



Ohio Revised Code

Section 4501.01 Motor vehicles definitions.

Effective: July 1, 2015

Legislation: House Bill 53 - 131st General Assembly

As used in this chapter and Chapters 4503., 4505., 4507., 4509., 4510., 4511., 4513., 4515., and 4517. of the Revised Code, and in the penal laws, except as otherwise provided:

(A) "Vehicles" means everything on wheels or runners, including motorized bicycles, but does not mean electric personal assistive mobility devices, vehicles that are operated exclusively on rails or tracks or from overhead electric trolley wires, and vehicles that belong to any police department, municipal fire department, or volunteer fire department, or that are used by such a department in the discharge of its functions.

(B) "Motor vehicle" means any vehicle, including mobile homes and recreational vehicles, that is propelled or drawn by power other than muscular power or power collected from overhead electric trolley wires. "Motor vehicle" does not include utility vehicles as defined in division (VV) of this section, motorized bicycles, road rollers, traction engines, power shovels, power cranes, and other equipment used in construction work and not designed for or employed in general highway transportation, well-drilling machinery, ditch-digging machinery, farm machinery, and trailers that are designed and used exclusively to transport a boat between a place of storage and a marina, or in and around a marina, when drawn or towed on a public road or highway for a distance of no more than ten miles and at a speed of twenty-five miles per hour or less.

(C) "Agricultural tractor" and "traction engine" mean any self-propelling vehicle that is designed or used for drawing other vehicles or wheeled machinery, but has no provisions for carrying loads independently of such other vehicles, and that is used principally for agricultural purposes.

(D) "Commercial tractor," except as defined in division (C) of this section, means any motor vehicle that has motive power and either is designed or used for drawing other motor vehicles, or is designed or used for drawing another motor vehicle while carrying a portion of the other motor vehicle or its load, or both.



(E) "Passenger car" means any motor vehicle that is designed and used for carrying not more than nine persons and includes any motor vehicle that is designed and used for carrying not more than fifteen persons in a ridesharing arrangement.

(F) "Collector's vehicle" means any motor vehicle or agricultural tractor or traction engine that is of special interest, that has a fair market value of one hundred dollars or more, whether operable or not, and that is owned, operated, collected, preserved, restored, maintained, or used essentially as a collector's item, leisure pursuit, or investment, but not as the owner's principal means of transportation. "Licensed collector's vehicle" means a collector's vehicle, other than an agricultural tractor or traction engine, that displays current, valid license tags issued under section 4503.45 of the Revised Code, or a similar type of motor vehicle that displays current, valid license tags issued under substantially equivalent provisions in the laws of other states.

(G) "Historical motor vehicle" means any motor vehicle that is over twenty-five years old and is owned solely as a collector's item and for participation in club activities, exhibitions, tours, parades, and similar uses, but that in no event is used for general transportation.

(H) "Noncommercial motor vehicle" means any motor vehicle, including a farm truck as defined in section 4503.04 of the Revised Code, that is designed by the manufacturer to carry a load of no more than one ton and is used exclusively for purposes other than engaging in business for profit.

(I) "Bus" means any motor vehicle that has motor power and is designed and used for carrying more than nine passengers, except any motor vehicle that is designed and used for carrying not more than fifteen passengers in a ridesharing arrangement.

(J) "Commercial car" or "truck" means any motor vehicle that has motor power and is designed and used for carrying merchandise or freight, or that is used as a commercial tractor.

(K) "Bicycle" means every device, other than a device that is designed solely for use as a play vehicle by a child, that is propelled solely by human power upon which a person may ride, and that has two or more wheels, any of which is more than fourteen inches in diameter.

(L) "Motorized bicycle" means any vehicle that either has two tandem wheels or one wheel in the



front and two wheels in the rear, that is capable of being pedaled, and that is equipped with a helper motor of not more than fifty cubic centimeters piston displacement that produces no more than one brake horsepower and is capable of propelling the vehicle at a speed of no greater than twenty miles per hour on a level surface.

