Department of Transportation

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

N.Y.C. TRAFFIC RULES AND REGULATIONS

§ 4-01 (b) - Definitions

A bicycle is defined as 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.

§ 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 or otherwise obstructing bike lanes.

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

Driver of a bicycle must have hand on steering device or handlebars.

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

Rider involved in accident resulting in death or injury to person or damage to property must stop and give name, address, insurance information, etc., and must report to Police Department.

§ 4-12 (o)(1) - Use of Roadways

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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 for access, safety, turns, etc.
- Other vehicles shall not drive on or across bike lanes except for access, safety, turns, etc.
- Bicyclists may use either side of a 40-foot wide one-way roadway.

§ 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.

N.Y.C. 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 number on the back.
- Business must provide operator with a helmet according to A.N.S.I. or Snell standards.
- Operator shall wear a helmet provided by business.
- Operator must carry and produce on demand a numbered ID card with operator's photo, name, home address and business' name, address and phone number.
- Business must maintain log book that includes the name, identification number and place of residence of each bicycle operator; and the date of employment and discharge. The log book must also include information on daily trips, identifying the bicycle operator’s identification number and name; and name and place of origin and destination.
- Owner of business must file an annual report with the Police Department identifying the number of bicycles it owns and the identification number and identity of any employees.

§ 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).

N.Y.S. VEHICLE AND TRAFFIC LAW

§ 102-a – Definition of Bicycle Lane

A portion of the roadway which has been designated by stripping, 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.