

State Vehicle Code:

<http://www.michiganlegislature.org/printDocument.asp?objName=mcl-chap257&version=txt>

Please send results or direct questions to Fred Oswald, <fredoswald@yahoo.com>

Here's what Traffic Laws Annotated had to say in 1979 about the Michigan laws for slow vehicles (unchanged since then):

"These Michigan laws constitute a substantial variation from the Uniform Vehicle Code and, in effect, utilize rules that were deleted from the Code in 1934 following the advent of one-way and multiple-lane roadways. They have been judged unworkable and impractical in other states and materially contribute to poor utilization of roadway space and to unsafe driving practices."

Rating of Michigan Bicycle Traffic Laws

Michigan Bicycle Traffic Laws earn a TENTATIVE rating of F- (12 points)

Note: A bicycle IS NOT defined as a vehicle in Michigan.

A: 91 points or above (89-90 is A-, over 99 is A+)
 B: 79 to 86 points (87-88 is B+, 77-78 is B-)
 C: 66 to 74 points (75-76 is C+, 64-65 is C-)
 D: 52 to 61 points (62-63 is D+, 50-51 is D-)
 F: 40 to 47points (48-49 is F+, below 40 points is F-)

Traffic Law Defects		
	Mandates riding wrong way (Automatic failing score)	[-100]
	Mandates riding on sidewalk (creates failing score)	[-80]
	Prohibits bicycles from all main streets (a "stealth" sidewalk law)	[-80]
	Lower deduction if prohibition applies only where speed limit is above 50 mph	[-30]
	Lower deduction if engineering study, alternate route & signs reqd.	[-30]
	Mandates riding on sidewalk only for under age 16	[-30]
-25	Mandates riding on sidepath, shoulder or bike lane	[-40]
	Lower deduction if applies only where sidepath is "usable" and signed	[-25]
	Restriction only for under age 16	[-25]
	Lower deduction if includes UVC "far right" type exceptions	[-20]
	Lower deduction if also includes CA "right turn authorized" exceptions	[-15]
	257.660 BICYCLES, MOTORCYCLES, OR MOPEDS; OPERATION ON ROADWAY; USE OF BICYCLE PATH; PASSING; OPERATION OF BICYCLE OR MOPED ON SIDEWALK; EXCEPTION.	
	(3) Where a usable and designated path for bicycles is provided adjacent to a roadway, a bicycle rider may, by local ordinance, be required to use that path. Where a usable and designated path for bicycles is provided adjacent to a roadway, a bicycle rider who is less than 16 years of age shall use that path unless accompanied by an adult.	
-30	Unlimited local "regulation of the operation of bicycles" (non-uniform laws)	[-30]
	Lower deduction if allows only local sidepath ordinance.	[-20]
	Allows local bicycle ban only on major highway	[-15]
	Local authorities may mandate registration (rather than voluntary program)	[-1]
	257.606 Regulation of streets or highways under jurisdiction of local authority and within reasonable exercise of police power; stop sign or traffic control device requiring state trunk line highway traffic to stop; approval; posting signs giving notice of local traffic regulations; providing by ordinance for impounding of motor vehicle parked contrary to local ordinance; bond or cash deposit.	
	(i) Regulating the operation of bicycles and requiring the registration and licensing of bicycles, including the requirement of a registration fee.	
	(3) An ordinance or regulation ... shall not be enforceable until signs ... are posted	