(M) "Trailer" means any vehicle without motive power that is designed or used for carrying property or persons wholly on its own structure and for being drawn by a motor vehicle, and includes any such vehicle that is formed by or operated as a combination of a semitrailer and a vehicle of the dolly type such as that commonly known as a trailer dolly, a vehicle used to transport agricultural produce or agricultural production materials between a local place of storage or supply and the farm when drawn or towed on a public road or highway at a speed greater than twenty-five miles per hour, and a vehicle that is designed and used exclusively to transport a boat between a place of storage and a marina, or in and around a marina, when drawn or towed on a public road or highway for a distance of more than ten miles or at a speed of more than twenty-five miles per hour. "Trailer" does not include a manufactured home or travel trailer.

(N) "Noncommercial trailer" means any trailer, except a travel trailer or trailer that is used to transport a boat as described in division (B) of this section, but, where applicable, includes a vehicle that is used to transport a boat as described in division (M) of this section, that has a gross weight of no more than ten thousand pounds, and that is used exclusively for purposes other than engaging in business for a profit, such as the transportation of personal items for personal or recreational purposes.

(O) "Mobile home" means a building unit or assembly of closed construction that is fabricated in an off-site facility, is more than thirty-five body feet in length or, when erected on site, is three hundred twenty or more square feet, is built on a permanent chassis, is transportable in one or more sections, and does not qualify as a manufactured home as defined in division (C)(4) of section 3781.06 of the Revised Code or as an industrialized unit as defined in division (C)(3) of section 3781.06 of the Revised Code.

(P) "Semitrailer" means any vehicle of the trailer type that does not have motive power and is so designed or used with another and separate motor vehicle that in operation a part of its own weight or that of its load, or both, rests upon and is carried by the other vehicle furnishing the motive power



for propelling itself and the vehicle referred to in this division, and includes, for the purpose only of registration and taxation under those chapters, any vehicle of the dolly type, such as a trailer dolly, that is designed or used for the conversion of a semitrailer into a trailer.

(Q) "Recreational vehicle" means a vehicular portable structure that meets all of the following conditions:

- (1) It is designed for the sole purpose of recreational travel.
- (2) It is not used for the purpose of engaging in business for profit.
- (3) It is not used for the purpose of engaging in intrastate commerce.
- (4) It is not used for the purpose of commerce as defined in 49 C.F.R. 383.5, as amended.
- (5) It is not regulated by the public utilities commission pursuant to Chapter 4905., 4921., or 4923. of the Revised Code.
- (6) It is classed as one of the following:
 - (a) "Travel trailer" means a nonself-propelled recreational vehicle that does not exceed an overall length of thirty-five feet, exclusive of bumper and tongue or coupling, and contains less than three hundred twenty square feet of space when erected on site. "Travel trailer" includes a tent-type fold-out camping trailer as defined in section 4517.01 of the Revised Code.
 - (b) "Motor home" means a self-propelled recreational vehicle that has no fifth wheel and is constructed with permanently installed facilities for cold storage, cooking and consuming of food, and for sleeping.
 - (c) "Truck camper" means a nonself-propelled recreational vehicle that does not have wheels for road use and is designed to be placed upon and attached to a motor vehicle. "Truck camper" does not include truck covers that consist of walls and a roof, but do not have floors and facilities enabling them to be used as a dwelling.



(d) "Fifth wheel trailer" means a vehicle that is of such size and weight as to be movable without a special highway permit, that has a gross trailer area of four hundred square feet or less, that is constructed with a raised forward section that allows a bi-level floor plan, and that is designed to be towed by a vehicle equipped with a fifth-wheel hitch ordinarily installed in the bed of a truck.

(e) "Park trailer" means a vehicle that is commonly known as a park model recreational vehicle, meets the American national standard institute standard A119.5 (1988) for park trailers, is built on a single chassis, has a gross trailer area of four hundred square feet or less when set up, is designed for seasonal or temporary living quarters, and may be connected to utilities necessary for the operation of installed features and appliances.

(R) "Pneumatic tires" means tires of rubber and fabric or tires of similar material, that are inflated with air.

(S) "Solid tires" means tires of rubber or similar elastic material that are not dependent upon confined air for support of the load.

(T) "Solid tire vehicle" means any vehicle that is equipped with two or more solid tires.

(U) "Farm machinery" means all machines and tools that are used in the production, harvesting, and care of farm products, and includes trailers that are used to transport agricultural produce or agricultural production materials between a local place of storage or supply and the farm, agricultural tractors, threshing machinery, hay-baling machinery, corn shellers, hammermills, and machinery used in the production of horticultural, agricultural, and vegetable products.

