September 2024

RIDESHARING AND TAXI SAFETY

Information on Background Checks and Safety Features

Revised on October 25, 2024, to clarify the scope of legal research on pages 3, 18, 24, 48-50, 63, 67, 69, and 70; clarify the results of legal research on the highlights page and pages 16, 21-22, 66-68; and clarify a stakeholder perspective on page 14.

RIDESHARING AND TAXI SAFETY

Information on Background Checks and Safety Features

Why GAO Did This Study

Ridesourcing and taxi services help meet the transportation needs of many people in the U.S. Advocacy groups and other stakeholders have raised questions about the safety of these services.

Sami's Law, enacted in January 2023, provides for GAO to conduct a study on background check requirements for prospective ridesourcing and taxi drivers, and safety steps taken by ridesourcing and taxi companies. This report describes background checks of prospective ridesourcing and taxi drivers and safety features for drivers and passengers, among other objectives.

GAO searched state statutes and regulations to identify states with statewide background check requirements for prospective ridesourcing and taxi drivers.

GAO reviewed documents and interviewed officials from five federal agencies, six selected states, and four selected localities. GAO also interviewed representatives from five selected ridesourcing and five taxi companies. GAO selected states and localities based on their oversight of ridesourcing and taxi services, and selected ridesourcing and taxi companies to obtain variation in size and location, among other things.

GAO also conducted nongeneralizable intercept surveys to examine if passengers were aware of and used selected safety features. An intercept survey is an in-person data collection method conducted in a public place (such as an airport), where a specific targeted population is asked a series of questions.

What GAO Found

In general, ridesourcing (also referred to as ridesharing) and taxi companies can be regulated by states, localities, or both. GAO's review of state statutes and regulations found that 45 states and Washington, D.C., (states) require criminal background checks for prospective ridesourcing drivers, and 11 states require criminal background checks for prospective taxi drivers. Although fewer states have statewide background check requirements for taxi drivers compared with ridesourcing drivers, historically taxis tend to be regulated at the local level, according to a 2016 report by the Transportation Research Board. Selected states and localities GAO reviewed administer and manage background checks in a variety of ways. For example, one selected locality conducts all background checks for ridesourcing drivers, while another locality allows ridesourcing companies the option of having a third party, or the locality, conduct the check. All five ridesourcing and five taxi companies GAO interviewed said they conduct background checks for all prospective drivers, regardless of requirements.

Ridesourcing and taxi companies may offer pretrip safety features in digital applications (app), other in-app safety features, and in-vehicle safety features. For example, four selected ridesourcing and four selected taxi companies either require or allow drivers to use a security camera during trips.

Examples of Safety Features for Ridesourcing and Taxi Drivers and Passengers

Type of safety feature	Example of safety feature		Description
Pretrip in-application (app)	License plate number	WASHINGTON, DC OB 2279	Passengers match the license plate number in the app to the vehicle to identify the correct vehicle.
Other in-app	Emergency call button		If drivers or passengers need immediate assistance, this button can connect them with emergency responders.
In-vehicle	Partition		Partitions provide a physical barrier between the front and back part of a vehicle.

Source: GAO analysis of ridesourcing and taxi company documents and interviews with their representatives. | GAO-24-107093

GAO conducted in-person surveys in public places (intercept surveys) in four locations and asked 304 individuals who were likely to have used ridesourcing or taxis about their awareness and use of selected safety features. Of the 267 respondents who were asked about pretrip in-app features, over 95 percent were aware of and had used at least one such feature when arranging a ride in the past year. Respondents were most likely to consider two pretrip in-app features—license plate number and driver name and picture—as very important to their safety. More than 90 percent of respondents were aware of at least one in-vehicle safety feature, such as a vehicle decal.

United States Government Accountability Office

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Ridesourcing, also referred to as ridesharing, and taxi services help meet the transportation needs of many people in the U.S.[1] Ridesourcing involves transportation network companies, such as Uber and Lyft, using a digital network to connect passengers with drivers of, most commonly, personally owned vehicles. Ridesourcing companies offer prearranged trips through a digital application (app), and taxi companies can conduct trips that are prearranged through an app or a dispatcher, or street-hail trips.

Media outlets, advocacy groups, and other stakeholders have raised questions about the safety of ridesourcing and taxi services.[2] For example, a survey of drivers in Chicago found that 47 percent of taxi drivers and 66 percent of ridesourcing drivers considered personal safety a main concern. In addition, 30 percent of the surveyed ridesourcing drivers indicated that more safety precautions would help improve their

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[1]Ridesourcing services are also called "ridesharing" or "ridehailing" services. In addition, ridesourcing companies can be called "transportation network companies" or "transportation network providers." For example, in many state laws, these companies are referred to as transportation network companies. For the purposes of this report, we use the terms ridesourcing and ridesourcing company.

[2]For the purposes of this report, safety refers to the physical safety of drivers and passengers from violence.

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working conditions.[3] Safety is also a concern for passengers. For instance, in 2019, Sami Josephson was murdered by an individual impersonating a ridesourcing driver. In a recent report, we found that some federal and nonfederal sources collect data on assaults against drivers and passengers of ridesourcing and taxi vehicles, but the available data cannot fully describe the extent of assaults in these industries.[4]

Sami's Law, enacted in January 2023, provides for GAO to conduct a study on criminal background check (background check) requirements for prospective ridesourcing and taxi drivers and safety steps taken by ridesourcing and taxi companies.[5] This report describes

1. requirements for background checks of prospective ridesourcing and taxi drivers;

2. in-app and in-vehicle safety features for ridesourcing and taxi drivers and passengers; and

3. safety efforts undertaken by selected states, localities, and ridesourcing and taxi companies.

To inform all three objectives, we reviewed documents and interviewed representatives from five ridesourcing and five taxi companies. We selected Uber and Lyft, which represent most of the U.S. market, as well as HopSkipDrive, SilverRide, and Alto, to obtain diversity in populations served and fleet size (i.e., number of annual rides or number of drivers), among other criteria. We selected two taxi companies—United Independent Taxi Cab and Union Cab Cooperative—because they operated in states with high numbers of taxi drivers and to obtain diversity in size based on revenue, among other criteria. The three other taxi companies whose representatives we interviewed—C&H Taxi, Yellow Cab of Los Angeles, and zTrip—were part of a taxi operator panel

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[3]City of Chicago, Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection, *Public Passenger Vehicle Study Reports* (Apr. 26, 2023).

[4]GAO, *Ridesharing and Taxi Safety: Information on Assaults against Drivers and Passengers*, GAO-24-106742 (Washington, D.C.: Feb. 22, 2024).

[5]Pub. L. No. 117-330, § 2, 136 Stat. 6114, 6114-15 (2023) (codified at 34 U.S.C. § 41313). Sami's Law also requires that we conduct a recurring study on the incidence of assaults against ridesourcing and taxi drivers and passengers beginning with calendar years 2019 and 2020. In February 2024, we issued a report with information on the availability of such data. See GAO-24-106742.

organized by an industry group representing the private passenger transportation industry.

We also reviewed documents and interviewed officials from the Departments of Health and Human Services, Justice, Labor, and Transportation, and the Federal Trade Commission (FTC). In addition, we reviewed documents from, and conducted interviews with, selected states, localities, and industry and advocacy groups. We selected six states (California, Connecticut, Montana, Nevada, New Jersey, and South Carolina) and five localities (Chicago; Los Angeles; New York City; Philadelphia; and Portland, Oregon). We selected these states and localities based on the types and levels of oversight they have over ridesourcing and taxi vehicles, among other things, and we interviewed officials from six states and four localities.[6] We also interviewed representatives of 11 industry and advocacy groups, selected based on background research and our prior work.

To identify state laws with background check requirements for prospective ridesourcing and taxi drivers, we searched all 50 states and the District of Columbia (states)[7] for state statutes and regulations generally using a core set of search terms aimed to identify background check requirements for these industries that apply statewide.[8] To identify local laws with background check requirements for prospective ridesourcing and taxi drivers for the five selected localities, we searched each locality's applicable codes generally using a core set of search terms aimed to identify city-specific background check requirements for prospective ridesourcing and taxi drivers.

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[6]Officials from Philadelphia did not respond to our request for a meeting. In addition, two state agencies in Nevada have oversight of taxis: the Nevada Transportation Authority and the Nevada Taxicab Authority. We met with the Nevada Transportation Authority, which has jurisdiction over taxis in counties with a population of less than 700,000. The Nevada Taxicab Authority, which has jurisdiction over taxis in counties with a population of 700,000 or more and any other county that enacts an ordinance granting the Authority jurisdiction, did not respond to our request for a meeting.

[7]For the purposes of this report, the term "states" includes the District of Columbia, when applicable.

[8]Background checks may seek to cover many types of information, including credit and employment history, public records from civil court proceedings (such as bankruptcy filings and other court documents), and public record information on arrests and convictions. A background check may or may not include criminal history record information. For this report, we focused on criminal background check requirements, given the mandate's focus on the physical safety of drivers and passengers.

We conducted our legal review of state laws with background check requirements for ridesourcing drivers from June 2023 through December 2023, and for taxi drivers from January 2024 through April 2024. We conducted our legal review of local laws with background check requirements for ridesourcing and taxi drivers from February 2024 through March 2024. Our descriptions of states' and localities' applicable laws do not reflect any amendments made to them after we completed our review for that particular state or locality.

To describe passenger views on in-app and in-vehicle safety features, we conducted a nongeneralizable intercept survey of ridesourcing and taxi passengers in August and October 2023 in four locations: the Washington, D.C., metro area; Portland, Oregon; Bloomington-Normal, Illinois; and Chicago, Illinois.[9] We selected these locations to overlap with the selected states and localities whose officials we interviewed and to obtain diversity in geography, population size, and demographics.

To describe safety efforts undertaken by selected states, localities, and ridesourcing and taxi companies, we reviewed documents and interviewed representatives from these entities, as described above. We limited our scope to efforts directly related to the safety of ridesourcing and taxi drivers and passengers. Appendix I contains a more detailed discussion of our objectives, scope, and methodology.

We conducted this performance audit from April 2023 to September 2024 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

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[9]To conduct the intercept survey, we visited public locations like airports, college campuses, and commercial areas and asked members of our target population—individuals who had used ridesourcing or taxi services in the past year—a series of questions about their experiences with safety features.

Background

Ridesourcing and Taxi Services

Ridesourcing is an on-demand, technology-enabled service that connects passengers with drivers who provide transportation services through digital apps. Two major ridesourcing companies—Uber and Lyft—provide service nationwide, and smaller ridesourcing companies may offer services in certain geographic areas or may specialize in providing services to certain populations. According to a Transportation Research Board report, most ridesourcing drivers are not employees of the companies they drive for; rather, they are classified by these companies as independent contractors.[10]

Taxis represent a more traditional type of for-hire, personal transportation that is either on-demand or prearranged. Taxis conduct street-hail rides and rides arranged by phone through a dispatcher, but taxis increasingly also offer on-demand, technology-enabled rides arranged through a digital app or other means. Unlike ridesourcing companies, taxi companies tend to operate locally or regionally, rather than nationally. Taxi companies get most of their ridership in large cities. According to the Transportation Research Board report, taxi drivers may be classified as either independent contractors or employees of the company for which they drive.[11]

The ways in which ridesourcing and taxi companies provide services are becoming increasingly similar, and ridesourcing and taxi companies may coordinate with each other. As mentioned above, taxis are increasingly offering rides arranged through a digital app. In some locations, ridesourcing and taxi companies have partnered to allow passengers to book a taxi through the ridesourcing company's app.[12]

Violence against Ridesourcing and Taxi Drivers and Passengers

Violence against taxi drivers has been a well-documented occupational safety issue since the 1990s. According to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, certain characteristics of the occupation increase the risk of violence, including working with cash, interacting with people

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[10]National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, Transportation Research Board, *Between Public and Private Mobility: Examining the Rise of Technology-Enabled Transportation Services* (Washington, D.C.: 2016).

[11]National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, Transportation Research Board, *Between Public and Private Mobility.*

[12]International Association of Transportation Regulators, *Modernizing Taxi Regulations* (January 2024), https://iatr.global/iatrs-modernizing-taxi-regulations/.

under the influence, working at night and alone, and driving in high-crime areas.[13] One 2017 study reported that almost 10 per 100,000 taxi and limousine drivers were murdered on the job. This rate is 50 percent more than were killed in a transportation incident while working in an industry that exclusively provides transportation.[14] Further, the 2017 study found homicide rates were higher for drivers who are men, Black or African American, Hispanic, and driving in the Southern U.S. A survey of approximately 400 Las Vegas taxi drivers found 41 percent had refused a ride during the past year due to concerns over safety.[15]

With the advent of ridesourcing companies, similar questions have been raised about the safety of ridesourcing drivers. Driver advocacy groups and academic research have found that ridesourcing drivers may be targets of violence. Research conducted by an industry group that represents ridesourcing drivers, in conjunction with advocacy groups, found that app-based workers, especially those of color, experience a wide range of harm on the job. These experiences include verbal harassment, physical assaults, carjackings, and other types of violent acts.[16] Surveys of app-based workers found that between 35 and 79 percent of drivers surveyed felt unsafe while working, and between 19

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[13]Occupational Safety and Health Administration, *OSHA FactSheet: Preventing Violence Against Taxi and For-Hire Drivers* (April 2010). The Occupational Safety and Health Administration has also recommended that taxi companies implement certain physical and procedural precautions, such as partitions, security cameras, emergency radios, and panic buttons. In 2019, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration updated its guidance about preventing violence against taxi drivers. See https://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3976.pdf.

[14]Cammie K. Chaumont Menendez, Christina Socias-Morales, and Matthew W. Daus, "Work-Related Violent Deaths in the US Taxi and Limousine Industry 2003 to 2013," *Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine,* vol. 59, no. 8 (August 2017).

[15]R. Keith Schwer, Michael C. Mejza, and Michel Grun-Rehomme, "Workplace Violence and Stress: The Case of Taxi Drivers*," Transportation Journal,* vol. 49, no. 2 (spring 2010).

[16]Gig Workers Rising, PowerSwitch Action, and Action Center on Race and the Economy*, Murdered Behind the Wheel: An Escalating Crisis for App Drivers* (spring 2023). In this report, an app-based worker is defined as someone who works for an app corporation to provide rides or deliveries on its platform.

and 43 percent experienced unwanted sexual advances or sexual harassment while on the job.[17]

Violence against ridesourcing and taxi passengers has been less well studied, but some incidents have received national attention. For example, in 2019, Sami Josephson was murdered by an individual impersonating a ridesourcing driver. In addition, media outlets have reported on other instances of individuals impersonating drivers and offering rides to passengers.[18]

We previously reported that there is no federal requirement to collect data specifically on assaults against drivers and passengers of ridesourcing and taxi vehicles. Six federal databases contain some information on assaults in these industries, particularly on assaults against drivers. For example, a federal census of occupational fatalities reported 19 fatal injuries or illnesses of workers in the ridesourcing and taxi industries in 2019 related to assaults.[19] Additionally, representatives from three ridesourcing companies told us that they collect data on assaults against their drivers and passengers. These three companies reported that about

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[17]Pew Research Center, *The State of Gig Work in 2021* (December 2021); Illinois Economic Policy Institute and University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, *Quality of the Gig: An Analysis of App-Based Platform Drivers' Working Conditions in the Greater Chicago Area* (January 2023); and Asian Americans Advancing Justice and Rideshare Drivers United, *Fired by an App: The Toll of Secret Algorithms and Unchecked Discrimination on California Rideshare Drivers* (February 2023).

[18]For example, see Jeff Weinsier, "Undercover operations lead to citations, arrests of illegal rideshare drivers at South Florida airports" *Local 10 News, (*Mar. 13, 2024), https://www.local10.com/news/local/2024/03/13/undercover-operations-leading-to-citations-arrests-of-illegal-rideshare-drivers-at-south-florida-airports/. Also see Alyssa Bethencourt, "Las Vegas airport officials warn of people posing as rideshare drivers" *KTNV Las Vegas, (*May 2, 2024), https://www.ktnv.com/news/las-vegas-airport-officials-warn-of-people-posing-as-rideshare-drivers.

[19]GAO-24-106742.

4,600 incidents of the five most serious types of sexual assault occurred related to trips arranged through their apps in 2019.[20]

Regulating Ridesourcing and Taxi Services

States and localities may enact laws for ridesourcing and taxi companies. Ridesourcing companies work across all states. The majority of these states have enacted laws related to ridesourcing, which may include background check requirements for prospective drivers and requirements related to insurance and vehicle inspections. Localities may also provide oversight of ridesourcing.

In addition, taxi companies can be found across the U.S. Certain states have enacted laws related to taxis, which may include background check requirements for prospective drivers; standards for service, safety, and rates of fare; and market entry restrictions, as well as requirements related to insurance and vehicle inspections.[21] Localities may also provide oversight of taxis.

Background Checks of Prospective Ridesourcing and Taxi Drivers

What Types of Background Checks May Be Used to Screen Ridesourcing and Taxi Drivers?

We reviewed two types of background checks that may be used to screen prospective ridesourcing and taxi drivers: Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) fingerprint-based checks and name-based checks conducted by

[20]The three companies use RALIANCE's Sexual Misconduct and Violence Taxonomy to categorize reported incidents of sexual assault. The five most serious types of sexual assault in the taxonomy are "non-consensual kissing of a non-sexual body part, attempted non-consensual penetration, non-consensual touching of a sexual body part, non-consensual kissing of a sexual body part, and non-consensual sexual penetration." Our previous report includes data from each company's safety reports on the number of such assaults in 2019. Specifically, in 2019, Uber reported 2,826 instances of the most serious types of sexual assault, Lyft reported 1,807 instances of these assaults, and HopSkipDrive reported 0 instances of these assaults. We also spoke with representatives of five taxi companies that collect data that may include assault data, but this information is not publicly reported. See GAO-24-106742.

[21]These background checks may or may not include an FBI fingerprint-based background check.

private screening companies.[22] Background checks can be used to screen prospective employees or contractors (applicants), including ridesourcing and taxi drivers.[23] Federal and state laws require background checks for workers in certain types of jobs or industries, including those working with individuals over the age 65, children, or other vulnerable populations. Background check reports may include many types of information, including public record information on arrests and convictions.

FBI Fingerprint-Based Background Checks

FBI fingerprint-based background checks for noncriminal justice purposes rely on positive identification by matching an individual's fingerprints with the associated criminal history record information, which may include other information such as a name, aliases, date of birth, sex, race, and Social Security number.[24] By law, the FBI is authorized to use funds for the exchange of criminal history record information with officials of state and local governments for the purposes of employment and licensing if this is authorized by state statute and approved by the Attorney

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[22]According to a National Consortium for Justice Information and Statistics (SEARCH) 2020 survey of state criminal record repositories, 12.8 million fingerprints were processed for noncriminal justice purposes in 2020, up from 7.7 million in 2006. According to a Consumer Financial Protection Bureau report, an industry analysis estimated that 1,954 background screening companies, which conducted name-based background checks of non-FBI information, existed in 2019. Checkr, a primarily name-based screening company, which provides background checks for companies such as Uber and Lyft, processes roughly 1 million reports each month.

[23]While we examined processes by which prospective drivers are screened, industry representatives noted that a lack of passenger screening and passenger anonymity represented a safety concern for drivers. The risk of passenger anonymity has been mitigated by some ridesourcing companies. SilverRide representatives said that, due to the nature of their contract work, passengers are known entities, and drivers are trained to respond to a passenger's unique needs. Additionally, Uber may now require passengers that use an anonymous payment method to upload identification information.

[24]For states to conduct FBI fingerprint checks, they must be authorized to do so through provisions contained in the Departments of State, Justice, and Commerce, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Appropriation Act, 1973, Pub. L. No. 92-544, 86 Stat. 1109, 1115 (hereinafter referred to as Public Law 92-544). Pursuant to Public Law 92-544, the FBI is authorized to use funds for the exchange of identification records, including criminal history record information, with officials of state and local governments for the purposes of employment and licensing if this is authorized by state statute and approved by the Attorney General.

General.[25] The approval process of state statutes has been delegated to the FBI.[26]

Some states' statutes or regulations may require fingerprint-based background checks be conducted using databases of criminal history records maintained by the FBI.[27] Generally, for states to search the FBI database for noncriminal justice purposes, the state must have a state statute allowing it to do so that has been approved or a federal statute must authorize an FBI fingerprint-based background check. According to FBI officials, the FBI has one point of contact in each state, referred to as the State Identification Bureau or the state central repository, which submits fingerprints and receives criminal history information for dissemination to authorized state agencies. When authorized by a state statute approved by the FBI, private services or industries may request FBI fingerprint checks through the applicable state agency for prospective employees or contractors, such as ridesourcing or taxi companies. However, the authorized state, city, or county agency receives the results of the check and makes a recommendation, not the private company requesting the fingerprint check, according to FBI officials.

Additionally, some states and localities may conduct their own fingerprint checks, which search only state records, such as for obtaining certain licenses or to work in certain fields. See figure 1 for an example of the fingerprint check process for a prospective ridesourcing or taxi driver and appendix II for a narrative example of an FBI fingerprint-based background check process.

