



August 11, 2022

## **KANSAS LAWS ON BICYCLE, E-BIKE, AND E-SCOOTER OPERATION**

This memorandum summarizes State of Kansas traffic laws applicable to the operation of bicycles, electric-assisted bicycles (e-bikes)<sup>1</sup>, and electric-assisted scooters (e-scooters)<sup>2</sup> on roadways. Local laws also may apply and may address additional topics.

### **The “Rules of the Road” Apply to All**

Cyclists and e-scooter operators must follow the statutory rules of the road (in the Uniform Act Regulating Traffic on Highways, KSA 8-1401 *et seq.*), such as obeying traffic devices unless otherwise directed by a law enforcement officer, signaling turns, obeying speed limits, and yielding the right of way as indicated to other vehicles and to pedestrians.

A vehicle driver going the same direction may pass a bicycle or scooter at a distance of not less than three feet to the left and may pass in a no-passing zone only if it is safe to do so.

### **Traffic Laws Specific to Bicycles, E-bikes, or E-scooters<sup>3</sup>**

**Keep right.** If going less than the normal speed of traffic, bicycles and e-scooters must be operated as near to the right side of the roadway as is practicable with these exceptions:

- When overtaking and passing another vehicle going the same direction;
- When preparing for a left turn; or
- When reasonably necessary to avoid obstacles and surface hazards.

A cyclist on a one-way highway with two or more marked lanes may also ride as close to the left side of the roadway as practicable.

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1 An e-bike is defined as a bicycle with two or three wheels, a saddle, fully operative pedals for human propulsion, and an electric motor of less than 750 watts. The e-bike must meet requirements of one of the three classes of e-bikes, described on p. 2. An e-bike is excluded from the definition of a motor vehicle (2022 [House Sub. for SB 101](#), KSA 8-1489, KSA 8-126).

2 An e-scooter is defined as a self-propelled vehicle that has at least two wheels in contact with the ground, an electric motor, handlebars, a brake, and a deck designed to be stood upon when riding (KSA 8-1498).

3 Statutes regarding bicycles and e-bikes are in KSA 8-1587 through 8-1592b and in KSA 8-15,113 for e-scooters. The traffic signal exception is in KSA 8-1508. Statutory language is available through the Office of Revisor of Statutes [website](#) and current-year session laws. Statute numbers in this memorandum assume the supplement as appropriate.

**Riding together.** Cyclists must not ride more than two abreast except on exclusive bike paths or within exclusive lanes. No bicycle may carry more people than the number for which it is designed and equipped.

**Use the path.** Whenever a usable path is adjacent to a roadway, the path and not the roadway must be used.

**Keep hands on handlebars.** Clinging to any vehicle is prohibited. At least one hand must be kept on the handlebars.

**Required lights and reflectors.** Every bicycle ridden between sunset and sunrise must be equipped with a white-light lamp on the front visible from at least 500 feet. A red reflector or a red light on the bicycle, or a red or amber light on the cyclist, must be visible from the rear. Pedals must have reflectors visible from the front and rear from 200 feet.

**Exception for “dead red” traffic light.** A bicycle (or a motorcycle) may proceed through a steady red signal that fails to turn green in a reasonable period of time but must yield to any vehicle in or near the intersection.

### **Additional Local or Agency Restrictions May Apply**

The governing body of a city or county may adopt an ordinance or resolution that further restricts or prohibits the operation of bicycles, e-scooters, or e-bikes or specific classes of e-bikes on any public highway, street, or sidewalk within such city or county (KSA 2022 Supp. 8-1592b, KSA 8-15,113). Here are some examples:<sup>4</sup>

- Kansas state laws regarding operating a vehicle under the influence of alcohol or drugs do not apply to operation of a bicycle, but such operation is illegal within the City of Wichita.
- Johnson County Parks and Recreation District allows classes 1 and 3, but not class 2, e-bikes on its shared-use paved trails. (The classes, as defined in state law, are distinguished by when the motor may assist and the maximum motor-assisted speed: the motor assists only when the cyclist is pedaling for classes 1 and 3, the motor assists to a maximum speed of 20 mph for classes 1 and 2, and the motor assists to a maximum speed of 28 mph for class 3.)
- Topeka City Code requires an e-scooter operator to be at least 16 years old and, until age 18, to wear a helmet. It also sets a 15 mph speed limit for an e-scooter and restricts operation to bike lanes on any street with a speed limit of 35 mph or more.
- Within state parks, e-bikes that cease to provide assistance at 20 mph may be used on trails approved for bicycle use.

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4 Accessed August 2022: City of Wichita Code of Ordinances [Section 14.48.190](#), Johnson County Parks and Recreation District [website](#), Topeka City Code [Section 10.35.040](#), Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks [website](#).