2016 Michigan Motorcycle Laws Guide for Motorcycle Operators

“Motorcycle” means every motor vehicle having a saddle or seat for the use of a rider and designed to travel on not more than 3 wheels in contact with the ground but excluding a tractor. MCL 257.31.

“Moped” means a 2- or 3-wheeled vehicle to which is equipped with a motor that does not exceed 100 cubic centimeters piston displacement, cannot propel the vehicle at a speed greater than 30 miles per hour on a level surface, and its power drive system does not exceed 100 cubic centimeters piston displacement, cannot propel the vehicle at a speed greater than 30 miles per hour on a level surface, and its power drive system does not permit operation of a 2-wheeled motorcycle. MCL 257.32b.

Endorsements and Temporary Instruction Permits
Operating with a Temporary Instruction Permit (TIP). A person with a TIP may operate a motorcycle for 180 days and must:

- Carry the permit.
- Be under the constant visual supervision of a licensed motorcycle operator who is at least 18 years of age.
- Not operate the motorcycle at night.
- Not operate the motorcycle with a passenger.

A person shall not be eligible for more than two TIPs in a 10-year period. MCL 257.306(5).

Motorcycle endorsement. A person, before operating a motorcycle, other than an autocycle, upon a public street or highway, shall procure a motorcycle endorsement on his or her operator’s or chauffeur’s license. MCL 257.312a(1).

3-Wheeled motorcycle. An endorsement issued to operate a 3-wheeled motorcycle, other than an autocycle, is restricted to that operation and does not permit operation of a 2-wheeled motorcycle. MCL 257.312b (3).

Helmet use; motorcycle operators – A motorcycle operator is required to wear an approved crash helmet unless he or she:

- Is at least 21 years old,
- Has at least $20,000 in first-party medical benefits insurance in effect, and
- Has held a motorcycle endorsement for at least two years, or has passed an approved motorcycle safety course. MCL 257.658(5).

Helmet use; moped – A moped operator less than 19 years of age shall wear a crash helmet. MCL 257.658(4).


Riding on seat of motorcycle; multiple riders. (1) A motorcycle operator must ride upon and astride a permanent and regular seat attached to that vehicle. (2) A motorcycle or moped shall not be used to carry more persons at one time than the number for which it is designed and equipped. MCL 257.658.

Seats and foot rests. A motorcycle shall be equipped with adequate seats and securely attached foot rests or pegs for each designated seating position. Unless unable to do so because of a permanent physical disability, a passenger shall not ride on a motorcycle unless his or her feet can rest on the foot rests or pegs. MCL 257.658a(1).

Carrying packages. A moped or motorcycle operator shall not carry any package, bundle, or article that prevents the driver from keeping both hands upon the handlebars of the vehicle. MCL 257.661.

Handlebars of motorcycle. A person shall not operate a motorcycle or moped equipped with handlebars that are higher than 15 inches from the lowest point of the undepressed saddle to the highest point of the handle grips. MCL 257.661a.

Interference with normal flow of vehicular traffic. (1) A person, without authority, shall not block, obstruct, impede, or otherwise interfere with the normal flow of vehicular or pedestrian traffic upon a public street or highway in this state, by means of a barricade, object, or device, or with his or her person. MCL 257.676b.

Limited access highways. A person shall not operate a motorcycle with less than a 125 cubic centimeter engine or moped on a limited access highway. MCL 257.679a.

Equipment Laws
Head lamps; number; modulator; height. (2) A motorcycle or moped shall be equipped with at least 1 and not more than 2 head lamps that comply with this chapter. (3) A motorcycle or moped head lamp may be wired or equipped to allow either its upper beam or its lower beam, but not both, to modulate from a higher intensity to a lower intensity. A head lamp modulator installed on a motorcycle or moped with 2 head lamps shall be wired in a manner to prevent the head
A motor vehicle may be equipped with not

A motorcycle shall not be equipped with

Clearance/marker lamps and

MCL 257.685.

54 inches nor less than 24 inches above the level

from the center of the head lamp of not more than

vehicle shall be located at a height measured

MCL 257.696.