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[25]Pub. L. No. 92-544, 86 Stat. 1109, 1115. In addition, to expand access to FBI record checks for certain populations—such as individuals who provide services to children—federal laws have been enacted that authorize state governmental agencies to conduct FBI checks without requiring a separate state statute and approval from the Attorney General. The FBI also reviews federal statutes to determine if it authorizes an FBI fingerprint-based background check.

[26]See 28 C.F.R. § 50.12.

[27]To meet Pub. L. 92-544 criteria, a state regulation must be voted on by the full legislative body and approved by the Governor.

Figure 1: Example of the Process for Conducting a Fingerprint-Based Background Check of a Prospective Ridesourcing or Taxi Driver

Application	Screening request	Record check	Verification	Adjudication	Notification
Joe wants to be a for-hire driver and applies for a job with the local licensing agency, which requires Joe to submit fingerprints for a fingerprint-based background check. Joe gets fingerprinted at a police station.	The police station sends Joe's fingerprints to the state repository, where the state maintains information on arrests and criminal charges.	**State Record Check:** The state repository searches its own records using Joe's fingerprints. **Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Record Check:** For states with approved access to FBI records, the state submits Joe's fingerprints for review of FBI information to determine if there is a match in the national criminal history record repository, which is managed by the FBI.	The state repository receives updated records.	The state repository sends the results of the check to the local licensing agency. The licensing agency determines whether Joe is qualified for the job based on the background check results.	If Joe is not hired as a result of the background check, Joe receives a notification. If Joe believes that the information used to disqualify Joe from the position is inaccurate, Joe can request an investigation. The repository checks the record again, and any incorrect information must be removed or updated.

Source: GAO icons and analysis of agency and stakeholder interviews and documents; and previous GAO work. | GAO-24-107093

Name-Based Background Checks

Name-based background checks may use several identifiers to match an applicant with a specific criminal record, including name, aliases, date of birth, Social Security number, or address.[28] Private-sector screening companies compile and sell background information on applicants, including criminal record information, to employers.[29] Screening companies obtain this information from public sources, such as state courts. The Fair Credit Reporting Act includes provisions related to the inclusion and use of criminal history information, such as requiring screening companies to follow reasonable procedures that assure

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[28]For the purposes of this report, we focus on name checks conducted by private screening companies. However, other entities may also conduct this type of check.

[29]For the purposes of this report, we refer to private, third-party companies that conduct name checks as screening companies; the users of these reports as employers; and the subjects of the background checks as applicants.

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maximum possible accuracy.[30] See figure 2 for an example of the name check process for a prospective ridesourcing or taxi driver and appendix III for a narrative example of a name-based background check process.

Figure 2: Example of the Process for Conducting a Third-Party, Name-Based Background Check of a Prospective Ridesourcing or Taxi Driver

Application	Screening request	Record check	Verification	Adjudication	Notification
Jane wants to be a for-hire driver and applies for a job that requires a name-based background check.	The for-hire company works with a screening company to conduct the check. The screening company asks Jane to submit full name, Social Security number, date of birth, and previous addresses for the check.	Local regulations require a state-level background check for this industry. The for-hire company also requires a multistate check of prospective drivers. The screening company conducts state and multistate searches for records matching Jane's information using automated searches of court records and other public information.	The screening company finds a match for a record with the same name and date of birth. The screening company may send an employee to a local court to verify the information.	The screening company sends the results of the check to the for-hire company. The screening company flags records that may disqualify Jane, but it is up to the for-hire company to decide whether to hire Jane based on the results.	If Jane is not hired as a result of the background check, Jane must be notified. If Jane believes that the information used to disqualify Jane from the job is inaccurate, Jane may dispute the inaccurate information with the screening company. The screening company must investigate the disputed information and remove or update the record as applicable.

Source: GAO icons and analysis of agency and stakeholder interviews and documents; and previous GAO work. | GAO-24-107093

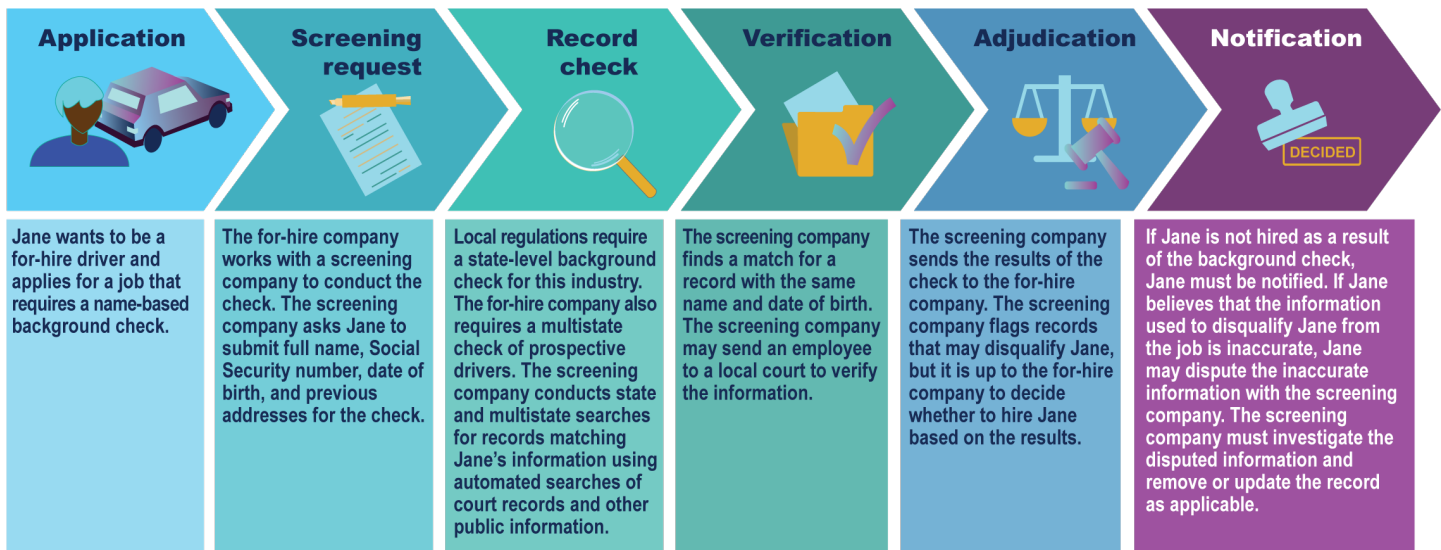## What Are the Potential Benefits and Limitations of the Background Checks Used to Screen Ridesourcing and Taxi Drivers, according to Stakeholders and Academic Research?

Federal officials, industry representatives, and academic research point to several benefits and limitations of the FBI fingerprint and third-party name

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[30]*See, e.g.*, 15 U.S.C. §§ 1681b and 1681e. Specifically, screening companies and employers are subject to Fair Credit Reporting Act requirements. FTC and the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau both enforce the Fair Credit Reporting Act. As of April 2023, FTC has not brought enforcement actions related to this act against our five selected ridesourcing or five selected taxi companies. FTC has brought enforcement actions related to the Fair Credit Reporting Act against employment screening companies, including one of the companies that work with our selected ridesourcing and taxi companies we asked about.

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checks (see table 1).[31] While these benefits and limitations may be inherent to the nature of the check, certain strategies may mitigate some of the limitations. According to some stakeholders, for example, conducting both a fingerprint and a name check for prospective ridesourcing and taxi drivers could address the limitations of each type of check.[32]

Table 1: Examples of Stakeholder-Identified Benefits and Limitations of Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Fingerprint-Based and Third-Party, Name-Based Background Checks

FBI fingerprint-based checks	
Benefits	**Limitations**
• **Positive identifier.** According to representatives of the National Consortium for Justice Information and Statistics (SEARCH), fingerprint checks are the most reliable check for establishing identity.[a] According to the FBI, its fingerprint matching algorithm is more than 99.6 percent accurate. • **Consistent and known process.** According to SEARCH representatives, states generally administer fingerprint checks in a similar manner. Regardless of the occupation (e.g., teacher, lawyer, or for-hire driver), states search the same databases, and the same information is returned. • **National scope of search.** According to SEARCH representatives, the only way for a state to conduct a national search is by running an FBI fingerprint check. According to FBI officials, state statutory authority determines the scope of the check, and some checks may not be national.	• **Missing information.** According to SEARCH representatives, the records that FBI and state repositories access may be incomplete, especially because disposition information (i.e., the results of the criminal proceeding) may be missing. • **Potentially long process.** According to SEARCH representatives, fingerprint checks can return results within minutes, but it takes time to track down missing information, if the results contain incomplete records. • **Missing fingerprints.** According to SEARCH representatives, "cite and release" practices were common during the COVID-19 pandemic and have resulted in some records missing fingerprints. Cite and release often involves law enforcement officers issuing an offender a ticket without taking fingerprints. The more traditional practice of arresting and booking offenders involves taking fingerprints immediately. • **Special authorization necessary.** For a state or local government agency to search the FBI database for noncriminal justice purposes, the state must have a statute allowing it to do so that has been approved by the FBI, or a federal statute must authorize an FBI fingerprint-based background check.

[31]We previously reported on limitations of fingerprint checks, such as limitations in collecting fingerprints, reporting dispositions, and resolving criminal history information disputes. GAO, *Criminal History Records: Additional Actions Could Enhance the Completeness of Records Used for Employment-Related Background Checks*, GAO-15-162 (Washington, D.C.: Feb. 12, 2015).

[32]Several studies have examined the effectiveness of different types of background checks at screening ridesourcing and taxi drivers. These studies have compared the benefits and limitations of each type of check or the specific procedures of certain ridesourcing companies. According to one report, no empirical studies exist on the effectiveness of these background checks at protecting passenger safety. National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, Transportation Research Board, *Between Public and Private Mobility.*

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Third-party, name-based checks	
Benefits	**Limitations**
• **Timely results.** Screening companies may take from a few minutes to a week to complete a name check, depending on the type of information the employer requests and how quickly the information can be accessed.	• **Risk of false match.** According to SEARCH representatives, name checks can potentially produce many records, and it may be hard to determine if the records belong to the person in question.[c]
• **Use of artificial intelligence (AI).** According to Consumer Data Industry Association (CDIA) representatives, all of CDIA's members use AI with human involvement in their background check process.[b] Screening companies may use sophisticated matching logic to ensure the match is correct, such as including common nicknames in the search. Each company decides how to use AI based on its risk tolerance.	• **Limited access.** Screening companies' limited access to personally identifiable information (e.g., Social Security numbers) may prevent them from accurately identifying or matching an individual with a criminal record. According to CDIA representatives, screening companies can more easily make a match with more publicly available data about a person.[d]
• **Inclusion of nonfingerprinted records.** Name checks search databases based on identifiers other than fingerprints, such as date of birth or Social Security number. These searches may produce results that do not appear in FBI records.	• **Highly variable processes.** According to Federal Trade Commission (FTC) officials, the ways in which screening companies process name checks vary widely.[e] For example, the scope may be national or narrower. Moreover, the officials said the accuracy of name checks varies. For example, FTC has brought enforcement actions against screening companies that it alleged have failed to follow reasonable procedures to assure that information in their consumer reports concerned the individual who was the subject of the report.
	• **No best practices.** According to CDIA representatives, there are no stand-alone best practices for name checks because screening companies have their own internal procedures and use the law as best practices.[f] FTC officials said that the FTC's prior cases can inform screening companies about practices that the agency has alleged violate the Fair Credit Reporting Act's requirement that screeners follow reasonable procedures to assure maximum possible accuracy. FTC also provides business guidance resources for complying with the act when conducting employment background screening.

Source: GAO analysis of interviews with and documents from agencies and stakeholders. | GAO-24-107093

Note: Fingerprint checks described in the table are for noncriminal justice purposes, such as employment and licensing.

[a]SEARCH is a nonprofit organization governed by a membership group of Governor appointees from the 50 states, District of Columbia, and territories. SEARCH supports the information-sharing, information technology, cybercrime investigative and digital forensics, and criminal records systems needs of state, local, and tribal justice and public safety agencies and practitioners nationwide.

[b]CDIA is a trade association of consumer reporting agencies, which includes background screening companies. CDIA represents some of the largest background screening companies in the U.S.

[c]Additionally, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau issued an advisory opinion that matching using only a person's name was insufficient for compliance with the Fair Credit Reporting Act's requirement that screening companies follow reasonable procedures to ensure maximum possible accuracy. However, each screening company determines what information constitutes an acceptable match in its search.

[d]According to CDIA representatives, screening companies have a number of proprietary systems in place to address the lack of publicly available data. If a company determines it has insufficient information to verify a match based on its risk tolerance, then the company may choose not to report information back to the employer.

Stakeholders identified some limitations that are relevant to both fingerprint and name checks:

- **Out-of-date records.** Delays in updating records may affect the accuracy and completeness of data used by either type of check. For instance, according to a National Consortium for Justice Information and Statistics (SEARCH) survey of state criminal history repositories, eight states take more than 30 days (and one state more than a year) to enter final disposition information upon receipt.

- **Different regulatory landscapes.** States and localities have different laws and regulations, which may make it difficult to process background checks with source information from various locations. For instance, Consumer Data Industry Association (CDIA) representatives told us that a significant challenge for employers has been the emergence of fair chance hiring laws, for which there is a high degree of variability across states.[33]

- **Variations in recording practices.** Variation in how states and localities record criminal justice information may make it difficult to interpret criminal records. For instance, states and localities may use different terminology, such as different definitions of dismissals, misdemeanors, or felonies.[34]

- **Incomplete or inaccurate information.** Both types of checks may be affected by incomplete or inaccurate criminal history record information. For example, FTC officials said they have found that

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[33]According to the Checkr website, fair chance hiring laws can affect when and how employers take a person's criminal records into account. Such laws may permit employers to take criminal records into account only after the candidate has been interviewed and is considered qualified for a role. They may also specify what charges can be taken into account, according to Checkr representatives. According to a Consumer Financial Protection Bureau report, an example of such a law is one that "bans the box"—that is, prohibits an employer from asking about an applicant's criminal history on an application or before an initial interview.

[34]According to SEARCH representatives, most states adhere to the National Crime Prevention and Privacy Compact, which has helped mitigate this challenge by standardizing fingerprint check processes for how information returned from searches is released to states.

some records used in name checks contained errors, such as listing a misdemeanor as a felony.
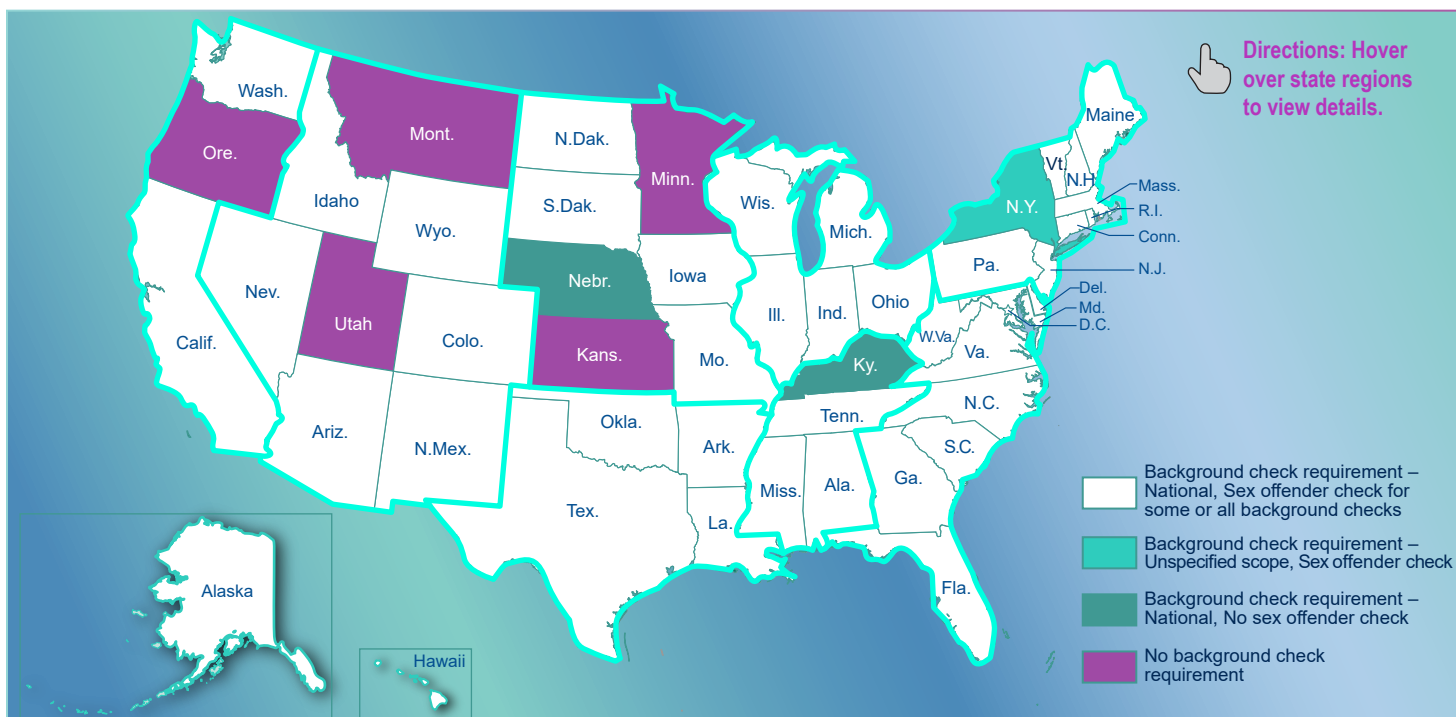
What Requirements Do States and Selected Localities Have in Law for Background Checks of Ridesourcing and Taxi Drivers?

Background checks required by law for ridesourcing and taxi drivers vary by state and selected locality.[35] Variations among laws include whether the background check includes a sex offender search, whether it includes a fingerprint search, which parties are required to conduct the background check, and what scopes are required for the background check. Forty-six states' laws require background checks for prospective ridesourcing drivers (see fig. 3), and 11 states' laws require background checks for prospective taxi drivers. Additionally, in all five of our selected localities, ridesourcing and taxi drivers are subject to background check requirements by law at the state level, local level, or both, but the specifics of these requirements vary.

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[35]Generally, we use the term law to refer to relevant statutes, regulations, and city code provisions, unless otherwise indicated. We conducted our legal review of state laws with background check requirements for ridesourcing drivers from June 2023 through December 2023 and for taxi drivers from January 2024 through April 2024. We conducted our legal review of local laws with background check requirements for ridesourcing and taxi drivers from February 2024 through March 2024. For the purposes of this report, we included laws that expressly require background check requirements for ridesourcing and taxi drivers. We used a core set of search terms to identify legal requirements. Therefore, there may be requirements that our search did not find.

Figure 3: Background Check Laws for Ridesourcing Drivers, by State, as of December 2023
Legal requirements as explicitly outlined in the text of each state's applicable laws. Please see table notes.

Directions: Hover over state regions to view details.

Background check requirement – National, Sex offender check for some or all background checks

Background check requirement – Unspecified scope, Sex offender check

Background check requirement – National, No sex offender check

No background check requirement

State	Is a criminal background check required?[a]	Which parties are required to conduct the background check?	What scopes are required for the background check?	Does the background check include a fingerprint search?	Does the background check include a sex offender search, and, if so, for what scope(s)?

Source: GAO analysis of states' applicable laws and regulations and Map Resources. | GAO-24-107093

Print instructions | To access a printable version of this interactive graphic, see appendix.

Notes:

The table summarizes legal requirements as explicitly outlined in the text of each state's applicable statutes and regulations based on a core set of search terms. Therefore, there may be requirements that our search did not find. It also does not capture state policies and practices outside of statutes and regulations that may require a background check in some or all circumstances. We conducted our legal review of state laws with background check requirements for ridesourcing drivers from June 2023 through December 2023.

One vehicle for states to conduct Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) criminal history record fingerprint checks for noncriminal justice purposes is through provisions contained in the Departments of State, Justice, and Commerce, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Appropriation Act, 1973. Pub. L. No. 92-544, 86 Stat. 1109. Pursuant to this Act, the FBI is authorized to use funds for the exchange of identification records, including criminal history record information, with officials of state and local governments for the purposes of employment and licensing if this is authorized by state statute and approved by the Attorney General, which has been delegated to the FBI. According to the FBI, it is incumbent upon states to submit legislation that contains a reference to an FBI fingerprint-based background check to the FBI for review so that the agency can ensure it complies with Public Law 92-544. For ridesourcing drivers, Colorado, Connecticut, Georgia, and New Jersey have enacted statutes that reference a fingerprint-based background check using FBI criminal history records for some background checks. Based on the statutes we provided the FBI for these states, it has approved the Colorado statute to allow the state to access FBI criminal history records for the purpose of ridesourcing driver licensing.

[a]States that do not explicitly require background checks for all drivers are considered null or not applicable (N/A) for subsequent categories.

[b]Before the company permits an individual to act as a driver, the individual must obtain a background check. Colorado provides two mutually exclusive paths for satisfying its background check requirement. An individual who wants to be a driver can either pursue a fingerprint-based check via state officials or acquire a privately administered criminal history check. The scopes and requirements for these checks vary. See Colo. Rev. Stat. § 40-10.1-605.

