

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

NOTICE OF PENALTIES INCURRED AND DUE FOR VIOLATIONS OF LAWS AND RULES

PENALTY ASSESSMENT: TE-161287
PENALTY AMOUNT: \$200

Tiger Express Shipping Corporation
dba Tiger Travel
2144 Westlake Ave N. #A
Seattle, WA 98109

The Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (Commission) believes that you have committed violations of Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 480-30-221 Vehicle and Driver Safety Requirements, which requires charter and excursion carriers to comply with Title 49 CFR Part 391 – Qualifications of Drivers.

Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 81.04.405 allows penalties of one hundred dollars for each violation of Title 49 CFR Part 391. In the case of an ongoing violation, every day's continuance is considered a separate and distinct violation.

On November 29, 2016, Commission Motor Carrier Investigator Wayne Gilbert conducted a routine destination check at the Blaine, WA border crossing of Tiger Express Shipping Corporation dba Tiger Travel (Tiger Travel or company) and documented the following violations of critical regulations:

- **Two violations of CFR 391.45(a) – Using a driver not medically examined and certified.** Tiger Travel allowed employee Zhigang Jiang (Peter Jiang) to drive on November 27 and 29 without having been medically examined and certified prior to driving.

The Commission considered the following factors in determining the appropriate penalties for these violations:

1. **How serious or harmful the violation is to the public.** The violations noted are serious and potentially harmful to the public. Companies that disregard requirements for medical examination and certification put the traveling public at risk. A potentially undocumented or undetected medical condition presents serious safety concerns.
2. **Whether the violation is intentional.** Considerations include:
 - Whether the company ignored Commission staff's previous technical assistance; and
 - Whether there is clear evidence through documentation or other means that shows the company knew of and failed to correct the violation.

In its initial application for charter and excursion authority, Tiger Travel acknowledged its responsibility to understand and comply with applicable motor carrier safety rules. Staff conducted a new entrant visit on February 2, 2015 and provided technical assistance with regard to safety regulations, including CFR Part 391.

On August 26, 2016, staff conducted a compliance review of Tiger Travel and provided additional technical assistance to the company. The company knew, or should have known, about these requirements.

3. **Whether the company self-reported the violation.** The company did not self-report these violations.
4. **Whether the company was cooperative and responsive.** The staff at Tiger Travel was helpful throughout the investigation. The company was responsive to the technical assistance provided.
5. **Whether the company promptly corrected the violations and remedied the impacts.** The Commission does not know if the company has corrected the violations. Peter Jiang is currently traveling in China and staff is unable to verify if he has a valid medical certificate at this time.
6. **The number of violations.** For a company this size, the number of critical violations is notable.
7. **The number of customers affected.** The company traveled 89,000 miles and reported \$259,755 in gross revenue for 2015. Due to the number of violations noted, these safety violations potentially affected a limited number of customers.
8. **The likelihood of recurrence.** The Commission does not know if the company is likely to repeat these violations.
9. **The company's past performance regarding compliance, violations, and penalties.** The company has received both a new entrant visit and a compliance review from staff. There have been no similar violations noted and no previous penalties assessed.
10. **The company's existing compliance program.** Tiger Travel does have a safety compliance program in place.
11. **The size of the company.** Tiger Travel is a small operation, with five vehicles and four drivers. The company traveled 89,000 miles and reported \$259,755 in gross revenue for 2015.

These are first-time violations, but the Commission's Enforcement Policy provides that some Commission requirements are so fundamental to safe operations that the Commission will issue

mandatory penalties for each occurrence of a first-time violation.¹ The Commission generally will assess penalties per type of violation, rather than per occurrence, for other first-time violations of critical regulations that do not meet the criteria for mandatory penalties. The Commission will assess penalties for any repeat violations of critical regulations found in future compliance investigations, including for each occurrence of a repeat violation.

