



MICHIGAN MOTORCYCLIST LAWS: GUIDE FOR OPERATORS



A **Motorcycle** is any motor vehicle having a saddle or seat for the use of a rider and designed to travel on not more than three wheels in contact with the ground, excluding a tractor.

A **Moped** is any two- or three-wheeled vehicle with a motor that does not exceed speeds of 30 miles per hour (mph) and a drive system that does not require the operator to shift gears.

An **Autocycle** is a motorcycle that is equipped with safety belts, a roll bar, handlebars or a steering wheel, and equipment otherwise required on a motorcycle and has two or three wheels in contact with the roadway.

Motorcyclists have the same rights on the road as motorists. All Motorcyclists must follow the general rules of the road as well as follow specific motorcycle laws.

VIOLATING ANY OF THE LAWS LISTED BELOW COULD RESULT IN A TICKET.

A motorcyclist must have the proper endorsement on their driver's license.

A person who violates this is guilty of a misdemeanor and could face jail time, fines, or both.

ENDORSEMENTS

Operating with a Temporary Instruction Permit

- ◆ Only valid for 180 days.
- ◆ Must always be under the supervision of a licensed motorcycle operator who is aged 18 or older.
- ◆ Cannot operate the motorcycle at night.
- ◆ Cannot operate the motorcycle with a passenger.

To legally operate on any public street or highway, a motorcyclist must have a motorcycle endorsement on their operator's license.

A three-wheeled motorcycle endorsement is restricted to operate a three-wheeled motorcycle only and does not permit the operation of a two-wheeled motorcycle.

A license plate must be attached to the rear of the vehicle.

HELMETS

A motorcyclist is required to wear an approved crash helmet unless they:

- ◆ Are at least 21 years old,
- ◆ Have at least \$20,000 in first-party medical benefits insurance in effect, and
- ◆ Have held a motorcycle endorsement for at least two years or have passed an approved motorcycle safety course.

All helmets must meet the U.S. Department of Transportation standards.

EQUIPMENT

- ◆ A motorcycle operator must ride upon a permanent and regular seat attached to that vehicle.
- ◆ An operator must not carry more passengers than the equipment was designed for.
- ◆ Must have securely attached footrests for proper seating position of the operator and passenger. Passenger footrests are not required if not carrying a passenger.
- ◆ An operator must not carry any packages or articles that can prohibit them from keeping both hands on the handlebars.

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- ◆ Handlebars should be less than 30 inches from the lowest point of the saddle.

Motorcyclists should not block, obstruct, impede, or interfere with the normal flow of vehicular and pedestrian traffic.

Any person operating a motorcycle, a moped, a low-speed vehicle, or an electric vehicle shall not pass between lines of traffic unless passing on the left of moving traffic in an unoccupied lane.

- ◆ Must have a 125-cubic-centimeter engine to operate on a limited-access highway or expressway.
- ◆ Motorcycles must be equipped with at least one headlight.
- ◆ Must have marker lamps and reflectors:
 - » *Front or side front: amber*
 - » *Rear or rear sides: red*
 - » *Illuminating license plate: white*
- ◆ Head lamps must be aimed so the beam of light is not directed at approaching drivers' eyes.
- ◆ A rear stop lamp is required on all motorcycles or mopeds.
- ◆ Operating upon a highway requires equipment with at least two brakes.
- ◆ Audible horns are required to operate a motorcycle on the highway.
- ◆ Muffler, engine, and exhaust systems must be in good working order.
- ◆ Motorcycles must not produce noise greater than:
 - » *82 decibels on 35-mph or less streets*
 - » *86 decibels on 35-mph or greater streets*
- ◆ Motorcycles must be equipped with a rearview mirror on the driver's side and/or operator's helmet.
- ◆ Operating more than 35 mph without a windshield requires transparent goggles or eyeglasses.
- ◆ All motorcycles must have good tires with no cord exposure or tread separations or tires that have been regrooved.

VIOLATING ANY OF THE LAWS LISTED BELOW COULD RESULT IN A CIVIL INFRACTION OR MISDEMEANOR.

REFERENCES FOR LAWS/DEFINITIONS

Registration (License) Plate	MCL 257.225
Autocycle	MCL 257.25a
Operating With a Temporary Instruction Permit	MCL 257.306
Motorcycle	MCL 257.31
Motorcycle Endorsement	MCL 257.312a
Three-Wheeled Motorcycle	MCL 257.312b(3)
Moped	MCL 257.32b
Parents or Guardians	MCL 257.656
Riding on Seat of Motorcycle; Multiple Riders	MCL 257.658
Helmet Use	MCL 257.658(5)
Helmet Use; Motorcycle Passengers	MCL 257.658(5)
Seat and Footrests	MCL 257.658a(1)
Pass Between Lines of Traffic	MCL 257.660(5)
Carrying Packages	MCL 257.661
Handlebars of Motorcycles	MCL 257.661a
Interference With Normal Flow of Traffic	MCL 257.676b
Limited Access Highways	MCL 257.679a
Head Lamps	MCL 257.685(2)
Clearance/Marker Lamps and Reflectors; Color	MCL 257.689
Spot Lamps; Fog Lamps	MCL 257.696
Rear Stop Lamps	MCL 257.697b
Side, Fender, Running, Courtesy, and Backing Lamps	MCL 257.698(4)
Brake Equipment	MCL 257.705
Horn or Warning Device	MCL 257.706
Muffler, Engine, and Exhaust Systems	MCL 257.707
Noise Limitations	MCL 257.707c
Mirrors	MCL 257.708
Windshields, Goggles, Eyeglasses	MCL 257.708a
Tires	MCL 257.710
Crash Helmet Standards	MI Admin. Code, R 28.951



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