571.108. (4) Every head lamp upon a motor

modulator installed on a motorcycle or moped

in synchronization with each other. A head lamp

lamps from modulating at different rates or not

approaching another vehicle that no part of

spot lamp shall be so aimed and used upon

Motorcycles and moped………..1/32 inch

front and rear

has a marking "not for highway use," “for

racing purposes only,” “for farm use only,” or

“unsafe for highway use.”

has been regrooved or recut below the

original tread design depth except in the case

of special purpose designed tires having

extra undertread rubber provided for this

purpose and identified as those tires.

MCL 257.710.

Rear stop lamps. A motorcycle or moped shall be
required to have 1 rear stop lamp.
MCL 257.697b.

Side, fender, running, courtesy, and
backing lamps; reflectors; flashing,
oscillating, or rotating lights; violation as
Civil Infraction. A lamp or a part designed to be
a reflector, if visible from the front, shall display or
reflect a white or amber light; if visible from either
side, shall display or reflect an amber or red light;
and if visible from the rear, shall display or reflect a
red light, except as otherwise provided by law.
MCL 257.698(4).

Brake equipment. (b) A motorcycle or moped
when operated upon a highway shall be equipped
with at least 2 brakes, 1 on the front wheel and 1
on the rear wheel, that may be operated by hand
or foot. MCL 257.705.

Horn or other warning device. (a) A
motorcycle or moped, when operated upon a
highway shall be equipped with a horn in good
working order and capable of emitting sound
audible under normal conditions from a distance
of not less than 200 feet but a horn or other
warning device shall not emit an unreasonably
loud or harsh sound or a whistle. MCL 257.706.

Muffler, engine, and exhaust system.
(1) A motorcycle or moped, shall at all times be
equipped with a muffler in good working order
and in constant operation to prevent excessive
or unusual noise and annoying smoke. A person
shall not remove, destroy, or damage any of the
baffles contained in the muffler, nor shall a person
use a muffler cutout, bypass, or similar device
upon a motorcycle or moped on a highway or
street. MCL 257.707.

Noise limitations; prohibitions. (1) After April
1, 1978, a motor vehicle shall not be operated or
driven on a highway or street if the motor vehicle
produces total noise exceeding 1 of the following
limits at a distance of 50 feet except as provided in
subdivision (b)(ii): (b) A motorcycle or a moped:
(i) 86 DBA if the maximum lawful speed on the
highway or street is greater than 35 miles per
hour.
(ii) 82 DBA if the maximum lawful speed on the
highway or street is not more than 35 miles per
hour.
(iii) 95 DBA under stationary run-up test at 75
inches. MCL 257.707c.

“DBA: “Decibels on the a-weighted network”
means decibels measured on the a-weighted
network of a sound level meter, as specified in
American National Standards Institute standard
S 1.4-1971. MCL 257.707a.

Mirrors. All motor vehicles shall be equipped
with an outside rearview mirror on the driver’s
side which shall be positioned to give the driver
a reawviewing angle from the driver’s side of the
vehicle. Rearview mirrors may be positioned on
the helmet or visor worn by the operator of a
motorcycle if the helmet is securely attached to
the head of the operator. MCL 257.708.

Windshields, goggles, eyeglasses or face
shields. A person operating a motorcycle in
excess of 35 miles per hour that is not equipped
with a windshield, shall wear goggles with
transparent lenses, eyeglasses, or a transparent
face shield, that is shatter resistant and of
sufficient size to protect his or her eyes against
airborne materials and other road debris.
MCL 257.708a.

Spot lamps; fog lamps.

(a) A motorcycle shall not be equipped with
more than 1 spot lamp, and every lighted
spot lamp shall be so aimed and used upon
approaching another vehicle that no part of
the beam will be directed into the eyes of the
approaching driver. Spot lamps may not emit
other than either a white or amber light.

(b) A motor vehicle may be equipped with not
more than 2 fog lamps mounted on the front
at a height of not less than 12 inches nor more
than 30 inches above the level surface upon
which the vehicle stands. MCL 257.696.

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MCL 257.708a.

The Michigan Motor Vehicle Code can be found
in its entirety at www.legislature.mi.gov.

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