The Commission has considered these factors and determined that it should penalize Tiger Travel \$200 for violations of WAC 480-30-221 Vehicle and Driver Safety Requirements, which adopts CFR Part 391, calculated as follows:

- Two violations of CFR 391.45(a) – Using a driver not medically examined and certified. The Commission assesses a penalty of \$100 for each of these critical violations, for a total of \$200.

This information, if proved at a hearing and not rebutted or explained, is sufficient to support the penalty assessment.

Your penalty is due and payable now. If you believe any or all of the violations did not occur, you may deny committing the violation(s) and contest the penalty assessment through evidence presented at a hearing or in writing. The Commission will grant a request for hearing only if material issues of law or fact concerning the violation(s) require consideration of evidence and resolution in a hearing. Any contest of the penalty assessment must include a written statement of the reasons supporting that contest. Failure to provide such a statement will result in denial of the contest.

If there is a reason for any or all of the violations that you believe should excuse you from the penalty, you may ask for mitigation (reduction) of this penalty through evidence presented at a hearing or in writing. The Commission will grant a request for hearing only if material issues of law or fact require consideration of evidence and resolution in a hearing. Any request for mitigation must include a written statement of the reasons supporting that request. Failure to provide such a statement will result in denial of the request. See RCW 81.04.405.

If you properly present your request for a hearing and the Commission grants that request, the Commission will review the evidence supporting your dispute of the violation(s) or application for mitigation in a Brief Adjudicative Proceeding before an administrative law judge. The administrative law judge will consider the evidence and will notify you of his or her decision.

You must act within 15 days after receiving this notice to do one of the following:

- Pay the amount due.
- Contest the occurrence of the violations.
- Request mitigation to contest the amount of the penalty.

¹ Docket A-120061 – Enforcement Policy of the Washington Utilities & Transportation Commission – Section V.

Please indicate your selection on the enclosed form and send it to the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission, Post Office Box 47250, Olympia, Washington 98504-7250, **within FIFTEEN (15) days** after you receive this notice.

If you do not act within 15 days, the Commission may take additional enforcement action, including but not necessarily limited to suspending or revoking your certificate to provide regulated service, assessing additional penalties, or referring this matter to the Office of the Attorney General for collection.

DATED at Olympia, Washington, and effective December 27, 2016.


GREGORY J. KOPTA
Administrative Law Judge

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
PENALTY ASSESSMENT TE-161287.

PLEASE NOTE: You must complete and sign this document, and send it to the Commission within 15 days after you receive the penalty assessment. Use additional paper if needed. I have read and understand RCW 9A.72.020 (printed below), which states that making false statements under oath is a class B felony. I am over the age of 18, am competent to testify to the matters set forth below and I have personal knowledge of those matters. I hereby make, under oath, the following statements.

- 1. **Payment of penalty.** I admit that the violation occurred and enclose \$ _____ in payment of the penalty.
- 2. **Contest the violation.** I believe that the alleged violation did not occur for the reasons I describe below:

a) I ask for a hearing to present evidence on the information I provide above to an administrative law judge for a decision

OR b) I ask for a Commission decision based solely on the information I provide above.

- 3. **Application for mitigation.** I admit the violation, but I believe that the penalty should be reduced for the reasons set out below:

a) I ask for a hearing to present evidence on the information I provide above to an administrative law judge for a decision

OR b) I ask for a Commission decision based solely on the information I provide above.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of Washington that the foregoing, including information I have presented on any attachments, is true and correct.

Dated: _____ [month/day/year], at _____ [city, state]

Name of Respondent (company) – please print

Signature of Applicant

RCW 9A.72.020:

“Perjury in the first degree. (1) A person is guilty of perjury in the first degree if in any official proceeding he makes a materially false statement which he knows to be false under an oath required or authorized by law. (2) Knowledge of the materiality of the statement is not an element of this crime, and the actor’s mistaken belief that his statement was not material is not a defense to a prosecution under this section. (3) Perjury in the first degree is a class B felony.”