think that specific representation would be essential and crucial to representing our interests like a specific labor sector. I would like to see that happen, and if that did I think it would be very positive in getting things done because I think it would be more representative of our beliefs."*[88]

Figure 30: Driver organizing

Source: UCLA Ride-hailing Driver Survey 2018

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

California historically leads the way in technological innovation, and must likewise innovate quality jobs for gig workers. Our findings show that while gig workers in Los Angeles value flexibility, they also require a measure of predictability, safety, and income security, protections long available to other workers. Technology is neutral and does not inherently mitigate the rights of workers; automation, for example, holds the potential to create new and better jobs. Uneven regulation, however, allows technology companies to flourish in the gray areas of workers' rights. Policymakers must find balance. Below we offer the following recommendations to stimulate an economy that works for everyone.

1. Ensure job quality, fair wages, and the health and safety of TNC drivers

Reardless whether one is classified as an independent contractor or an employee, livable wages and safe and healthy conditions must be accessible for all workers.

- **Provide universal benefits for every worker.** Universal benefits such as single-payer healthcare and a universal wage guarantee would protect every driver regardless of their classification.
- **Ensure independent contractors have access to fair work conditions and benefits.** Those that prefer to be classified as independent contractors should nonetheless be covered by universal industry standards, such as reasonable base rates, overtime premiums, health and safety standards, waiting time compensation, and reimbursement for certain expenses. Portable benefits could provide retirement and healthcare, for instance, paid by matching contributions from customers, drivers, and TNCs. Other protections could include establishing a workers compensation fund for drivers, paid for by TNCs or a rider surcharge.
- **Give drivers the option to become company employees with benefits.** Workers should not bear the entirety of the risks associated with their work. Those that use the platforms for regular work should have the option to become employees of the companies for whom they drive, and receive the workplace protections and benefits that status entails.
- **Allow TNCs drivers to organize and collectively bargain.** If TNC drivers were classified as employees, they would be able to collectively bargain with TNCs. As independent contractors, however, they require the protection of their right to organize without risk of retaliation — such as deactivation. Driver organizing will give them equal power with companies and leverage to advocate for fair and equitable work conditions.

2. Level the regulatory playing ground for all transportation systems

Regardless of how TNCs identify, they provide rides and compete with existing mobility systems, including taxis and public transportation. TNCs have thus far eluded regulations that might burden them. But if they are not regulated within a transportation framework, a two-tiered system in which modes of transportation that are reasonably regulated and monitored are disadvantaged will become permanent.

- **Regulate the industry to provide fair and sustainable work for drivers.** Taxi regulations generally provide drivers with sustainable wages, protect them from oversaturation, and guarantee safety. Technology can be deployed to cap TNC vehicles to a number that meets demand but limits unfair competition and congestion, and secure fares that produce livable wages.

- **Ensure that TNCs are offering safe, accessible, and non-discriminatory services.** TNCs and taxi companies should be monitored by regulatory agencies to ensure that they provide accessible, safe, and non-discriminatory services to all customers. Drivers should be provided training to understand and comply with these basic standards.

- **Protect public transportation infrastructure and jobs.** TNCs risk eroding public investment in, and support for, public transportation and its workforce. We suggest the monitoring of, and investment in, public transportation to protect mobility for everyone, including those who cannot afford a private car or ride-hail services.

- **Consider fair share fees.** TNCs are impacting public transportation, traffic, carbon emissions, and the taxi industry. TNC's should pay "fair share fees," as taxis do, to share the costs of road maintenance and public transportation.

3. Encourage fair, accessible, and equitable uses of platform work

Much of the control of platform apps are in the hands of private companies, and workers are often left outside of the decision-making process. Worker-centered approach to technology is possible.

- **Envision a worker-centered approach to technology.** Platforms that that allow workers to network with one another can be developed. These technologies could facilitate transparency around issues such as appeals processes for deactivation and could create systems for worker input.