[c]Connecticut law requires companies to obtain a background check and provides the option to conduct a background check one of two ways—via a name-based check or by submitting fingerprints to the State Bureau of Investigation and the FBI. Conn. Gen. Stat. § 13b-119(a)(2). However, the statute allows the check to consist of fingerprinting or "any other method of positive identification." Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-17a(a). State law is unclear if a sex offender check is required in the case of performing a fingerprint-based check.

[d]Georgia provides two mutually exclusive paths for satisfying its background check requirement and requires companies to ensure an individual has met these requirements. An individual who wants to be a driver can either pursue a for-hire license endorsement, which requires a fingerprint-based check, or acquire a privately administered criminal history check, which is conducted by the ridesourcing company. Ga. Code §§ 40-1-193(c)(2); 40-5-39(a)-(b), (e)(1). State law is unclear if a sex offender check is required in the case of performing a fingerprint-based check.

[e]Although Kansas law does not explicitly require a background check for ridesourcing drivers, it does list circumstances, including when an individual has been convicted of certain crimes and is registered on a sex offender registry, that would prohibit an individual from becoming a ridesourcing driver. Kan. Stat. § 8-2720(a).

[f]The background check must be completed using an entity from an approved list issued by the state. Ky. Rev. Stat. § 281.6301(6)(c).

[g]Massachusetts requires a two-part background check. Mass. Gen. Laws ch. 159A 1/2, § 4(c). The ridesourcing company must conduct a national background check, including a check of the national sex offender database. 200 Mass. Code Regs. § 274.06(2)(a). Additionally, the ridesourcing company must provide driver information to state officials, who will use that information to conduct state-level criminal and sex offender searches. 200 Mass. Code Regs. § 274.06(1)(c), (3)(a).

[h]Nebraska law requires the ridesourcing company to "obtain and review a national criminal history record information check," but the statute does not specify which party is required to conduct the background check. Neb. Rev. Stat. § 75-326.

[i]New Jersey requires ridesourcing companies to submit their background check processes to the state for approval. N.J. Rev. Stat. § 39:5H-17(a). If the ridesourcing company's process has not been approved, as an alternative, the driver may submit fingerprints for a check by the state. N.J. Rev.

Stat. § 39:5H-17(e). If the state conducts this check, state law is not clear if the process involves a sex offender check.

[j]New Mexico law requires the ridesourcing company to "obtain a local and national criminal background check for the prospective driver," but the statute does not specify which party is required to conduct the background check. N.M. Stat. § 65-7-12.

[k]New York requires all ridesourcing company drivers to be subject to a background check, but neither state statute nor regulation clarify the scope required. See N.Y. Veh. & Traf. Law § 1699(1); N.Y. Comp. Codes R. & Regs. tit. 15, § 80.7(a).

[l]Texas law requires the ridesourcing company to "conduct, or cause to be conducted, a local, state, and national criminal background check for the individual," but the statute does not specify which party is required to conduct the background check. Tex. Occ. Code § 2402.107.

[m]Utah law requires drivers to consent to a criminal background check but does not affirmatively require background checks to be conducted. Utah Code § 13-51-107(1)(b).

Background check requirements for prospective ridesourcing drivers vary among the 46 states, as described below.[36] See appendix IV for a table displaying selected background check laws' requirements for prospective ridesourcing drivers by state.

- **Party that conducts the background check.** State laws vary in which parties are required to conduct the background check for ridesourcing drivers. State laws may require the ridesourcing company, a third party, or state officials to conduct the background check.[37] In 43 states, the ridesourcing company or a third party are required by law to conduct the background check for some or all background checks.[38] In some states' laws, there are options for which parties may conduct the background check. For example, Colorado provides prospective ridesourcing drivers with the option to have state officials conduct a fingerprint-based background check or have a third party conduct the background check.[39]

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[36]We use the phrase, for all background checks, to denote when a characteristic of the relevant law is required in every background check. We use the phrase, for some background checks, to denote when a characteristic of the relevant law is required in only certain background checks because options are identified in the applicable law for how the background check requirement may be fulfilled.

[37]For example, several state statutes explicitly require the background check to be conducted by the ridesourcing company or a third party. *See, e.g.*, Ala. Code § 32-7C-29(a)(2) ("The [ridesourcing company] shall conduct, or have a third party conduct, a local and national criminal background check for each applicant . . .").

[38]In other states, state officials are required to conduct the background check for some or all background checks. For example, in New Jersey, while a ridesourcing company conducts the background check if its process is approved by the state, state officials are required to conduct the background check if the ridesourcing company's process has not been approved by the state. N.J. Rev. Stat. § 39:5H-17(a), (e).

[39]Colo. Rev. Stat. § 40-10.1-605(3)(a).

- **Geographic scope.** State laws may, but do not always, specify scopes for the background check. When specified, the scope may include local, state, or national geographic scopes. Thirty-nine states' laws require that the background check include more than one scope for some or all background checks.

- **Fingerprint search.** State laws vary in whether they require a fingerprint-based search as part of the background check. Three states require fingerprint-based searches for some background checks.[40] Furthermore, ridesourcing drivers may need fingerprinting in specific contexts. For instance, California law, as set forth in a decision by the California Public Utilities Commission, requires state fingerprint-based background checks for companies that primarily transport unaccompanied minors.

- **Sex offender search.** State laws vary in whether they require a sex offender search as part of the background check. Forty-four states' laws require a sex offender search for some or all background checks. In all circumstances in which a sex offender search is required by law, it must include a national scope.[41]

- **Disqualifying offenses.** In certain states, ridesourcing drivers are disqualified if they have convictions for specific offenses. For instance, in South Carolina, ridesourcing drivers are disqualified if they have previous convictions for driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol or using a motor vehicle to commit a felony, among other offenses, within the past 10 years.[42] In California, ridesourcing drivers are disqualified if they, at any time, are convicted of murder, human trafficking, terrorism, or using a weapon of mass destruction or a bioweapon, among other offenses.[43]

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[40]For example, Georgia provides ridesourcing drivers with the option to satisfy the background check requirement by pursuing a for-hire license endorsement through the state or using a private third-party company. Georgia requires a fingerprint-based search only when the background check is conducted by state officials for purposes of obtaining a for-hire license endorsement. Ga. Code §§ 40-1-193(c)(2); 40-5-39(a)-(b), (e)(1). Furthermore, Connecticut law requires that all background checks consist of fingerprinting or another method of identification. Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-17a(a).

[41]Our review did not include specifying the source of the sex offender search. According to the FBI, a search of the National Crime Information Center's National Sex Offender Registry is not authorized for this purpose.

[42]S.C. Code § 58-23-1650(F)(3).

[43]Cal. Pub. Util. Code § 5445.2(a)(2)(B); Cal. Penal Code §§ 236.1, 667.5, 11413, 11418.5, 11419.

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Background check requirements for prospective taxi drivers vary among the 11 states' laws with background check requirements, as described below.[44] According to a report by the Transportation Research Board, historically, taxis are generally regulated at the local level.[45] In some cases, state laws explicitly give this authority to localities.[46] See appendix V for a full table displaying selected background check laws' requirements for prospective taxi drivers by state.

- **Party that conducts the background check.** State laws vary in which parties are required to conduct the background check for taxi drivers, including whether the background check must be conducted by the taxi company, a third party, or state or local officials. In six states' laws, the background check must be conducted by the taxi company or a third party for some or all background checks, and in six states' laws, the background check must be conducted by state or local officials for some or all background checks. In some states' laws, there are options for which parties may conduct the background check. For example, in Colorado, the background check may be conducted by either local officials or a third party approved by the state.[47]

- **Geographic scope.** State laws may, but do not always, specify scopes for the background check. When specified, the scope may include local, state, or national geographic scopes. Eight states' laws require that the background check include a national scope, and six states' laws require that the background check include a state scope for some or all background checks. The scope is unspecified in two states' laws with background check requirements for taxi drivers.

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[44]The 11 states with background check requirements for taxi drivers are Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, Michigan, Nevada, and South Carolina.

[45]National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, Transportation Research Board, *Between Public and Private Mobility.*

[46]For example, Louisiana law designates to every municipality or other local governing authority the authority to regulate the entry into the business of providing taxicab passenger transportation service. La. Stat. § 33:4792(B)(1).

[47]Colo. Rev. Stat. § 40-10.1-110(1)(a).

- **Fingerprint search.** State laws vary in whether they require a fingerprint search as part of the background check. Six states' laws require fingerprint searches for some or all background checks.[48]

- **Sex offender search.** State laws vary in whether they require a sex offender search as part of the background check. Three states' laws require a sex offender search for some or all background checks. In all circumstances in which a sex offender search is required by law, it must be national in scope.[49]

- **Disqualifying offenses.** In certain states, taxi drivers are disqualified by law from operating a taxi if they have convictions for specific offenses. For example, under Connecticut law, drivers are disqualified if they have been convicted of operating a motor vehicle while under the influence of intoxicating liquor or any drug within 5 years of the date of application, among other offenses.[50]

In the five selected localities' laws, ridesourcing and taxi drivers are subject to background check requirements, either at the local level, the state level, or both. For taxi drivers, Los Angeles and New York City laws require fingerprint searches, and Chicago law requires the background check to be fingerprint or nonbiometric based. For ridesourcing drivers, New York City law requires fingerprint-based searches, and Chicago law requires the background check to be fingerprint or nonbiometric based. In certain cities' laws, ridesourcing and taxi drivers are disqualified as drivers if they have convictions for certain offenses. For example, in Los Angeles, taxi drivers are disqualified by law for a felony conviction involving any type of sexual offense at any time, among other offenses.[51] See appendix VI for a full list of selected background check laws for prospective ridesourcing and taxi drivers, by selected city.

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[48]Additionally, Connecticut law requires that all background checks consist of fingerprinting or another method of identification. Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-17a(a).

[49]Our review did not include specifying the source of the sex offender search. According to the FBI, a search of the National Crime Information Center's National Sex Offender Registry is not authorized for this purpose.

[50]Conn. Gen. Stat. §§ 14-44(b)(1), 14-227a.

[51]Taxicab Rules and Reguls. of the Bd. of Taxicab Comm'rs, City of L.A., §§ 608P, 607R, 608R (Nov. 2016). In Chicago, ridesourcing drivers are disqualified by law if they, "within the 3-year period preceding the date of application to be a driver, [have] been convicted by a court of any jurisdiction, in custody, under parole, under any other noncustodial supervision, or any similar deferral program, or subject to conditional discharge, resulting from a finding or determination of guilt by a court of any jurisdiction" for certain offenses, including criminal sexual assault. Mun. Code of Chi. § 9-115-150(b)(1)(v).

How Do Selected States, Localities, and Ridesourcing and Taxi Companies Administer and Manage Background Checks?

Selected states, localities, and ridesourcing and taxi companies administer and manage background checks for ridesourcing and taxi drivers in a variety of ways.[52] As described above, state and local requirements may specify which type of check may be conducted (including whether the background check requires a fingerprint search) and which entity may conduct the check. However, ridesourcing and taxi companies may conduct these checks whether or not there is a requirement. All five selected ridesourcing companies and all five selected taxi companies reported conducting background checks for all prospective drivers, regardless of whether there is a state or local requirement. Additionally, all five of the ridesourcing companies we spoke with conduct sex offender searches as part of their background check process, even though not all states require such a search.

Administering and managing background checks also involves reviewing background check results and monitoring active drivers. See table 2 for examples of how some of our selected states and localities administer and manage background checks for ridesourcing and taxi drivers.

Table 2: Examples of How Selected States and Local Agencies Administer and Manage Background Checks of Ridesourcing and Taxi Drivers

Locality or state	Type of service regulated	Whether the background check requires a fingerprint search	Which parties are required to conduct the background check	How the agency reviews background check results	How the agency monitors drivers
New York City	Ridesourcing	Yes	State officials	Locality determines applicant eligibility	Locality receives an alert when a driver is arrested
	Taxi	Yes	State officials	Locality determines applicant eligibility	Locality receives an alert when a driver is arrested
South Carolina	Ridesourcing	No	Company/third party on company's behalf	State reviews a sample of results annually	State uses audits to ensure driver background checks are rerun annually
	Taxi	No	Company	State reviews background check compliance when conducting inspections	State does not monitor drivers

[52]According to industry representatives, ridesourcing and taxi companies differ in the procedures they use for background checks due to differing state and local requirements and the nature of their businesses.

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Locality or state	Type of service regulated	Whether the background check requires a fingerprint search	Which parties are required to conduct the background check	How the agency reviews background check results	How the agency monitors drivers
Connecticut	Ridesourcing	Fingerprint or other method of identification	Company/third party on company's behalf	State does not review results of third-party check	State does not monitor drivers
	Taxi	Fingerprint or other method of identification	State officials	State determines applicant eligibility	Background checks are rerun with certificate or license renewals
Portland, Oregon	Ridesourcing	No	Third party[a]	Locality reviews the results of every check	If company does not conduct its own monitoring, locality will conduct
	Taxi	No	Third party[a]	Locality reviews the results of every check	Locality monitors drivers

Source: GAO analysis of interviews with state and locality licensing agencies, and analysis of states' applicable laws. | GAO-24-107093

Notes:

Columns three and four of the table summarize legal requirements as explicitly outlined in the text of the applicable laws for each state and locality. The table does not capture policies and practices outside of laws that may require a background check in some or all circumstances, unless otherwise specified in table note a. We conducted our legal review of state laws with background check requirements for ridesourcing drivers from June 2023 through December 2023, and for taxi drivers from January 2024 through April 2024. We conducted our legal review of local laws with background check requirements for ridesourcing and taxi drivers from February 2024 through March 2024. We used a core set of search terms to identify legal requirements. Therefore, there may be requirements that our search did not find.

The type of background check administered or managed is set by state or local law or regulation. Fingerprint-based checks use fingerprints as the primary method of identifying an individual in a criminal history record search. Name-based checks use other identifying information, such as full names, date of birth, or Social Security number, to match an individual to a criminal history record.

[a]A Portland official told us that the ridesourcing or taxi company may choose to have the locality conduct the background check in lieu of the company or a third party on the company's behalf.

Conducting background checks. We spoke with one selected locality that regulates ridesourcing that conducts all background checks for prospective drivers.[53] We found that two selected states and localities we spoke with that regulate taxis conduct all background checks for prospective drivers.

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[53]We spoke with nine states and localities to inform this section. Eight regulate ridesourcing (California; Chicago; Connecticut; Nevada; New Jersey; New York City; Portland, Oregon; and South Carolina), and seven regulate taxis (Chicago; Connecticut; Los Angeles; Nevada; New York City; Portland, Oregon; and South Carolina). Montana and Philadelphia are not included in the results of this section. Montana does not have laws or regulations pertaining to background checks for ridesourcing and taxi drivers, and officials from Philadelphia declined our request for an interview.

We spoke with four selected ridesourcing companies that conduct their own background checks using third-party screening companies.[54] Uber and Lyft representatives told us that they have baseline background check requirements for prospective drivers nationwide, but that these requirements may be adjusted or expanded based on state or local requirements.[55] A representative of HopSkipDrive, which primarily arranges transportation for minors, told us that the company's background check process includes a fingerprint and name check, as well as an additional child abuse and neglect screening in all states, where permissible. Representatives of SilverRide, which generally contracts to transport individuals over 65 and those with transportation challenges, told us that their drivers may be disqualified for specific offenses, depending on the contract.

Representatives from the selected taxi companies we spoke with said that they generally do not conduct their own background checks and that background check procedures are subject to local requirements. We spoke with one taxi company, zTrip, that operates in many jurisdictions and conducts its own checks, in addition to any check conducted by a state or locality.[56]

Officials from one selected locality told us that the locality allows ridesourcing companies the option of having a third party or the locality conduct the check; officials from two selected localities told us they allow this option for taxi companies. For instance, in Portland, Oregon, an official said that smaller ridesourcing companies may choose to have the locality conduct drivers' background checks.[57] According to an official from Los Angeles, taxi companies may choose to use an approved vendor to take fingerprints of prospective drivers instead of the licensing agency, which may result in quicker processing times.

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[54]SilverRide and HopSkipDrive representatives told us that they fingerprinted all their drivers. An Alto representative told us that they would prefer to fingerprint drivers but may not be authorized to do so under state or local law.

[55]According to representatives from the screening company Checkr, which works with both Uber and Lyft, ridesourcing companies can purchase different background check packages made up of different sets of searches that can be adjusted by customers according to their needs or any local requirements.

[56]A zTrip representative told us that drivers are sometimes fingerprinted. For instance, drivers that work with vulnerable populations are fingerprinted.

[57]According to an official, Portland used to provide administrative background check services to all ridesourcing companies' drivers.

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Reviewing background check results. Four selected states and localities that regulate ridesourcing companies have processes to review the background check results for prospective ridesourcing drivers,[58] and one selected state and one selected locality also review the ridesourcing company's background check process itself.[59] For example, according to officials in Nevada and South Carolina, the states may audit random samples of drivers' background checks.[60] Additionally, according to officials in Chicago, the locality reviews a ridesourcing company's background check process to verify that the company is meeting ordinance requirements, but it is the responsibility of the ridesourcing company to vet its drivers.

All seven selected states and localities that regulate taxis have processes to review the results of these checks to determine a driver's eligibility.[61] An official from Portland said that background checks may be conducted by the locality or an approved third party but that the results of those conducted by a third party must be reviewed by the locality. Officials in

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[58]Two selected states do not review the background check results for prospective ridesourcing drivers. For example, a Connecticut official told us that, while ridesourcing drivers are to receive background checks in the state, Connecticut does not have a direct enforcement mechanism equal to that of taxis. In Portland, officials started reviewing the results of ridesourcing drivers' background checks after the city discovered issues with the background checks conducted through the ridesourcing companies. An official said that since they strengthened the city's review process, they have observed fewer issues with background check results.

[59]In some cases, localities have reached settlements with ridesourcing companies regarding their driver background check processes. For example, according to a press release from the Office of the Mayor of the City of Chicago, in 2018, Chicago reached settlements with three ridesourcing companies to settle allegations that the companies committed process violations by performing background checks that were not consistent with Chicago's rideshare ordinance. See https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/depts/mayor/press_room/press_releases/2018/august/081618_MentoringInvestment.html. In 2016, SFGate reported that San Francisco and Los Angeles had reached a settlement with a ridesourcing company to settle allegations that the ridesourcing company had misled customers on the background checks of its drivers, among other allegations. See Jessica Floum, "Uber settles lawsuit with SF, LA over driver background checks,"*SFGate,* April 7, 2016, https://www.sfgate.com/business/article/Uber-settles-lawsuit-with-SF-LA-over-driver-7235244.php.

[60]For instance, according to officials, the Nevada Transportation Authority selects a percentage of drivers to audit on an annual basis. During this process, the Nevada Transportation Authority requests vehicle and driver documents, including a copy of the drivers' criminal history background checks.

[61]Representatives of two taxi companies told us that they may review some of their drivers' background check results.

Chicago and Nevada told us that they review the results of all background checks for taxi drivers.

Monitoring active drivers. We found that five selected states and localities that regulate ridesourcing, and five that regulate taxis, have processes to continuously monitor active drivers for criminal activity and driver eligibility. An official in Portland told us that they monitor the drivers of smaller ridesourcing companies but not the two biggest companies, since those companies have their own monitoring processes. In addition, officials in Connecticut and Los Angeles told us they conduct subsequent background checks of taxi drivers through their license renewal processes.[62] Officials in Chicago and New York City said that they receive weekly police reports to identify and suspend both ridesourcing and taxi drivers.

Four selected ridesourcing companies conduct at least annual background checks of their active drivers. At least three selected ridesourcing companies also conduct continuous criminal monitoring by receiving notifications of new criminal offenses as they occur. For example, Lyft partners with a company to conduct continuous criminal record monitoring for all active U.S. drivers. According to Lyft officials, when the company verifies a potentially disqualifying criminal record on an active driver, it provides Lyft with a background check, which Lyft uses to disqualify the driver, in accordance with the law and Lyft's internal safety standards.

Representatives of selected taxi companies told us that processes for criminal monitoring or recurring background checks may be initiated by the company or the relevant locality. For example, a representative from one taxi company said that they have implemented a pilot program to work with a third-party company that continuously monitors the taxi company's drivers and alerts them if a driver commits a violation.

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[62]Officials in Los Angeles told us that they do not refingerprint drivers when running subsequent background checks.

In-App and In-Vehicle Safety Features for Ridesourcing and Taxi Drivers and Passengers

What In-App and In-Vehicle Safety Features May Be Available to Ridesourcing and Taxi Drivers and Passengers?

To enhance the safety of drivers and passengers, ridesourcing and taxi companies may offer features through a mobile app, such as trip monitoring, or in the vehicle, such as security cameras (see fig. 4).[63] We classified these features into three groups: pretrip in-app features, other in-app features, and in-vehicle features.[64]

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[63]Throughout the report, we use the term "security camera" to describe any inward-facing video recording device, such as a dashcam.

