



Ohio Revised Code

Section 4511.01 Traffic laws - operation of motor vehicles definitions.

Effective: July 1, 2015

Legislation: House Bill 53 - 131st General Assembly

As used in this chapter and in Chapter 4513. of the Revised Code:

(A) "Vehicle" means every device, including a motorized bicycle, in, upon, or by which any person or property may be transported or drawn upon a highway, except that "vehicle" does not include any motorized wheelchair, any electric personal assistive mobility device, any device that is moved by power collected from overhead electric trolley wires or that is used exclusively upon stationary rails or tracks, or any device, other than a bicycle, that is moved by human power.

(B) "Motor vehicle" means every vehicle propelled or drawn by power other than muscular power or power collected from overhead electric trolley wires, except 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, hole-digging machinery, well-drilling machinery, ditch-digging machinery, farm machinery, and trailers 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 street or highway for a distance of no more than ten miles and at a speed of twenty-five miles per hour or less.

(C) "Motorcycle" means every motor vehicle, other than a tractor, having a seat or saddle for the use of the operator and designed to travel on not more than three wheels in contact with the ground, including, but not limited to, motor vehicles known as "motor-driven cycle," "motor scooter," "cab-enclosed motorcycle," or "motorcycle" without regard to weight or brake horsepower.

(D) "Emergency vehicle" means emergency vehicles of municipal, township, or county departments or public utility corporations when identified as such as required by law, the director of public safety, or local authorities, and motor vehicles when commandeered by a police officer.

(E) "Public safety vehicle" means any of the following:



(1) Ambulances, including private ambulance companies under contract to a municipal corporation, township, or county, and private ambulances and nontransport vehicles bearing license plates issued under section 4503.49 of the Revised Code;

(2) Motor vehicles used by public law enforcement officers or other persons sworn to enforce the criminal and traffic laws of the state;

(3) Any motor vehicle when properly identified as required by the director of public safety, when used in response to fire emergency calls or to provide emergency medical service to ill or injured persons, and when operated by a duly qualified person who is a member of a volunteer rescue service or a volunteer fire department, and who is on duty pursuant to the rules or directives of that service. The state fire marshal shall be designated by the director of public safety as the certifying agency for all public safety vehicles described in division (E)(3) of this section.

(4) Vehicles used by fire departments, including motor vehicles when used by volunteer fire fighters responding to emergency calls in the fire department service when identified as required by the director of public safety.

Any vehicle used to transport or provide emergency medical service to an ill or injured person, when certified as a public safety vehicle, shall be considered a public safety vehicle when transporting an ill or injured person to a hospital regardless of whether such vehicle has already passed a hospital.

(5) Vehicles used by the motor carrier enforcement unit for the enforcement of orders and rules of the public utilities commission as specified in section 5503.34 of the Revised Code.

(F) "School bus" means every bus designed for carrying more than nine passengers that is owned by a public, private, or governmental agency or institution of learning and operated for the transportation of children to or from a school session or a school function, or owned by a private person and operated for compensation for the transportation of children to or from a school session or a school function, provided "school bus" does not include a bus operated by a municipally owned transportation system, a mass transit company operating exclusively within the territorial limits of a municipal corporation, or within such limits and the territorial limits of municipal corporations immediately contiguous to such municipal corporation, nor a common passenger carrier certified by



the public utilities commission unless such bus is devoted exclusively to the transportation of children to and from a school session or a school function, and "school bus" does not include a van or bus used by a licensed child day-care center or type A family day-care home to transport children from the child day-care center or type A family day-care home to a school if the van or bus does not have more than fifteen children in the van or bus at any time.

(G) "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.

(H)(1) Until January 1, 2017, "motorized bicycle" means any vehicle having either two tandem wheels or one wheel in the front and two wheels in the rear, that is capable of being pedaled and 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.

(2) Effective January 1, 2017, "motorized bicycle" or "moped" means any vehicle having either two tandem wheels or one wheel in the front and two wheels in the rear, that may be pedaled, and that is equipped with a helper motor of not more than fifty cubic centimeters piston displacement that produces not more than one brake horsepower and is capable of propelling the vehicle at a speed of not greater than twenty miles per hour on a level surface.

(I) "Commercial tractor" means every motor vehicle having motive power designed or used for drawing other vehicles and not so constructed as to carry any load thereon, or designed or used for drawing other vehicles while carrying a portion of such other vehicles, or load thereon, or both.

(J) "Agricultural tractor" means every self-propelling vehicle designed or used for drawing other vehicles or wheeled machinery but having no provision for carrying loads independently of such other vehicles, and used principally for agricultural purposes.

(K) "Truck" means every motor vehicle, except trailers and semitrailers, designed and used to carry property.



