



# TNC Background Checks Put Passengers in Harm's Way

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A fingerprint can't be faked.

That's why, in most major cities in the United States, taxicab drivers are required to pass fingerprint-based background checks conducted by state or local authorities. When a Live Scan fingerprint check is used, it can cost an applicant between \$60-\$90 dollars. The scan crosschecks through official Department of Justice and FBI databases.

In contrast, Transportation Network Companies (TNCs) use a less than \$20 dollar, private company background check on applicant names and social security numbers that access public records through the internet. Time and time again, [felons have been proven to be behind the wheel of TNC vehicles](#) owing to these inferior checks.

How inadequate are the background checks done by Uber and Lyft? A recent [peer-reviewed study](#) by a team of law enforcement experts found that name-based background checks are **43 times more likely to have errors** than fingerprint-based checks.

Conducting thorough criminal background checks on drivers who transport passengers is crucial to keeping passengers safe. Passengers are frequently alone with these drivers in their vehicle, and being exhausted, inebriated or traveling in a strange city makes them even further vulnerable.

[Los Angeles and San Francisco are suing Uber](#), stating the company's claims to keep passengers safe through their criminal background checks are false and misleading.

Uber's application process, including its criminal background checks, is conducted entirely online. Drivers do not appear in person, and are not fingerprinted. The importance of using fingerprint-based checks is to definitively identify that the applicant is who he claims to be.

[For example](#), the City of Houston conducted a fingerprint-based criminal background check on an Uber driver approved by the company's private screening company, Hirease, who turned out to have 24 alias names, five listed birth dates, 10 listed social security numbers and an active warrant for arrest. Meanwhile, in Florida, an Uber driver has been arrested on his [fourth charge of drunk driving](#).

With so many criminals slipping behind the wheel, San Francisco District Attorney George Gascon characterized the TNC's name-based criminal background checks as "[completely worthless](#)."

Even Hirease itself—the company Uber pays to run name-based checks on its drivers—[acknowledges that fingerprint-based criminal background checks are more secure](#) because “fingerprinting helps uncover criminal history not discovered through traditional means, offers extra protection to aid in meeting industry guidelines, and helps prevent fraud.”

Cities and states simply **must** retain the right to decide how they wish to screen drivers in order to keep their own citizens safe. Uber and Lyft, meanwhile, want to cut corners, put as many drivers on the road as fast as they can, and increase revenues for their Wall Street investors. It's a dangerous direction to travel.

**They want profit. Public safety demands fingerprints.**

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'Who's Driving You?' is a public safety initiative designed to educate the public about the dangers of unlicensed transportation services. It was launched by the Taxicab, Limousine & Paratransit Association, an international non-profit trade association whose membership consists of 1,100 regulated transportation companies. For more information, visit [www.WhosDrivingYou.org](http://www.WhosDrivingYou.org), follow us on Twitter (@WhosDrivingYou) and follow us on Facebook ([facebook.com/WhosDrivingYou](https://www.facebook.com/WhosDrivingYou))