TRANSPORTATION CODE
TITLE 7. VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC
SUBTITLE C. RULES OF THE ROAD
CHAPTER 551. OPERATION OF BICYCLES AND MOPEDS, GOLF CARTS, AND
OTHER LOW-POWERED VEHICLES

SUBCHAPTER A. APPLICATION OF CHAPTER

Sec. 551.001. APPLICABILITY. Unless specifically provided otherwise, a provision of this chapter that applies to a person operating a bicycle applies only to a person operating a bicycle on:

(1) a highway; or

(2) a path set aside for the exclusive operation of bicycles.


Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 485 (H.B. 2188), Sec. 3, eff. September 1, 2019.

Sec. 551.002. MOPED AND ELECTRIC BICYCLE INCLUDED. A provision of this subtitle applicable to a bicycle also applies to:

(1) a moped, other than a provision that by its nature cannot apply to a moped; and

(2) an electric bicycle, other than a provision that by its nature cannot apply to an electric bicycle.


SUBCHAPTER B. BICYCLES

Sec. 551.101. RIGHTS AND DUTIES. (a) A person operating a bicycle has the rights and duties applicable to a driver operating a vehicle under this subtitle, unless:

(1) a provision of this chapter alters a right or duty; or

(2) a right or duty applicable to a driver operating a
vehicle cannot by its nature apply to a person operating a bicycle.

(b) A parent of a child or a guardian of a ward may not knowingly permit the child or ward to violate this subtitle.

Sec. 551.102. GENERAL OPERATION. (a) A person operating a bicycle shall ride only on or astride a permanent and regular seat attached to the bicycle.

(b) A person may not use a bicycle to carry more persons than the bicycle is designed or equipped to carry.

(c) A person operating a bicycle may not use the bicycle to carry an object that prevents the person from operating the bicycle with at least one hand on the handlebars of the bicycle.

(d) A person operating a bicycle, coaster, sled, or toy vehicle or using roller skates may not attach either the person or the bicycle, coaster, sled, toy vehicle, or roller skates to a streetcar or vehicle on a roadway.

Sec. 551.103. OPERATION ON ROADWAY. (a) Except as provided by Subsection (b), a person operating a bicycle on a roadway who is moving slower than the other traffic on the roadway shall ride as near as practicable to the right curb or edge of the roadway, unless:

(1) the person is passing another vehicle moving in the same direction;

(2) the person is preparing to turn left at an intersection or onto a private road or driveway;

(3) a condition on or of the roadway, including a fixed or moving object, parked or moving vehicle, pedestrian, animal, or surface hazard prevents the person from safely riding next to the right curb or edge of the roadway; or

(4) the person is operating a bicycle in an outside lane that is:

(A) less than 14 feet in width and does not have a designated bicycle lane adjacent to that lane; or

(B) too narrow for a bicycle and a motor vehicle
to safely travel side by side.

(b) A person operating a bicycle on a one-way roadway with two or more marked traffic lanes may ride as near as practicable to the left curb or edge of the roadway.

(c) Persons operating bicycles on a roadway may ride two abreast. Persons riding two abreast on a laned roadway shall ride in a single lane. Persons riding two abreast may not impede the normal and reasonable flow of traffic on the roadway. Persons may not ride more than two abreast unless they are riding on a part of a roadway set aside for the exclusive operation of bicycles.


Sec. 551.104. SAFETY EQUIPMENT. (a) A person may not operate a bicycle unless the bicycle is equipped with a brake capable of making a braked wheel skid on dry, level, clean pavement.

(b) A person may not operate a bicycle at nighttime unless the bicycle is equipped with:

(1) a lamp on the front of the bicycle that emits a white light visible from a distance of at least 500 feet in front of the bicycle; and

(2) on the rear of the bicycle:

(A) a red reflector that is:

(i) of a type approved by the department; and

(ii) visible when directly in front of lawful upper beams of motor vehicle headlamps from all distances from 50 to 300 feet to the rear of the bicycle; or

(B) a lamp that emits a red light visible from a distance of 500 feet to the rear of the bicycle.


Sec. 551.105. COMPETITIVE RACING. (a) In this section, "bicycle" means a nonmotorized vehicle propelled by human power.
(b) A sponsoring organization may hold a competitive bicycle race on a public road only with the approval of the appropriate local law enforcement agencies.

(c) The local law enforcement agencies and the sponsoring organization may agree on safety regulations governing the movement of bicycles during a competitive race or during training for a competitive race, including the permission for bicycle operators to ride abreast.