[64]The safety features we discuss do not comprise a comprehensive list of all available features; rather, they are examples of features that may be available when using ridesourcing or taxi services. Further, drivers and passengers interact with safety features in different ways. Some safety features allow drivers and passengers to opt in or opt out of using the feature. Other features are always available, and others are only used when a safety incident occurs.

Figure 4: Examples of Safety Features That May Be Available to Ridesourcing and Taxi Drivers and Passengers
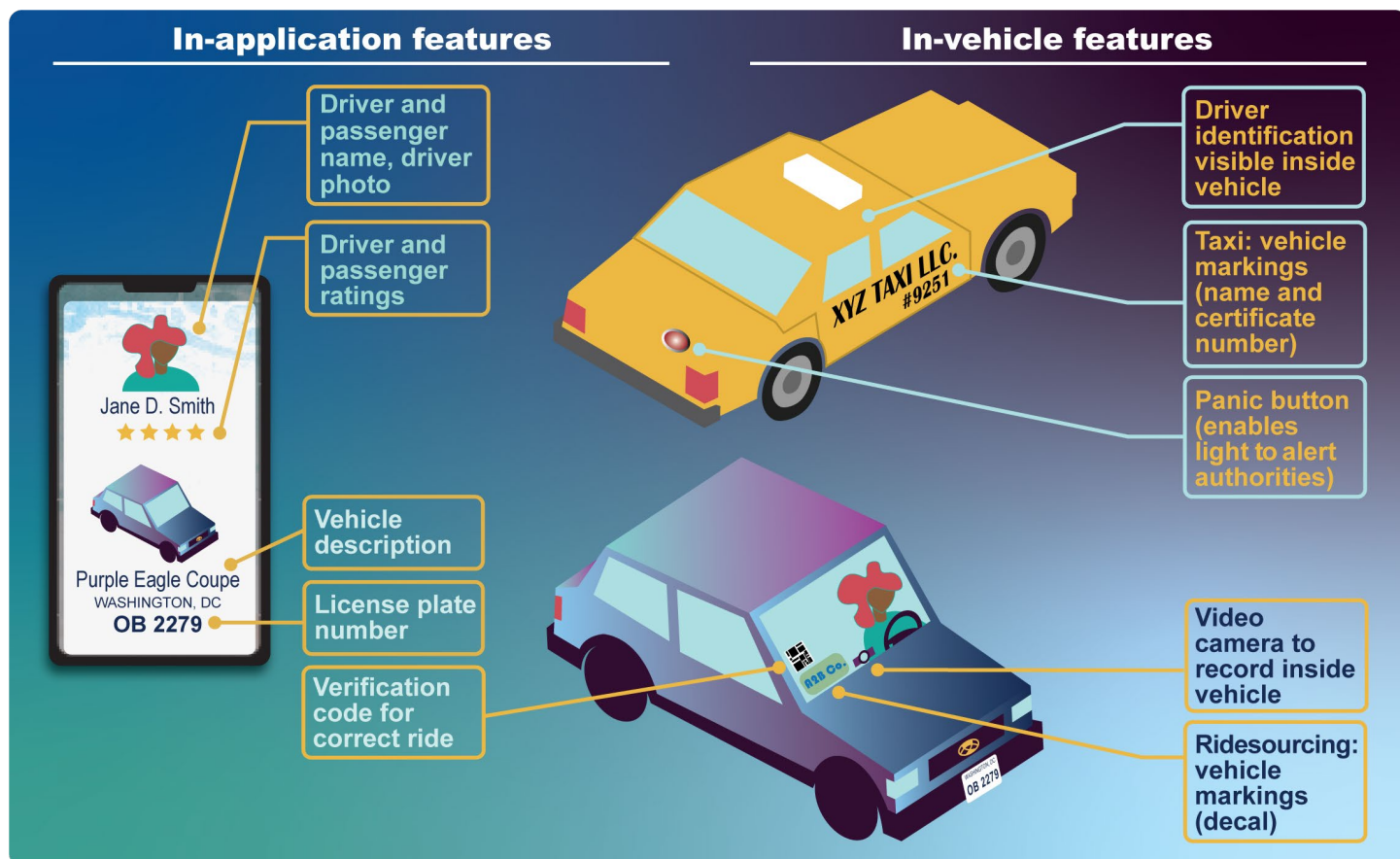
Source: GAO illustration and analysis of ridesourcing and taxi safety features. | GAO-24-107093

Pretrip in-app features. Drivers and passengers use pretrip in-app safety features, which are commonly offered by ridesourcing companies and some taxi companies, to arrange and verify trips. These features may also help prevent passengers from entering vehicles driven by illegal operators (i.e., individuals who pose as ridesourcing or taxi drivers but are not affiliated with an app or company, or drivers who are affiliated with an app but offer rides outside the app). Many of these features, such as the driver's name and photo, are intended for use by passengers. Some

features, such as verification codes and ratings, can be used by both drivers and passengers (see table 3).[65]

Table 3: Selected Pretrip In-Application (App) Safety Features That Ridesourcing and Taxi Companies May Offer to Drivers and Passengers

Pretrip in-app feature		Description
License plate number	WASHINGTON, DC OB 2279	• Passengers can view the license plate number in the app and match it to the vehicle to ensure they enter the correct vehicle. • Three selected ridesourcing companies offer this feature. One selected taxi company told us that their app includes the cab number.[a]
Name and photo		• The driver's name and photo are available to passengers, and the passenger's name and, in some cases, photo are available to drivers to ensure the driver and passenger can identify each other. • Four selected ridesourcing companies offer this feature. Two of the selected taxi companies told us that they offer this feature.
Ratings	4 ★★★★	• Drivers and passengers can see how a passenger or driver is rated, which they can use when arranging a ride or to inform future rides. For example, according to representatives from one ridesourcing company, if the driver or passenger submits a rating of 3 or lower, they will not be matched again. • Three selected ridesourcing companies offer a ratings system in their apps for arranging a ride. Three of the selected taxi companies told us that they use driver scoring methods to rate drivers' driving safety.
Vehicle make and model	White Eagle Coupe	• Passengers can view the make, model, and an image of the vehicle to ensure they enter the correct vehicle. • Five selected ridesourcing companies offer this feature. Two of the selected taxi companies told us that they offer this feature.

[65]Other safety features may still be in development. For example, Uber is piloting a passenger verification feature in 15 cities, and Lyft is piloting its passenger verification feature in 9 cities. To verify a passenger, the passenger's account information is checked against third-party databases. If a passenger's account information cannot be verified, the passenger can choose to upload government-issued identification. Verified passengers will receive a badge that is displayed in their account and shown to drivers when a ride is requested. This verification feature allows drivers to choose whether to accept ride requests from passengers based on whether the passengers' account information has been validated.

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Pretrip in-app feature		Description
Verification code		• Drivers and passengers use codes—such as a QR code, four-digit pin, or code word—to confirm trip details. For instance, one ridesourcing company allows users to opt in to this feature, through which a passenger would receive a four-digit pin and tell it to the driver to confirm the ride. • Two selected ridesourcing companies offer this feature.[b] One of the selected taxi companies told us that they offer this feature.[c]

Source: GAO analysis of ridesourcing and taxi company documents and interviews with their representatives. | GAO-24-107093

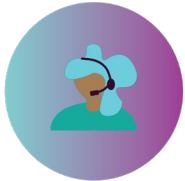Note: We selected five ridesourcing companies and five taxi companies for our analysis.

[a]According to one taxi company representative, the company's app has information on its taxi drivers, including the cab number.

[b]Ridesourcing companies may offer other safety features with similar functionality. For example, two ridesourcing companies allow drivers to have lights on their vehicles that illuminate when a passenger pushes a button in the app to confirm their ride.

[c]Representatives from one taxi company said the availability of this feature varies based on the market.

Other in-app features. Ridesourcing and taxi companies offer other in-app features that drivers and passengers may use during or after their trips to enhance safety (see table 4). Drivers and passengers may use these features more or less frequently, depending on their function. For example, representatives of two selected ridesourcing companies said that location sharing is their most used feature, and representatives of one selected ridesourcing company said the emergency call button is their least used feature, due to the infrequency of emergency situations.

Table 4: Selected In-Application (App) Safety Features That Ridesourcing and Taxi Drivers and Passengers Can Use during or after Their Trip

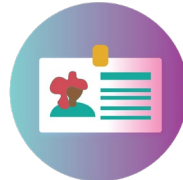| In-app feature for use during or after trip		Description
Audio recording		• Drivers and passengers may choose to record the audio of a trip within the app and then may share it with the company after the ride has ended. • One selected ridesourcing company told us that they offer this feature. None of the selected taxi companies told us that they offer this feature. However, representatives from two of the selected taxi companies said that their security cameras have the ability to record audio.
Emergency call button		• If drivers or passengers need immediate assistance, this button can connect them with emergency responders. Such a button can connect the driver or passenger to a security professional who can call or text them, call 911 on their behalf, or connect them with their local emergency number directly. • Two selected ridesourcing and three selected taxi companies offer some type of emergency button to drivers or passengers.

In-app feature for use during or after trip	Description
Location sharing	• This feature allows drivers and passengers to share their trip information and location with a friend or family member, either during a single ride or for all rides. • Three selected ridesourcing companies offer this feature. One of the selected taxi companies told us that they offer this feature for drivers.
Report a driver or passenger	• Drivers and passengers may use the app to report a safety issue that occurred during a trip. • Two selected ridesourcing companies offer this feature in the app for both drivers and passengers. All five of the selected taxi companies told us that they may collect complaints about a driver, and one of the companies offers an in-app reporting feature.
Trip monitoring	• Real-time trip monitoring can enable ridesourcing and taxi companies to identify any irregularities that occur during the trip, such as unplanned stops or detours, and provide live support. • Four selected ridesourcing companies offer this feature. One selected taxi company allows passengers to track their rides on a map.

Source: GAO analysis of ridesourcing and taxi company documents and interviews with their representatives. | GAO-24-107093

Note: We selected five ridesourcing companies and five taxi companies for our analysis.

In-vehicle features. Ridesourcing and taxi companies may have physical safety features located in or on the vehicle (see table 5). In-vehicle safety features may have varied purposes, such as to help a passenger identify a vehicle or to prevent, mitigate, or record an incident. We found that vehicle markings and decals were the most common in-vehicle safety feature offered by our selected ridesourcing and taxi companies.

Table 5: Selected In-Vehicle Safety Features That May Be Available to Ridesourcing and Taxi Drivers and Passengers

In-vehicle feature	Description
Driver identification	• Ridesourcing or taxi vehicles may display a driver's identification, license number, or similar credentials in or on the vehicle. This identification helps passengers ensure that their driver is licensed and authorized to provide services. • One selected ridesourcing company and three selected taxi companies told us that they display this information inside the vehicle.

In-vehicle feature	Description
Panic button	• A panic button allows drivers to quickly and silently call for help in the event of an emergency. Pushing the panic button may illuminate a light on the outside of the vehicle, alert authorities, or trigger some other response. Additionally, one selected taxi company has panic buttons on security cameras that will capture the previous 30 seconds before the button was pushed to record an incident as it occurs. • None of the selected ridesourcing companies told us that they offer this feature.[a] Four selected taxi companies told us that they offer this feature.
Partition	• Partitions provide a physical barrier between the front and back part of a vehicle. • None of the selected ridesourcing or taxi companies told us that they require this feature, although one taxi company offers drivers the option to use partitions.
Security camera	• Ridesourcing and taxi vehicles may have security cameras that record the inside of the vehicle during trips. Recordings may be used to aid in incident response or as a deterrence, according to representatives of several ridesourcing and taxi companies. Representatives of one taxi company said the cameras used in their vehicles provide a live view inside the vehicle when the driver's panic button is pressed. • Four selected ridesourcing companies and four selected taxi companies either require or allow the use of a security camera during trips.
Uniforms	• Driver uniforms can help passengers identify their drivers. For example, a ridesourcing company told us that their drivers wear orange-colored shirts so that they can be easily recognizable. • Two selected ridesourcing companies told us that their drivers wear uniforms. None of the selected taxi companies said that their drivers wear uniforms.
Vehicle markings and decals	• Ridesourcing and taxi companies may have a standard decal to affix to the vehicle. Taxi companies may also display their company name and certificate number on the vehicle. These vehicle markings help ensure that passengers enter an authorized vehicle. • Five selected ridesourcing companies and four selected taxi companies provide or require the use of decals or logos on drivers' vehicles. In addition, three selected ridesourcing companies require that drivers remove the decal when the vehicle is not being used for ridesourcing.

Source: GAO analysis of ridesourcing and taxi company documents and interviews with their representatives. | GAO-24-107093

Note: We selected five ridesourcing companies and five taxi companies for our analysis.

[a]However, one ridesourcing company said that an in-app panic button provides similar functionality for ridesourcing passengers and drivers.

What In-App and In-Vehicle Safety Features Do Ridesourcing and Taxi Companies Provide in Selected States and Localities?

According to state and local officials we spoke with, eight of our selected states and localities have specifications pertaining to ridesourcing safety features, and seven of our selected states and localities have specifications pertaining to taxi safety features. These officials identified three types of in-app and in-vehicle safety features—vehicle markings and decals, security cameras or partitions, and in-app safety information—that ridesourcing and taxi companies provide to align with state and locality specifications (see table 6).[66]

Table 6: Number of Selected States and Localities with Specifications for Safety Features for Ridesourcing and Taxi Companies, according to State and Local Officials

Type of service	Vehicle markings/decals	Security camera or partition	In-app safety information
Ridesourcing	8 of 8	0 of 8	7 of 8
Taxi	7 of 7	4 of 7	1 of 7

Source: GAO analysis of state and local agency interviews. | GAO-24-107093

Note: We spoke with officials from five selected states (California, Connecticut, Nevada, New Jersey, and South Carolina) and four localities (Chicago; Los Angeles; New York City; and Portland, Oregon). According to the state and local officials we spoke with, eight of the selected states and localities have specifications pertaining to ridesourcing safety features, and seven of the selected states and localities have specifications pertaining to taxi safety features.

Vehicle markings and decals. Of the three types of safety features for which selected states and localities reported having specifications, vehicle markings and decals were the most common. For instance, in New Jersey, officials told us that specifications call for ridesourcing companies to issue two placards (i.e., decals) for drivers to affix to their vehicle; these placards are to be either reflective or capable of being illuminated. Officials in Portland, Oregon, told us that specifications call for taxis to display, among other things, the full name of the company, the taxi number, and the word "taxi," "cab," or "taxicab."

Security cameras or partitions. None of the state or local officials we spoke with specified that ridesourcing vehicles were to have a security camera or partition. In contrast, officials from two selected localities said that all taxis should install approved security cameras, and officials from two selected localities told us that taxi companies or drivers are to install

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[66]We paired security cameras with partitions because, according to some state and local officials, vehicles may be equipped with either a camera or a partition.

either a camera or a partition.[67] For example, officials in Los Angeles told us that operating a taxi with a deactivated or inoperable camera is considered a major safety violation.

In-app safety information. Officials from seven states and localities told us that ridesourcing apps are to include certain pretrip identification information, such as the driver's name and picture, vehicle description, or license plate number. For example, according to officials in California, ridesourcing apps may have some type of rating system and must provide the driver's photograph, license plate number, and vehicle description to passengers. According to officials from Los Angeles, all taxi apps should enable a driver to rate a passenger, and taxi apps with driver-facing or passenger-facing functions should provide additional identifying information.[68]

Additionally, some officials described specifications for other safety features specific to ridesourcing or taxi vehicles that operate in their jurisdictions. For example, officials in New York City said that all ridesourcing and taxi vehicles have a special license plate that bears the Taxi and Limousine Commission's initials, and officials in Chicago said taxi vehicles have special license plates in a color specific to the license year (see fig. 5).

Figure 5: Examples of Special License Plates for Ridesourcing and Taxi Vehicles

Sources: New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission and Chicago Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection. | GAO-24-107093

[67]States and localities may conduct inspections or audits of these features. For example, Portland has audited the functionality of taxi security cameras.

[68]According to Los Angeles officials, apps with driver-facing functions should show the name of the passenger. Apps with passenger-facing functions should show the name, photograph, and permit number of the driver and allow the passenger to rate a driver, among other things.

What Is Known About the Effectiveness of In-App and In-Vehicle Safety Features?

According to academic research and some stakeholders we interviewed, in-app and in-vehicle features may have some safety benefits. For instance, one study suggests that passengers viewed in-app safety features as enhancing safety and providing incentives for safe behavior.[69] Other research found that in-vehicle safety features improved driver safety. For instance, researchers have studied the effectiveness of security cameras in reducing homicides of taxi drivers. According to one 2013 study, cities that mandated security cameras experienced a threefold reduction in homicides of taxi drivers compared with cities without these mandates.[70]

A recent analysis found a significant decline in work-related homicides within taxi and chauffeur occupations, which includes ridesourcing drivers.[71] This analysis suggested that, in addition to security cameras, technologies like electronic payment options, which provide an alternative to cash payments, and smartphone ridesharing apps that allow for the identification of passengers may have helped reduce violence against drivers.

However, some advocacy groups have stated that safety features may not prevent harm or may have unintended consequences. According to two advocacy groups, ridesourcing safety features generally provide support during and after a safety incident but do little to prevent harm. For example, representatives of the What's My Name Foundation told us that emergency call buttons and other reactive features would likely not be helpful in preventing or mitigating harm, but pretrip features, such as verification codes and license plate matching, help passengers confirm that they are entering the correct vehicle. Advocacy groups have found that both drivers and passengers who are subject to ratings find them

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[69]B Fileborn, E Cama, and A Young, "Perceptions of Safety Among Taxi and Rideshare Service Patrons: Gender, Safekeeping and Responsibilisation*," International Journal for Crime, Justice, and Social Democracy,* vol. 11, no. 4 (2022).

[70]Cammie K.C. Menendez et al., "Effectiveness of Taxicab Security Equipment in Reducing Driver Homicide Rates," *American Journal of Preventative Medicine,* vol. 45, no. 1 (July 2013).

[71]Scott Hendricks et al., "Trends in Workplace Homicides in the U.S., 1994-2021: An End to Years of Decline," *American Journal of Industrial Medicine,* vol. 67, no. 6 (April 2024).

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unreliable, and that drivers may risk their safety—such as by accepting rides they believe could be unsafe—out of fear of negative reviews.[72]

How Have Ridesourcing and Taxi Companies Assessed the Effectiveness of Safety Features?

Representatives of two selected ridesourcing companies said they gather input from drivers to develop, evaluate, and improve safety features. Both companies told us they use these assessments to make improvements and updates. For example, Lyft representatives said the company regularly surveys its drivers to gauge their awareness of safety features and learn which features they would like the app to include. The company uses these findings to guide the development and function of safety features. Representatives from Uber said that the company conducts surveys, questionnaires, interviews, and focus groups to understand drivers' and passengers' needs and preferred functions and to evaluate features prelaunch. After Uber launches a safety feature, it conducts recurring surveys of drivers and passengers to assess the feature's usability and identify opportunities to improve its functionality. Representatives of both companies told us that drivers were more likely to use safety features than passengers, probably because drivers interact with the features more regularly.

Taxi companies may have fewer resources than ridesourcing companies to assess the effectiveness of safety features because, unlike ridesourcing companies, taxi companies tend to operate locally or regionally, rather than nationally. However, representatives of three taxi companies said inward-facing cameras were the most effective features for ensuring driver safety.[73] For example, representatives from one taxi company said that cameras make drivers feel safer and have been shown to reduce the number of incidents involving belligerent passengers.

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[72]Representatives of one advocacy group noted that, for ridesourcing drivers, the issue of safety intersects with other issues, such as pay and job security. Sometimes, drivers may be disincentivized from making safe choices for fear of penalization in the form of lower ratings or lower pay. In addition, drivers who are independent contractors may not be eligible for workplace safety protections.

[73]An industry group told us that, in addition to cameras, being able to pay for a taxi within an app and without using cash has improved security for drivers by discouraging robberies. Some reports have also suggested that cashless transactions may reduce crime against drivers. For instance, the International Association of Transportation Regulators' report on modernizing taxi regulations suggests that since taxi drivers have been targets for theft in the past, a cashless model is safer. Another report points to evidence that cashless transactions in taxis reduce street crime.

What Is Known About Passengers' Views on In-App and In-Vehicle Safety Features?