- **Support worker-owned platforms.** Cooperative platforms are apps that are controlled and/or co-owned by workers. A number of unions and worker centers are piloting cooperative apps that channel fees into programs and direct services for workers. These platforms can be models that enhance working conditions and raise wages.

- **Begin to address the forthcoming displacement of workers by technology.** Given the imminent possibility of driverless cars, policymakers should consider proactive policies that will support transitions to other forms of work. This should include not only workforce development programs to reskill workers, but also a universal basic income.

4. Continue to expand research and make data accessible

While technology-driven data is easy to gather, it is exceptionally difficult for researchers and government analysts to locate. As this workforce grows, we must have access to timely and accurate data in order to monitor trends and tailor regulations.

- **Expand government collection of work data to include gig work.** Because many data sources do not capture second or third jobs, data on gig work is incomplete. It is also hard to distinguish platform work in many existing data categories. Consider revising data collection methods or develop new surveys that can adequately portray this work.
- **Make ride-hailing data available and transparent.** Though TNCs provide data to the state, it is not publicly available. It is in the public interest for this to be accessible to all stakeholders in order to evaluate the work. We need to know the volume of vehicles, drivers, and rides to monitor market saturation and fares and fees to ensure sustainable incomes and schedules. Other data on accidents, discrimination complaints, and disability access are also important for advocates to address social harms.
- **Evaluate and monitor current and future practices in the ride-hailing industry.** Evaluations and public monitoring are necessary steps to support the enforcement of future legislation. We believe that further examination on how TNC business and labor models impact workers, consumers, other businesses, public transportation, and the environment will both inform scholarship and draw attention to policies that lead to greater social and economic stability.
- **Conduct further research on transportation network company business models and workplace practices.** Continue to conduct research on TNC businesses and working conditions and investigate the experiences of platform app based workers in this and other “gig” industries.

APPENDIX A

Detailed Methodology

The study uses a multi-method research approach that includes surveys, interviews, and academic and policy research. Students collected data through two UCLA Labor Minor courses: the Labor Summer Internship Program and a Labor Studies independent course. Students were trained in research methodologies and conducted participant observations at drop off/pick up sites, recruited participants, and administered surveys and interviews.

Surveys and Interviews

Students who participated in the Labor Summer Research Internship Program 2017 conducted face-to-face surveys with 260 TNC drivers throughout Los Angeles County. Surveys were conducted in English and took approximately 30 minutes to complete. A $10 incentive was provided to drivers who successfully completed the survey.

This study used a mixed-sampling approach to surveying and interviewing TNC drivers. First, students utilized their social networks to recruit drivers. Second, students randomly approached drivers at pick up and drop off TNC locations and if a driver was willing to take the survey, students administered it. Students passed out fliers at different locations throughout Los Angeles and used an online outreach strategy that included emails, Facebook posts, and ads to recruit drivers.

The majority of the surveys were conducted in South Los Angeles and in the Westside, with the remainder of the surveys conducted throughout the greater Los Angeles region (see Table A.1). Only 1% were conducted in cities in Orange County.

Table A.1. Regions where surveys took place[89]

Regions	Percent
South Los Angeles	44%
Westside	41%
Central Los Angeles	9%
South Bay	3%
East Los Angeles	3%
Orange County	1%
	100%

About one-third of students surveyed drivers at the Los Angeles airport, with the remainder of the surveys taking place at diverse locations such as the driver's residence, coffee shops and restaurants, schools and universities, car washes, malls, and beaches (see Table A.2).

Table A.2. Fielding locations[90]

Locations	Percent
LAX	32%
Coffee Shop/Restaurant	19%
Driver's Residence	14%
UCLA/Community College/High School	12%
Carwash	8%
Mall/Museum	7%
Beach	4%
Union Station/Convention Center/Staple Center/Hotel	3%
Gas Station/Grocery Store	1%
	100%

To complement the survey data, interviews with TNC drivers were conducted to better understand the workplace dynamics in the ride-hailing industry. A total of 8 interviews were conducted with drivers as part of an independent studies course in the UCLA's Labor Studies department during the Fall 2017. Students were trained in data analysis using SPSS and Dedoose. Prior to the release of this report, we presented preliminary findings through a community forum with students, organizers, government staff, and other key stakeholders to receive feedback on our data. Finally, we worked with student researchers to compile the findings and develop this report.