Sec. 551.106. REGULATION OF BICYCLES BY DEPARTMENT OR LOCAL AUTHORITY. (a) The department or a local authority may not prohibit the operation of an electric bicycle:

(1) on a highway that is used primarily by motor vehicles; or

(2) in an area in which the operation of a nonelectric bicycle is permitted, unless the area is a path that:

(A) is not open to motor vehicles; and

(B) has a natural surface tread made by clearing and grading the native soil without adding surfacing materials.

(b) The department or a local authority may:

(1) prohibit the operation of a bicycle on a sidewalk; and

(2) establish speed limits for bicycles on paths set aside for the exclusive operation of bicycles and other paths on which bicycles may be operated.

(c) The department may establish rules for the administration of this section if necessary.


Amended by:

Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 485 (H.B. 2188), Sec. 5, eff. September 1, 2019.

Sec. 551.107. OPERATION OF ELECTRIC BICYCLE.

(a) Subtitles A, B, and D and Chapter 663 do not apply to the operation of an electric bicycle.
(b) A person may not operate an electric bicycle unless the electric motor disengages or ceases to function either:

(1) when the operator stops pedaling; or

(2) when the brakes are applied.

(c) A person may not operate a Class 3 electric bicycle, as defined by Section 664.001, unless the person is at least 15 years of age. This subsection does not prohibit a person who is under 15 years of age from riding on a Class 3 bicycle as a passenger.

Added by Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 485 (H.B. 2188), Sec. 6, eff. September 1, 2019.

SUBCHAPTER C. ELECTRIC PERSONAL ASSISTIVE MOBILITY DEVICES

Sec. 551.201. DEFINITION. In this subchapter, "electric personal assistive mobility device" means a two non-tandem wheeled device designed for transporting one person that is:

(1) self-balancing; and

(2) propelled by an electric propulsion system with an average power of 750 watts or one horsepower.

Added by Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 1318, Sec. 5, eff. Sept. 1, 2003.

Sec. 551.202. OPERATION ON ROADWAY. (a) A person may operate an electric personal assistive mobility device on a residential street, roadway, or public highway with a speed limit of 30 miles per hour or less only:

(1) while making a direct crossing of a highway in a marked or unmarked crosswalk;

(2) where no sidewalk is available; or

(3) when so directed by a traffic control device or by a law enforcement officer.

(b) A person may operate an electric personal assistive mobility device on a path set aside for the exclusive operation of bicycles.

(c) Any person operating an electric personal assistive mobility device on a residential street, roadway, or public highway shall ride as close as practicable to the right-hand edge.

(d) Except as otherwise provided by this section,
provisions of this title applicable to the operation of bicycles apply to the operation of electric personal assistive mobility devices.
Added by Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 1318, Sec. 5, eff. Sept. 1, 2003.

Sec. 551.203. SIDEWALKS. A person may operate an electric personal assistive mobility device on a sidewalk.
Added by Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 1318, Sec. 5, eff. Sept. 1, 2003.

SUBCHAPTER D. NEIGHBORHOOD ELECTRIC VEHICLES

Sec. 551.301. DEFINITION. In this subchapter, "neighborhood electric vehicle" means a vehicle that can attain a maximum speed of 35 miles per hour on a paved level surface and otherwise complies with Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 500 (49 C.F.R. Section 571.500).
Amended by:
Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 281 (H.B. 2702), Sec. 2.86, eff. June 14, 2005.
Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 1242 (H.B. 1596), Sec. 2, eff. June 18, 2005.
Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 722 (S.B. 129), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2009.
Reenacted by Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 91 (S.B. 1303), Sec. 24.014, eff. September 1, 2011.

Sec. 551.302. REGISTRATION. The Texas Department of Motor Vehicles may adopt rules relating to the registration and issuance of license plates to neighborhood electric vehicles.
Added by Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 1320, Sec. 7, eff. Sept. 1, 2003.
Amended by:
Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 933 (H.B. 3097), Sec. 21.01, eff. September 1, 2009.

Sec. 551.303. OPERATION ON ROADWAYS. (a) A neighborhood
electric vehicle may be operated only on a street or highway for which the posted speed limit is 45 miles per hour or less. A neighborhood electric vehicle may cross a road or street at an intersection where the road or street has a posted speed limit of more than 45 miles per hour. A neighborhood electric vehicle may not be operated on a street or highway at a speed that exceeds the lesser of:

1. the posted speed limit; or
2. 35 miles per hour.

