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## Summary of Kansas Laws Applicable to Bicycle Operation in the Uniform Act Regulating Traffic

This memorandum summarizes traffic laws applicable to bicycles.

### General Traffic Laws

**Traffic laws apply to persons riding bicycles.** All the rights and all of the duties applicable to the driver of a vehicle apply to a cyclist.<sup>1</sup> The following are examples:

- Must obey traffic control devices unless otherwise directed by a law enforcement officer.<sup>2</sup>
- Must yield the right of way as indicated, to other vehicles and to pedestrians.<sup>3</sup>
- Must exercise due care to avoid colliding with any pedestrian.<sup>4</sup> A pedestrian also has the right of way on any sidewalk.<sup>5</sup>
- Must stop before crossing a sidewalk when emerging from an alley or driveway.<sup>6</sup>
- Must obey the speed limit.<sup>7</sup>
- Must signal turns.<sup>8</sup>
- Cannot operate while impaired by alcohol or drugs<sup>9</sup> or refuse a test for impairment.<sup>10</sup>

### Additional restrictions specific to bicycles are summarized below.

- A cyclist riding at less than the normal speed of traffic must ride as near to the right side of the roadway as is practicable and reasonably necessary to avoid obstacles and surface hazards, except when
  - overtaking and passing another bicycle or vehicle going the same direction,
  - preparing for a left turn, or
  - riding on a one-way highway with two or more marked lanes; in this case, the rider may go as close to the left side of the roadway as practicable.<sup>11</sup>
- Cyclists shall not ride more than two abreast except on exclusive bike paths or within exclusive lanes.<sup>12</sup>
- Whenever a usable path for bicycles has been provided adjacent to a roadway, cyclists must use the path, not the roadway.<sup>13</sup>
- Clinging to another vehicle is prohibited.<sup>14</sup>
- No cyclist shall carry anything that prevents the cyclist from keeping at least one hand on the handlebars.<sup>15</sup>

## Equipment

- A bicycle ridden at night must have a white-light lamp on the front visible for at least 500 feet and a red reflector on the rear visible with low beams from 100 feet to 600 feet. A lamp emitting a red light visible from 500 feet may be used in addition to the reflector. Pedals must have reflectors visible from the front and rear from 200 feet.<sup>16</sup>
- Brakes must allow the operator to make the braked wheels skid on dry, level, clean pavement.<sup>17</sup>
- Each person propelling a bicycle must ride on or astride a permanent and regular seat.<sup>18</sup>
- No bicycle may carry more people than the number for which it is designed and equipped.<sup>19</sup>

Note: The above restrictions also are included in the Standard Traffic Ordinance for Kansas Cities prepared by the League of Kansas Municipalities, 2010, 38<sup>th</sup> Edition. Municipalities may have additional restrictions on bicycle operation. For example, City of Lawrence ordinances ([http://lawrenceks.org/city\\_code/](http://lawrenceks.org/city_code/)) prohibit riding a bicycle on downtown sidewalks (17-702) and locking a bicycle to a tree, fire hydrant, traffic control device or sign, street light, utility pole, or parking meter post serving a space designated for disabled parking (17-703(B)).

<sup>1</sup> *Kansas Statutes Annotated (KSA) 8-1587*

<sup>2</sup> *KSA 8-1507(a), 8-1508. As of July 1, 2011, a cyclist or motorcycle rider may proceed through a steady red signal, subject to other traffic rules governing right of way, if the red light has failed to change to green within a reasonable period of time because the signal has malfunctioned or has failed to detect the vehicle. The cyclist or driver must yield the right of way to any vehicle in the intersection or approaching so as to constitute an immediate hazard, to any pedestrian lawfully within an adjacent crosswalk, and to any other traffic lawfully using the intersection. 2011 HB 2192, Sec. 3, signed 4/13/11. Section 4 of that bill further provided that a driver of a vehicle overtaking a bicycle must pass that bicycle to the left at a distance of not less than three feet and may not pull back to the right until safely clear of the bicycle; the driver may pass a bicycle in a no-passing zone if it is safe to do so.*

<sup>3</sup> *KSA 8-1528, 8-1529, 8-1530, 8-1531, 8-1533, 8-1542*

<sup>4</sup> *KSA 8-1535*

<sup>5</sup> *KSA 8-1540*

<sup>6</sup> *KSA 8-1555*

<sup>7</sup> *KSA 8-1557, 8-1558*

<sup>8</sup> *KSA 8-1548, 8-1550*

<sup>9</sup> *KSA 8-1567*

<sup>10</sup> *KSA 8-1001, 1002*

<sup>11</sup> *KSA 8-1590(a), (b)*

<sup>12</sup> *KSA 8-1590(c)*

<sup>13</sup> *KSA 8-1590(d) Similarly, pedestrians must use provided sidewalks (8-1537(a)).*

<sup>14</sup> *KSA 8-1589 This applies also to coasters, roller skates, sleds, and toy vehicles.*

<sup>15</sup> *KSA 8-1591*

<sup>16</sup> *KSA 8-1592(a), (c)*

<sup>17</sup> *KSA 8-1592(b)*

<sup>18</sup> *KSA 8-1588(a)*

<sup>19</sup> *KSA 8-1588(b)*