



Waymo Autonomous Vehicle Ride-Share Service Raises Issues for Employers

Insights

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After a decade of testing and over 10 million miles driven on public roads, Waymo officially launched Waymo One, the country's first commercial autonomous ride-share service. Waymo One will now begin providing customers rides in AVs 24 hours a day. Similar to other ride-share services, consumers use an app to request a ride and enter in their drop-off location. The app provides a fixed price for the cost of transporting the rider from their pickup location to the requested drop off location.

Waymo One is currently only offered to the hundreds of people in the Phoenix, Arizona area who were previously test users of Waymo's self-driving vehicle fleet that launched in April 2017. Safety drivers are still present in each vehicle to supervise the rides, and Waymo One's smartphone app allows riders to instantly connect with the company if they have an issue or question during their ride.

This is undoubtedly just the beginning of commercial AV ride-share programs. Other tech companies and automakers have also announced plans to launch AV ride-share services as early as next year. Automakers and tech companies estimate driverless ride-share fleets will result in a significant reduction in transportation costs for consumers, and companies are currently testing commercial delivery and pickup programs to understand how consumers will interact with AVs.

Waymo intends to make Waymo One available to even more members of the public as they add more vehicles and introduce AVs in new locations. In fact, the company has placed orders for 62,000 more Chrysler Pacificas and 20,000 Jaguar I-Pace electric vehicles.

As traditional automakers and tech companies continue to work toward launching commercial AV ride-share services, employers should review their policies and procedures and start strategizing about how the proliferation of commercial autonomous ride-share services will impact their employees and customers. For example, employees may soon be able to work remotely during their commutes and some companies are already testing the potential of providing free rides to their stores.

Specifically, employers should monitor the progress of commercial AV ride-share services in order to ensure that their policies and procedures related to data privacy, confidential information, remote

work, and workplace safety are adequately up to date to address potential issues that may arise due employees being able to work while traveling. On the plus side, riders that have been able to take advantage of Waymo One have already reported the ability to increase their productivity during their commutes.

If you have questions or concerns regarding remote workplace policies in the age of autonomous vehicles, contact the author or any member of our Autonomous Vehicles Practice Group.

Related People



Brett P. Owens
Partner
813.769.7512
Email