

INFORMATION BULLETIN



May 27, 2026

ELECTRIC BICYCLES AND OTHER DEVICES

GENERAL

Electric bicycles continue to increase in popularity and can be found on roadways and communities across California. Electric bicycles can quickly achieve speed with minimal to moderate physical effort, which can pose safety risks.

Additionally, some electric devices resemble electric bicycles; however, they do not fit the definition. A new vehicle definition for an off-highway electric motorcycle (e-moto) was added to the California Vehicle Code (CVC), effective January 1, 2026. These e-motos are prohibited on public roadways and are required to be registered as off-highway vehicles.

Vehicles that cannot be registered or issued identification numbers cannot be legally operated on-highway or off-highway. The operation of these vehicles is limited to private lands.

NOTE: This bulletin only references CVC requirements. Some counties, cities, and local authorities may have specific ordinances and/or resolutions.

DEFINITIONS

Section 231 CVC, Bicycle: A device upon which a person may ride, propelled exclusively by human power, except as provided in Section 312.5, through a belt, chain, or gears, and having one or more wheels. A person riding a bicycle is subject to the provisions of this code specified in Sections 21200 and 21200.5. An electric bicycle is a bicycle.

Section 312.5 CVC, Electric Bicycles: A bicycle equipped with fully operable pedals and an electric motor that does not exceed 750 watts. There are three classifications:

- **Class 1** or “low-speed pedal- assisted.”
 - Motor only provides assistance when the rider is pedaling.



- Not capable of exclusively propelling the bicycle, with the exception of a start assistance or “walk mode.”
- Ceases providing assistance when the bicycle speed reaches 20 mph.
- Not capable of providing assistance to reach speeds greater than 20 mph.
- **Class 2** or “low-speed throttle- assisted.”
 - Motor that may be used exclusively to propel the bicycle.
 - Not capable of providing assistance when the bicycle speed reaches 20 mph.
- **Class 3** or “speed pedal- assisted.”
 - Motor that provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling.
 - Ceases providing assistance when the bicycle speed reaches 28 mph.
 - Equipped with a speedometer.

Class 1 and Class 3 may have start assistance or a “walk mode” that propels the electric bicycle on motor power alone, up to a maximum speed of 3.7 mph.

The following vehicles are not electric bicycles:

- A vehicle with two or three wheels powered by an electric motor that is intended by the manufacturer to be modifiable to attain a speed greater than 20 mph on motor power alone or to attain more than 750 watts of power.
- A vehicle modified to attain a speed greater than 20 mph on motor power alone or to have motor power of more than 750 watts.
- A vehicle that is modified to have its operable pedals removed.

Section 415(a) CVC, Motor Vehicle: A vehicle that is self-propelled.

Section 436.1 CVC, Off-Highway Electric Motorcycle or eMoto: A two-wheeled, off-highway motorcycle that is designed by the manufacturer for operation primarily off-highway, is powered by an electric motor, has handlebars for steering control, has a straddle seat provided by the manufacturer, and is not equipped with pedals from the manufacturer.

Section 24016(b) CVC: An electric bicycle is not a motor vehicle.



CALIFORNIA VEHICLE CODE LAWS

Section 21200 CVC: A person riding a bicycle has all the rights and responsibilities of a driver of a vehicle.

Section 21201(f) CVC: Electric bicycles are required to have a red reflector or a solid or flashing red light with a built-in reflector on the rear, visible for 500 feet, during all hours.

Section 21207.5 CVC: Electric bicycles of all classifications can be ridden anywhere a bicycle can be ridden with the following exceptions:

- The local authority or governing body of a public agency that has jurisdiction over an equestrian trail, or hiking or recreational trail, may prohibit, by ordinance, the operation of an electric bicycle or any class of electric bicycle on that trail.
- The Department of Parks and Recreation may prohibit the operation of an electric bicycle or any class of electric bicycle on any bicycle path or trail within the department's jurisdiction.

Section 21213(a) CVC: A person under 16 years of age shall not operate a Class 3 electric bicycle.

Section 21213(b) CVC: Helmets are required for all operators and passengers of Class 3 electric bicycles, regardless of age.

