

Texas requirements for motorcycle license, helmet law, safety inspection and insurance

Obtaining a motorcycle license (class M)

Contact local Driver License office for additional requirements

<http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/DriverLicense/motorcycleLicense.htm>

- First time license; motorcycle only
 - motorcycle safety course
 - car written test; only test with questions about signs and rules of the road
 - motorcycle road test; since no car road test taken, proof of driving competency must be shown
 - 15-17 year olds - Classroom phase of Teen Driver Education course; behind-the-wheel phase not required
 - 18-24 year olds - Adult Driver Education course; if Teen Driver Education course is taken, only classroom phase is required; behind-the-wheel phase not required
- Adding motorcycle license to car permit

Note: the car permit for a minor must have been issued with the completion of the classroom phase of a Teen Driver Education Course

 - motorcycle safety course
 - motorcycle road test; since no car road test taken, proof of driving competency must be shown
- Adding motorcycle license to car license
 - motorcycle safety course
 - motorcycle road test if under 18; DL office *may* waive motorcycle road test if 18 or over

Note: applicants requesting Moped restriction (K) are not exempt from the motorcycle written test at DL office. Read the Motorcycle Operator's Manual to study for test.

Personal gear requirements

- Helmet law requires both driver and passenger to wear a helmet with two exceptions. Must be 21 or older AND
 - Can show proof of successful completion of an MSF basic or advanced motorcycle safety course
 - OR
 - Can show proof of health insurance plan that provides benefits for health care services or for medical or surgical expenses incurred as a result of an accident while operating or riding on a motorcycle
- No other personal gear is required *by the state*, i.e. eye protection, jacket, reflective vest, gloves, footwear
- Note: military personnel have specific gear requirements other than listed above

Motorcycle equipment requirements

1. Horn
2. Mirror
3. Steering
4. Brakes (system)
5. Tires
6. Wheel Assembly
7. Exhaust System
8. Tail Lamp (1)
9. Stop Lamp (1)
10. License Plate Lamp
11. Rear Red Reflector (1)
12. Head Lamp (1)
13. Motor, Serial, or Vehicle Identification Number

Note: although not an inspectionable item, Malorie's Law states that if a motorcycle is designed to carry more than one person then it must be equipped with footrests and handholds for use by the passenger.

Insurance requirements

- Minimum liability coverage (30/60/25)
 - \$30,000 for bodily injury to or death of one person in one accident
 - \$60,000 for bodily injury to or death of two or more persons in one accident
 - \$25,000 for damage to or destruction of property of others in one accident

CONSEQUENCES FOR IMPAIRED RIDING (LEGAL, SOCIAL, PERSONAL, ECONOMIC)

TxDPS MOTORCYCLE OPERATOR'S MANUAL page 46

ALCOHOL AND THE LAW

It is against the law to operate a motor vehicle while intoxicated. In Texas, a person with a Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) of .08 percent or more is legally intoxicated. Texas' Zero Tolerance for Minors law make it illegal for persons under 21 to operate a motor vehicle (motorcycle) with **ANY** detectable amount of alcohol in his or her system in a public place. Doing so constitutes a criminal offense of (Driving Under the Influence of Alcohol by a Minor).

Consequences of a DWI Arrest

Texas, like most other states, has strengthened DWI laws in recent years resulting in little tolerance for drinking and driving. Years ago, DWI offenders may have been required to pay a fine and attend an alcohol awareness class. Today a person arrested for DWI may experience the following on a first offense:

- The humiliation of an arrest, being fingerprinted and videotaped as you perform sobriety tests at the police station
- Spending the night in jail with violent offenders
- Posting a cash bond of \$500 or more or paying a bonding fee for jail release
- Having your motorcycle carried away by a wrecker and paying a towing fee to get the vehicle out of impound
- Explaining what happened to your family and employer and interrupting your life for court appearances and visits to a probation officer
- Paying legal fees to an attorney
- Undergoing an alcohol or drug dependency evaluation

Possible Consequences of a DWI Conviction

- Driver license and/or driving privilege suspension for up to two years under the Administrative License Revocation Program
- Driver License and/or driving privilege suspended by the court for up to one year for the first conviction and up to two years for subsequent convictions
- Fines up to \$2,000 for the first conviction and up to \$10,000 for subsequent convictions
- Court costs starting at \$70
- Annual surcharges for three years of \$1,000 for the first conviction, \$1,500 for subsequent convictions and \$2,000 if your BAC is at least twice the legal limit
- Jail sentence ranging from 72 hours to ten years or you may be eligible for probation for a first offense
- Weekly visits to your probation officer
- Community service requirements
- DWI education/rehabilitation program attendance
- Increased insurance rates and requirements
- Legal defense fees
- Driver and criminal record entries that may follow you for life