(L) "Bus" means every motor vehicle designed for carrying more than nine passengers and used for the transportation of persons other than in a ridesharing arrangement, and every motor vehicle, automobile for hire, or funeral car, other than a taxicab or motor vehicle used in a ridesharing arrangement, designed and used for the transportation of persons for compensation.

(M) "Trailer" means every vehicle designed or used for carrying persons or property wholly on its own structure and for being drawn by a motor vehicle, including any such vehicle when 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 street or highway at a speed greater than twenty-five miles per hour, and a vehicle 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 street or highway for a distance of more than ten miles or at a speed of more than twenty-five miles per hour.

(N) "Semitrailer" means every vehicle designed or used for carrying persons or property with another and separate motor vehicle so that in operation a part of its own weight or that of its load, or both, rests upon and is carried by another vehicle.

(O) "Pole trailer" means every trailer or semitrailer attached to the towing vehicle by means of a reach, pole, or by being boomed or otherwise secured to the towing vehicle, and ordinarily used for transporting long or irregular shaped loads such as poles, pipes, or structural members capable, generally, of sustaining themselves as beams between the supporting connections.

(P) "Railroad" means a carrier of persons or property operating upon rails placed principally on a private right-of-way.

(Q) "Railroad train" means a steam engine or an electric or other motor, with or without cars coupled thereto, operated by a railroad.

(R) "Streetcar" means a car, other than a railroad train, for transporting persons or property, operated upon rails principally within a street or highway.



(S) "Trackless trolley" means every car that collects its power from overhead electric trolley wires and that is not operated upon rails or tracks.

(T) "Explosives" means any chemical compound or mechanical mixture that is intended for the purpose of producing an explosion that contains any oxidizing and combustible units or other ingredients in such proportions, quantities, or packing that an ignition by fire, by friction, by concussion, by percussion, or by a detonator of any part of the compound or mixture may cause such a sudden generation of highly heated gases that the resultant gaseous pressures are capable of producing destructive effects on contiguous objects, or of destroying life or limb. Manufactured articles shall not be held to be explosives when the individual units contain explosives in such limited quantities, of such nature, or in such packing, that it is impossible to procure a simultaneous or a destructive explosion of such units, to the injury of life, limb, or property by fire, by friction, by concussion, by percussion, or by a detonator, such as fixed ammunition for small arms, firecrackers, or safety fuse matches.

(U) "Flammable liquid" means any liquid that has a flash point of seventy degrees fahrenheit, or less, as determined by a tagliabue or equivalent closed cup test device.

(V) "Gross weight" means the weight of a vehicle plus the weight of any load thereon.

(W) "Person" means every natural person, firm, co-partnership, association, or corporation.

(X) "Pedestrian" means any natural person afoot.

(Y) "Driver or operator" means every person who drives or is in actual physical control of a vehicle, trackless trolley, or streetcar.

(Z) "Police officer" means every officer authorized to direct or regulate traffic, or to make arrests for violations of traffic regulations.

(AA) "Local authorities" means every county, municipal, and other local board or body having authority to adopt police regulations under the constitution and laws of this state.



(BB) "Street" or "highway" means the entire width between the boundary lines of every way open to the use of the public as a thoroughfare for purposes of vehicular travel.

(CC) "Controlled-access highway" means every street or highway in respect to which owners or occupants of abutting lands and other persons have no legal right of access to or from the same except at such points only and in such manner as may be determined by the public authority having jurisdiction over such street or highway.

(DD) "Private road or driveway" means every way or place in private ownership used for vehicular travel by the owner and those having express or implied permission from the owner but not by other persons.

(EE) "Roadway" means that portion of a highway improved, designed, or ordinarily used for vehicular travel, except the berm or shoulder. If a highway includes two or more separate roadways the term "roadway" means any such roadway separately but not all such roadways collectively.

(FF) "Sidewalk" means that portion of a street between the curb lines, or the lateral lines of a roadway, and the adjacent property lines, intended for the use of pedestrians.

(GG) "Laned highway" means a highway the roadway of which is divided into two or more clearly marked lanes for vehicular traffic.

(HH) "Through highway" means every street or highway as provided in section 4511.65 of the Revised Code.

(II) "State highway" means a highway under the jurisdiction of the department of transportation, outside the limits of municipal corporations, provided that the authority conferred upon the director of transportation in section 5511.01 of the Revised Code to erect state highway route markers and signs directing traffic shall not be modified by sections 4511.01 to 4511.79 and 4511.99 of the Revised Code.

(JJ) "State route" means every highway that is designated with an official state route number and so marked.



(KK) "Intersection" means:

(1) The area embraced within the prolongation or connection of the lateral curb lines, or, if none, the lateral boundary lines of the roadways of two highways that join one another at, or approximately at, right angles, or the area within which vehicles traveling upon different highways that join at any other angle might come into conflict. The junction of an alley or driveway with a roadway or highway does not constitute an intersection unless the roadway or highway at the junction is controlled by a traffic control device.