In a nongeneralizable intercept survey we conducted, we found that passengers were more likely to identify pretrip in-app safety features when asked about which safety features they noticed, had used, and considered important for safety.[74]

The intercept survey asked people about pretrip in-app features, which provide information to arrange or verify a ride; other in-app features that may be used during or after the ride; and in-vehicle features. Specifically, for 10 safety features, we asked whether respondents were aware of the feature during a trip within the past year and how important they considered the feature for their own personal safety. For in-app safety features, we also asked whether the respondents had used the feature.
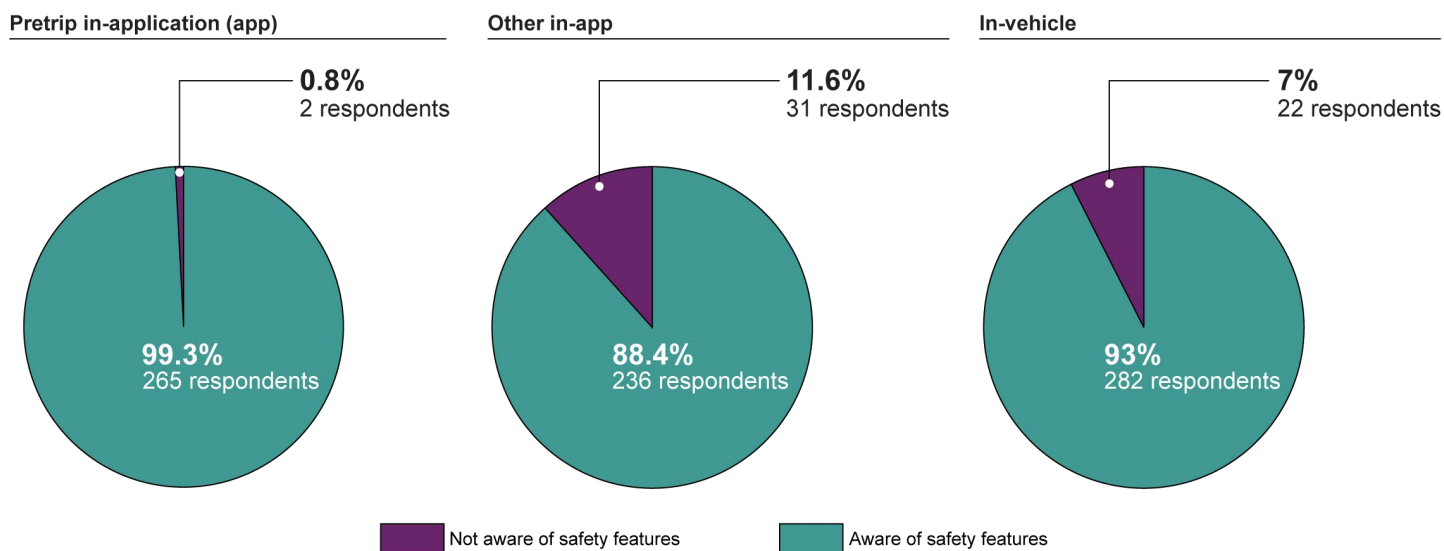
In surveying people who had used ridesourcing or taxi services in the past year, we found that most respondents were aware of at least one safety feature from each of the three categories (pretrip in-app, other in-app, and in-vehicle) during a ridesourcing or taxi trip (see fig. 6).[75] Respondents had most frequently used certain pretrip in-app features and considered these features most important for safety. Generally, respondents were less aware of other in-app safety features and tended to rate in-vehicle safety features as less important for safety than in-app features.[76] Appendix VII contains the list of questions we asked survey respondents and additional analysis of the survey results.

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[74]An intercept survey is an in-person data collection method that is conducted in a public place where a specific targeted population is asked a series of questions. Of the 304 respondents, 267 had used an app to arrange a ride in the last year and 37 had not. For more information on how we conducted the survey, see appendix I.

[75]"Awareness" of a safety feature includes both respondents who had used the safety feature and those who had not used the feature but said they knew it was available to them.

[76]We asked these questions of both ridesourcing and taxi passengers who responded to our survey. Our interviews with representatives of ridesourcing and taxi companies indicated that the safety features we asked about in the survey may not be available to all ridesourcing and taxi passengers. Therefore, respondents may have been less aware of some features or used some features less frequently due to lack of availability of the feature on trips.

Figure 6: Survey Respondents' Awareness of at Least One Type of Safety Feature during a Ridesourcing or Taxi Trip in the Past Year

Pretrip in-application (app)

0.8%
2 respondents

99.3%
265 respondents

Other in-app

11.6%
31 respondents

88.4%
236 respondents

In-vehicle

7%
22 respondents

93%
282 respondents

■ Not aware of safety features   ■ Aware of safety features

Note: In August and October 2023, we conducted a nongeneralizable intercept survey of 304 people who had used ridesourcing or taxi services in the past year. There were 267 total respondents for questions about pretrip in-app and other in-app features and 304 total respondents for questions about in-vehicle features. "Awareness" of pretrip in-app features includes both those who had used the feature and those who had not used the feature but said they knew it was available to them.

Pretrip in-app safety features. We asked survey respondents about four pretrip in-app features that passengers may use to arrange or verify a ride: driver ratings, license plate number, driver's name and picture, and verification code. Generally, more than 95 percent of respondents were aware of, and had used, at least one pretrip in-app safety feature during one of their trips in the past year. We found that high-frequency users of ridesourcing and taxi services (i.e., those who had used the services 20 times or more in the past year) reported similar use of pretrip in-app features as low-frequency users (i.e., those who had used the services five times or fewer in the past year).

Respondents reported higher usage of the license plate number and the driver's name and picture when arranging a ride, and they also highly rated these two features as very important for safety (see table 7). Respondents were least aware of the verification code feature and used it the least. According to a stakeholder we interviewed and our analysis of ridesourcing safety features, on the largest ridesourcing company's platform, passengers who wish to use the verification code feature must

opt in, which could account for respondents' low levels of awareness and use of this feature.[77]

Table 7: Survey Respondents' Awareness, Use, and Perception of Importance of Selected Pretrip Safety Features That Ridesourcing and Taxi Companies May Offer on Their Applications (app)

Pretrip in-app safety feature	Aware of (percentage)	Used (percentage)	Consider very important for safety (percentage)
Driver ratings	245 (92%)	165 (62%)	103 (39%)
License plate number	244 (91)	207 (78)	213 (80)
Driver's name and picture	259 (97)	222 (83)	207 (78)
Verification code	85 (32)	58 (22)	106 (40)

Source: GAO analysis of survey data. | GAO-24-107093

Note: In August and October 2023, we conducted a nongeneralizable intercept survey of 304 people who had used ridesourcing or taxi services in the past year. There were 267 total respondents to questions on pretrip in-app safety features. "Awareness" includes those who had used the feature and those who had not used the feature but said they knew it was available to them.

Other in-app safety features. The survey asked about three other in-app features that passengers may use during or after a ride: location sharing, emergency call button, and driver reporting. More than 85 percent of respondents were aware of at least one other in-app feature. We found that high-frequency users of ridesourcing and taxi services displayed greater awareness of other in-app features than low-frequency users. Awareness of these features was higher among younger and female respondents.

More than half of respondents considered all three of the other in-app features we asked about to be very important to safety. However, respondents' awareness and use of these features varied. For instance, we found that reporting a driver was the most well-known feature in this category, while location sharing (through the use of the app) was the most used feature. Since passengers would use the emergency button or report a driver in response to an incident during the ride, we may not expect these features to be used at the same rate as pretrip features (see table 8).

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[77]Officials in New Jersey told us that all ridesourcing vehicles are to provide this safety feature, via a barcode or machine-readable code, to operate in their state.

Table 8: Survey Respondents' Awareness, Use, and Perception of Importance of Selected In-Application (app) Safety Features That Ridesourcing and Taxi Companies May Offer on Their App

In-app safety feature	Aware of (percentage)	Used (percentage)	Consider very important for safety (percentage)
Emergency button	67 (25%)	2 (<1%)	182 (68%)
Location sharing	159 (60)	106 (39)	152 (57)
Reporting a driver	202 (76)	26 (10)	207 (78)

Source: GAO analysis of survey data. | GAO-24-107093

Note: In August and October 2023, we conducted a nongeneralizable intercept survey of 304 people who had used ridesourcing or taxi services in the past year. There were 267 total respondents on questions about selected in-app safety features. "Awareness" indicates respondents who responded "yes" when asked if the feature had been available to them.

In-vehicle safety features. The survey asked about three in-vehicle safety features that may be present in a ridesourcing or taxi vehicle: vehicle markings and decals, partitions, and security cameras. More than 90 percent of respondents were aware of at least one in-vehicle safety feature during one of their trips in the past year. Both high-frequency and low-frequency users of ridesourcing and taxi services had high levels of awareness of these features. Awareness of these features was similar across age and gender demographic groups as well.

Our survey results showed that of the in-vehicle features we asked about, respondents were most aware of vehicle markings and decals and considered these features most important for safety. Of all 10 safety features we asked about, the fewest number of respondents considered partitions very important to safety (see table 9).

Table 9: Survey Respondents' Awareness and Perception of Importance of Selected In-Vehicle Safety Features That Ridesourcing and Taxi Companies May Offer

In-vehicle safety feature	Aware of (percentage)	Consider very important to safety (percentage)
Partition	137 (45%)	40 (13%)
Security camera	153 (50)	111 (37)
Vehicle markings and decals	252 (83)	158 (52)

Source: GAO analysis of survey data. | GAO-24-107093

Note: In August and October 2023, we conducted a nongeneralizable intercept survey of 304 people who had used ridesourcing or taxi services in the past year. There were 304 total respondents to questions about in-vehicle safety features. "Awareness" indicates the respondent noticed the feature during any of their rides of the past year.

Safety Efforts Undertaken by Selected States, Localities, and Ridesourcing and Taxi Companies

What Efforts Have Selected States and Localities Undertaken Related to the Safety of Ridesourcing and Taxi Drivers and Passengers?

Representatives from four of the six selected states and four of the five selected localities told us they had undertaken various efforts related to driver and passenger safety. These efforts included educating drivers and the public, coordinating with other entities, and curbing illegal operators.

Educating drivers and the public. Officials from one selected state and four selected localities said they have specifications for driver training programs—for taxi drivers, ridesourcing drivers, or both—that cover a range of topics, including safety. These training programs educate drivers on safety topics such as local rules for drivers of ridesourcing and taxi vehicles and customer service. For example, according to Portland officials, all ridesourcing and taxi drivers must take training that includes safe driving and customer service, and they must pass a test within 30 days of being certified.

Officials from three selected states and three selected localities said they have used public awareness campaigns and materials to educate drivers and passengers about ridesourcing and taxi safety. For example, in Chicago and New York City, officials implemented public awareness campaigns to share safety tips with passengers (see fig. 7).[78]

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[78]See Chicago.gov/RideSmart for more information on Chicago's passenger awareness campaign.

Figure 7: Examples of Efforts by Selected Localities to Raise Awareness of Ridesourcing and Taxi Safety
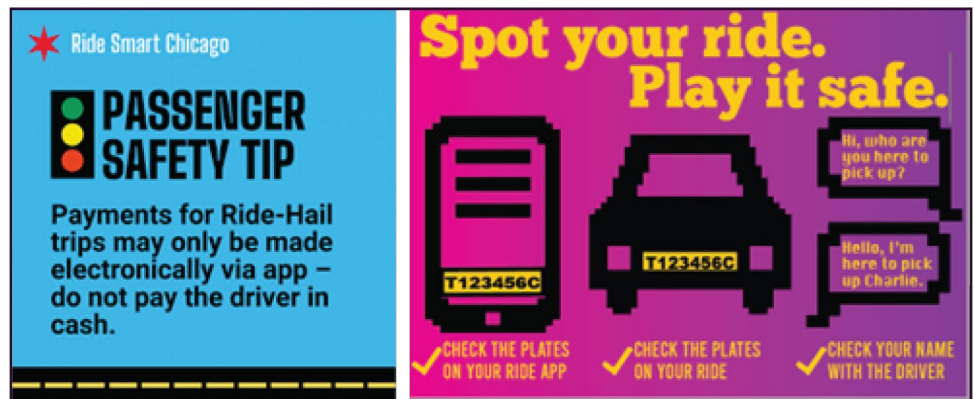
Sources: Chicago Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection and New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission. | GAO-24-107093

Coordinating with other entities. Officials from three selected states and three selected localities said they coordinated with public and private entities on ridesourcing and taxi safety. For example, Portland, Oregon, facilitates a Ridesourcing Drivers Advisory Committee to discuss topics such as drivers' views on certain safety features.[79]

Curbing illegal operators. Four selected states and four selected localities have also taken actions aimed at curbing illegal operators (i.e., individuals who pose as ridesourcing or taxi drivers but are not affiliated with an app or company, or drivers who are affiliated with an app but offer rides outside the app). Officials from Nevada said that their officers conduct sting operations against illegal operators and may impound their vehicles. According to these officials, illegal operators attend a hearing before their vehicle may be returned, and they may be removed from any affiliated ridesourcing company's app. Portland officials said that they use geofencing to route authorized ridesourcing drivers to certain pick-up locations for major events, such as sports games.[80]

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[79]Portland Bureau of Transportation, *TNC Drivers Advisory Committee Meeting Summary Draft Final* (Portland, OR: June 12, 2023). The committee comprises ridesourcing drivers, city officials, and representatives of ridesourcing companies.

[80]According to a transportation industry company's website, geofencing for vehicles creates and defines virtual boundaries that result in a specific action when a vehicle is equipped with a GPS tracking device and is within, entering, or exiting the defined area. Geofencing can be used to define pick-up and drop-off areas.

What Efforts Have Selected Ridesourcing and Taxi Companies Undertaken Related to the Safety of Drivers and Passengers?

Like our selected states and localities, the five selected ridesourcing and five selected taxi companies have undertaken efforts related to the safety of drivers and passengers. These efforts include educating drivers and the public, coordinating with other entities, and curbing illegal operators. As discussed above, ridesourcing and taxi companies operate on different scales; generally, taxi companies tend to operate locally or regionally, rather than nationally. As such, ridesourcing and taxi companies may have different levels of resources available to support these actions.

Educating drivers and the public. Representatives of the selected ridesourcing and taxi companies said their driver training includes some safety topics. For example, Uber representatives said that driver training covers a range of topics, including respecting personal space, sexual assault awareness, bystander intervention, and de-escalation tactics. According to representatives of one advocacy group representing drivers, this kind of training is important because it helps prepare drivers to manage challenging passengers. A zTrip representative said that the company's driver training instructs drivers to avoid carrying cash or discussing details of their shift, among other things.

In addition to driver training, three ridesourcing companies and one taxi company conduct outreach campaigns to raise awareness of available safety features. This outreach may be necessary for app users to be aware of in-app safety features.[81] According to representatives of the What's My Name Foundation, many passengers may not be aware of in-app features such as the verification code. Lyft representatives said that while their website includes information about safety features, they also inform users about safety features through in-app messaging and emails. Representatives of one taxi company said they set up a table at a community event to provide safety information to the public.

Coordinating with other entities. Representatives of three selected ridesourcing companies told us they coordinated with each other and with other entities on safety issues, and representatives of three taxi

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[81]According to a 2019 Pennsylvania audit of Uber, audit staff previously found that Uber's safety tools were not sufficiently highlighted or prominently displayed within the app. In response, Uber reviewed and refined its safety tools to allow for quicker and easier identification of safety tools within the app. In 2024, Uber launched a feature in its app that highlights the app's safety features and allows passengers to set preferences for these features.

companies told us they coordinated with other entities.[82] For example, Uber, Lyft, and HopSkipDrive participate in the Industry Sharing Safety Program.[83] The program allows Uber, Lyft, and HopSkipDrive to share the names of drivers who have been deactivated for fatal physical assaults and for the five most serious types of sexual assaults, such that the other companies may also take action on their own platform.[84]

Curbing illegal operators. Representatives of selected ridesourcing companies said that pretrip safety features, described above, aim to curb illegal operators by ensuring that passengers get into the correct vehicles. Related to these features, Uber representatives said that the company conducted a public education campaign called "Check Your Ride," which sends in-app reminders to passengers to confirm the vehicle's license plate and driver details before entering the vehicle. Taxi companies may also have safety features to curb illegal operators. For example, representatives of one selected taxi company said their taxi drivers must have their driver information, including cab number, clearly visible in their vehicle.

Agency Comments

We provided a draft of this report to the Departments of Health and Human Services, Justice, Labor, and Transportation, and to FTC, for review and comment. The Departments of Health and Human Services, Justice, Labor, and the FTC provided technical comments, which we incorporated, as appropriate. The Department of Transportation did not have any comments.

We are sending copies of this report to the appropriate congressional committees; the Secretaries of Health and Human Services, Labor, and Transportation; the Attorney General; and the Chair of the Federal Trade Commission; and other interested parties. In addition, the report is available at no charge on the GAO website at https://www.gao.gov.

If you or your staff have any questions about this report, please contact Elizabeth Repko at (202) 512-2834 or repkoe@gao.gov, and Derrick

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[82]Taxi companies we interviewed described their coordination with law enforcement, which is beyond the scope of our review. See appendix I for more information on our objectives, scope, and methodology.

[83]This program launched in 2021 and is administered by a third party.

[84]Uber and Lyft's safety reports do not include information about the results or effectiveness of this program. However, Lyft officials said that the program has been an effective way to share information about deactivated drivers.

Collins at (202) 512-8777 or collinsd@gao.gov. Contact points for our Offices of Congressional Relations and Public Affairs may be found on the last page of this report. GAO staff who made key contributions to this report are listed in appendix VIII.

Elizabeth Repko
Director, Physical Infrastructure

Derrick Collins
Director, Homeland Security and Justice

Appendix I: Objectives, Scope, and Methodology

Sami's Law, enacted in January 2023, provides for GAO to conduct a study on criminal background check (background check) requirements for prospective ridesourcing and taxi drivers, and safety steps taken by ridesourcing and taxi companies.[1] This report describes

1. requirements for background checks of prospective ridesourcing and taxi drivers;

2. in-application (app) and in-vehicle safety features for ridesourcing and taxi drivers and passengers; and

3. safety efforts undertaken by selected states, localities, and ridesourcing and taxi companies.

To inform all three objectives, we reviewed documents and interviewed representatives of the two major ridesourcing companies that represent the vast majority of the U.S. market (Uber and Lyft), three smaller ridesourcing companies (HopSkipDrive, SilverRide, and Alto), and five taxi companies. We selected the five ridesourcing companies to obtain diversity in populations served, platform model, range of safety features, fleet size (i.e., number of annual rides or number of drivers), and geographic areas served, and based on whether the ridesourcing company collects data about physical and sexual assaults. We reviewed documents, such as safety reports, terms of services, and community guidelines, and other information available on the websites of these ridesourcing companies.

We selected two taxi companies (United Independent Taxi Cab and Union Cab Cooperative) because they operated in states with high numbers of taxi drivers and to obtain diversity in size, based on revenue, and geographic location.[2] The three other companies whose representatives we interviewed (C&H Taxi, Yellow Cab of Los Angeles, and zTrip) were part of a taxi operator panel organized by The Transportation Alliance, a trade association representing the private passenger transportation industry. We also reviewed information available on the websites of these five companies.

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[1]Pub. L. No. 117-330, § 2, 136 Stat. 6114, 6114-15 (2023) (codified at 34 U.S.C. § 41313).

[2]In addition to these two taxi companies, we selected two other taxi companies, Yellow Checker Star Transportation and Curb. We did not meet with representatives from these two companies, as they either did not respond to our request for a meeting or declined to be interviewed.

To inform all three objectives, we also interviewed officials from the Departments of Health and Human Services, Justice (including the Federal Bureau of Investigation), Labor, and Transportation, and the Federal Trade Commission.

In addition, we interviewed officials and reviewed documents from selected states and localities. We selected six states (California, Connecticut, Montana, Nevada, New Jersey, and South Carolina) and five localities (Chicago; Los Angeles; New York City; Philadelphia; and Portland, Oregon) based on whether the state or locality had regulatory oversight of ridesourcing and taxi companies, to obtain geographic diversity, and based on recent developments in the state or locality related to ridesourcing and taxi vehicles.[3] We interviewed officials from all six states and from Chicago, Los Angeles, New York City, and Portland.[4] We reviewed reports and studies issued by states and localities about, for example, regulation of ridesourcing and taxi services.

We interviewed representatives of industry and advocacy groups and reviewed documents, including reports, that they had published. These groups included the Action Center on Race and the Economy, Checkr, Consumer Data Industry Association, the Independent Drivers Guild, the International Association of Chiefs of Police, International Association of Transportation Regulators, National League of Cities, RALIANCE, National Consortium for Justice Information and Statistics, the What's My Name Foundation, and The Transportation Alliance.

To identify state laws with background check requirements for prospective ridesourcing and taxi drivers, we searched all 50 states and the District of Columbia (states) for state statutes and regulations generally using a core set of search terms aimed to identify background check requirements for these industries that apply statewide. To identify local laws with background check requirements for prospective ridesourcing and taxi drivers for the five selected localities, we searched

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[3]For instance, a recent development may include a recent change in ridesourcing or taxi legislation or the occurrence of a high-profile safety incident.

[4]Officials from Philadelphia did not respond to our request for a meeting. In addition, two state agencies in Nevada have oversight of taxis: the Nevada Transportation Authority and the Nevada Taxicab Authority. We met with the Nevada Transportation Authority, which has jurisdiction over taxis in counties with a population of less than 700,000. The Nevada Taxicab Authority, which has jurisdiction over taxis in counties with a population of 700,000 or more and any other county that enacts an ordinance granting the Authority jurisdiction, did not respond to our request for a meeting.

each locality's applicable codes generally using a core set of search terms aimed to identify city-specific background check requirements for prospective ridesourcing and taxi drivers.[5] We used our best professional judgment to develop appropriate search terms and interpret state and local laws. We did not speak with state and local regulators to verify these laws or collect information on the details of how these laws are implemented at the state or local level. Accordingly, there may be background check requirements that our search did not find or implementation details that our analysis does not capture.