(b) A county or municipality may prohibit the operation of a neighborhood electric vehicle on a street or highway if the governing body of the county or municipality determines that the prohibition is necessary in the interest of safety.

(c) The Texas Department of Transportation may prohibit the operation of a neighborhood electric vehicle on a highway if that department determines that the prohibition is necessary in the interest of safety.

Added by Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 1320, Sec. 7, eff. Sept. 1, 2003. Amended by:

Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 722 (S.B. 129), Sec. 2, eff. September 1, 2009.

Sec. 551.304. LIMITED OPERATION. (a) An operator may operate a neighborhood electric vehicle:

1. in a master planned community:
   (A) that has in place a uniform set of restrictive covenants; and
   (B) for which a county or municipality has approved a plat;

2. on a public or private beach; or

3. on a public highway for which the posted speed limit is not more than 35 miles per hour, if the neighborhood electric vehicle is operated:
   (A) during the daytime; and
   (B) not more than two miles from the location where the neighborhood electric vehicle is usually parked and for transportation to or from a golf course.
(b) A person is not required to register a neighborhood electric vehicle operated in compliance with this section. Added by Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., Ch. 1135 (H.B. 2741), Sec. 94, eff. September 1, 2013.

SUBCHAPTER E. MOTOR-ASSISTED SCOOTERS

Sec. 551.351. DEFINITIONS. In this subchapter:

(1) "Motor-assisted scooter":
(A) means a self-propelled device with:
   (i) at least two wheels in contact with the ground during operation;
   (ii) a braking system capable of stopping the device under typical operating conditions;
   (iii) a gas or electric motor not exceeding 40 cubic centimeters;
   (iv) a deck designed to allow a person to stand or sit while operating the device; and
   (v) the ability to be propelled by human power alone; and
(B) does not include a pocket bike or a minimotorbike.

(2) "Pocket bike or minimotorbike" means a self-propelled vehicle that is equipped with an electric motor or internal combustion engine having a piston displacement of less than 50 cubic centimeters, is designed to propel itself with not more than two wheels in contact with the ground, has a seat or saddle for the use of the operator, is not designed for use on a highway, and is ineligible for a certificate of title under Chapter 501. The term does not include:
   (A) a moped or motorcycle;
   (B) an electric bicycle;
   (C) a motorized mobility device, as defined by Section 552A.0101;
   (D) an electric personal assistive mobility device, as defined by Section 551.201; or
   (E) a neighborhood electric vehicle, as defined
Sec. 551.352. OPERATION ON ROADWAYS OR SIDEWALKS. (a) A motor-assisted scooter may be operated only on a street or highway for which the posted speed limit is 35 miles per hour or less. The motor-assisted scooter may cross a road or street at an intersection where the road or street has a posted speed limit of more than 35 miles per hour.

(b) A county or municipality may prohibit the operation of a motor-assisted scooter on a street, highway, or sidewalk if the governing body of the county or municipality determines that the prohibition is necessary in the interest of safety.

(c) The department may prohibit the operation of a motor-assisted scooter on a highway if it determines that the prohibition is necessary in the interest of safety.

(d) A person may operate a motor-assisted scooter on a path set aside for the exclusive operation of bicycles or on a sidewalk. Except as otherwise provided by this section, a provision of this title applicable to the operation of a bicycle applies to the operation of a motor-assisted scooter.

(e) A provision of this title applicable to a motor vehicle does not apply to a motor-assisted scooter.

Added by Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 1242 (H.B. 1596), Sec. 3, eff. June 18, 2005.

Amended by:

Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 91 (S.B. 1303), Sec. 24.015, eff. September 1, 2011.

Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 612 (S.B. 969), Sec. 5, eff. June 10, 2019.

Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 882 (H.B. 3171), Sec. 2.18, eff. September 1, 2019.
highway, road, or street;
(2) path set aside for the exclusive operation of bicycles; or
(3) sidewalk.

Transferred and redesignated from Transportation Code, Section 551.304 by Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 91 (S.B. 1303), Sec. 27.001(64), eff. September 1, 2011.

SUBCHAPTER F. GOLF CARTS

Sec. 551.401. DEFINITION. In this subchapter, "golf cart" means a motor vehicle designed by the manufacturer primarily for use on a golf course.

Added by Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 1136 (H.B. 2553), Sec. 10, eff. September 1, 2009.