(V) "Owner" includes any person or firm, other than a manufacturer or dealer, that has title to a motor vehicle, except that, in sections 4505.01 to 4505.19 of the Revised Code, "owner" includes in addition manufacturers and dealers.

(W) "Manufacturer" and "dealer" include all persons and firms that are regularly engaged in the business of manufacturing, selling, displaying, offering for sale, or dealing in motor vehicles, at an established place of business that is used exclusively for the purpose of manufacturing, selling,



displaying, offering for sale, or dealing in motor vehicles. A place of business that is used for manufacturing, selling, displaying, offering for sale, or dealing in motor vehicles shall be deemed to be used exclusively for those purposes even though snowmobiles or all-purpose vehicles are sold or displayed for sale thereat, even though farm machinery is sold or displayed for sale thereat, or even though repair, accessory, gasoline and oil, storage, parts, service, or paint departments are maintained thereat, or, in any county having a population of less than seventy-five thousand at the last federal census, even though a department in a place of business is used to dismantle, salvage, or rebuild motor vehicles by means of used parts, if such departments are operated for the purpose of furthering and assisting in the business of manufacturing, selling, displaying, offering for sale, or dealing in motor vehicles. Places of business or departments in a place of business used to dismantle, salvage, or rebuild motor vehicles by means of using used parts are not considered as being maintained for the purpose of assisting or furthering the manufacturing, selling, displaying, and offering for sale or dealing in motor vehicles.

(X) "Operator" includes any person who drives or operates a motor vehicle upon the public highways.

(Y) "Chauffeur" means any operator who operates a motor vehicle, other than a taxicab, as an employee for hire; or any operator whether or not the owner of a motor vehicle, other than a taxicab, who operates such vehicle for transporting, for gain, compensation, or profit, either persons or property owned by another. Any operator of a motor vehicle who is voluntarily involved in a ridesharing arrangement is not considered an employee for hire or operating such vehicle for gain, compensation, or profit.

(Z) "State" includes the territories and federal districts of the United States, and the provinces of Canada.

(AA) "Public roads and highways" for vehicles includes all public thoroughfares, bridges, and culverts.

(BB) "Manufacturer's number" means the manufacturer's original serial number that is affixed to or imprinted upon the chassis or other part of the motor vehicle.



(CC) "Motor number" means the manufacturer's original number that is affixed to or imprinted upon the engine or motor of the vehicle.

(DD) "Distributor" means any person who is authorized by a motor vehicle manufacturer to distribute new motor vehicles to licensed motor vehicle dealers at an established place of business that is used exclusively for the purpose of distributing new motor vehicles to licensed motor vehicle dealers, except when the distributor also is a new motor vehicle dealer, in which case the distributor may distribute at the location of the distributor's licensed dealership.

(EE) "Ridesharing arrangement" means the transportation of persons in a motor vehicle where the transportation is incidental to another purpose of a volunteer driver and includes ridesharing arrangements known as carpools, vanpools, and buspools.

(FF) "Apportionable vehicle" means any vehicle that is used or intended for use in two or more international registration plan member jurisdictions that allocate or proportionally register vehicles, that is used for the transportation of persons for hire or designed, used, or maintained primarily for the transportation of property, and that meets any of the following qualifications:

- (1) Is a power unit having a gross vehicle weight in excess of twenty-six thousand pounds;
- (2) Is a power unit having three or more axles, regardless of the gross vehicle weight;
- (3) Is a combination vehicle with a gross vehicle weight in excess of twenty-six thousand pounds.

"Apportionable vehicle" does not include recreational vehicles, vehicles displaying restricted plates, city pick-up and delivery vehicles, or vehicles owned and operated by the United States, this state, or any political subdivisions thereof.

(GG) "Chartered party" means a group of persons who contract as a group to acquire the exclusive use of a passenger-carrying motor vehicle at a fixed charge for the vehicle in accordance with the carrier's tariff, lawfully on file with the United States department of transportation, for the purpose of group travel to a specified destination or for a particular itinerary, either agreed upon in advance or modified by the chartered group after having left the place of origin.



