

Biking Laws of New Jersey

NJ Department of Transportation

Regulations

Bicycling in New Jersey is regulated under Title 39 of the Motor Vehicles and Traffic Regulation laws.

39:4-14.5 Definition.

"Bicycle" means any two wheeled vehicle having a rear drive which is solely human powered and having a seat height of 25 inches or greater when the seat is in the lowest adjustable position.

39:4-10 Lights on Bicycles.

When in use at nighttime every bicycle shall be equipped with: 1) A front headlamp emitting a white light visible from a distance of at least 500 feet to the front; 2) A rear lamp emitting a red light visible from a distance of at least 500 feet to the rear; 3) In addition to the red lamp a red reflector may be mounted on the rear.

39:4-11 Audible Signal.

A bicycle must be equipped with a bell or other audible device that can be heard at least 100 feet away, but not a siren or whistle.

39:4-11.1 Brakes.

A bicycle must be equipped with a brake that can make wheels skid while stopping on dry, level, clean pavement.

39:4-12 Feet and Hands on Pedals and Handlebars; Carrying Another Person.

Bicyclists should not drive the bicycle with feet removed from the pedals, or with both hands removed from the handlebars, nor practice any trick or fancy driving in a street. Limit passengers to only the number the bicycle is designed and equipped to carry (the number of seats it has).

39:4-14 Hitching on Vehicle Prohibited.

No person riding a bicycle shall attach themselves to any streetcar or vehicle.

39:4-14.1 Rights and Duties of Persons on Bicycles.

Every person riding a bicycle on a roadway is granted all the rights and subject to all of the duties of the motor vehicle driver.

39:4-14.2, 39:4-10.11 Operating Regulations.

Every person riding a bicycle on a roadway shall ride as near to the right roadside as practicable exercising due care when passing a standing vehicle or one proceeding in the same direction. A bicyclist may move left under any of the following conditions: 1) To make a left turn from a left turn lane or pocket; 2) To avoid debris, drains, or other hazardous conditions on the right; 3) To pass a slower moving vehicle; 4) To occupy any available lane when traveling at the same speed as other traffic; 5) To travel no more than two abreast when traffic is not impeded, but otherwise ride in single file. Every person riding a bicycle should ride in the same direction as vehicular traffic.

In New Jersey, the law states a bicyclist must obey all state and local automobile driving laws. A parent may be held responsible for the child's violation of any traffic law

Helmet Law

Title 39:4-10.1

In New Jersey, anyone under 17 years of age that rides a bicycle or is a passenger on a bicycle, or is towed as a passenger by a bicycle **must** wear a safety helmet.

On August 1, 1998 this helmet law was extended to include roller and inline skates and skateboards. Roller skates means a pair of devices worn on the feet with a set of wheels attached, regardless of the number or placement of those wheels and used to glide or propel the user over the ground.

The definition of bicycle with reference to the helmet legislation is a vehicle with two wheels propelled solely by human power and having pedals, handle bars and a saddle-like seat. The term shall include a bicycle for two or more persons having seats and corresponding pedals arranged in tandem.

All helmets must be properly fastened and fitted. Bicycle helmets must meet the federal standards developed by the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) effective March 10, 1999 that ensure the best head protection and strong chin straps to keep the helmet in place during a fall or collision. Also acceptable are helmets meeting the Snell Memorial Foundation's 1990 Standard for Protection Headgear.

Exemptions from the helmet requirement are persons who operate or ride a bicycle (as a driver or a passenger) on a roadway closed to motor traffic; on a trail, route, course, boardwalk, path or area set aside only for the use of bicycles.

These exemptions do not apply if the areas of operation are adjacent to a roadway and not separated from motor vehicle traffic by a barrier that prevents the bicycle from entering the roadway. Bicyclists or passengers operating in an area where helmets are not required who need to cross a road or highway should *walk* with the bicycle.

Initial violators of the helmet law will receive warnings. For minors, the parent or legal guardian may be fined a maximum of \$25 for the 1st offense and a maximum of \$100 for subsequent offense(s), if lack of parental supervision contributed to the offense.

Bicycle salespersons and rental agents must display a sign at least 15 inches long and 8 inches wide at the point where the transaction is completed when they sell or rent a bicycle. This sign should read: "**STATE LAW REQUIRES A BICYCLE RIDER UNDER 17 YEARS TO WEAR A HELMET.**" In the case of bicycle rentals, the salesperson/rental agent must provide a helmet, if necessary, for a fee.