

Specific Electric Bicycle (E-Bike) Laws of CA

Vehicle Code - VEH

DIVISION 1. WORDS AND PHRASES DEFINED [100 - 681] (Division 1 enacted by Stats. 1959, Ch. 3.)

312.5. (a) An **“electric bicycle”** is a **bicycle** equipped with fully operable pedals and an electric motor of less than 750 watts.

(1) A **“class 1 electric bicycle,”** or “low-speed pedal-assisted electric bicycle,” is a **bicycle** equipped with a motor that provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling, and that ceases to provide assistance when the bicycle reaches the speed of 20 miles per hour.

(2) A **“class 2 electric bicycle,”** or “low-speed throttle-assisted electric bicycle,” is a **bicycle** equipped with a motor that may be used exclusively to propel the bicycle, and that is not capable of providing assistance when the bicycle reaches the speed of 20 miles per hour.

(3) A **“class 3 electric bicycle,”** or “speed pedal-assisted electric bicycle,” is a **bicycle** equipped with a motor that provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling, and that ceases to provide assistance when the bicycle reaches the speed of 28 miles per hour, and equipped with a speedometer.

(b) A person riding an **electric bicycle**, as defined in this section, is subject to Article 4 (commencing with Section 21200) of Chapter 1 of Division 11.

(c) On and after January 1, 2017, manufacturers and distributors of **electric bicycles** shall apply a label that is permanently affixed, in a prominent location, to each **electric bicycle**. The label shall contain the classification number, top assisted speed, and motor wattage of the **electric bicycle**, and shall be printed in Arial font in at least 9-point type.

(Added by Stats. 2015, Ch. 568, Sec. 1. (AB 1096) Effective January 1, 2016.)

467.5. “Pedicab” means any of the following:

(a) A bicycle, **including an electric bicycle**, that has three or more wheels, that transports, or is capable of transporting, passengers on seats attached to the bicycle, that is operated by a person, and that is being used for transporting passengers for hire.

(b) A bicycle, **including an electric bicycle**, that pulls a trailer, sidecar, or similar device, that transports, or is capable of transporting, passengers on seats attached to the trailer, sidecar, or similar device, that is operated by a person, and that is being used for transporting passengers for hire.

(c) A four-wheeled device that is primarily or exclusively pedal-powered, has a seating capacity for eight or more passengers, cannot travel in excess of 15 miles per hour, and is being used for transporting passengers for hire. A pedicab defined under this subdivision is subject to the requirements of Article 4.5 (commencing with Section 21215) of Chapter 1 of Division 11.

(Amended by Stats. 2021, Ch. 311, Sec. 3. (SB 814) Effective January 1, 2022.)

Operation of Bicycles [21200 - 21213] (Article 4 added by Stats. 1963, Ch. 479.)

21200. (a) A person riding a **bicycle** or operating a pedicab upon a highway has all the rights and is subject to all the provisions applicable to the driver of a vehicle by this division, including, but not limited to, provisions concerning driving under the influence of alcoholic beverages or drugs, and by Division 10 (commencing with Section 20000), Section 27400, Division 16.7 (commencing with Section 39000), Division 17 (commencing with Section 40000.1), and Division 18 (commencing with Section 42000), except those provisions which by their very nature can have no application.

21207.5. (a) Notwithstanding Sections 21207 and 23127 of this code, or any other law, a **motorized bicycle** or **class 3 electric bicycle** shall not be operated on a bicycle path or trail, bikeway, bicycle lane established pursuant to Section 21207, equestrian trail, or hiking or recreational trail, unless it is within or adjacent to a roadway or unless the local authority or the governing body of a public agency having jurisdiction over the path or trail permits, by ordinance, that operation.

(b) The local authority or governing body of a public agency having jurisdiction over a bicycle path or trail, equestrian trail, or hiking or recreational trail, may prohibit, by ordinance, the operation of a class 1 or class 2 electric bicycle on that path or trail.

(Amended by Stats. 2015, Ch. 568, Sec. 5. (AB 1096) Effective January 1, 2016.)

ARTICLE 4. Operation of Bicycles [21200 - 21213] (Article 4 added by Stats. 1963, Ch. 479.)

21213. (a) A person under 16 years of age shall not operate a **class 3 electric bicycle**.

(b) A person shall not operate a **class 3 electric bicycle**, or ride upon a **class 3 electric bicycle** as a passenger, upon a street, bikeway, as defined in Section 890.4 of the Streets and Highways Code, or any other public bicycle path or trail, unless that person is wearing a properly fitted and fastened bicycle helmet that meets the standards of either the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) or the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), or standards subsequently established by those entities. This helmet requirement also applies to a person who rides upon a **class 3 electric bicycle** while in a restraining seat that is attached to the bicycle or in a trailer towed by the bicycle.

(Added by Stats. 2015, Ch. 568, Sec. 6. (AB 1096) Effective January 1, 2016.)

DIVISION 12. EQUIPMENT OF VEHICLES [24000 - 28160] (Division 12 enacted by Stats. 1959, Ch. 3.)

CHAPTER 1. General Provisions [24000 - 24018] (Chapter 1 enacted by Stats. 1959, Ch. 3.)

24016. (a) An **electric bicycle** described in subdivision (a) of Section 312.5 shall meet the following criteria:

(1) Comply with the equipment and manufacturing requirements for bicycles adopted by the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission (16 C.F.R. 1512.1, et seq.).

(2) Operate in a manner so that the electric motor is disengaged or ceases to function when the brakes are applied, or operate in a manner such that the motor is engaged through a switch or mechanism that, when released or activated, will cause the electric motor to disengage or cease to function.

(b) A person operating an **electric bicycle** is **not** subject to the provisions of this code relating to **financial responsibility, driver's licenses, registration, and license plate requirements**, and an **electric bicycle is not a motor vehicle**.

(c) Every manufacturer of an **electric bicycle** shall certify that it complies with the equipment and manufacturing requirements for bicycles adopted by the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission (16 C.F.R. 1512.1, et seq.).

(d) A person shall not tamper with or modify an **electric bicycle** described in subdivision (a) of Section 312.5 so as to change the speed capability of the bicycle, unless he or she appropriately replaces the label indicating the classification required in subdivision (c) of Section 312.5.

(Amended by Stats. 2015, Ch. 568, Sec. 7. (AB 1096) Effective January 1, 2016.)

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