Section 22651.08(a)(1) CVC: A peace officer may remove a vehicle located within the territorial limits in which the officer may act when a person is operating a vehicle with fewer than four wheels that does not meet the definition of an electric bicycle in Section 312.5 CVC, and is both powered by an electric motor capable of exclusively propelling the vehicle in excess of 20 mph on a highway and operated by an operator who is not licensed to operate the vehicle.

Section 22651.08(a)(2) CVC: A peace officer may remove a vehicle located within the territorial limits in which the officer may act when a person is operating a vehicle that is a Class 3 electric bicycle in violation of subdivision (a) of Section 21213 CVC.

Section 22651.08(c) CVC: An agency shall release a seized vehicle to the owner, violator, or their agent after a minimum of 48 hours if the owner, violator, or authorized agent's request is made during normal business hours, and the applicable removal, seizure, and storage costs have been paid.

Section 22651.08(d) CVC: An agency may require the owner, violator, or the parent or legal guardian of the owner or violator to deliver proof that the violator has completed an electric bicycle safety and training program, as described in Section 894 of the Streets and Highways Code, or a related local bicycle safety course, if one is available, as prescribed by authorities in the local jurisdiction.



Section 24016(a) CVC: Electric bicycles must comply with the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission equipment and manufacturing requirements for bicycles. The electric motor must disengage or cease to function when the brakes are applied, or the motor be engaged through a switch or mechanism that, when released or activated, will cause the electric motor to disengage or cease to function.

Section 24016(b) CVC: Insurance, a driver's license, registration, and license plates are not required for riding an electric bicycle.

Section 24016(c) CVC: Manufacturers must certify that an electric bicycle complies with the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission equipment and manufacturing requirements for bicycles.

Section 24016(d) CVC: Tampering with or modifying an electric bicycle to change the speed capability is prohibited unless the person appropriately replaces the manufacturer's label indicating the new classification. Electric bicycles must continue to meet the definition of an electric bicycle after being modified.

Section 24016(e) CVC: It is illegal to sell a product, application, or device, that can modify an electric bicycle's speed capability so it no longer meets the definition of an electric bicycle.

Section 38010 CVC: Off-highway electric motorcycles are subject to identification as an off-highway vehicle.

NOTE: Off-highway electric motorcycles operated upon a highway may be in violation of:

Section 4000(a)(1) CVC: Unregistered motor vehicle.

Section 12500(b) CVC: No valid M1 driver's license endorsement.

Section 16028(a) CVC: No insurance.

VEHICLE TYPE CODES

The following is a list of vehicle type codes that should be referenced when documenting crashes or issuing citations:

- 02: Motorcycle
- 03: Motor Driven Cycle
- 04: Bicycle
- 05: Motorized Bicycle or Moped
- 90: Off-Highway Electric Motorcycle (eMoto)
- 91: Electric Bicycle (Class 1, 2, or 3)



- 93: Electrically Motorized Board
- 94: Go-Ped® ZIP-Style Electric Scooter, Motorboard
- 95: Miscellaneous Non-Motor Vehicle
- 96: Miscellaneous Motor Vehicle (Snowmobile, Golf Cart, Pocket Bike)
- 97: Low-Speed Vehicle

ONLINE BICYCLE SAFETY TRAINING

On August 15, 2022, Governor Gavin Newsom signed Assembly Bill (AB) 1946 into law. Authored by Assembly Member Tasha Boerner, AB 1946 requires the California Highway Patrol to develop statewide safety and training programs based on evidence-based practices for users of electric bicycles (e-bikes), including, but not limited to, general e-bike riding safety, emergency maneuver skills, rules of the road, and laws pertaining to e-bikes.

Online training can be found at [Electric Bicycle Training and Safety](#).

POLICY

Highway Patrol Manual 100.68, Traffic Enforcement Policy Manual, Chapter 4, Enforcement Guidelines—Other Modes of Transportation, provides direction regarding electric bicycles, motorized bicycles/mopeds, motorized scooters, pocket bikes/miniature motorcycles, off-highway motor vehicles, and other modes of transportation.