(HH) "International registration plan" means a reciprocal agreement of member jurisdictions that is endorsed by the American association of motor vehicle administrators, and that promotes and encourages the fullest possible use of the highway system by authorizing apportioned registration of fleets of vehicles and recognizing registration of vehicles apportioned in member jurisdictions.

(II) "Restricted plate" means a license plate that has a restriction of time, geographic area, mileage, or commodity, and includes license plates issued to farm trucks under division (J) of section 4503.04 of the Revised Code.

(JJ) "Gross vehicle weight," with regard to any commercial car, trailer, semitrailer, or bus that is taxed at the rates established under section 4503.042 or 4503.65 of the Revised Code, means the unladen weight of the vehicle fully equipped plus the maximum weight of the load to be carried on the vehicle.

(KK) "Combined gross vehicle weight" with regard to any combination of a commercial car, trailer, and semitrailer, that is taxed at the rates established under section 4503.042 or 4503.65 of the Revised Code, means the total unladen weight of the combination of vehicles fully equipped plus the maximum weight of the load to be carried on that combination of vehicles.

(LL) "Chauffeured limousine" means a motor vehicle that is designed to carry nine or fewer passengers and is operated for hire pursuant to a prearranged contract for the transportation of passengers on public roads and highways along a route under the control of the person hiring the vehicle and not over a defined and regular route. "Prearranged contract" means an agreement, made in advance of boarding, to provide transportation from a specific location in a chauffeured limousine. "Chauffeured limousine" does not include any vehicle that is used exclusively in the business of funeral directing.

(MM) "Manufactured home" has the same meaning as in division (C)(4) of section 3781.06 of the Revised Code.

(NN) "Acquired situs," with respect to a manufactured home or a mobile home, means to become located in this state by the placement of the home on real property, but does not include the



placement of a manufactured home or a mobile home in the inventory of a new motor vehicle dealer or the inventory of a manufacturer, remanufacturer, or distributor of manufactured or mobile homes.

(OO) "Electronic" includes electrical, digital, magnetic, optical, electromagnetic, or any other form of technology that entails capabilities similar to these technologies.

(PP) "Electronic record" means a record generated, communicated, received, or stored by electronic means for use in an information system or for transmission from one information system to another.

(QQ) "Electronic signature" means a signature in electronic form attached to or logically associated with an electronic record.

(RR) "Financial transaction device" has the same meaning as in division (A) of section 113.40 of the Revised Code.

(SS) "Electronic motor vehicle dealer" means a motor vehicle dealer licensed under Chapter 4517. of the Revised Code whom the registrar of motor vehicles determines meets the criteria designated in section 4503.035 of the Revised Code for electronic motor vehicle dealers and designates as an electronic motor vehicle dealer under that section.

(TT) "Electric personal assistive mobility device" means a self-balancing two non-tandem wheeled device that is designed to transport only one person, has an electric propulsion system of an average of seven hundred fifty watts, and when ridden on a paved level surface by an operator who weighs one hundred seventy pounds has a maximum speed of less than twenty miles per hour.

(UU) "Limited driving privileges" means the privilege to operate a motor vehicle that a court grants under section 4510.021 of the Revised Code to a person whose driver's or commercial driver's license or permit or nonresident operating privilege has been suspended.

(VV) "Utility vehicle" means a self-propelled vehicle designed with a bed, principally for the purpose of transporting material or cargo in connection with construction, agricultural, forestry, grounds maintenance, lawn and garden, materials handling, or similar activities. "Utility vehicle" includes a vehicle with a maximum attainable speed of twenty miles per hour or less that is used



exclusively within the boundaries of state parks by state park employees or volunteers for the operation or maintenance of state park facilities.

(WW) "Motorcycle" means a motor vehicle with motive power having a seat or saddle for the use of the operator, designed to travel on not more than three wheels in contact with the ground, and having no occupant compartment top or occupant compartment top that can be installed or removed by the user.

(XX) "Cab-enclosed motorcycle" means a motor vehicle with motive power having a seat or saddle for the use of the operator, designed to travel on not more than three wheels in contact with the ground, and having an occupant compartment top or an occupant compartment top that is installed.

The Legislative Service Commission presents the text of this section as a composite of the section as amended by multiple acts of the General Assembly. This presentation recognizes the principle stated in R.C. 1.52(B) that amendments are to be harmonized if reasonably capable of simultaneous operation.