

## **Safe Passing Laws**

Wisconsin requires that an operator of a motor vehicle overtaking a bicycle proceeding in the same direction exercise due care, leaving a safe distance, but in no case less than 3 feet clearance, when passing the bicycle and maintain such clearance until safely past the overtaken bicycle.

Source: Wis. Stat. §346.075

## **Helmet Law**

Wisconsin has no helmet law. It is legal for all persons of any age to operate a bicycle without wearing a helmet unless otherwise provided by a municipal regulation.

## **Share the Road license plates**

Wisconsin, in conjunction with Harley-Davidson, offers Share the Road license plates. For more information on such plates please visit:

<http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/drivers/vehicles/personal/special/harley-davidson.htm>.

Source: Wis. Stat. §341.140

## **Vulnerable Road User Laws**

Wisconsin does not have any vulnerable road user laws at this time. There are currently no national standards for laws protecting vulnerable road users, but the League of American Bicyclists has drafted a Model Vulnerable Road User statute, which you can find [here](#).

## **Distracted Driving Laws**

Wisconsin currently has the following restrictions on distracted driving, subject to limited exceptions:

- No person while driving a motor vehicle shall be so engaged or occupied as to interfere with the safe driving of such vehicle;
- No person shall drive any motor vehicle equipped with any device for visually receiving a television broadcast when such device is located in the motor vehicle at any point forward of the back of the operator's seat or when such device is visible to the operator while driving the motor vehicle;
- No person may drive any motor vehicle while composing or sending an electronic text message or an electronic mail message; and
- No person who holds a probationary license or an instruction permit may drive any motor vehicle while using a cellular or other wireless telephone.

Source: Wis. Stat. §346.89

## **Where to Ride**

Wisconsin requires that any person operating a bicycle upon a roadway at less than the normal speed of traffic at the time and place and under the conditions then existing shall ride as close as practicable to the right-hand edge or curb of the unobstructed traveled roadway, except:

- When overtaking and passing another vehicle proceeding in the same direction.
- When preparing for a left turn or U-turn at an intersection or a left turn into a private road or driveway.
- When reasonably necessary to avoid unsafe conditions, including fixed or moving objects, parked or moving vehicles, pedestrians, animals, surface hazards or substandard width lanes that make it unsafe to ride along the right-hand edge or curb.
- When operating upon a one-way highway having 2 or more lanes available for traffic may ride as near the left-hand edge or curb of the roadway as practicable.

Source: Wis. Stat. §346.80

## **Sidewalk Riding**

Wisconsin provides that when local authorities permit bicycles on the sidewalk, every person operating a bicycle upon a sidewalk shall yield the right-of-way to any pedestrian and shall exercise due care and give an audible signal when passing a bicycle, electric personal assistive mobility device rider, or a pedestrian proceeding in the same direction.

Source: Wis. Stat. §346.804

## **Mandatory Use of Separated Facilities**

Wisconsin does not require that bicyclists use any lane or path other than a normal vehicular traffic lane.

Source: N/A

## **Bicycling Under the Influence**

Wisconsin's law prohibiting driving while under the influence of alcohol or other controlled substances is written so that it applies to vehicles and therefore does not directly apply to bicyclists. Nevertheless bicycles should not be operated while intoxicated.

Source: Wis. Stat. §346.63

## **"Idaho Stop" and Vehicle Detection Errors**

Wisconsin provides that no bicyclist facing a steady red signal shall enter the roadway unless he or she can do so safely and without interfering with any vehicular traffic.

However, a bicycle facing a red signal at an intersection may, after stopping as required, for not less than 45 seconds, proceed cautiously through the intersection before the signal turns green if:

- No other vehicles are present at the intersection to actuate the signal and the operator of the bicycle reasonably believes the signal is vehicle actuated; and
- The operator of a bicycle yields the right-of-way to any vehicular or other traffic proceeding through a green signal at the intersection or crosswalk.

Source: Wis. Stat. §346.37(1)(c)

## **Authorization for Local Regulation of bicycles**

Wisconsin does not specifically provide for local authorities to regulate the operation of bicycles or require registration of bicycles, although such authorities may regulate the operation of bicycles through the exercise of their other legal powers.

Source: N/A

## **Dooring law**

Wisconsin requires that no person open any door on a motor vehicle unless and until it is reasonably safe to do so and can be done without interfering with the movement of other traffic. In addition, no person shall leave a door open on a side of a vehicle available to moving traffic for a period of time longer than necessary to load or unload passengers.

Source: Wis. Stat. §346.94(20)(a)

## **Treatment as a Vehicle**

In Wisconsin bicycles are vehicles according to the statute that defines vehicles and a person riding a bicycle has all of the rights and duties of a driver of a vehicle under Chapter 346 of the Wisconsin Statutes, except for those provisions that by their express terms apply only to motor vehicles and those provisions that by their nature can have no application.

Source: Wis. Stat. §§340.01(74); 346.02

## **Source of Laws**

The laws regulating the operation of bicycles in the state of Wisconsin are generally found in Chapter 346 of the Wisconsin Statutes (Wis. Stat.), available here: <https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/statutes/prefaces/toc>.