Commanders should develop Standard Operating Procedures for removing electric bicycles, off-highway electric motorcycles, and undefined electric vehicles. A tow truck may be called to impound a Class 3 electric bicycle, motorized bicycle, moped, off-highway electric motorcycle, or undefined electric vehicle pursuant to Section 22651.08 CVC.

NOTE: Electric bicycles, off-highway electric motorcycles, and undefined electric vehicles contain various types of lithium-ion batteries, which are potential fire hazards. Damaged or improperly charged batteries are susceptible to thermal runaway, which can result in a sudden and severe fire. Commanders should consider these concerns before storing these battery powered devices at Area offices.

Questions regarding the contents of this Information Bulletin may be directed to Field Support Section at (916) 843-3470.

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

OPI: 065



**Class 1 and Class 2
E - Bike**



**California Vehicle Code (CVC)
Definition:**

312.5 CVC:

A pedal or throttle-assisted electric bicycle equipped with a motor that assists only up to a speed of 20 MPH.

RIDER REQUIREMENTS:

- A license is not required.
- A helmet is required if under 18 per 21212 CVC.
- May ride wherever a traditional bike may ride 21200 CVC.
- No minimum age to ride.

PENALTIES:

- Helmet citation if applicable.
- Right of way citation for improper riding.
- Impound for violations under Ceres Municipal Code.

**Off-Highway Motorcycle
(Dirtbike)**



**California Vehicle Code (CVC)
Definition:**

436 CVC:

- A motorcycle for use exclusively off the highway
- Electric and/or gas powered

RIDER REQUIREMENTS:

- This vehicle is not street legal.
- DOT-compliant helmet required.
- You can only ride at off-highway vehicle parks or on private property.
- You cannot ride on any public property including parks, sidewalks, or roadways.
- Must be registered with the DMV and have adequate vehicle insurance.

PENALTIES:

Citation for violation of 12500(a) CVC – Driving without a license and 30-day impound.



**CERES POLICE
DEPARTMENT**

Bikes, E-Bikes, and E-Scooters



Ceres Police Traffic Unit:

209-538-5700 ext. 5699

Ceres Police Dispatch:

209-538-5712

The City of Ceres Municipal Code Title 10 Chapter 5 regulates the use of bicycles within the city. Violations can lead to 30-day impound of bikes and fines up to \$1,000.00.

- In Ceres, bicycles are prohibited from riding on sidewalks, in the downtown business district, in front of schools, stores, and other buildings used for business or public assembly. Ceres Municipal Code 10.05.020.

- Bike style street take-over events or riding in a dangerous manner is prohibited. Ceres Municipal Code 10.05.120.

Motorized Bicycle or Moped



California Vehicle Code (CVC)

Definition:

406(a) CVC:

- Two or three wheels
- Fully operative pedals or no pedals if has an electric motor.
- Max speed of 30 MPH.

RIDER REQUIREMENTS:

- Driver's license with an M1 or M2 endorsement.
- DOT-compliant helmet required for all.
- May ride on public and private roads. Not allowed on sidewalks.
- Must be registered with the DMV and have adequate vehicle insurance.

PENALTIES:

- Helmet citation if applicable.
- Right of way citation for improper riding.
- 12500(a) CVC Citation -Driving without a license and 30-day impound.

Motorized E- Scooter



California Vehicle Code (CVC)

Definition:

407.5 CVC:

- Two wheels with a motor, handlebars, and a floorboard for standing on when riding. May have a seat that does not interfere with the ability to stand and ride.

RIDER REQUIREMENTS:

- Driver's license or instruction permit required.
- Bicycle helmet if under 18. 21212 CVC.
- May ride wherever traditional bicycles may ride – No riding on sidewalks. 21200 CVC.
- Not to exceed 15 MPH. 22411 CVC.

PENALTIES:

- Helmet citation if applicable.
- Right of way citation for improper riding.
- Impound for violations under Ceres Municipal Code.
- 12500(a) CVC Citation -Driving without a license and 30 day-impound.

Class 3 E - Bike



California Vehicle Code (CVC)

Definition:

312.5 CVC:

A low-speed pedal-assisted electric bicycle equipped with a speedometer, and a motor that provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling and ceases to assist when a speed of 28 MPH is reached.

