

State Vehicle Code not available on-line. Excerpts at: <http://www.bicycleaccess-pa.org/>  
 Please send new info. or direct questions to Fred Oswald, <fredoswald@yahoo.com>

**Rating is not quite complete. Note questions ?? in table below**

## Rating of Pennsylvania Bicycle Traffic Laws

Pennsylvania Bicycle Traffic Laws earn a **TENTATIVE** rating of C+ (76 pts)

Note: A bicycle IS defined as a vehicle in Pennsylvania.

A: 91 to 98 points	(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 47 points	(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]
	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]
<b>-30</b>	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]
	<b>§ 6109. Specific powers of department (PennDOT) and local authorities.</b>
	(a) Enumeration of police powers. The provisions of this title shall not be deemed to prevent the department on State highways and local authorities on streets or highways within their physical boundaries from the reasonable exercise of their police powers. The following are presumed to be reasonable exercises of police power:
	(8) Regulating the operation of pedalcycles and requiring their registration and inspection, and the payment of a reasonable registration fee.
	“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 [-20]
	Lower deduction if includes all UVC exceptions [-10]
	Subsection (c) is a very significant improvement over UVC § 11-1205.
	<b>§ 3505. Riding on roadways and pedalcycle paths.</b>
	(c) Slower than prevailing speeds.--A pedalcycle operated at slower than prevailing speed shall be operated in accordance with the provisions of section 3301(b) (relating to driving on right side of roadway) unless it is unsafe to do so.
<b>-3</b>	Mandatory helmet law that includes adult cyclists [-6]
	Lower deduction if applies only to children under 12 [-3]

	Additional deduction if law lacks strong “contributory negligence” exclusion <b>§ 3510. Pedalcycle helmets for certain persons.</b> (c) Civil actions.--In no event shall a violation or alleged violation of subsection (a) be used as evidence in a trial of any civil action; nor shall any jury in a civil action be instructed that any conduct did constitute or could be interpreted by them to constitute a violation of subsection (a); nor shall failure to use a pedalcycle helmet be considered as contributory negligence nor shall failure to use a pedalcycle helmet be admissible as evidence in the trial of any civil action.	[-10]
	Prohibits normal vehicular left turn	[-10]
	“Shall ride single file” (no exceptions) Lower deduction depending on exceptions	[-10] [-5]
	<b>Motor</b> vehicle restrictions that should not apply to bicycles: (following too closely, racing, etc.) <b>§ 3310. Following too closely.</b> (a) General rule.--The driver of a <b>motor</b> vehicle shall not follow another vehicle more closely than is reasonable and prudent, having due regard for the speed of the vehicles and the traffic upon and the condition of the highway	[up to -5]
-1	Irresponsible brake requirements (skid braked wheel, etc/) Requirement below is stricter than UVC (15’ from 10 mph) and may be impossible for a rear-wheel only (coaster) brake bike. <b>§ 3507. Lamps and other equipment on pedalcycles.</b> (c) Brakes.--Every pedalcycle shall be equipped with a braking system which will stop the pedalcycle in 15 feet from an initial speed of 15 miles per hour on a dry, level and clean pavement.	[-3]
	“Nuisance” safety equipment required (bell, front, wheel & pedal reflectors, etc)	[-2]
	Right-arm right turn signal not authorized	[-2]
??	Unreasonable turn signal requirement (continuous, even if not safe)	[-2]
	Authorizes bicycle-specific traffic control devices	[-2]
	Lacks provision allowing bicycle access to freeway shoulders <b>§ 3511. Pedalcycles prohibited on freeways.</b> (a) General rule.--No person shall ride a pedalcycle on a freeway. (b) Exceptions.-- On State-designated freeways, pedalcycles may be authorized under the following limitations: i. The pedalcycler is 16 years of age or older or is accompanied by a pedalcycler 18 years of age or older. ii. A written request for review of the freeway route based on the potential unavailability of a reasonable alternate route is made to the department. iii. The department determines that no reasonable alternate route exists. iv. The department publishes a notice in the Pennsylvania Bulletin authorizing pedalcycle access to the freeway. The notice shall constitute approval for the persons authorized under subparagraph (i) to ride a pedalcycle on the State-designated freeway. (d) Operation on shoulder.--If the department authorizes pedalcycle access to a freeway, the pedalcycle shall be operated upon the shoulder of that freeway whenever practicable.	[-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]

<b>-3</b>	<b>Minor Defects (scored as a group)</b>	
<b>Y</b>	Lacks provision allowing preparing for left turn early	
<b>Y</b>	Lacks exception to no-passing zone rule for passing of slow vehicles	
<b>Y</b>	Lacks language prohibiting “points” for bicycle violations	
<b>Y</b>	“Give way to the right on audible signal”	
<b>Y</b>	Lacks cycling skills course for violators	
<b>??</b>	Police explicitly authorized to inspect bicycles	
<b>??</b>	Lacks child seat or trailer language or allow child in backpack	
<b>??</b>	Lacks language authorizing additional lights or reflectors	
	Lacks language saying riding two abreast does not impede traffic if no conflicting traffic	
<b>??</b>	Poor definition of bicycle	
Positive Factors (points added)		
<b>+13</b>	Have issued a good state “Bicycle Drivers' Manual” and/or --- Drivers Handbook has vehicular cycling info. Pennsylvania was the pathfinder with its Bicycle Drivers Manual that incorporates <b>Bicycling Street Smarts</b> and annotated excerpts of relevant laws. <a href="http://www.dot.state.pa.us/Penndot/Bureaus/bikeped.nsf/infoBikeManual?OpenForm">http://www.dot.state.pa.us/Penndot/Bureaus/bikeped.nsf/infoBikeManual?OpenForm</a> Also, PA has some good information in the driver’s manual, publication 95	[up to +15]
	Cycling education program (possibly financed by Share the Road license plate)	[+5]
	Permits and requires motorists to merge into a bike lane before turning.	[+2]
<b>+2</b>	Expressly permits but does not require cycling on the shoulder. <b>§ 3505. Riding on roadways and pedalcycle paths.</b> (b) Operation on shoulder.--A pedalcycle <b>may be operated on the shoulder</b> of a highway and <b>shall be operated in the same direction as required of vehicles operated on the roadway</b> . All turns shall be made in accordance with Section 3331 (relating to required position and method of turning).	[+2]
	Local authorities may reduce the fine for bicycling offenses	[+2]
	Language to discourage unsafe sidewalk riding	
	Other positive factors	[?]