(2) If a highway includes two roadways that are thirty feet or more apart, then every crossing of each roadway of such divided highway by an intersecting highway constitutes a separate intersection. If both intersecting highways include two roadways thirty feet or more apart, then every crossing of any two roadways of such highways constitutes a separate intersection.

(3) At a location controlled by a traffic control signal, regardless of the distance between the separate intersections as described in division (KK)(2) of this section:

(a) If a stop line, yield line, or crosswalk has not been designated on the roadway within the median between the separate intersections, the two intersections and the roadway and median constitute one intersection.

(b) Where a stop line, yield line, or crosswalk line is designated on the roadway on the intersection approach, the area within the crosswalk and any area beyond the designated stop line or yield line constitute part of the intersection.

(c) Where a crosswalk is designated on a roadway on the departure from the intersection, the intersection includes the area that extends to the far side of the crosswalk.

(LL) "Crosswalk" means:

(1) That part of a roadway at intersections ordinarily included within the real or projected prolongation of property lines and curb lines or, in the absence of curbs, the edges of the traversable



roadway;

(2) Any portion of a roadway at an intersection or elsewhere, distinctly indicated for pedestrian crossing by lines or other markings on the surface;

(3) Notwithstanding divisions (LL)(1) and (2) of this section, there shall not be a crosswalk where local authorities have placed signs indicating no crossing.

(MM) "Safety zone" means the area or space officially set apart within a roadway for the exclusive use of pedestrians and protected or marked or indicated by adequate signs as to be plainly visible at all times.

(NN) "Business district" means the territory fronting upon a street or highway, including the street or highway, between successive intersections within municipal corporations where fifty per cent or more of the frontage between such successive intersections is occupied by buildings in use for business, or within or outside municipal corporations where fifty per cent or more of the frontage for a distance of three hundred feet or more is occupied by buildings in use for business, and the character of such territory is indicated by official traffic control devices.

(OO) "Residence district" means the territory, not comprising a business district, fronting on a street or highway, including the street or highway, where, for a distance of three hundred feet or more, the frontage is improved with residences or residences and buildings in use for business.

(PP) "Urban district" means the territory contiguous to and including any street or highway which is built up with structures devoted to business, industry, or dwelling houses situated at intervals of less than one hundred feet for a distance of a quarter of a mile or more, and the character of such territory is indicated by official traffic control devices.

(QQ) "Traffic control device" means a flagger, sign, signal, marking, or other device used to regulate, warn, or guide traffic, placed on, over, or adjacent to a street, highway, private road open to public travel, pedestrian facility, or shared-use path by authority of a public agency or official having jurisdiction, or, in the case of a private road open to public travel, by authority of the private owner or private official having jurisdiction.



(RR) "Traffic control signal" means any highway traffic signal by which traffic is alternately directed to stop and permitted to proceed.

(SS) "Railroad sign or signal" means any sign, signal, or device erected by authority of a public body or official or by a railroad and intended to give notice of the presence of railroad tracks or the approach of a railroad train.

(TT) "Traffic" means pedestrians, ridden or herded animals, vehicles, streetcars, trackless trolleys, and other devices, either singly or together, while using for purposes of travel any highway or private road open to public travel.

(UU) "Right-of-way" means either of the following, as the context requires:

(1) The right of a vehicle, streetcar, trackless trolley, or pedestrian to proceed uninterruptedly in a lawful manner in the direction in which it or the individual is moving in preference to another vehicle, streetcar, trackless trolley, or pedestrian approaching from a different direction into its or the individual's path;

(2) A general term denoting land, property, or the interest therein, usually in the configuration of a strip, acquired for or devoted to transportation purposes. When used in this context, right-of-way includes the roadway, shoulders or berm, ditch, and slopes extending to the right-of-way limits under the control of the state or local authority.

(VV) "Rural mail delivery vehicle" means every vehicle used to deliver United States mail on a rural mail delivery route.

(WW) "Funeral escort vehicle" means any motor vehicle, including a funeral hearse, while used to facilitate the movement of a funeral procession.

(XX) "Alley" means a street or highway intended to provide access to the rear or side of lots or buildings in urban districts and not intended for the purpose of through vehicular traffic, and includes any street or highway that has been declared an "alley" by the legislative authority of the municipal



corporation in which such street or highway is located.

(YY) "Freeway" means a divided multi-lane highway for through traffic with all crossroads separated in grade and with full control of access.

(ZZ) "Expressway" means a divided arterial highway for through traffic with full or partial control of access with an excess of fifty per cent of all crossroads separated in grade.

(AAA) "Thruway" means a through highway whose entire roadway is reserved for through traffic and on which roadway parking is prohibited.

