

MOTORCYCLE LAWS AND REGULATIONS

MOTORCYCLE RIDERS

1. All motorcycle operators must:
 - Have a motorcycle instruction permit or endorsement. **169.974 subd. 2 (a)**
 - Register their motorcycle and display a valid license plate. **169.79 subd. 1, 3**
 - Carry liability insurance. **65B.48 subd. 5**
 - Carry proof of insurance when riding. **169.791 subd. 2**
 - Wear eye protection: face shield, goggles or glasses.
Windshields do not meet legal requirements. **169.974 subd. 4 (a)**
2. Motorcycle permit operators:
 - Must wear a DOT-approved helmet. **169.974 subd. 2 (c)**
 - May not carry passengers. **169.974 subd. 2 (c)**
 - May not ride at night. **169.974 subd. 2 (c)**
Motorcycle permits are valid for one year.
3. Operators under the age of 18 must:
 - Wear a DOT-approved helmet. **169.974 subd. 4 (a)**
4. Trike (3-wheel) and sidecar operators:
 - Must have a motorcycle instruction permit, motorcycle endorsement, or “also valid for 3 wheel motorcycle” under restrictions. **169.974 subd. 2 (a)**
5. Autocycle:
 - Has three wheels and a steering wheel. **169.011 subd. 3 (a)**
 - Operators are not required to have a motorcycle endorsement, or 3-wheel restriction, just a valid driver’s license. **169.974 subd. 2 (a)**

MOTORCYCLE EQUIPMENT

For street-legal motorcycles:

- The headlight must be on at all times when riding. **169.974 subd. 5 (i)**
- Motorcycles are required to have at least one, but not more than four headlights with both high and low beam. **169.49 (b)**
- Headlight modulators are legal. **FMVSS, Title 49, Part 571, Standard 108**
- A red or yellow tail light and stop lamp are required. **169.57 subd. 1 (a) (b)**
- A blue dot on the tail light of up to one inch is legal. **169.64 subd. 4 (c)**
- At least one brake is required, either front or rear, which may be operated by hand or foot. **169.67 subd. 2**
- A rear-view mirror and horn are required equipment. **169.974 subd. 3 (a)**
- If the bike has a passenger seat, it must also have passenger footrests. **169.974 subd. 3 (a)**
- The muffler shall blend the exhaust noise into the overall vehicle noise and the exhaust system shall not emit or produce a sharp popping or crackling sound. **169.69**
- The license plate must be securely fastened to prevent swinging; displayed horizontally or vertically with letters and numbers facing outward from the vehicle; and in an upright position. **169.79 subd. 3, 7**
- Motorcyclists may use hand signals. **169.19 subd. 7, 8**
- Turn signals must be visible 100 feet to the front and rear during daytime and nighttime. **169.57 subd. 2**

MOTORCYCLE LAWS

- Motorcyclists are entitled to the full use of their lanes and have all the rights and duties of other drivers. **169.974 subd. 5 (f) (g)**
- Motorcyclists are permitted to travel in high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) carpool lanes. **Title 23, U.S. Code, Section 166**
- All laws regarding driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs apply to motorcyclists as well. **169A**
- Careless and reckless driving **169.13** applies to motorcyclists as well, and includes “wheelies,” “stoppies,” standing on the seat, etc. **169.13**
- A motorcyclist may only ride on a permanent seat. Passengers may ride on a passenger seat or in a sidecar. **169.974 subd. 5 (a)**
- Passengers under the age of 18 must wear a DOT-approved helmet. **169.974 subd. 4 (a)**
- Passengers must be able to reach both footrests while seated on the passenger seat. **169.974 subd. 5 (b)**
- Operators and passengers must face forward with one leg on each side of the motorcycle. **169.974 subd. 5 (c)**
- Motorcyclists must not carry anything that interferes with holding onto the handlebars. **169.974 subd. 5 (d)**
- Splitting traffic is illegal. No one except on-duty police officers may ride between lanes of traffic or in the same lane with another vehicle. It is legal for two motorcyclists to ride side-by-side if both riders agree to it. **169.974 subd. 5 (e)**
- Motorcyclists are provided with an affirmative defense when proceeding through an unchanging red light that has shown red for an unreasonable time if no vehicle or pedestrian is approaching the street. **169.06 subd. 9**
- Headphones/earphones: one ear only. **169.471 subd. 2 (a)**

MOPEDS

- Mopeds are registered and plated as a moped; have a piston displacement of 50cc or less, a maximum of 2 horse power, and a maximum speed of 30 mph on a flat surface. **169.011 subd. 45**
- Moped operators are required to have a moped permit, moped operators license, or a valid class D drivers license. **169.223 subd. 2; 171.02 subd. 3**
- Moped operators and passengers under age 18 must wear a helmet: either a bicycle helmet meeting ANSI Z90.4-1984 or a DOT-approved motorcycle helmet. **169.223 subd. 1**
- Moped operators under age 16 may drive at night if the moped is equipped with a proper headlight and taillight. **169.223 subd. 2 (b) (2)**
- Moped operators under age 16 may not carry passengers except for a parent or guardian. **169.223 subd. 2 (b)**

MOTORCYCLE ROAD GUARDS

All motorcycle road guards:

- Must have and carry a valid motorcycle road guard certificate. **171.60 subd. 1**
- Must meet safety and equipment standards: flagging equipment and high-visibility safety apparel. **169.06 sub. 4 (f)**
- May stop and hold vehicles in place until it is safe for vehicles to proceed. **169.06 subd. 4 (f)**



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