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Nashville taxi drivers face new requirements

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NASHVILLE, Tenn. – Islam Hussein moved to Nashville from Sudan about six years ago.

Wanting to go back to school, Hussein he decided to look into driving a taxi to make extra money.

It was when he inquired that he found out about the city's new course all new applicants must now complete.

"I got frustrated to tell you the truth," he said. "When I came in the beginning and they told me you are going to have to do this and it's going to take you this long."

Any new applicant that wants to drive a cab in Nashville now needs to not only complete but also pass a three-day course before they can get their permit.

Brian McQuiston is Director of the Transportation Licensing Commission.

"This is in response to a bunch of issues we've had in the past," he explained.

The Transportation Licensing Commission runs the course, along with the Tennessee Foreign Language Institute.

It is three days a month, seven hours each day and covers English skills, geography and basic customer service.

"Drivers have to know they are the face of Nashville for visitors in particular, as well as for residents," McQuiston continued.

No everyone passes the course, according to McQuiston.

He said, "The last class we had nine people in the program, seven of them passed. We've got 16 in this program."

Hussein passed the course Monday afternoon and got his permit.

Despite the time commitment, he said he believes the city made the right move by making all new drivers complete the course.

"I recommend, I suggest the other drivers just to come and take those classes because I'm quite sure they're going to benefit from those classes a lot," he said.



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