-20	“Shall ride within 3 feet of right edge of road” (or similar unsafe rule)	[-25]
	“Shall ride as close as practicable to the right-hand curb”, with no exceptions Lower deduction if includes all UVC exceptions	[-20] [-10]
	257.660 BICYCLES, MOTORCYCLES, OR MOPEDS; OPERATION ON ROADWAY; USE OF BICYCLE PATH; PASSING; OPERATION OF BICYCLE OR MOPED ON SIDEWALK; EXCEPTION. (1) A person operating a bicycle upon a roadway shall ride as near to the right side of the roadway as practicable, exercising due care when passing a standing vehicle or one proceeding in the same direction.	
	Mandatory helmet law that includes adult cyclists	[-10]
	Lower deduction if applies only to children under 12	[-5]
	Additional deduction if law lacks strong “contributory negligence” exclusion	[-10]
	Prohibits normal vehicular left turn	[-10]
	“Shall ride single file” (no exceptions)	[-10]
	Lower deduction depending on exceptions	[-5]
	Motor vehicle restrictions that should not apply to bicycles: (following too closely, racing, etc.)	[up to -5]
-3	Irresponsible brake requirements (skid braked wheel) 257.662 BICYCLES; EQUIPMENT; VIOLATION AS CIVIL INFRACTION. (3) A bicycle shall be equipped with a brake which will enable the operator to make the braked wheels skid on dry, level, clean pavement.	[-3]
-1	“Nuisance” safety equipment required (bell, front, wheel & pedal reflectors, etc) [-2] 257.662 BICYCLES; EQUIPMENT; VIOLATION AS CIVIL INFRACTION. (4) A person shall not sell, offer for sale, or deliver for sale in this state a bicycle or a pedal for use on a bicycle, either of which was manufactured after January 1, 1976, unless it is equipped with a type of reflex reflector located on the front and rear surfaces of the pedal. [rest of paragraph not shown] (5) A person shall not sell, offer for sale, or deliver for sale in this state a bicycle manufactured after January 1, 1976, unless it is equipped with either tires which have reflective sidewalls or with wide-angle prismatic spoke reflectors. [rest of paragraph not shown]	[-2]
-2	Right-arm right turn signal not authorized	[-2]
-1	Unreasonable turn signal requirement (continuous, or even if not safe)	[-2]
	Authorizes bicycle-specific traffic control devices	[-2]
-1	Lacks provision allowing bicycle access to freeway shoulders	[-1]
-1	Slow vehicle “as close as practicable to the right-hand curb”	[-1]
-1	Missing language “intent is to facilitate overtaking” in slow veh. rule	[-1]
	Other excessive or unnecessary regulation	
-3	Minor Defects (scored as a group)	
Y	Lacks provision allowing preparing for left turn early	
Y	Lacks exception to no-passing zone rule for passing of slow vehicles	
	Lacks language prohibiting “points” for bicycle violations 257.732 (16) Except for controlled substance offenses described in subsection (4), the court shall not submit,	

	and the secretary of state shall discard and not enter on the master driving record, an abstract for a conviction or civil infraction determination for any of the following violations: (d) A pedestrian, passenger, or bicycle violation, other than a violation of section 703(1) or (2) of the Michigan liquor control code
Y	“Give way to the right on audible signal”
Y	Lacks cycling skills course for violators
	Police authorized to inspect bicycles
Y	Lacks child seat or trailer language or allow child in backpack
	Lacks language authorizing additional lights or reflectors
Y	Lacks language saying riding two abreast does not impede traffic if no conflicting traffic
Y	Poor definition of bicycle (not recognizing recumbents or trikes) 257.4 “Bicycle” defined. Sec. 4. “Bicycle” means a device propelled by human power upon which a person may ride, having either 2 or 3 wheels in a tandem or tricycle arrangement, all of which are over 14 inches in diameter.
Y	Excessive, unnecessary regulation or poorly written laws 257.661 A person operating a bicycle, electric personal assistive mobility device, moped, or motorcycle shall not carry any package, bundle, or article that prevents the driver from keeping both hands upon the handlebars of the vehicle. [Could be misinterpreted to prohibit standing to pedal.] 257.658 (1) A person propelling a bicycle or operating a motorcycle or moped shall not ride other than upon and astride a permanent and regular seat attached to that vehicle.
Positive Factors (points added)	
??	Have issued a good state “Bicycle Drivers' Manual” [up to +15] and/or --- Drivers Handbook has vehicular cycling info.
N	Permits <u>and</u> requires motorists to merge into any bike lane before turning. [+2]
N	Expressly permits but does not require cycling on the shoulder. [+2]
N	Local authorities may reduce the fine for bicycling offenses [+2]
N	Share the road license plate (or similar) with proceeds to benefit cycling [+2]
N	Language to discourage unsafe sidewalk riding [+2]
	Other positive factors [?]