



COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS REGISTRY OF MOTOR VEHICLES



MOTORIZED SCOOTER INFORMATION

Chapter 396 of the Acts of 2004 regulating the operation of "motorized scooters" became law on November 18, 2004.

Motorized Scooter Definition

According to Massachusetts law (M.G.L. c.90 §§ 1, 1C and 1E-definitions and operational requirements), a "motorized scooter" is any **two-wheeled tandem or three-wheeled** device that meets all of the following:

- 1) Has handlebars;
- 2) Is designed to be stood or sat upon by the operator;
- 3) Is powered by an electric or gas powered motor that is capable of propelling the device with or without human propulsion;
- 4) Is equipped with operational "stop" and "turn" signals; and
- 5) Complies with all applicable Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards.

The definition of "motorized scooter" does **not** include a motorcycle, motorized bicycle (moped), or three-wheeled motorized wheelchair. **The Registrar has determined that "mini-motorcycles" and "pocket bikes" are "Motorized Scooters."**

Massachusetts law provides for the following restrictions in the operation of a Motorized Scooter:

- a) Operator must wear a helmet as prescribed by the Registrar. The helmet must meet or exceed the standards established in the United States Department of Transportation's (US DOT) Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 218 for motorcycle helmets (49 CFR 571.218).
- b) Operator must be at least 16 years of age and have a valid driver's license or learner's permit.
- c) Motorized Scooters **may not be operated at a speed greater than twenty-miles per hour (20 m.p.h.)**.
- d) Motorized Scooters may be operated on all public ways (except limited access or express state highways where signs prohibiting bicycles **or** scooters have been posted).
- e) Motorized Scooter operators are subject to all state traffic laws and regulations, except that the operator **must** keep to the right side of the road **at all times**, including when passing a motor vehicle which is moving in the travel lane of the way.
- f) Operator shall signal when stopping or turning.
- g) Motorized Scooters may not be operated on any way after sunset or before sunrise.
- h) **No passenger** may be carried on a Motorized Scooter.
- i) Any violation is subject to a fine of up to \$25 (1st Offense); \$25-\$50 (2nd Offense); \$50-\$100 (3rd + Offense)

Motorized scooters are not recognized in Massachusetts as "motor vehicles" (which includes "motorcycles") or as "motorized bicycles" (mopeds) and can not be registered in the Commonwealth. However, motorized scooters (and motorized bicycles) **are considered "motor vehicles"** for purposes of enforcing traffic laws under MGL Chapter 90C and operators of both are subject to and can be issued citations for violation of laws that apply to motor vehicle operation.