



SAFE BICYCLING IN NEW YORK CITY

Bicyclists have all the rights and are subject to all the duties applicable to drivers of motor vehicles. This includes obeying all traffic signals, regulating signs and pavement markings. Bicycle riding is permitted on arterial and local streets throughout the City even though no designated route exists. Bicycle riding is prohibited on the roadways of certain bridges, expressways and highways. Often a separate path exists on these facilities for bicycles.

SUMMARY LISTING OF BICYCLE LAWS, RULES & REGULATIONS

NEW YORK CITY TRAFFIC RULES AND REGULATIONS (Title 34, Chapter 4)

§ 4-01 (b) - Definitions

A “bicycle” means every two- or three- wheeled device upon which a person or persons may ride, propelled by human power through a belt, a chain or gears, with such wheels in a tandem or tricycle, except that it shall not include a device having solid tires and intended for use only on a sidewalk by pre-teenage children. For the purposes of these rules the term bicycle includes a pedal-assist bicycle as defined in this section.

A “pedal-assist bicycle” means a bicycle equipped with fully operable pedals and an electric motor of less than seven hundred fifty watts (one horsepower) whereby such electric motor engages only when the operator is pedaling and the rate of speed of the bicycle is less than 20 miles per hour, and disengages or ceases to function when (i) the operator applies the brakes, (ii) the operator stops pedaling, or (iii) the bicycle achieves a speed of twenty miles per hour. A pedal-assist bicycle shall not be equipped with any throttle capacity or have any additional motorized equipment affixed to it.

§ 4-02 (a) - Compliance with and Effect of Traffic Rules

The provisions of N.Y.C. Traffic Rules are applicable to bicycles and their operators.

§ 4-07 (c)(3) - Restrictions on crossing sidewalks

No driving bikes on sidewalks unless sign allows or wheels are less than 26 inches in diameter and rider is twelve years or younger. See also Administrative Code §19-176.

§ 4-08 (e)(9) - Stopping, standing and parking prohibited in specified places

No parking, standing or stopping vehicles within designated bike lanes.

§ 4-12 (e) - Driver's hand on steering device

Cyclist must have hand on steering device or handlebars when operating a bicycle.



§ 4-12 (h) - Reporting accidents by drivers of other than motor vehicles

Cyclist involved in accident resulting in death or injury to person or damage to property must stop and give name, address, and information concerning liability insurance coverage to the party sustaining injuries or damage and report the accident to the nearest police station unless already supplied to a police officer on the scene.

§ 4-12 (o)(1) - Use of Roadways

Bicycles are prohibited on expressways, drives, highways, interstate routes, bridges and thruways, unless authorized by signs.

§ 4-12 (p) – Bicycles

- Bicycle riders must use bike path/lane, if provided, except under the following situations:
 - When preparing for a turn at an intersection or into a private road or driveway.
 - When reasonably necessary to avoid conditions (including but not limited to, fixed or moving objects, motor vehicles, bicycles, pedestrians, pushcarts, animals, surface hazards) that make it unsafe to continue within such bicycle path or lane.
- Other vehicles shall not drive on or across designated bike lanes except when it is reasonable and necessary:
 - to enter or leave a driveway; or
 - to enter or leave a legal curbside parking space; or
 - to cross an intersection; or
 - to make a turn within an intersection; or
 - to comply with the direction of any law enforcement officer or other person authorized to enforce this rule; or
 - to avoid an obstacle which leaves fewer than ten feet available for the free movement of vehicular traffic.

Notwithstanding any other rule, no person shall drive a vehicle on or across a designated bicycle lane in such manner as to interfere with the safety and passage of persons operating bicycles.

- Bicyclists may use either side of a 40-foot wide one-way roadway.
- Pedal-assist bicycles:
 - No person shall operate or park a pedal-assist bicycle on any public highway in the city of New York unless such bicycle has permanently affixed in a prominent location on the electric motor of the bicycle or elsewhere on the bicycle a legible original label of the manufacturer of the bicycle and/or of the electric motor containing the maximum motor-assisted speed and motor wattage of the bicycle.
 - All pedal-assist bicycles and their operators must comply with the provisions of Article 34 of the New York State Vehicle and Traffic Law relating to the operation of bicycles, except as provided in section 4-02(e) of these rules.
 - A pedal-assist bicycle that has been modified in any of the following ways shall not be considered a pedal-assist bicycle and may not be operated or parked on any public highway:



1. Any modification that increases the output of such bicycle to seven hundred fifty watts or greater;
2. Any modification that prevents the motor from disengaging when (i) the operator applies the brakes, (ii) the operator stops pedaling, or (iii) the bicycle achieves a speed of twenty miles per hour; or
3. Any modification that accelerates the speed of the pedal-assist bicycle motor by means other than pedaling.