(BBB) "Stop intersection" means any intersection at one or more entrances of which stop signs are erected.

(CCC) "Arterial street" means any United States or state numbered route, controlled access highway, or other major radial or circumferential street or highway designated by local authorities within their respective jurisdictions as part of a major arterial system of streets or highways.

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

(EEE) "Motorized wheelchair" means any self-propelled vehicle designed for, and used by, a handicapped person and that is incapable of a speed in excess of eight miles per hour.

(FFF) "Child day-care center" and "type A family day-care home" have the same meanings as in section 5104.01 of the Revised Code.

(GGG) "Multi-wheel agricultural tractor" means a type of agricultural tractor that has two or more wheels or tires on each side of one axle at the rear of the tractor, is designed or used for drawing other vehicles or wheeled machinery, has no provision for carrying loads independently of the drawn vehicles or machinery, and is used principally for agricultural purposes.



(HHH) "Operate" means to cause or have caused movement of a vehicle, streetcar, or trackless trolley.

(III) "Predicate motor vehicle or traffic offense" means any of the following:

(1) A violation of section 4511.03, 4511.051, 4511.12, 4511.132, 4511.16, 4511.20, 4511.201, 4511.21, 4511.211, 4511.213, 4511.22, 4511.23, 4511.25, 4511.26, 4511.27, 4511.28, 4511.29, 4511.30, 4511.31, 4511.32, 4511.33, 4511.34, 4511.35, 4511.36, 4511.37, 4511.38, 4511.39, 4511.40, 4511.41, 4511.42, 4511.43, 4511.431, 4511.432, 4511.44, 4511.441, 4511.451, 4511.452, 4511.46, 4511.47, 4511.48, 4511.481, 4511.49, 4511.50, 4511.511, 4511.53, 4511.54, 4511.55, 4511.56, 4511.57, 4511.58, 4511.59, 4511.60, 4511.61, 4511.64, 4511.66, 4511.661, 4511.68, 4511.70, 4511.701, 4511.71, 4511.711, 4511.712, 4511.713, 4511.72, 4511.73, 4511.763, 4511.771, 4511.78, or 4511.84 of the Revised Code;

(2) A violation of division (A)(2) of section 4511.17, divisions (A) to (D) of section 4511.51, or division (A) of section 4511.74 of the Revised Code;

(3) A violation of any provision of sections 4511.01 to 4511.76 of the Revised Code for which no penalty otherwise is provided in the section that contains the provision violated;

(4) Until January 1, 2017, a violation of a municipal ordinance that is substantially similar to any section or provision set forth or described in division (III)(1), (2), or (3) of this section;

(5) Effective January 1, 2017, a violation of section 4511.214 of the Revised Code;

(6) Effective January 1, 2017, a violation of a municipal ordinance that is substantially similar to any section or provision set forth or described in division (III)(1), (2), (3), or (5) of this section.

(JJJ) "Road service vehicle" means wreckers, utility repair vehicles, and state, county, and municipal service vehicles equipped with visual signals by means of flashing, rotating, or oscillating lights.

(KKK) "Beacon" means a highway traffic signal with one or more signal sections that operate in a flashing mode.



(LLL) "Hybrid beacon" means a type of beacon that is intentionally placed in a dark mode between periods of operation where no indications are displayed and, when in operation, displays both steady and flashing traffic control signal indications.

(MMM) "Highway traffic signal" means a power-operated traffic control device by which traffic is warned or directed to take some specific action. "Highway traffic signal" does not include a power-operated sign, steadily illuminated pavement marker, warning light, or steady burning electric lamp.

(NNN) "Median" means the area between two roadways of a divided highway, measured from edge of traveled way to edge of traveled way, but excluding turn lanes. The width of a median may be different between intersections, between interchanges, and at opposite approaches of the same intersection.

(OOO) "Private road open to public travel" means a private toll road or road, including any adjacent sidewalks that generally run parallel to the road, within a shopping center, airport, sports arena, or other similar business or recreation facility that is privately owned but where the public is allowed to travel without access restrictions. "Private road open to public travel" includes a gated toll road but does not include a road within a private gated property where access is restricted at all times, a parking area, a driving aisle within a parking area, or a private grade crossing.

(PPP) "Shared-use path" means a bikeway outside the traveled way and physically separated from motorized vehicular traffic by an open space or barrier and either within the highway right-of-way or within an independent alignment. A shared-use path also may be used by pedestrians, including skaters, joggers, users of manual and motorized wheelchairs, and other authorized motorized and non-motorized users.

(QQQ) "Highway maintenance vehicle" means a vehicle used in snow and ice removal or road surface maintenance, including a snow plow, traffic line striper, road sweeper, mowing machine, asphalt distributing vehicle, or other such vehicle designed for use in specific highway maintenance activities.