

ALABAMA BICYCLE LAWS

Section 32-5A-260: Traffic laws apply to persons riding bicycles. *(Acts 1980, No. 80-434, p. 604, §12-102.)*

Every person riding a bicycle upon a roadway shall be granted all of the rights and shall be subject to all of the duties applicable to the driver of a vehicle by this chapter, except as to special regulations in this article and except as to those provisions of this chapter which by their nature can have no application.

Section 32-5A-261: Riding on bicycles. *(Acts 1980, No. 80-434, p. 604, §12-103.)*

(a) A person propelling a bicycle shall not ride other than upon or astride a permanent and regular seat attached thereto.

(b) No bicycle shall be used to carry more persons at one time than the number for which it is designed and equipped.

Section 32-5A-262: Clinging to vehicles. *(Acts 1980, No. 80-434, p. 604, §12-104.)*

No person riding upon any bicycle, coaster, roller skates, sled or toy vehicle shall attach the same or himself to any vehicle upon a roadway.

Section 32-5A-263: Riding on roadways and bicycle paths. *(Acts 1980, No. 80-434, p. 604, §12-105.)*

(a) Every person operating a bicycle upon a roadway shall ride as near to the right side of the roadway as practicable, exercising due care when passing a standing vehicle or one proceeding in the same direction.

(b) Persons riding bicycles upon a roadway shall not ride more than two abreast except on paths or parts of roadways set aside for the exclusive use of bicycles.

(c) Wherever a usable path for bicycles has been provided adjacent to a roadway, bicycle riders shall use such path and shall not use the roadway.

Section 32-5A-264: Carrying articles. *(Acts 1980, No. 80-434, p. 604, §12-106.)*

No person operating a bicycle shall carry any package, bundle or article which prevents the driver from keeping at least one hand upon the handlebars.

Section 32-5A-265: Lamps and other equipment on bicycles. *(Acts 1980, No. 80-434, p. 604, §12-107.)*

(a) Every bicycle when in use at nighttime shall be equipped with a lamp on the front which shall emit a white light visible from a distance of at least 500 feet to the front and with a red reflector on the rear of a type approved by the department which shall be visible from all distances from 100 feet to 600 feet to the rear when directly in front of lawful lower beams of head lamps on a motor vehicle. A lamp emitting a red light visible from a distance of 500 feet to the rear may be used in addition to the red reflector.

(b) Every bicycle shall be equipped with a brake which will enable the operator to make the braked wheels skid on dry, level, clean pavement.

Section 32-5A-266: Violations of article as misdemeanor; responsibility of parent or guardian; applicability of article. (Acts 1980, No. 80-434, p. 604, §12-101.)

- (a) It is a misdemeanor for any person to do any act forbidden or fail to perform any act required in this article.
- (b) The parent of any child and the guardian of any ward shall not authorize or knowingly permit any such child or ward to violate any of the provisions of this chapter.
- (c) These regulations applicable to bicycles shall apply whenever a bicycle is operated upon any highway or upon any path set aside for the exclusive use of bicycles subject to those exceptions stated herein.

Section 32-5A-280: Short title. (Acts 1995, No. 95-198, p. 306, §1.)

This article shall be known and may be cited as the "Brad Hudson-Alabama Bicycle Safety Act of 1995."

Section 32-5A-281: Definitions. (Acts 1995, No. 95-198, p. 306, §2.)

As used in this article, the following words shall have the following meanings:

- (1) BICYCLE. A human-powered vehicle with two wheels in tandem design to transport by the act of pedaling one or more persons seated on one or more saddle seats on its frame. "Bicycle" includes, but is not limited to, a human-powered vehicle designed to transport by the act of pedaling which has more than two wheels when the vehicle is used on a public roadway, public bicycle path, or other public road or right-of-way, but does not include a tricycle.
- (2) OPERATOR. A person who travels on a bicycle seated on a saddle seat from which that person is intended to and can pedal the bicycle.
- (3) OTHER PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAY. Any right-of-way other than a public roadway or public bicycle path that is under the jurisdiction and control of the state or a local political subdivision thereof.
- (4) PASSENGER. Any person who travels on a bicycle in any manner except as an operator.
- (5) PROTECTIVE BICYCLE HELMET. A piece of headgear which meets or exceeds the impact standard for protective bicycle helmets set by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) or the Snell Memorial Foundation, or which is otherwise approved by the Alabama Department of Public Safety.
- (6) PUBLIC BICYCLE PATH. A right-of-way under the jurisdiction and control of the state, or a local political subdivision thereof, for use primarily by bicyclists and pedestrians.
- (7) PUBLIC ROADWAY. A right-of-way under the jurisdiction and control of the state or a local political subdivision thereof for use primarily by motor vehicular traffic.
- (8) RESTRAINING SEAT. A seat separate from the saddle seat of the operator of the bicycle or a bicycle trailer or similar product that is fastened securely to the frame of the bicycle and is adequately equipped to restrain the passenger in the seat and protect the passenger from the moving parts of the bicycle.
- (9) TRICYCLE. A three-wheeled human-powered vehicle designed for use by a child under the age of six.

