

## **Lyft ADA Violation – July 2024 Incident Communications**

### **Initial Email to Melina – July 31, 2024 at 12:36 AM**

Dear Melina:

This is a serious and unfounded accusation made against my service animal and me. The report that my service dog attacked a Lyft driver is categorically untrue.

For the record, the driver boldly forbid me to enter the vehicle with my service dog. As I opened the back door, the driver immediately displayed displeasure. I informed him that my dog was a service dog. The driver promptly and firmly said, “no.” At no point did my dog enter the vehicle; she remained on the curb outside the car. This can be corroborated by a witness, the restaurant owner, who observed the entire incident.

My dog is a large, slow moving dog. It is simply impossible for my dog to have attacked the driver from the curb. Given her size, (70 lbs) she could not have bypassed me, entered the backseat, and attacked the driver without my intervention. She simply does not move with that level of velocity. I have never even witnessed her growl.

The next driver who picked me up can attest to my dog’s calm and well-behaved demeanor throughout the ride. She did not exhibit any aggressive behavior; she was only panting slightly due to the heat and fatigue.

These allegations are deeply distressing. It is one matter for a driver to refuse service, but to fabricate a story about my service dog being aggressive is unacceptable. My service dog, Love, is gentle and kind, and in addition to being of service to me for PTSD, she works with children through my company, Mindology Fitness Kids. I am a doctor of clinical psychology and an associate psychology license holder in California. My dog is well-trained, professional, and continues to be of great service to me and my clients.

I am deeply saddened and disappointed by these false accusations. I believe the driver may be lying as his only course of defense. I will seek legal representation if this issue is not resolved to my satisfaction. All I initially sought was a credit, but it is clear this is more serious.

Sincerely,  
Dr. Troy Byer

### **Follow-Up to Renee – July 31, 2024 at 1:17 AM**

Hi Renee:

Below is the email I sent to Melina. I appreciate your assistance with this matter. It’s very unfortunate. Perhaps the driver was not aware of your service animal policy. The second driver also seemed unaware and showed me something on the app indicating he didn’t have to accept service animals. I thanked him for making an exception.

Nevertheless, I would hate to see anyone fired over refusing service, but making false accusations as a defense poses an entirely different concern.

Warmly,  
Dr. Troy Byer

### **Additional Follow-Up to Renee – July 31, 2024 at 3:29 PM**

Hi Renee:

The second driver who picked me up at 5:17 pm is named Asatar. He picked me up after the first driver refused service. Upon opening the door, he told me he doesn’t accept dogs, even service dogs. I was overheated, my phone was low, and I calmly but firmly stated it was against the law to refuse service. He said “no” and then “yes.”

He showed me data on his phone stating he doesn't accept dogs. I thanked him for the exception. He was very kind, smiled at my dog, and told me not to worry when I tried to clean the seat. He wished me a good evening.

The salient pattern is clear: some of your drivers are not grounded in ADA law or Lyft policy. I barely managed the situation due to the heat and stress. Others may not have the tools to handle these encounters.

Most people still think service dogs are only for the visually impaired. Your drivers seem to reflect that outdated belief.

Thank you for taking this seriously.

Warmly,

Dr. Troy Byer

### **Lyft Response from Rene – August 7, 2024 at 10:01 PM**

Hi Troy,

My name is Rene, from Lyft's Safety Department.

Thank you for your patience during our investigation.

The driver did not respond to our inquiry. We have deactivated the driver's account. Should the driver contact us, we will complete the investigation. You may follow up if you wish, but we will not reach out again regarding this incident.

Reports of this nature are taken very seriously.

Sincerely,

Rene

Lyft Support

### **Dr. Byer's Response – August 8, 2024 at 12:30 AM**

Which driver are you referring to?

Warmly,

Dr. Troy Byer

### **Lyft Final Update – August 9, 2024 at 7:41 PM**

Hi Troy,

This is Rene from Lyft's Safety Department.

We have contacted the driver and provided education on our Service Animal Policy. If there is another violation, they will be permanently deactivated.

You have not been charged, and I have issued a \$10 credit to your account for the inconvenience.

Thank you for being courteous and part of the Lyft community.

Sincerely,

Rene

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