We conducted our legal review of state laws with background check requirements for ridesourcing drivers from June 2023 through December 2023 and for taxi drivers from January 2024 through April 2024. We conducted our legal review of local laws with background check requirements for ridesourcing and taxi drivers from February 2024 through March 2024. Our descriptions of states' and localities' applicable laws do not reflect any amendments made to them after we completed our review for that particular state or locality.

For both states and selected localities, we identified the following characteristics of the legal requirements:

- **Whether a background check is required.** We determined if a law we identified explicitly requires a background check for all prospective ridesourcing or taxi drivers in the state or locality. In our counts, we included only those states and localities that have a law that explicitly requires a background check for all prospective ridesourcing or taxi drivers. If the relevant law does not explicitly require a background check for all prospective ridesourcing or taxi drivers in the state or locality, including if a background check process is permissive for some or all drivers or if a nonbinding policy or guidance encourages background checks but does not require them for all drivers, we did not include those states and localities in our counts.

- **Which parties are required to conduct the background check.** We described which parties are required to conduct the background check, including whether the background check must be performed by state or local officials, the ridesourcing or taxi company, a third party, or some combination or variation of these parties. When a law provides options for satisfying the background check requirement, we

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[5]Generally, we use the term law to refer to relevant statutes, regulations, and city code provisions unless otherwise indicated.

identified the parties that conduct the background check for each applicable option. In our counts, we included those parties that are required to conduct the background check for some or all background checks, including when options are identified in the applicable law. We used the term "unspecified" in instances when the applicable law does not specify which party is required to conduct the background check.

- **What scopes are required for the background check.** When a state or local law requires a background check, we identified the following scopes of the background check: local, state, national, or unspecified. We categorized the scope of the check based on whether the relevant law explicitly requires the background check to include a check for criminal records at the identified levels. For laws that require a background check but do not specify the scope of the background check, we categorized the scope as unspecified. To count the states and localities with a particular scope, we included those states and localities that have a law in which the background check explicitly includes a check for a criminal record at the particular level (i.e., local, state, or national) for some or all background checks.

- **Whether the background check includes a fingerprint search.** When a state or local law requires a background check, we identified whether the law includes a fingerprint search. We identified a relevant law as including a fingerprint search if it explicitly requires a fingerprint search as part of the background check for some or all background checks. If an applicable law has different ways an individual could fulfill the background check requirement, with only one path requiring a fingerprint search, we counted this as including a fingerprint search in some circumstances and gathered descriptive details on the background check. We answered "optional" if the relevant law explicitly allows for a fingerprint search but does not require it. To count the states and localities that include a fingerprint search, we included those states or localities with a law that explicitly requires a fingerprint search as part of the criminal background check for some or all background checks.

- **Whether the background check includes a sex offender search and, if so, for what scope(s).** When an identified state or local law requires a background check, we determined whether the check includes a sex offender search. We identified a relevant law as including a sex offender search if it explicitly requires a sex offender search as part of the background check for some or all background checks, regardless of scope. If a sex offender search is required, we also identified whether the scope of the search explicitly requires a

search of a state-level database or a national-level database.[6] If an applicable law has different ways an individual could fulfill the background check requirement, with only one path requiring a sex offender search, we counted this as including a sex offender search for some background checks. To count the states and localities that include a sex offender search, we included those states and localities with a law that explicitly requires a sex offender search as part of the criminal background check for some or all background checks.

The results of these analyses can be found in appendixes IV through VI.

To describe in-app and in-vehicle safety features, we reviewed documents and conducted interviews with selected ridesourcing companies, taxi companies, and states and localities, as described above. In addition, to understand passenger views on safety features, we developed and administered a nongeneralizable intercept survey to people who had ridden in either a ridesourcing or taxi vehicle in the past year.[7] We asked survey participants about their awareness, use, and perception of the importance of specific safety features.[8] We pretested the survey questions with 15 participants chosen through convenience to make sure the questions were clear, obtain any suggestions for clarification, and minimize the burden the questionnaire placed on respondents. An independent survey specialist within GAO also reviewed a draft of the questionnaire prior to its administration. We made appropriate revisions to the content and format of the questionnaire based on the pretests and independent review. We also field tested the survey in the Washington, D.C., metro area to make sure the questions were clear and to assess how long it took to administer the survey.

We administered the survey in four locations—Washington, D.C.; Portland, Oregon; Bloomington–Normal, Illinois; and Chicago, Illinois—in August and October 2023. We selected these locations to overlap with the selected states and localities whose officials we interviewed and to obtain diversity in geography, population size, and demographics. We

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[6]Our review did not include specifying the source of the sex offender search. According to the FBI, a search of the National Crime Information Center's National Sex Offender Registry is not authorized for this purpose.

[7]An intercept survey is an in-person data collection method that is conducted in a public place where a specific targeted population is asked a series of questions.

[8]"Awareness" of a safety feature includes both respondents who had used the safety feature and those who had not used the feature but said they knew it was available to them.

administered the survey at multiple sites where we could easily interact with a large number of potential survey respondents and that were likely to generate rides from ridesourcing and taxi passengers, such as at airports or on college campuses. In total, we administered the survey at 10 sites.

- In the Washington, D.C., metro area, we administered the survey at Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport, Howard University, and in the Georgetown neighborhood.

- In Portland, Oregon, we administered the survey at Portland State University, Portland International Airport, and in two neighborhoods.

- In Bloomington–Normal, Illinois, we administered the survey at Illinois State University.

- In Chicago, we administered the survey at O'Hare International Airport and the University of Illinois Chicago.

We generally approached each individual who passed us on the street or in an airport concourse. We delivered the survey orally and also allowed respondents to read the questions as they were being delivered. We recorded responses in real time on paper surveys, and we then entered these responses into a spreadsheet for analysis. We approached 1,534 individuals and received 1,158 refusals, for a survey participation rate of 25 percent. We initiated surveys with 373 respondents; however, 69 of these respondents said they had not ridden in either a ridesourcing or taxi vehicle in the past year. In these cases, we ended the survey and did not include these 69 survey responses in our analysis. The final number of completed surveys in our analysis is 304.[9]

After administering the survey at the first few locations, we found the vast majority of respondents said they used ridesourcing services more in the previous year than taxi services. To generate more responses from the perspective of taxi users, we added an additional question to the survey asking if respondents had also taken a taxi within the past year and completed 33 additional surveys with respondents from the perspective of taxi users. Results from this nongeneralizable survey cannot be used to make inferences about the population of ridesourcing and taxi passengers. Moreover, it is possible that we would have had different results if we had surveyed the public at different locations. However, the

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[9]This number does not include three people we surveyed who did not complete the survey.

results provide insights into the public's experiences with safety features.
The results of the survey are included in appendix VII.

To understand more about passengers' views of safety features, we
conducted a literature search of academic, governmental, and other types
of literature. Specifically, we conducted searches that spanned a range of
literature published from 2018 to mid-July 2023, including academic
studies, trade publications, and news reports. To identify relevant
sources, we conducted searches in various databases, such as
ProQuest, Ebsco, Scopus, Dialog, and IIIE Explore. We then reviewed 43
results to identify articles that (1) were published by an academic or
research organization, or a government agency; (2) focused on
passengers' awareness, use, and perception of safety features in
ridesourcing or taxi vehicles; and (3) focused on the U.S. market. While
none of the articles we reviewed met all of these conditions, we
incorporated an article as a contextual source into the report.

To describe safety efforts undertaken by selected states, localities, and
ridesourcing and taxi companies, we reviewed documents and conducted
interviews, as described above. We limited our scope to efforts directly
related to the safety of ridesourcing and taxi drivers and passengers and
to available safety features. We did not describe broader efforts that
states, localities, and ridesourcing and taxi companies may undertake,
such as coordinating with law enforcement.

We conducted this performance audit from April 2023 to September 2024
in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards.
Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain
sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our
findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that
the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and
conclusions based on our audit objectives.

Appendix II: Example of Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Fingerprint-Based Background Check Process

According to FBI officials, states and localities may conduct fingerprint-based checks for noncriminal justice purposes using the database that is maintained by the FBI, if authorized by a federal statute or a state statute that has been approved by the Attorney General which has delegated this authority to the FBI. The following represents an example of how an FBI fingerprint check might be processed for a prospective ridesourcing or taxi applicant.

Application. First, the applicant applies for a position that requires an FBI fingerprint check. States or localities must be authorized to conduct FBI fingerprint checks for certain industries. The applicant must then provide fingerprints at an approved location, such as a police agency or other authorized entity.

Screening request. Authorized entities, such as state agencies, then forward the fingerprints through established procedures to the state criminal history record repository. States maintain information on arrests in the central criminal history repositories and voluntarily report it to federal databases maintained by the FBI. State and local criminal justice agencies collect criminal history record information to establish the identity of arrested individuals and to help investigate and prosecute individuals charged with criminal offenses. This information may include an arrested person's fingerprints; prior arrest records; criminal charges; and any related dispositions, such as dismissal of charges, acquittal, or conviction.[1]

Record check. The state repository searches its own state records, and subsequently requests a national check of the FBI records to determine if there is a match against the applicant's fingerprints. The FBI is the agency that manages the federal database containing fingerprint-based criminal history record information. The FBI maintains a fingerprint-based criminal history record repository, called the Next Generation Identification System. This system contains records from all states and territories, as well as from federal and some foreign criminal justice agencies. In general, states conduct FBI criminal history record checks by searching for matches between an applicant's fingerprints and records in

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[1]State and local criminal history record information systems are subject to federal requirements for inclusion in the federal database maintained by the FBI. For example, information must be complete and accurate, meaning that dispositions should be included within 90 days, and records should contain no erroneous information.

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the Next Generation Identification System.[2] The system sends the results
to the state repository. According to FBI officials, states may vary in their
processes for collecting information to submit a request to the Next
Generation Identification System and for disseminating the information
received from the system.

Verification. Interstate and federal data-sharing agreements facilitate the
exchange of criminal history data among states for noncriminal justice
purposes. Once the criminal history record information is received from
the Next Generation Identification System and state repositories, the
regulating entity may need to contact state agencies to obtain additional
information, such as any related dispositions, prior to adjudicating the
background check results.[3]

Adjudication. When the fingerprint check is complete, the repository
returns the results of the check to the regulating entity, such as a
licensing agency, which will then determine the suitability of the applicant.
The information contained in the results may depend on the state
responsible for the search. According to a study by the National
Consortium for Justice Information and Statistics, these results may
contain the complete record, or convictions only. Some states share
arrests without dispositions, while others do not. In general, government
agencies that receive the results of fingerprint checks apply their own

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[2]Additionally, authorized entities may use the Interstate Identification Index (III) when
conducting fingerprint checks. The III functions as part of the Next Generation
Identification System and facilitates the interstate exchange of criminal history records.
Each record maintained in the III is supported by fingerprints. Under III, the FBI maintains
an identification index of persons arrested for felony and reportable misdemeanor
offenses under state or federal law. The III allows for national searches, thereby making it
harder for persons to conceal their records in other states. Currently, all 50 states and
Washington, D.C., participate in III. Participation in III requires that a state maintain a
criminal history record system capable of responding automatically to all interstate, state,
and federal record requests. According to a report by the National Consortium for Justice
Information and Statistics (SEARCH), nationwide, just over 100 million criminal records
are accessible through the III. States maintain 73 percent and the FBI 27 percent of
records, according to the report. See Becki R. Goggins and Dennis A. DeBacco,
SEARCH, *Survey of State Criminal History Information Systems, 2020* (December 2022).

[3]According to FBI officials, as of April 2023, 35 states have ratified the National Crime
Prevention and Privacy Compact, an interstate and federal/state compact that establishes
authority to promulgate rules and procedures governing the use of the III for noncriminal
justice purposes. The compact is designed to facilitate the exchange of criminal history
data among states for noncriminal justice purposes and to eliminate the need for the FBI
to maintain duplicate data about state offenders. All signatory states provide criminal
history information (except sealed information) in response to noncriminal justice requests
from other states.

suitability criteria for employment or licensing, or criteria established under state law. These criteria may include offenses that disqualify an applicant from being hired.[4]

Notification. Applicants not hired as a result of the fingerprint check are notified and have the right to review their criminal history record information. Individuals may then challenge any information they believe to be incorrect or incomplete by contacting the agency that contributed the disputed information, or the FBI Criminal Justice Information Services Division. This division forwards the challenge to the agency that submitted the data, requests that the agency verify or correct the entry, and only makes changes when requested by the agency. According to FBI officials, each state has its own processes and time frames for conducting criminal history dispute resolution.[5]

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[4]Some offenses must be committed within a specific time period to disqualify an applicant from being hired. But certain offenses—such as appearing on a sex offender registry or committing a violent crime—may be disqualifying regardless of time period.

[5]Although officials were unable to provide data on the percentage of fingerprint background checks that are disputed, the FBI received 2,704 criminal history challenges in 2023. Criminal history challenges occur when a person believes their criminal history record is inaccurate.

Appendix III: Example of Third-Party, Name-Based Background Check Process

Private-sector screening companies compile and sell background information on applicants, including criminal record information, to employers.[1] The following represents an example of how a third-party, name-based background check might be processed for a prospective ridesourcing or taxi applicant.

Application. If an employer requires a name check, it must first inform the applicant of its intent and secure the applicant's authorization in writing.[2] The name check may be required by company policy or by state or local requirements.

Screening request. Once the employer receives consent for a name check, it sends a background check request to the screening company. The employer may select the parameters of the background check to fit its needs, which may be specific to a particular industry or related to a position's risks. The parameters also depend on the rules and regulations of the state or locality in which the check is being conducted. The parameters may specify the data sources that may be used for the check, the scope of the check,[3] or disqualifying offenses.[4] The screening company then requests a range of identifying information about the applicant, such as name, date of birth, and Social Security number.

Record check. The screening company may use a wide range of sources—such as internal databases, external databases, or individual courthouses—to search for records that match the applicant's identifying information. Screening companies create, use, and sell private databases that collect public records, including from law enforcement agencies, state courts, corrections offices, and state criminal record repositories, where

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[1]For the purposes of this report, we refer to entities that conduct a background check to screen an individual for the purpose of hiring a worker as "employers."

[2]15 U.S.C. § 1681b(b)(2).

[3]For instance, the scope of a name check may be at the county, multijurisdictional, state, multistate, national, or federal level. The scope may be set by the screening company or required by local regulations. According to the Consumer Data Industry Association, because court access terms vary, there are no standard definitions of what a multijurisdictional or multistate search would entail, but generally the broader the scope, the more comprehensive the check will be. For example, a widely scoped check would be more likely to identify criminal offenses that applicants may try to conceal by omitting former addresses on their job application.

[4]Generally, the Fair Credit Reporting Act requires screening companies to, in most instances, limit reporting of arrest records to a 7-year period but does not impose a time limit on the reporting of criminal convictions. Some states or localities may have additional restrictions. 15 U.S.C. § 1681c.

available.[5] According to Federal Trade Commission (FTC) officials, the data the companies collect may vary based on the kinds of information the employer requests, such as a check of a state's records or of all states' records.[6]

Representatives from a screening company called Checkr told us that their criminal background check packages start with searches that provide "pointers" to lead to subsequent searches. Checkr starts by running two pointer searches on an applicant: a Social Security trace (which uses Social Security number–related information) and a national criminal database search (which is name based). These pointer searches may reveal additional details about an applicant, such as past addresses, aliases, and jurisdictions where the subject of the search may have had contact with law enforcement.

Verification. If the screening company finds a record that matches the applicant's identifying information, it may use different methods to verify that the record is accurate and complete. For example, Checkr representatives said that Checkr uses the results of its pointer searches to conduct research in counties—often at the county courthouse or clerk of courts—that hold the source records. This research may provide more up-to-date information on any offenses (e.g., disposition date or final disposition).[7]

Adjudication. Once the name check is complete, the screening company sends the results to the employer. The completed report may include the applicant's name, the jurisdiction from which the record originated, a date (such as the date of arrest, date of disposition, or date the record was created), and a judicial case number or law enforcement number. A screening company may "adjudicate" or "score" the applicant based on the eligible criteria. The adjudication process generally requires the

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[5]According to a study by the National Consortium for Justice Information and Statistics, repositories in five states provide bulk copies of criminal history records to screening companies, generally through a subscription service or through weekly, biweekly, or monthly data extractions.

[6]There are more than 13,000 state courts of record, as well as 94 district-level and 13 appellate federal courts, and how each jurisdiction keeps records and makes records available to the public varies greatly.

[7]Checkr representatives told us that they use a compliance process (or "compliance filters") on any results found during searches at counties to make sure they (1) have reasonable confidence that a record is for the candidate the search is about and (2) only report information that federal and state laws permit.

screening company to compare the retrieved records (and possibly other information, such as a credit report) with the eligibility criteria provided by the employer or developed by the company (including disqualifying offenses) and determine whether the applicant is eligible.

Notification. Before taking an adverse action, such as not hiring an applicant, based in whole or in part on the information in the report, an employer must first provide to the applicant (1) a copy of the report; and (2) a summary of the applicant's rights under the Fair Credit Reporting Act, including the right to dispute any potentially inaccurate information found in the report.[8]

For example, according to Checkr representatives, if a background check includes any potentially adverse information that could impact whether an applicant is hired, Checkr notifies the applicant and provides instructions for how to share additional information with the employer. If the applicant decides to file a dispute, the screening company must investigate the dispute within 30 days, as required by the Fair Credit Reporting Act.[9] According to FTC officials, if the screening company determines the information is inaccurate or cannot verify its accuracy, the information must be updated or removed from the report.[10] According to company representatives, if Checkr determines that a record or information needs to be updated when resolving an applicant dispute, it informs the party that conducted the research or provided the record information.

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[8]After taking an adverse action, such as not hiring the applicant, an employer must provide notice that the applicant was rejected due to information in the report; the name, address, and phone number of the screening company that provided the report; a statement that the company selling the report did not make the hiring decision and cannot give specific reasons for it; and a statement that the applicant has a right to dispute the accuracy or completeness of the report and to get an additional free report from the reporting company within 60 days.

[9]15 U.S.C. § 1681i.

[10]However, the Fair Credit Reporting Act does not require that an employer reconsider an applicant's employment based on an updated background check report.

Appendix IV: State Criminal Background Check Laws' Requirements for Prospective Ridesourcing Drivers

We conducted a systematic search of statutes and regulations in 50 states and the District of Columbia (states), to understand and describe state laws' requirements for background checks for prospective ridesourcing drivers. Table 10 presents the results of this search by describing selected background check requirements for ridesourcing drivers by state.