RIDER REQUIREMENTS:

- A license is not required.
- A helmet is required if under 18 per 21212 CVC.
- May ride wherever a traditional bicycle may ride 21200 CVC.
- No minimum age to ride.

PENALTIES:

- Helmet citation if applicable.
- Right of way citation for improper riding.
- Impound for violations under Ceres Municipal Code.

New e-bike laws

Effective March 26, 2026



E-motorcycles can look similar to e-bikes, but are more similar to motorcycles. Riders need a license, vehicle registration and insurance, and most e-motorcycles need modifications before they can be legally ridden on the street.



Pedal bike



Class 1



Class 2



Class 3

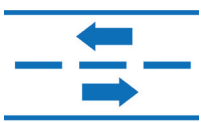
	Pedal bike	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3
Pedal assist		●	●	●
Throttle			●	
Max speed	Speed limit	20 mph	20 mph	28 mph
Minimum age	None	12	12	16
Driver's license	No	No	No	No
Helmet required	Under 18	Under 18	Under 18	All ages
Helmet recommended	All ages	All ages	All ages	All ages
Allowed on sidewalks	No	No	No	No
Allowed on trails	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Allowed at parks	Yes	Some*	Some*	Some*

*E-bikes are prohibited at Poinsettia and Pine Avenue Community Parks.



Passengers

Only allowed on bikes specifically made for additional riders
Must have a seat for passengers



Where to ride

Ride in the same direction as traffic
Use bike lanes when available
Do not ride on sidewalks or crosswalks



Signs & signals

Obey all traffic signs and signals
Come to a complete stop at stop signs and red lights



Safety

Ride at a safe speed
Stunts and racing are not allowed
Take care around others and yield to pedestrians when needed



Reckless Riding

Safety is the city's top priority. When a minor breaks the rules and creates an immediate or substantial public safety risk, their e-bike may be impounded.

The minor must complete an in-person safety course to retrieve the e-bike, and a parent or guardian must be present when the e-bike is released.



Nuevas leyes para las e-bikes

En efecto a partir del 26 de marzo, 2026



Las motocicletas eléctricas pueden parecerse a las ebikes, pero son más parecidas a las motocicletas. Los pasajeros necesitan licencia, matrícula del vehículo y seguro, y la mayoría de las motocicletas eléctricas necesitan modificaciones antes de circular legalmente por la calle.



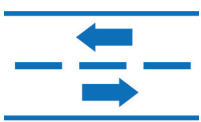
	Bici de pedales	Clase 1	Clase 2	Clase 3
Con asistencia de pedales		●	●	●
Acelerador			●	
Velocidad máxima	Velocidad límite	20 mph	20 mph	28 mph
Edad mínima	Ninguna	12	12	16
Licencia de manejo	No	No	No	No
Casco obligatorio	Menos de 18	Menos de 18	Menos de 18	Todas las edades
Casco recomendado	Todas las edades	Todas las edades	Todas las edades	Todas las edades
Permitidas en aceras	No	No	No	No
Permitidas en senderos	Sí	Sí	Sí	No
Permitidas en parques	Sí	Algunos*	Algunos*	Algunos*

*Las bicicletas eléctricas están prohibidas en los parques comunitarios Poinsettia y Pine Avenue.



Pasajeros

Solo están permitidos en bicicletas con asientos adicionales específicamente para pasajeros
Debe tener asiento para el pasajero



Dónde andar

Circula en la misma dirección que el tráfico
Utiliza carriles para bicis cuando estén disponible
No circules por aceras ni cruces peatonales



Letreros y señales

Obedece todas las señales y semáforos
Haz alto completamente en los stops y semáforos en rojo



Seguridad

Conduce a una velocidad segura
No se permiten acrobacias ni carreras
Ten cuidado con los demás y cede el paso a los peatones cuando sea necesario



Conducción Temeraria

La seguridad es la máxima prioridad de la ciudad. Cuando un menor no cumpla la ley y sea un riesgo inmediato o sustancial para la seguridad pública, su bicicleta eléctrica puede ser incautada.

El menor deberá completar un curso de seguridad presencial para recuperar la bicicleta eléctrica, y un padre o tutor deberá estar presente cuando se entregue la bicicleta.