Amended by:
Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 1296 (H.B. 2357), Sec. 239, eff. January 1, 2012.
Acts 2017, 85th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1052 (H.B. 1956), Sec. 22(1), eff. September 1, 2017.
Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1233 (H.B. 1548), Sec. 16, eff. June 14, 2019.

Sec. 551.402. REGISTRATION NOT AUTHORIZED; LICENSE PLATES.
(a) The Texas Department of Motor Vehicles may not register a golf cart for operation on a highway regardless of whether any alteration has been made to the golf cart.

(b) A person may operate a golf cart on a highway in a manner authorized by this subchapter only if the vehicle displays a license plate issued under this section.

(c) The Texas Department of Motor Vehicles:
(1) shall by rule establish a procedure to issue license plates for golf carts; and
(2) may charge a fee not to exceed $10 for the cost of the license plate, to be deposited to the credit of the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles fund.

(d) A golf cart license plate does not expire. A person who
becomes the owner of a golf cart for which the previous owner obtained a license plate may not use the previous owner's license plate.

Added by Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 1136 (H.B. 2553), Sec. 10, eff. September 1, 2009.

Amended by:

Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., Ch. 877 (H.B. 719), Sec. 1, eff. June 14, 2013.

Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., Ch. 1135 (H.B. 2741), Sec. 95, eff. September 1, 2013.

Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1233 (H.B. 1548), Sec. 17, eff. June 14, 2019.

Sec. 551.403. OPERATION AUTHORIZED IN CERTAIN AREAS. An operator may operate a golf cart:

(1) in a master planned community:
   (A) that has in place a uniform set of restrictive covenants; and
   (B) for which a county or municipality has approved a plat;

(2) on a public or private beach that is open to vehicular traffic; or

(3) on a highway for which the posted speed limit is not more than 35 miles per hour, if the golf cart is operated:
   (A) during the daytime; and
   (B) not more than two miles from the location where the golf cart is usually parked and for transportation to or from a golf course.

Added by Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 1136 (H.B. 2553), Sec. 10, eff. September 1, 2009.

Amended by:

Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1233 (H.B. 1548), Sec. 18, eff. June 14, 2019.

Sec. 551.4031. PROHIBITION OF OPERATION ON HIGHWAY BY MUNICIPALITY, COUNTY, OR DEPARTMENT. (a) A county or municipality may prohibit the operation of a golf cart on a highway under Section
if the governing body of the county or municipality determines that the prohibition is necessary in the interest of safety.

(b) The Texas Department of Transportation may prohibit the operation of a golf cart on a highway under Section 551.404 if the department determines that the prohibition is necessary in the interest of safety.

Added by Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1233 (H.B. 1548), Sec. 18, eff. June 14, 2019.

Sec. 551.404. OPERATION ON HIGHWAY AUTHORIZED BY MUNICIPALITY OR CERTAIN COUNTIES. (a) In addition to the operation authorized by Section 551.403, the governing body of a municipality may allow an operator to operate a golf cart on all or part of a highway that:

(1) is in the corporate boundaries of the municipality; and

(2) has a posted speed limit of not more than 35 miles per hour.

(b) In addition to the operation authorized by Section 551.403, the commissioners court of a county described by Subsection (c) may allow an operator to operate a golf cart on all or part of a highway that:

(1) is located in the unincorporated area of the county; and

(2) has a speed limit of not more than 35 miles per hour.

(c) Subsection (b) applies only to a county that:

(1) borders or contains a portion of the Red River;

(2) borders or contains a portion of the Guadalupe River and contains a part of a barrier island that borders the Gulf of Mexico; or

(3) is adjacent to a county described by Subdivision (2) and:

(A) has a population of less than 37,000; and

(B) contains a part of a barrier island or peninsula that borders the Gulf of Mexico.
Sec. 551.4041. EQUIPMENT. A golf cart operated under Section 551.404 must have the following equipment:

(1) headlamps;
(2) taillamps;
(3) reflectors;
(4) parking brake; and
(5) mirrors.

Added by Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1233 (H.B. 1548), Sec. 19, eff. June 14, 2019.

Sec. 551.405. CROSSING INTERSECTIONS. A golf cart may cross a highway at an intersection, including an intersection with a highway that has a posted speed limit of more than 35 miles per hour.

Added by Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 1136 (H.B. 2553), Sec. 10, eff. September 1, 2009.