A Brief profile of TNC drivers

Half of the drivers in our sample drive for Uber, over one-quarter for Lyft, and 20% for both companies. Almost two-thirds drive most hours for Uber and over one-third drive mostly for Lyft.

Table A.3. TNC platform used by driver

	Drive for	Drive the most hours for
Uber	50%	64%
Lyft	30%	36%
Both	20%	N/A

Most drivers in our sample are between 18 and 34 years old, but one-quarter are over 45. On average, TNC drivers are 35 years old (with a median age of 31). This is consistent with other studies that estimate "the median age of platform users from 32 to 38 years."[91]

Rideshare drivers in our survey are predominantly male, which is consistent with other estimates.[92] Although the promise of flexibility and the opportunity of equal pay may seem attractive to female drivers, both Lyft and Uber struggle to increase their proportion of women drivers.

TNC drivers in our sample are very diverse, with 20% self-identifying as white, 38% as Latino, and 23% as African-American. Our study was able to capture a higher proportion of African-Americans and a lower proportion of white people than other studies on ride-hailing drivers, but is consistent with the Pew Research Center survey that "found that Black and Latino workers are more likely to have worked for an online platform."[93]

Table A.4. Demographic characteristics of independent contractors in CA, TNC drivers in CA, general population in Los Angeles, CA, and TNC drivers in Los Angeles County, CA

		California: (Independent Contractors)[94]	California: Rideshare Guy Survey (California drivers)[95]	Los Angeles County: (General population)[96]	Los Angeles County: TNC Survey (Our Sample)
Age	**Mean**	N/A	N/A	36 years	35 years
	18-24	3%	**	10%	21%
	25-34	16%	**	16%	38%
	35-49	38%	**	21%	28%
	50-64	42%	**	18%	13%
	65+	N/A	**	13%	1%
Gender	**Male**	62%	83%	49%	80%
	Female	38%	17%	51%	19%
	Other	N/A	N/A	N/A	1%
Nativity	**Foreign- Born**	38%	N/A	35%	35%
Race/ Ethnicity	**White**	50%	78%	27%	20%
	Latino	33%	8%	48%	38%
	Black	4%	5%	8%	23%

[**]The Rideshare Guy, 2018 Survey Results for California - Age Categories: 18-30 4%, 31-40 9%, 41-50 17%, 51-60, 35%, 61-70 26%, and 71+ 9%.

APPENDIX B

The following table presents demographic characteristics by employment characteristics for drivers in our survey.

Table B.1. Worker profiles by full/part-time status, driving as their main job, and tenure

		Full-Time	Part-Time	Main Income	Not Main Income	Worked 1+ year	Worked -1 year
Gender	**Male**	87%	73%	81%	77%	84%	74%
	Female	11%	26%	18%	23%	14%	26%
	Other	2%	0%	1%	0%	2%	0%
Age	**18-34**	43%	73%	52%	74%	42%	76%
	35+	57%	27%	48%	26%	58%	24%
Status	**Full-Time**	*	*	60%	26%	57%	38%
	Part-Time	*	*	40%	74%	43%	62%
Nativity	**Foreign-Born**	50%	21%	39%	26%	43%	26%
	U.S.- Born	50%	79%	61%	74%	57%	74%
Tenure	**Driving 1+ year(s)**	62%	43%	56%	43%	*	*
Job	**Main Job**	62%	34%	77%	0%	54%	40%
Income	**Main Source**	81%	51%	*	*	71%	60%
Children	**Supports at least 1 child**	45%	25%	32%	36%	45%	24%

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