§ 4-14 (c) – Restricted areas of parks

No person shall ride a bicycle in any park, except in places designated for bike riding; but persons may push bikes in single file to and from such places, except on beaches and boardwalks.

NEW YORK CITY ADMINISTRATIVE CODE

§ 10-157 - Bicycles used for commercial purposes

- Business must be identified on the bike by name and identification number.
- Operator must wear upper body apparel with business' name and operator's identification number on the back.
- Business must provide operator with a helmet according to A.N.S.I. or Snell standards. Business must provide at its own expense or ensure that each bicycle is equipped with a lamp, bell or other device capable of giving an audible signal from a distance of at least 100 feet (but not use of siren or whistle), brakes, reflective tires or alternately a reflect reflector mounted on the spokes of each wheel
- Operator must wear a helmet provided by business.
- Operator must complete a bicycle safety course prior to making deliveries or otherwise operating a bicycle on behalf of a business
- Operator must carry and produce on demand a numbered ID card with operator's photo, name, and business' name, address and phone number.
- Business must maintain roster of its bicycle operators that includes the name, home address, start date, discharge date (if applicable), identification number and date of completion of the bicycle safety course

§ 19-176 - Bicycles operation on sidewalks prohibited

Bicycles ridden on sidewalks may be confiscated and riders may be subject to legal sanctions. See also N.Y.C. Traffic Rules and Regulations §4-07 (c).

§ 19-195.1 – Bicyclist rights and duties at intersection

A person operating a bicycle while crossing an intersection shall follow pedestrian control signals except where otherwise indicated by traffic control devices, and provided that such person shall yield to pedestrians in the crosswalk.



NEW YORK STATE VEHICLE AND TRAFFIC LAW

§ 102-a – Definition of Bicycle Lane

A portion of the roadway which has been designated by striping, signing and pavement markings for the preferential or exclusive use of bicycles.

§ 102-b – Definition of Bicycle Path

A path physically separated from motorized vehicle traffic by an open space or barrier and either within the highway right-of-way or within an independent right-of-way and which is intended for the use of bicycles.

§ 375(24-a) - Equipment

Rider cannot wear more than one earphone attached to radio, tape player or other audio device while riding.

§ 1231 - Traffic Laws Applicable to Persons Riding Bicycles

Bicyclists are granted all rights and subject to all duties applicable to operator of vehicle except where not applicable.

§ 1232 - Riding on bicycles

- Must ride on a permanent seat;
- Feet must be on pedals;
- Bike must carry only number of persons for which it is designed and equipped.

§ 1233 - Clinging to vehicles

No attaching bike or person to another vehicle being operated on the roadway.

§ 1234 - Riding on roadways, shoulders, bicycle lanes and bicycle paths

- Must ride bicycle on the right side of the roadway (some conditions and exceptions apply - see also N.Y.C. Traffic Rules and Regulations Section 4-12 above);
- No more than two abreast.

§ 1235 - Carrying articles

Rider must keep at least one hand on handlebars when carrying packages.



§ 1236 - Lamps and other equipment

- White headlight and red taillight must be used from dusk to dawn;
- Bell or other audible signal (not whistle) required;
- Working brakes required;
- Reflective tires and/or other reflective devices required.

§ 1237 - Hand and arm signals

- Bicyclists are required to use hand signals to turn left and right and to stop or decrease speed;
- Rider can use either hand to signal a right turn.

§ 1238 - Helmets and carrying children

- A child under age one is not permitted to ride on a bicycle.
- A child one or more years of age but less than five years of age must wear an approved helmet and be carried in a properly affixed child carrier.
- A child five or more years of age but less than fourteen years of age must wear an approved helmet.