Amended by:

Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1233 (H.B. 1548), Sec. 20, eff. June 14, 2019.
Sec. 551.452. LICENSE PLATES FOR PACKAGE DELIVERY VEHICLES.  
(a) The Texas Department of Motor Vehicles may issue distinguishing license plates for a vehicle operated by a motor carrier for the purpose of picking up and delivering mail, parcels, and packages if the vehicle:

(1) is a golf cart, a neighborhood electric vehicle, or an off-highway vehicle; and

(2) is equipped with headlamps, taillamps, reflectors, a parking brake, and mirrors, in addition to any other equipment required by law.

(b) The Texas Department of Motor Vehicles by rule shall establish a procedure to issue the license plates to be used only for operation in accordance with this subchapter.
(c) The license plates must include the words "Package Delivery."

(d) The Texas Department of Motor Vehicles may charge a license plate fee not to exceed $25 annually to be deposited to the credit of the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles fund.

Added by Acts 2017, 85th Leg., R.S., Ch. 119 (H.B. 561), Sec. 1, eff. May 26, 2017.

Amended by:

Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1233 (H.B. 1548), Sec. 22, eff. June 14, 2019.

Sec. 551.453. LIMITED OPERATION. (a) A motor carrier may operate, for the purpose of picking up or delivering mail, parcels, or packages, a vehicle bearing license plates issued under Section 551.452 on a public highway that is not an interstate or a limited-access or controlled-access highway and that has a speed limit of not more than 35 miles per hour.

(b) The Department of Motor Vehicles may not require the registration of a vehicle operated under Subsection (a) unless the registration is required by other law.

Added by Acts 2017, 85th Leg., R.S., Ch. 119 (H.B. 561), Sec. 1, eff. May 26, 2017.

Sec. 551.454. OPERATION ON PROPERTY OF SUBDIVISION OR CONDOMINIUM. (a) In this section:

(1) "Condominium" has the meaning assigned by Section 82.003, Property Code.

(2) "Declaration" has the meaning assigned by Section 82.003, Property Code.

(3) "Property owners' association" has the meaning assigned by Section 202.001, Property Code.

(4) "Restrictions" has the meaning assigned by Section 209.002, Property Code.

(5) "Subdivision" has the meaning assigned by Section 209.002, Property Code.

(b) A property owners' association may adopt reasonable safety and use rules for the operation, for the purpose of picking
up or delivering mail, parcels, or packages, of a vehicle bearing license plates issued under Section 551.452 on the property of a subdivision or condominium managed or regulated by the association.

(c) A motor carrier may operate, for the purpose of picking up or delivering mail, parcels, or packages, a vehicle bearing license plates issued under Section 551.452 on the property of a subdivision subject to restrictions or a condominium that has in place a declaration, in a manner that complies with any applicable rules adopted by a property owners' association that manages or regulates the subdivision or condominium.

Added by Acts 2017, 85th Leg., R.S., Ch. 119 (H.B. 561), Sec. 1, eff. May 26, 2017.

Sec. 551.455. OPERATION IN MUNICIPALITIES AND COUNTIES.

(a) In addition to the operation authorized by Sections 551.453 and 551.454, the governing body of a municipality may allow a motor carrier to operate, for the purpose of picking up or delivering mail, parcels, or packages, a vehicle bearing license plates issued under Section 551.452 on all or part of a public highway that:

(1) is in the corporate boundaries of the municipality; and

(2) has a speed limit of not more than 35 miles per hour.

(b) In addition to the operation authorized by Sections 551.453 and 551.454, a county commissioners court may allow a motor carrier to operate, for the purpose of picking up or delivering mail, parcels, or packages, a vehicle bearing license plates issued under Section 551.452 on all or part of a public highway that:

(1) is located in the unincorporated area of the county; and

(2) has a speed limit of not more than 35 miles per hour.

Added by Acts 2017, 85th Leg., R.S., Ch. 119 (H.B. 561), Sec. 1, eff. May 26, 2017.

Sec. 551.456. CROSSING CERTAIN ROADWAYS. A vehicle bearing license plates issued under Section 551.452 may cross
intersections, including on or through a road or street that has a speed limit of more than 35 miles per hour.

Added by Acts 2017, 85th Leg., R.S., Ch. 119 (H.B. 561), Sec. 1, eff. May 26, 2017.

Sec. 551.457. CONFLICTS. In the case of a conflict between this subchapter and other law, including Chapters 502 and 551A, this subchapter controls.

Added by Acts 2017, 85th Leg., R.S., Ch. 119 (H.B. 561), Sec. 1, eff. May 26, 2017.

Amended by:

Acts 2019, 86th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1233 (H.B. 1548), Sec. 23, eff. June 14, 2019.