Table 10: Criminal Background Check Laws' Requirements for Prospective Ridesourcing Drivers, by State, as of December 2023

State	Is a criminal background check required?[a]	Which parties are required to conduct the background check?	What scopes are required for the background check?	Does the background check include a fingerprint search?	Does the background check include a sex offender search, and, if so, for what scope(s)?
Alabama	Yes	Company/third party on company's behalf	Local and national	No	Yes – national
Alaska	Yes	Company/third party on company's behalf	Local and national	No	Yes – national
Arizona	Yes	Company/third party on company's behalf	Local and national	No	Yes – national
Arkansas	Yes	Company/third party on company's behalf	State and national	No	Yes – national
California	Yes	Company/third party on company's behalf	Local and national	No	Yes – national
Colorado[b]	Yes	Option - state officials or third party	If conducted by state officials – state and national. If conducted by third party – national	If conducted by state officials – yes. If conducted by third party – no	If conducted by state officials – yes, state and national. If conducted by third party - yes, national
Connecticut[c]	Yes	Company/third party on company's behalf	If conducting a fingerprint-based search – state and national. If conducting a name-based search – local, state, and national	Fingerprint or other method of identification	If conducting a name-based search – yes, state and national. If conducting a fingerprint-based search – no
Delaware	Yes	Company/third party on company's behalf	Local and national	No	Yes – national
District of Columbia	Yes	Third party on company's behalf	Local and national	No	Yes – national
Florida	Yes	Company/third party on company's behalf	Local and national	No	Yes – national

State	Is a criminal background check required?[a]	Which parties are required to conduct the background check?	What scopes are required for the background check?	Does the background check include a fingerprint search?	Does the background check include a sex offender search, and, if so, for what scope(s)?
Georgia[d]	Yes	Option – state officials or company/third party on company's behalf	If conducted by state officials – state and national If conducted by company/third party on company's behalf – local and national	If conducted by state officials – yes If conducted by company/third party on company's behalf – no	If conducted by state officials – no If conducted by company/third party on company's behalf – yes, national
Hawaii	Yes	Company	Local and national	No	Yes – national
Idaho	Yes	Company/third party on company's behalf	Local and national	No	Yes – national
Illinois	Yes	Company/third party on company's behalf	Local and national	No	Yes – national
Indiana	Yes	Company/third party on company's behalf	Local and national	No	Yes – national
Iowa	Yes	Company/third party on company's behalf	Local and national	No	Yes – national
Kansas[e]	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Kentucky[f]	Yes	Company via approved third party	National	No	No
Louisiana	Yes	Company/third party	Local and national	No	Yes – national
Maine	Yes	Company/third party on company's behalf	Local and national	No	Yes – state and national
Maryland	Yes	Third party	National	No	Yes – state and national
Massachusetts[g]	Yes	Company and state officials	State and national	No	Yes – state and national
Michigan	Yes	Company/third party on company's behalf	Local and national	No	Yes – national
Minnesota	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Mississippi	Yes	Company/third party on company's behalf	Local and national	No	Yes – national
Missouri	Yes	Company/third party on company's behalf	Local and national	No	Yes – national
Montana	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Nebraska	Yes	Unspecified[h]	National	No	No
Nevada	Yes	Company/third party on company's behalf	National	No	Yes – national
New Hampshire	Yes	Company/third party on company's behalf	Local and national	No	Yes – national

State	Is a criminal background check required?[a]	Which parties are required to conduct the background check?	What scopes are required for the background check?	Does the background check include a fingerprint search?	Does the background check include a sex offender search, and, if so, for what scope(s)?
New Jersey[i]	Yes	Company/third party on company's behalf, state officials if company does not have approved process	If conducted by company – national If conducted by state officials – state and national	If conducted by company – no If conducted by state officials – yes	If conducted by company – yes, national If conducted by state officials – no
New Mexico	Yes	Unspecified[j]	Local and national	No	Yes – national
New York[k]	Yes	Company/third party on company's behalf	Unspecified	No	Yes – state and national
North Carolina	Yes	Company/third party on company's behalf	Local and national	No	Yes – national
North Dakota	Yes	Company/third party on company's behalf	Local and national	No	Yes – national
Ohio	Yes	Company	National	No	Yes – national
Oklahoma	Yes	Company/third party on company's behalf	Local and national	No	Yes – national
Oregon	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Pennsylvania	Yes	Company/third party on company's behalf	Local and national	No	Yes – national
Rhode Island	Yes	Company/third party on company's behalf	Local and national	No	Yes – national
South Carolina	Yes	Company/third party on company's behalf	Local and national	No	Yes – national
South Dakota	Yes	Company/third party on company's behalf	Local and national	No	Yes – national
Tennessee	Yes	Company/third party on company's behalf	Local and national	No	Yes – national
Texas	Yes	Unspecified[l]	Local, state, and national	No	Yes – national
Utah[m]	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Vermont	Yes	Third party on company's behalf	Local, state, and national	No	Yes – state and national
Virginia	Yes	Third party on company's behalf	National	No	Yes – national
Washington	Yes	Company/third party on company's behalf	Local and national	No	Yes – national
West Virginia	Yes	Company/third party on company's behalf	Local and national	No	Yes – national
Wisconsin	Yes	Company/third party on company's behalf	Local and national	No	Yes – national

State	Is a criminal background check required?[a]	Which parties are required to conduct the background check?	What scopes are required for the background check?	Does the background check include a fingerprint search?	Does the background check include a sex offender search, and, if so, for what scope(s)?
Wyoming	Yes	Company/third party on company's behalf	Local and national	No	Yes – national

Source: GAO analysis of states' applicable statutes and regulations. | GAO-24-107093

Notes:

The table summarizes legal requirements as explicitly outlined in the text of each state's applicable statutes and regulations based on a core set of search terms. Therefore, there may be requirements that our search did not find. It also does not capture state policies and practices outside of statutes and regulations that may require a background check in some or all circumstances. We conducted our legal review of state laws with background check requirements for ridesourcing drivers from June 2023 through December 2023.

One vehicle for states to conduct Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) criminal history record fingerprint checks for noncriminal justice purposes is through provisions contained in the Departments of State, Justice, and Commerce, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Appropriation Act, 1973. Pub. L. No. 92-544, 86 Stat. 1109. Pursuant to this Act, the FBI is authorized to use funds for the exchange of identification records, including criminal history record information, with officials of state and local governments for purposes of employment and licensing if this is authorized by state statute and approved by the Attorney General, which has been delegated to the FBI. According to the FBI, it is incumbent upon states to submit legislation that contains a reference to an FBI fingerprint-based background check to the FBI for review so that the agency can ensure it complies with Public Law 92-544. For ridesourcing drivers, Colorado, Connecticut, Georgia, and New Jersey have enacted statutes that reference a fingerprint-based background check using FBI criminal history records for some background checks. Based on the statutes we provided the FBI for these states, it has approved the Colorado statute to allow the state to access FBI criminal history records for the purpose of ridesourcing driver licensing.

[a]States that do not explicitly require background checks for all drivers are considered null or not applicable (N/A) for subsequent categories.

[b]Before the company permits an individual to act as a driver, the individual must obtain a background check. Colorado provides two, mutually exclusive paths for satisfying its background check requirement. An individual who wants to be a driver can either pursue a fingerprint-based check via state officials or acquire a privately administered criminal history check. The scopes and requirements for these checks vary. See Colo. Rev. Stat. § 40-10.1-605.

[c]Connecticut law requires companies to obtain a background check and provides the option to conduct a background check one of two ways—via a name-based check or by submitting fingerprints to the State Bureau of Investigation and the FBI. Conn. Gen. Stat. § 13b-119(a)(2). However, the statute allows the check to consist of fingerprinting or "any other method of positive identification." Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-17a(a). State law is unclear if a sex offender check is required in the case of performing a fingerprint-based check.

[d]Georgia provides two, mutually exclusive paths for satisfying its background check requirement and requires companies to ensure an individual has met these requirements. An individual who wants to be a driver can either pursue a for-hire license endorsement, which requires a fingerprint-based check, or acquire a privately administered criminal history check, which is conducted by the ridesourcing company. Ga. Code §§ 40-1-193(c)(2); 40-5-39(a)-(b), (e)(1). State law is unclear if a sex offender check is required in the case of performing a fingerprint-based check.

[e]Although Kansas law does not explicitly require a background check for ridesourcing drivers, it does list circumstances, including when an individual has been convicted of certain crimes and is registered on a sex offender registry, that would prohibit an individual from becoming a ridesourcing driver. Kan. Stat. § 8-2720(a).

[f]The background check must be completed using an entity from an approved list issued by the state. Ky. Rev. Stat. § 281.6301(6)(c).

[g]Massachusetts requires a two-part background check. Mass. Gen. Laws ch. 159A 1/2, § 4(c). The ridesourcing company must conduct a national background check, including a check of the national sex offender database. 200 Mass. Code Regs. § 274.06(2)(a). Additionally, the ridesourcing company must provide driver information to state officials, who will use that information to conduct state-level criminal and sex offender searches. 200 Mass. Code Regs. § 274.06(1)(c), (3)(a).

[h]Nebraska law requires the ridesourcing company to "obtain and review a national criminal history record information check," but the statute does not specify which party is required to conduct the background check. Neb. Rev. Stat. § 75-326.

[i]New Jersey requires ridesourcing companies to submit their background check processes to the state for approval. N.J. Rev. Stat. § 39:5H-17(a). If the ridesourcing company's process has not been approved, as an alternative, the driver may submit fingerprints for a check by the state. N.J. Rev. Stat. § 39:5H-17(e). If the state conducts this check, state law is not clear if the process involves a sex offender check.

[j]New Mexico law requires the ridesourcing company to "obtain a local and national criminal background check for the prospective driver," but the statute does not specify which party is required to conduct the background check. N.M. Stat. § 65-7-12.

[k]New York requires all ridesourcing company drivers to be subject to a background check, but neither state statute nor regulation clarify the scope required. See N.Y. Veh. & Traf. Law § 1699(1); N.Y. Comp. Codes R. & Regs. tit. 15, § 80.7(a).

[l]Texas law requires the ridesourcing company to "conduct, or cause to be conducted, a local, state, and national criminal background check for the individual," but the statute does not specify which party is required to conduct the background check. Tex. Occ. Code § 2402.107.

[m]Utah law requires drivers to consent to a criminal background check but does not affirmatively require background checks to be conducted. Utah Code § 13-51-107(1)(b).

Appendix V: State Criminal Background Check Laws' Requirements for Prospective Taxi Drivers

We conducted a systematic search of statutes and regulations in 50 states and the District of Columbia (states) to understand and describe state laws' requirements for background checks for prospective taxi drivers. Table 11 presents the results of this search by describing background check laws' requirements for taxi drivers by state. Although fewer states have statewide background check laws for taxi drivers compared with ridesourcing drivers, they may be regulated at the local level. This table does not capture any locality-specific laws for taxi drivers in the 50 states and Washington, D.C.

Table 11: Criminal Background Check Laws' Requirements for Prospective Taxi Drivers, by State, as of April 2024

State	Is a criminal background check required?[a]	Which parties are required to conduct the background check?	What scopes are required for the background check?	Does the background check include a fingerprint search?	Does the background check include a sex offender search, and, if so, for what scope(s)?
Alabama	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Alaska	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Arizona	Yes	Unspecified	Unspecified	No	No
Arkansas	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
California[b]	Yes	Unspecified	Unspecified	Yes	No
Colorado	Yes	Option - local officials or third party	State and national	Yes	No
Connecticut	Yes	State officials	State and national	Fingerprint or other method of identification[c]	No
Delaware	Yes	Company provides check conducted by state and federal officials	State and national	Yes	No
District of Columbia[d]	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Florida	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Georgia[e]	Yes	Option - state officials or company/third party on company's behalf	If conducted by state officials – state and national. If conducted by company/third party on company's behalf – local and national	If conducted by state officials - yes. If conducted by company/third party on company's behalf - no	If conducted by state officials - no. If conducted by company/third party on company's behalf – yes, national
Hawaii	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Idaho	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Illinois	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

State	Is a criminal background check required?[a]	Which parties are required to conduct the background check?	What scopes are required for the background check?	Does the background check include a fingerprint search?	Does the background check include a sex offender search, and, if so, for what scope(s)?
Indiana	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Iowa	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Kansas	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Kentucky	Yes	Third party[f]	National	No	No
Louisiana	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Maine	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Maryland	Yes	State officials and third party[g]	State and national	Yes	Yes – national[h]
Massachusetts	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Michigan	Yes	Company/third party on company's behalf	Local and national	No	Yes – national
Minnesota	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Mississippi	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Missouri	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Montana	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Nebraska[i]	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Nevada[j]	Yes	State officials	National	Yes	No
New Hampshire	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
New Jersey	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
New Mexico	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
New York	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
North Carolina	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
North Dakota	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Ohio	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Oklahoma	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Oregon	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Pennsylvania	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Rhode Island[k]	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
South Carolina	Yes	Company	State	No	No
South Dakota	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Tennessee	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Texas	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Utah	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Vermont	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

State	Is a criminal background check required?[a]	Which parties are required to conduct the background check?	What scopes are required for the background check?	Does the background check include a fingerprint search?	Does the background check include a sex offender search, and, if so, for what scope(s)?
Virginia	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Washington	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
West Virginia	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Wisconsin	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Wyoming	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: GAO analysis of states' applicable statutes and regulations. | GAO-24-107093

Notes:

The table summarizes legal requirements as explicitly outlined in the text of each state's applicable statutes and regulations based on a core set of search terms. Therefore, there may be requirements that our search did not find. It also does not capture state policies and practices outside of statutes and regulations that may require a background check in some or all circumstances. We conducted our legal review of state laws with background check requirements for taxi drivers from January 2024 through April 2024.

One vehicle for states to conduct Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) criminal history record fingerprint checks for noncriminal justice purposes is through provisions contained in the Departments of State, Justice, and Commerce, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Appropriation Act, 1973. Pub. L. No. 92-544, 86 Stat. 1109. Pursuant to this Act, the FBI is authorized to use funds for the exchange of identification records, including criminal history record information, with officials of state and local governments for purposes of employment and licensing if this is authorized by state statute and approved by the Attorney General, which has been delegated to the FBI. According to the FBI, it is incumbent upon states to submit legislation that contains a reference to an FBI fingerprint-based background check to the FBI for review so that the agency can ensure it complies with Public Law 92-544. For taxi drivers, Colorado, Connecticut, Georgia, Maryland, and Nevada have enacted statutes and Delaware has enacted regulations that reference a fingerprint-based background check using FBI criminal history records for some or all background checks. Based on the statutes we provided to the FBI for these states, it has approved state statutes for Colorado, Connecticut, Georgia, Maryland, and Nevada to allow these states to access FBI criminal history records for the purpose of taxi driver licensing.

[a]States that do not explicitly require background checks for all drivers are considered null or not applicable (N/A) for subsequent categories.

[b]California requires that every city or county in which a taxi company is located must adopt an ordinance or resolution that requires taxi companies to provide for a fingerprint-based background check for taxi drivers. Cal. Gov't Code § 53075.5(h)(7).

[c]The check may consist of fingerprinting or "any other method of positive identification required by the State Police Bureau of Identification." Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-17a(a).

[d]The District of Columbia requires taxi drivers to submit a fingerprint-based background check as part of their application to renew their license to operate a public vehicle for hire. D.C. Mun. Regs. tit. 31, § 1014.2.

[e]Georgia provides two, mutually exclusive paths for satisfying its background check requirement and requires companies to ensure an individual has met these requirements. An individual who wants to be a driver can either pursue a for-hire license endorsement, which requires a fingerprint-based check, or acquire a privately administered criminal history check, which is conducted by the taxi company. Ga. Code § 40-5-39(a)-(b), (e)(1). State law is unclear if a sex offender check is required in the case of performing a fingerprint check.

[f]The criminal background check must be completed using an entity from an approved list issued by the state. Ky. Rev. Stat. § 281.6301(6)(c).

[g]In Maryland, an applicant for a taxi license is responsible for submitting the results of a national background check conducted by a third party for a temporary driver's license, as well as a supplemental fingerprint-based state background check conducted by state officials within 30 days of the issuance of a temporary license. Md. Code, Pub. Util. §§ 10-104(a)(1)(v), (b)(1), 10-104.1(b)(2)(i), (c). A taxi company may submit the third-party background check results on the applicant's behalf. Md. Code, Pub. Util. § 10-104.1(f). Additionally, Maryland "may require" an applicant to obtain a national fingerprint-based criminal history records check. Md. Code, Pub. Util. § 10-104(b)(6).

[h]Although Maryland requires the background check to include both "a search of the Sex Offender Registry" and "a search of the U.S. Department of Justice's National Sex Offender Public Website," it is unclear whether the "Sex Offender Registry" is a state registry. Md. Code, Pub. Util. § 10-104.1(b)(2)(i)(2)(B)-(C).

[i]Although Nebraska requires each operator of a motor vehicle subject to the Nebraska Public Service Commission's jurisdiction to be subject to a criminal background check, it is unclear whether this provision applies to taxi drivers statewide. 291 Neb. Admin. Code § 3-005.03.

[j]Two state agencies in Nevada have oversight of taxis: the Nevada Transportation Authority and the Nevada Taxicab Authority. The Nevada Transportation Authority has jurisdiction over taxis in counties with a population of less than 700,000, and the Nevada Taxicab Authority has jurisdiction over taxis in counties with a population of 700,000 or more and any other county that enacts an ordinance granting the Taxicab Authority jurisdiction. Nev. Rev. Stat. § 706.881. The laws of both authorities have criminal background check requirements for prospective taxi drivers that "[r]equire the applicant to submit a complete set of [their] fingerprints, which the [relevant authority] [shall] forward to the Central Repository for Nevada Records of Criminal History for submission to the Federal Bureau of Investigation to ascertain whether the applicant has a criminal record and the nature of any such record, and [shall] further investigate the applicant's background." Nev. Rev. Stat. §§ 706.462, 706.8841.

[k]Rhode Island requires taxi drivers to submit to the state a "record of all criminal convictions obtained from the Bureau of Criminal identification of the Department of the Attorney General." 815-50 R.I. Code R. § 2.8.

Appendix VI: Locality-Specific Criminal Background Check Laws' Requirements for Prospective Ridesourcing and Taxi Drivers

Ridesourcing and taxi services may be regulated by states or localities. We conducted a systematic search of laws in five selected localities to understand and describe the types of locality-specific requirements for background checks for prospective ridesourcing and taxi drivers. Table 12 presents the results of this search for prospective ridesourcing drivers, and table 13 presents the results of this search for prospective taxi drivers.

Table 12: Locality-Specific Criminal Background Check Laws' Requirements for Prospective Ridesourcing Drivers, by Selected Locality, as of March 2024

Locality	Is a criminal background check required?[a]	Which parties are required to conduct the background check?	What scopes are required for the background check?	Does the background check include a fingerprint search?	Does the background check include a sex offender search, and, if so, for what scope(s)?
Chicago	Yes	Company/third party on company's behalf	Local and national	Fingerprint or nonbiometric based[b]	Yes - national
Los Angeles[c]	No locality requirements other than statewide requirements	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
New York City	Yes	State officials	State	Yes	No
Philadelphia[d]	No locality requirements other than statewide requirements	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Portland, OR	Yes	Third party	Local and national	No	Yes - national

Source: GAO analysis of selected localities' applicable codes and regulations. | GAO-24-107093

Note: The table summarizes legal requirements as explicitly outlined in the text of each locality's applicable codes based on a core set of search terms. Therefore, there may be requirements that our search did not find. It also does not capture other locality policies and practices that may require a background check in some or all circumstances. We conducted our legal review of local laws with background check requirements for ridesourcing drivers from February 2024 through March 2024.

[a]Localities that do not have locality-specific background check requirements for drivers are considered null or not applicable (N/A) for subsequent categories.

[b]The criminal background check must be "fingerprint based or non-biometric based." Chicago Mun. Code § 9-104-010.

[c]Although there are no Los Angeles-specific background check requirements for prospective ridesourcing drivers, California does have a statewide background check requirement. See Cal. Pub. Util. Code § 5445.2.

[d]Although there are no Philadelphia-specific background check requirements for prospective ridesourcing drivers, Pennsylvania does have a statewide background check requirement. See 53 Pa. Cons. Stat. § 57A12.

Table 13: Locality-Specific Criminal Background Check Laws' Requirements for Prospective Taxi Drivers, by Selected Locality, as of March 2024

Locality	Is a criminal background check required?	Which parties are required to conduct the background check?	What scopes are required for the background check?	Does the background check include a fingerprint search?	Does the background check include a sex offender search, and, if so, for what scope(s)?
Chicago	Yes	Unspecified	Local and national	Fingerprint or nonbiometric based[a]	Yes - national
Los Angeles	Yes	Unspecified	Unspecified	Yes	No
New York City	Yes	State officials	State	Yes	No
Philadelphia	Yes	Company/third party on company's behalf	Unspecified	No	No
Portland, OR	Yes	Third party	Local and national	No	Yes - national

Source: GAO analysis of selected localities' applicable codes and regulations. | GAO-24-107093

Note: The table summarizes legal requirements as explicitly outlined in the text of each locality's applicable codes, with one limited exception for Los Angeles. The table summarizes legal requirements as explicitly outlined in the text of the Taxicab Rules and Regulations of the Board of Taxicab Commissioners for the City of Los Angeles. Otherwise, this table does not capture other locality policies and practices that may require a background check in some or all circumstances. We conducted our legal review of local laws with background check requirements for taxi drivers from February 2024 through March 2024. We used a core set of search terms to identify legal requirements. Therefore, there may be requirements that our search did not find.

[a]The criminal background check must be "fingerprint based or non-biometric based." Chicago Mun. Code § 9-104-010.

Appendix VII: Intercept Survey Instrument and Survey Results

To describe in-application (app) and in-vehicle safety features, including passenger awareness and use of safety features, we conducted a nongeneralizable, public intercept survey of ridesourcing and taxi passengers.[1]

We conducted the survey in four locations—Washington, D.C.; Portland, Oregon; Bloomington–Normal, Illinois; and Chicago, Illinois—in August and October 2023. Within each location, we chose specific sites to administer the survey based on the number of expected for-hire vehicle users, such as airports, college campuses, and commercial areas. Team members administering the survey (surveyors) asked passersby to complete the survey. Surveyors delivered the questions orally and also allowed respondents to read the questions as they were being delivered. The surveyor then recorded responses in real time on paper surveys. See appendix I for more information on the methodology for the intercept survey.

Survey Instrument

1. Have you ridden in either a rideshare (e.g., Uber or Lyft) or taxi in the past year?

    a. Yes -> Go to Question 2

    b. No -> End survey

2. Did you use rideshares or taxis more in the past year?

    a. Rideshares

    b. Taxis

    c. [if answer to Q2 is Rideshares] Have you taken a taxi over the past year?

        i. Yes

        ii. No

For the rest of the questions, please respond based on your use of that service.

3. How often did you use this service in the past year?

    a. 1-5 times

    b. 6-10 times

---

[1]"Awareness" of a safety features includes both respondents who had used the safety feature and those who had not used the feature but said they knew it was available to them.

c. 11-20 times

d. More than 20 times

4. (If Q2 answer is taxi) Have you used an app to book your taxi in the
last year?

a. Yes -> Ask all questions

b. No -> Skip questions 5 and 7

5. (Rideshare and taxi with app only) The following is information that
may be available for your use when arranging a ride or identifying a
vehicle.

