

Bicycle Access Council

Introduction and Primer for reading and researching Pennsylvania Law

The laws that govern all “traffic” are found in the Vehicle Code, which is arranged in Statutes, and is just one of many “Titles” covering areas of law. Other publications, like the PennDOT Driver’s Manual (Pub 95) or the Bicycle Driver’s Manual (Pub 380) are helpful, but should not be relied on as a legal reference.

As edited, the relevant sections of the Vehicle Code, Title 75, are found within different links on this website. Notes and highlights are for emphasis and clarification.

Chapters 31 & 33, 35, 37 and Special Statutes of Interest cover most law relevant to bicyclists. The Crimes Code, Title 18, is also relevant, but not included here.

“Cyclists fare best when they act, and are treated in return, as drivers of vehicles, with the same rights and responsibilities that motorists have.” — John Forester

“Knowing the law makes good citizens and knowing the Vehicle Code makes better bicyclists.” — Joe Stafford



Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes

When new laws or amendments to statutes are passed by the General Assembly, the effective date and Act number will appear following that statute, for example: (Feb. 2, 2012 P.L. 27, No. 3, eff 60 days) is Act 3 of 2012.

A program of codification and compilation of the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania began in 1970 with the enactment of Act 230, approved November 25, 1970, P.L. 707.

The actual work of preparing and editing the statutes is done by the Legislative Reference Bureau. The form and contents of the publication of these statutes is approved by the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives as required by 1 Pa.C.S. § 502.

The Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes may be cited by title number and section number in general as follows: Title number Pa.C.S. § number

How to find and cite a statute

Statutes are arranged by the following system:

TITLES Name and (common name)

TITLE 75 VEHICLES (Vehicle Code)

PARTS: Division of the Title by headings [Roman Numerals]

Part I Preliminary Provisions

Part II Title, Registration and Licensing

Part III Operation of Vehicles

Part IV Vehicle Characteristics

Part V Administration and Enforcement

Part VI Miscellaneous Provisions

ARTICLES: [*not used very often*] e.g., Title 18 [Capital Letters]

CHAPTERS: Division of the Parts by headings [Numbers]

SUBCHAPTERS: Division of Chapters [Capital Letters]

SECTIONS denoted by § [four digits]

SUBSECTIONS are “elements” that follow typical paragraph outline notation using small case letters, numbers and italicized letters.

For example, the “Four Foot Passing Law” would be cited as:
75 Pa.C.S. § 3303(a)(3) as found in Part III, Chapter 33 Rules of the Road

And, “Bikes May Use Full Lane” on two lane, two way roadways:
75 Pa.C.S. § 3301(c)(2)(ii)

And, “Crossing a centerline in a No Passing Zone” to pass a bicyclist:
75 Pa.C.S. §3307(b.1)