Section 32-5A-282: Purpose. (*Acts 1995, No. 95-198, p. 306, §3.*)

The purpose of this article is to reduce the incidence of disability and death resulting from injuries incurred in bicycling accidents by requiring that, while riding on a bicycle on public roadways, public bicycle paths, or other public rights-of-way, all operators and passengers who are under 16 years of age to wear approved protective bicycle helmets, and by requiring that all bicycle passengers who weigh less than 40 pounds or are less than 40 inches in height be seated in separate restraining seats.

Section 32-5A-283: Unlawful for person to use bicycle under certain conditions. (*Acts 1995, No. 95-198, p. 306, §4.*)

It is unlawful for any person to use a bicycle on a public roadway, public bicycle path, other public rights-of-way, state, city, or county public park under any one of the following conditions:

- (1) For any person under the age of 16 years to operate or be a passenger on a bicycle unless at all times the person wears a protective bicycle helmet of good fit, fastened securely upon the head with the straps of the helmet.
- (2) For any person to operate a bicycle with a passenger who weighs less than 40 pounds or is less than 40 inches in height unless the passenger is properly seated in and adequately secured in a restraining seat.
- (3) For any parent or legal guardian of a person under the age of 16 years to knowingly permit the person to operate or be a passenger on a bicycle in violation of subdivision (1) or (2).

Section 32-5A-284: Duties of person regularly engaged in business of renting bicycles. (*Acts 1995, No. 95-198, p. 306, §5.*)

(a) A person regularly engaged in the business of renting bicycles shall require each person seeking to rent a bicycle to provide his or her signature either on the rental form or on a separate form indicating both of the following:

- (1) Receipt of a written explanation of the provisions of this article and the penalties for violations.
 - (2) A statement concerning whether a person under the age of 16 years will operate the bicycle in an area where the use of a helmet is required.
- (b) A person regularly engaged in the business of renting bicycles shall provide a helmet to any person who will operate the bicycle in an area requiring a helmet, if the person does not already have a helmet in his or her possession. A reasonable fee may be charged for the helmet rental.
- (c) A person regularly engaged in the business of selling or renting bicycles who complies with this article shall not be liable in a civil action for damages for any physical injuries sustained by a bicycle operator or passenger as a result of the operator's or passenger's failure to wear a helmet or to wear a properly fitted or fastened helmet in violation of this article.

Section 32-5A-285: Statewide bicycle safety education program; manner violations handled. (*Acts 1995, No. 95-198, p. 306, §6.*)

It is the legislative intent to implement an effective statewide bicycle safety education program to reduce disability and death resulting from improper or unsafe bicycle operation. Violations of Section 32-5A-283 shall be handled in the following manner:

(1) On the first offense, the police officer shall counsel and provide written information to the child relative to bicycle helmet safety. The officer shall instruct the child to deliver the written information to the parent.

(2) On the second offense, the police officer shall counsel the child and provide written information on bicycle helmet safety. A warning citation shall be issued to the child to give to the parent. The citation shall instruct the parent or guardian to contact the police department for further information about the law and where to obtain a bicycle helmet.

(3) Beginning on July 1, 1996, upon a third offense, the police officer shall counsel the child, confiscate the bicycle, and take the child to his or her residence. The officer shall then return the bicycle and give a warning ticket to the parent or guardian. If the parent or guardian is unavailable, the ticket shall be left at the residence with instructions to the parent or guardian to pick up the bicycle at the police department.

(4) Beginning on July 1, 1996, upon a fourth offense, the police officer shall confiscate the bicycle, take the child to his or her residence, whereupon a citation for fifty dollars (\$50) will be issued to the parent or guardian of the child. No court costs nor fees may be added to the fine or penalty. The fine or penalty shall be waived or suspended if the operator or passenger presents by the court date, proof of purchase or evidence of having provided a protective bicycle helmet or restraining seat and intends to use or causes to be used or intends to cause to be used the helmet as provided by law.

(5) Any fine or penalty monies shall be earmarked and used separately by the local school system for the purpose of safety education or the local municipality for the purchase of helmets for the financially disadvantaged.

(6) The Traffic Safety Center of the University of Montevallo, in conjunction with the Child Safety Institute at Children's Hospital of Alabama, shall furnish all materials, handouts, brochures, and other information related to bicycle safety used by police departments.

Section 32-5A-286: Establishment of more comprehensive bicycle safety program by ordinance. (*Acts 1995, No. 95-198, p. 306, §7.*)

A municipality may establish a more comprehensive bicycle safety program than that imposed by this article by local ordinance.