	Did you use this information in any of your trips over the past year?	**(If yes) When arranging a ride, did you use this information always, frequently, sometimes, or rarely?**	**(If no) Was this information available to you?**	**(If yes or no) When thinking about your safety, how important would you say this information is?**
License plate number to identify vehicle	☐ Yes ☐ No	☐ Always ☐ Frequently ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know	☐ Very important ☐ Somewhat important ☐ Not important
Driver identification (name and/or picture)	☐ Yes ☐ No	☐ Always ☐ Frequently ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know	☐ Very important ☐ Somewhat important ☐ Not important
Verification Code (via pin or other) to match rider and driver	☐Yes ☐No	☐ Always ☐ Frequently ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know	☐ Very important ☐ Somewhat important ☐ Not important
Driver ratings	☐ Yes ☐ No	☐ Always ☐ Frequently ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know	☐ Very important ☐ Somewhat important ☐ Not important

6. (All respondents) The following are features that may be present in the vehicle:

	Have you noticed this feature in any of your trips over the past year?	When thinking about your safety, how important would you say this feature is?
Company decal or logo on the outside of the vehicle	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know	☐ Very important ☐ Somewhat important ☐ Not important
Partition between front/back seat	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know	☐ Very important ☐ Somewhat important ☐ Not important
Video recording device (dash cam)	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know	☐ Very important ☐ Somewhat important ☐ Not important

7. (Rideshare and taxi with app only) The following are features that may be available in the app.

	Was this feature available in the app for any of your trips over the past year?	(If yes) Did you use this feature in the past year?	When thinking about your safety, how important would you say this feature is?
Sharing your location with others using the app	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know	☐ Yes ☐ No	☐ Very important ☐ Somewhat important ☐ Not important
Emergency call button	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know	☐ Yes ☐ No	☐ Very important ☐ Somewhat important ☐ Not important
Reporting a driver	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know	☐ Yes ☐ No	☐ Very important ☐ Somewhat important ☐ Not important

8. What is your age?
   a. 18-34
   b. 35-54
   c. 55+

9. How do you identify?
   a. Male

b. Non-binary

c. Female

d. Prefer to self-describe:

Survey Results

We approached 1,534 individuals to participate in the survey. We received 1,158 refusals and initiated the survey with 373 people. We first asked people if they had used these services in the past year and only continued the survey with those who responded Yes to this question. Overall, 304 people responded that they had used ridesourcing or taxi services in the past year, so we continued the survey with these 304 respondents to ask about 10 in-app and in-vehicle safety features. See table 14 for responses to our questions on use of ridesourcing and taxi services over the past year.

Table 14: Survey Respondents' Use of Rideshare and Taxi Services in the Past Year

Question	Response	Count (percentage)
Have you ridden in either a rideshare (e.g., Uber or Lyft) or taxi in the past year?	No	69 (19%)
	Yes	304 (82)
	Total	**373**
Did you use rideshares or taxis more in the past year?	Rideshares	285 (94%)
	Taxis	19 (6)
	Total	**304**
Have you taken a taxi over the past year?[a]	Yes	33 (20%)
	No	132 (80)
	Total	**165**
How often did you use this service in the past year?	1-5 times	119 (39%)
	6-10 times	66 (22)
	11-20 times	47 (16)
	More than 20 times	70 (23)
	Total	**302**
Have you used an application (app) to book your taxi in the last year?	Yes	15 (29%)
	No	37 (71)
	Total	**52**

Source: GAO analysis of survey data. | GAO-24-107093

Note: In August and October 2023, we conducted a nongeneralizable intercept survey of 304 people who had used ridesourcing or taxi services in the past year. The percentages may not add to 100. The total number of respondents for each question may change, as some respondents skipped, or did not answer, certain questions.

[a]The total reflects the number of respondents who answered this question. We included this question after administering the survey in the first location to gather more responses from users of taxi

services. We asked this question of respondents that said they had used ridesourcing services more in the previous year but indicated that they also used taxi services and were comfortable answering the survey regarding their experience with taxi services.

For those respondents who used an app for arranging a ridesourcing or taxi trip, we asked about use of pretrip and in-trip app features. We calculated awareness of pretrip in-app features by including respondents who had either used the feature or did not use but had noticed that the feature was available to them. Of the 304 respondents, 267 had used an app to arrange a ride in the last year, and 37 had not. Tables 15 to 17 show the awareness, use, frequency of use, and importance of selected in-app and in-vehicle features for these respondents.

Table 15: Survey Respondents' Awareness and Use of Safety Features

| In-application (app) feature | Aware of | | | Not aware of/unsure |
| | Used | Did not use | Total count | |
	Count (percentage)			
Pretrip				
Driver ratings	165 (67%)	80 (33%)	**245**	22
License plate number	207 (85)	37 (15)	**244**	23
Driver name and picture	222 (86)	37 (14)	**259**	8
Verification code	58 (68)	27 (32)	**85**	182
Other				
Emergency call button	2 (3)	65 (97)	**67**	200
Location sharing	106 (67)	53 (33)	**159**	108
Reporting a driver	26 (13)	175 (87)	**201**	66

In-vehicle feature	Aware of (percentage)	Not aware of (percentage)	Unsure (percentage)
Vehicle markings and decals	252 (83%)	48 (16%)	4 (1%)
Partition	137 (45)	156 (51)	11 (4)
Security camera	153 (50)	129 (42)	22 (7)

Source: GAO analysis of survey data. | GAO-24-107093

Note: In August and October 2023, we conducted a nongeneralizable intercept survey of 304 people who had used ridesourcing or taxi services in the past year. There were 267 total respondents for questions about pretrip in-app and other in-app features, and 304 total respondents for questions about in-vehicle features. "Awareness" of pretrip in-app features includes both those who had used the feature and those who had not used the feature but said they knew it was available to them. The percentages may not add to 100. The total number of respondents reflects the total number of respondents that reported being aware of or noticing that feature in the past year. Totals do not include skipped or unanswered questions.

Table 16: Survey Respondents' Frequency of Use of Safety Features

	Frequency of use				
	Always	**Frequently**	**Sometimes**	**Rarely**	**Total**
Pretrip in-app feature	Count (percentage)				
Driver ratings	86 (52%)	41 (25%)	32 (19%)	6 (4%)	**165**
License plate number	148 (72)	34 (17)	20 (10)	4 (2)	**206**
Driver name and picture	151 (68)	44 (20)	24 (11)	2 (1)	**221**
Verification code	23 (40)	10 (17)	17 (29)	8 (14)	**58**

Source: GAO analysis of survey data. | GAO-24-107093

Note: In August and October 2023, we conducted a nongeneralizable intercept survey of 304 people who had used ridesourcing or taxi services in the past year. There were 267 total respondents for questions about pretrip in-app features. The percentages may not add to 100. Totals do not include skipped or unanswered questions.

Table 17: Survey Respondents' Importance of Safety Features

	Very important	**Somewhat important**	**Not important**	**Total**
In-application (app) feature	Count (percentage)			
Pretrip				
Driver ratings	103 (39%)	120 (46%)	41 (16%)	**264**
License plate number	213 (80)	38 (14)	15 (6)	**266**
Driver name and picture	207 (78)	49 (18)	10 (4)	**266**
Verification code	106 (40)	112 (43)	45 (17)	**263**
Other				
Emergency call button	182 (68)	57 (21)	28 (11)	**267**
Location sharing	152 (57)	83 (31)	32 (12)	**267**
Reporting a driver	207 (78)	57 (21)	3 (1)	**267**
In-vehicle feature				
Vehicle markings and decals	158 (52%)	109 (36%)	36 (12%)	**303**
Partition	40 (13)	118 (39)	146 (48)	**304**
Security camera	111 (37)	137 (45)	55 (18)	**303**

Source: GAO analysis of survey data. | GAO-24-107093

Note: In August and October 2023, we conducted a nongeneralizable intercept survey of 304 people who had used ridesourcing or taxi services in the past year. There were 267 total respondents for questions about pretrip in-app and other in-app features, and 304 total respondents for questions about in-vehicle features. The percentages may not add to 100. The total number of respondents for each question may change, as some respondents skipped, or did not answer, certain questions.

We also analyzed how respondents rated the importance of selected pretrip in-app features for safety, based on whether or not they had used that feature (see fig. 8).

Figure 8: Importance of Pretrip In-Application Safety Features Based on Whether or Not Respondent Used Them
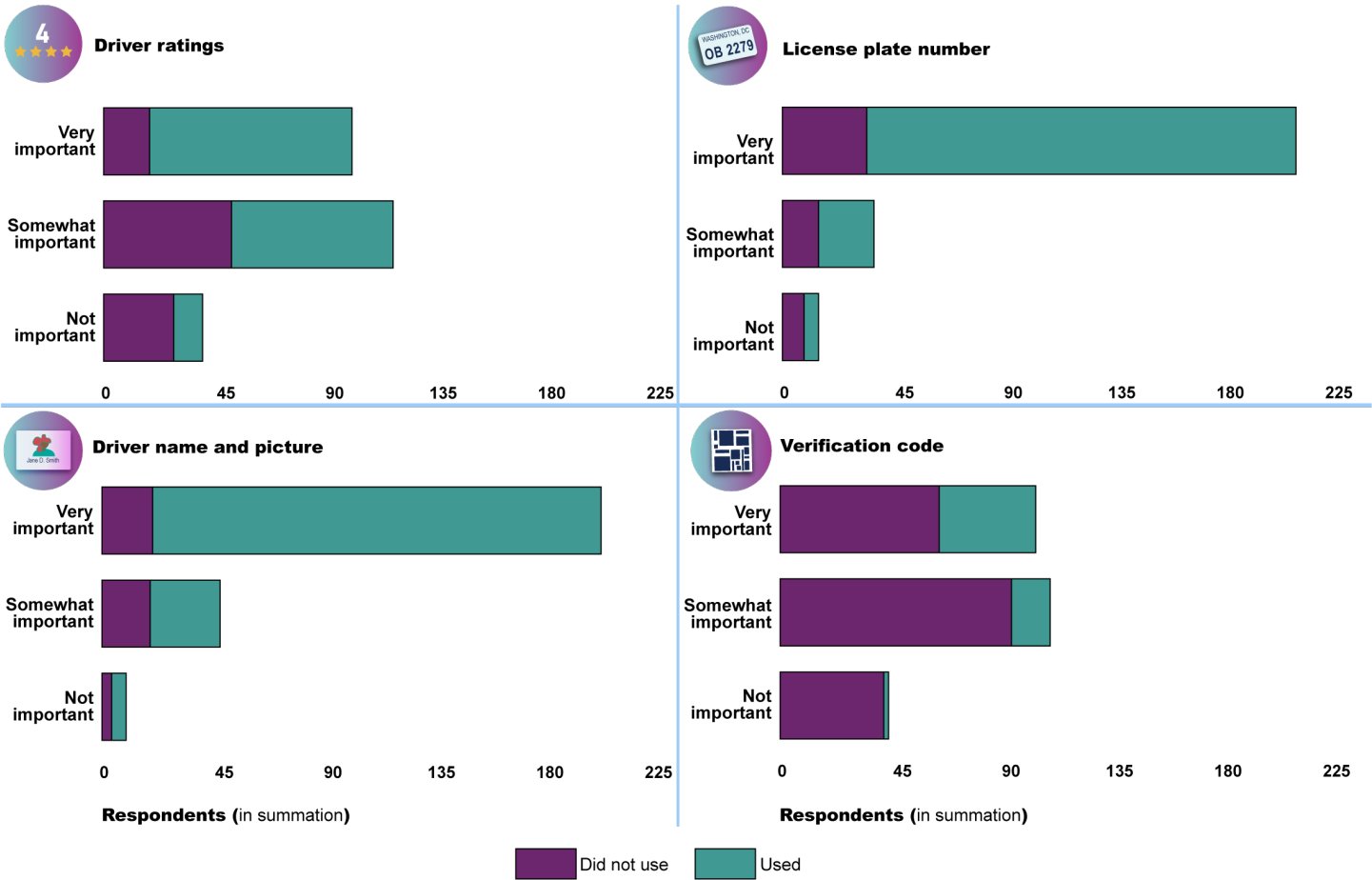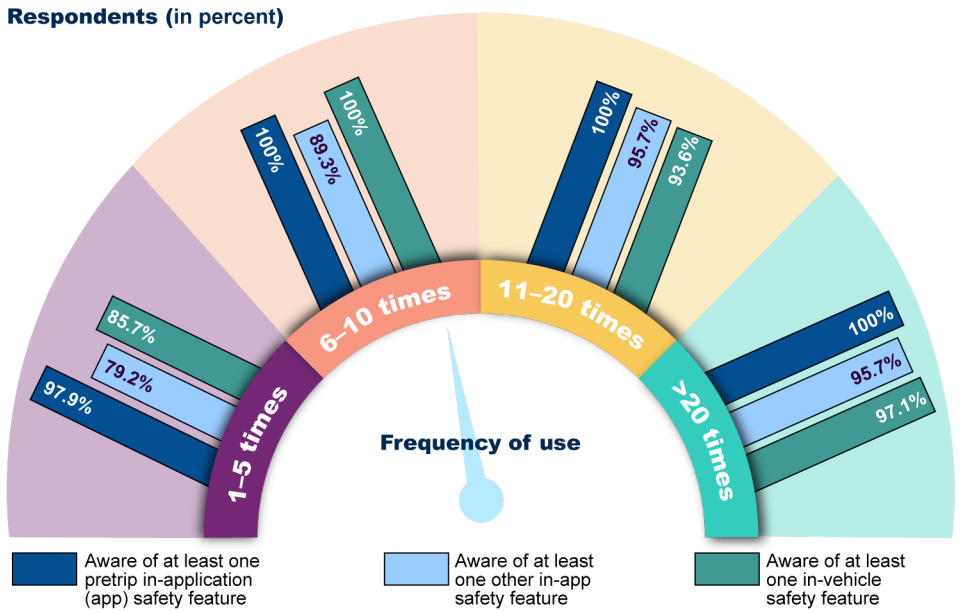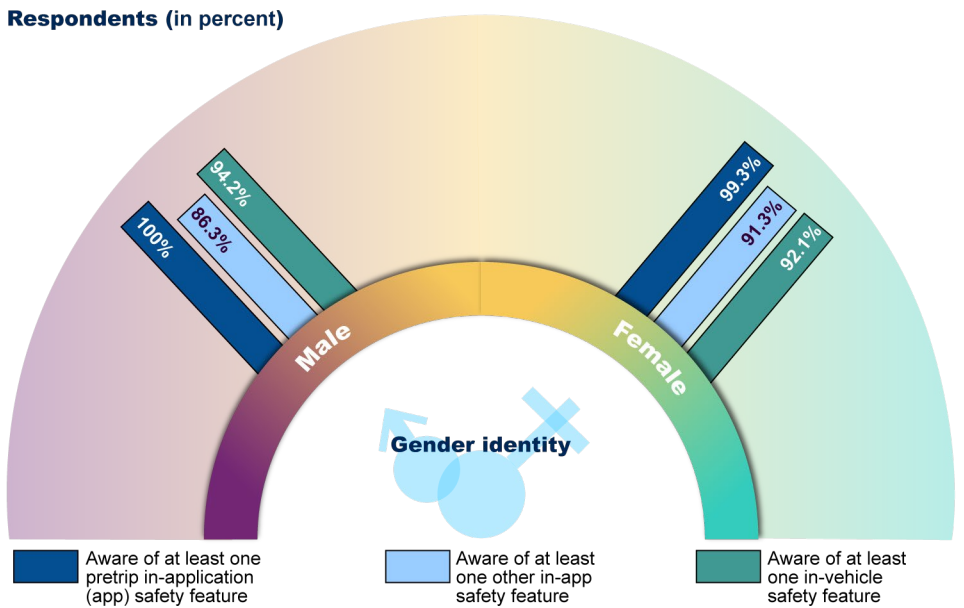

Source: GAO icons and analysis of survey data. | GAO-24-107093

Note: In August and October 2023, we conducted a nongeneralizable intercept survey of 304 people who had used ridesourcing or taxi services in the past year. There were 267 total respondents for questions about pretrip in-app features. The total number of respondents for each question may change, as some respondents skipped, or did not answer, certain questions.

We examined whether respondents were aware of at least one pretrip in-app feature, at least one other in-app feature, and at least one in-vehicle feature. We compared levels of self-reported awareness across several different demographic factors, as presented in figures 9 to 11.

**Figure 9: Percentage of Respondents Aware of at Least One Safety Feature Based
on Frequency of Use, by Type of Safety Feature**

Respondents (in percent)

Source: GAO analysis of survey data. | GAO-24-107093

Note: In August and October 2023, we conducted a nongeneralizable intercept survey of 304 people
who had used ridesourcing or taxi services in the past year. There were 267 total respondents for
questions about pretrip in-app features. "Awareness" of pretrip in-app features includes both those
who had used the feature and those who had not used the feature but said they knew it was available
to them.

Figure 10: Percentage of Respondents Aware of at Least One Safety Feature Based on Age, by Type of Safety Feature
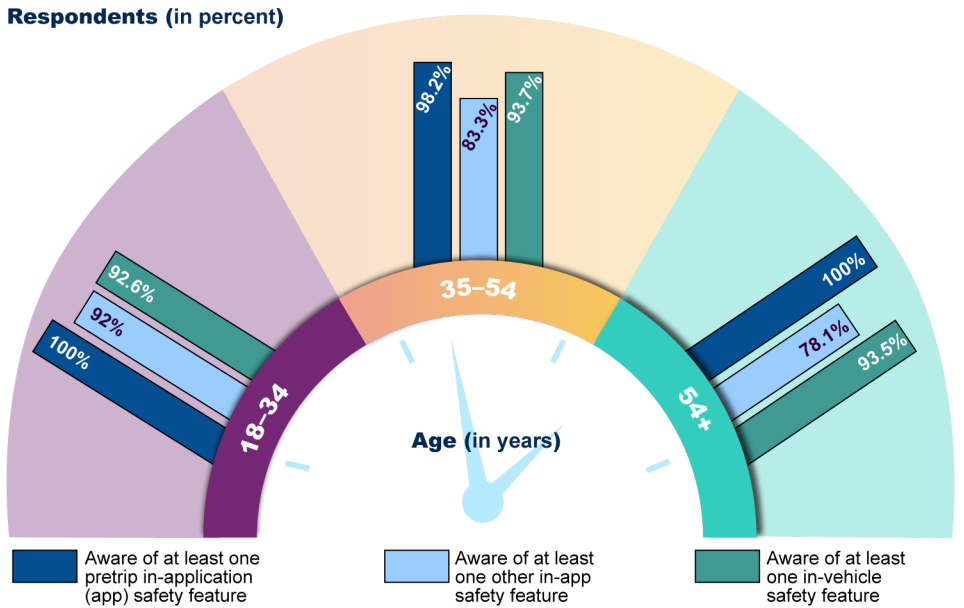
Respondents (in percent)

35–54
98.2%
83.3%
93.7%

18–34
92.6%
92%
100%

54+
100%
78.1%
93.5%

Age (in years)

■ Aware of at least one pretrip in-application (app) safety feature

■ Aware of at least one other in-app safety feature

■ Aware of at least one in-vehicle safety feature

Source: GAO analysis of survey data. | GAO-24-107093

Note: In August and October 2023, we conducted a nongeneralizable intercept survey of 304 people who had used ridesourcing or taxi services in the past year. There were 267 total respondents for questions about pretrip in-app features. "Awareness" of pretrip in-app features includes both those who had used the feature and those who had not used the feature but said they knew it was available to them.

Figure 11: Percentage of Respondents Aware of at Least One Safety Feature Based on Gender Identity, by Type of Safety Feature

Respondents (in percent)

Male: 100%, 86.3%, 94.2%
Female: 99.3%, 91.3%, 92.1%

Gender identity

- Aware of at least one pretrip in-application (app) safety feature
- Aware of at least one other in-app safety feature
- Aware of at least one in-vehicle safety feature

Source: GAO analysis of survey data. | GAO-24-107093

Note: In August and October 2023, we conducted a nongeneralizable intercept survey of 304 people who had used ridesourcing or taxi services in the past year. There were 267 total respondents for questions about pretrip in-app features. "Awareness" of pretrip in-app features includes both those who had used the feature and those who had not used the feature but said they knew it was available to them. This figure does not reflect all respondents, as we did not include respondents who answered using other gender identities with smaller category sizes.

Table 18 reflects the demographic information of survey respondents.

Table 18: Demographic Information of Survey Respondents

Question	Response	Count (percentage)
What is your age?	18-34	188 (63%)
	35-54	63 (21)
	55+	46 (16)
How do you identify?	Female	152 (51%)
	Male	139 (47)
	Nonbinary	7 (2)
	Prefer to self-describe	1 (<1)
Survey location	Bloomington – Normal (Illinois)	66 (22%)
	Chicago (Illinois)	56 (18)

Question	Response	Count (percentage)
	Portland (Oregon)	89 (29)
	Washington, D.C., metro area	93 (31)
	Total	304

Source: GAO analysis of survey data. | GAO-24-107093

Note: In August and October 2023, we conducted a nongeneralizable intercept survey of 304 people who had used ridesourcing or taxi services in the past year. The percentages may not add to 100. The total number of respondents for each question may differ, as some respondents skipped, or did not answer, certain questions.

Appendix VIII: GAO Contacts and Staff Acknowledgments

GAO Contacts

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Staff Acknowledgments

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