Comment: *For this reason, a motorist preparing to turn right should—after yielding to any cyclist present—enter or closely approach a bicycle lane, if one is present.*

Not to drive while under the influence

It is unlawful to drive any vehicle while under the influence of alcohol or drugs [§316.193].

Special hazards [§316.185]

Every driver shall drive at an appropriately reduced speed when approaching and crossing an intersection, approaching and going around a curve; approaching a hill crest; traveling upon any narrow or winding roadway; or when any special hazard exists with respect to pedestrians or other traffic or by reason of weather or highway conditions.

Riding on a sidewalk or crosswalk

[§316.2065(10),(11)]

When riding on a sidewalk or crosswalk, a cyclist has all the rights and duties of a pedestrian. A cyclist riding on a sidewalk or crosswalk must yield the right of way to a pedestrian and must give an audible warning before passing a pedestrian.

Comment: *Sidewalks are not designed for bicycle speeds, but bicycle use is allowed except where prohibited by local ordinance (e.g., in central business districts of many cities). Regulations pertaining to equipment and carriage still apply.*

Since a cyclist riding on a sidewalk or crosswalk has the rights of a pedestrian, he may ride in either direction. At a signalized intersection, he must obey the instructions of any applicable pedestrian control signal. Thus, he may start to cross a roadway in a crosswalk only during a steady Walk phase, if one is displayed; if no pedestrian signal is provided, the cyclist may proceed in accordance with the signal indications for the parallel roadway traffic flow [§316.084].

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Road riders are drivers

Florida's bicycle laws

for cyclists and other drivers

Operating in traffic is a cooperative activity, conducted according to rules. Following the rules and applying the skills needed to observe them promotes safe and efficient travel. Drivers who see and can predict each other's actions are less likely to conflict with each other.

Bicycle drivers and the Florida Uniform Traffic Control Law

Operating a vehicle safely and efficiently in traffic requires the ability to collect and process information about traffic conditions, determine a course of action, and execute it—all on a continuous basis. As a cyclist on a roadway, you are the driver of a vehicle and are responsible for complying with the Florida Uniform State Traffic Control Law. This code, set forth in Chapter 316 of the Florida Statutes, governs the operation of all vehicles operated on public roads in Florida.

A bicycle is classified as a vehicle [Section 316.003(2), F.S.]. ***A person in control of a vehicle on a street or highway is a driver*** [§316.003(10)]. As a driver, a cyclist must follow the traffic rules common to all drivers.

As the driver of a bicycle, he must also obey regulations adopted specially for bicycles. A cyclist has all of the rights applicable to any driver, except as to special regulations for bicycles [§316.2065(1)].

Equipment & carriage

Lamps and rear reflector [§316.2065(8)]

A bicycle operated between sunset and sunrise shall be equipped with a lamp on the front exhibiting a white light visible from 500 feet to the front, and both a red reflector and a lamp on the rear exhibiting a red light visible from 600 feet to the rear.

Comment: *Over half of fatal bicycle crashes in Florida occur after sunset, even though most cycling is done during daylight hours. If you ride at night, use a battery- or generator-powered headlamp; if lights are battery-powered, carry spare batteries or mount a second lamp as a spare (some LED lamps last many hours). Rear reflector and taillamp should be aimed straight back.*

Reflective leg bands and pedal reflectors help to indicate motion. Retroreflective clothing can also help you to be seen.

Brakes [§316.2065(14)]

Every bicycle must be equipped with a brake or brakes that allow the rider to stop within 25 feet from a speed of 10 mph on dry, level, clean pavement.

Bicycle helmet [§316.2065(3)(d)]

A bicycle rider or passenger under 16 years of age must wear a bicycle helmet that is properly fitted, fastened securely, and meets a nationally recognized standard.

Comment: *Head injuries account for about one third of hospital emergency room visits for bicycle-related injuries. Bicycle helmets, properly fitted and worn, have been found effective in reducing the incidence and severity of head, brain, and upper facial injury. The role model effect of adults is an important factor in enhancing helmet wearing by children. By federal law, bicycle helmets sold in the US are required to meet the standard of the Consumer Product Safety Commission.*

Headset not to be worn [§316.304]

A cyclist may not wear a headset, headphone or listening device, other than a hearing aid, while riding.

Comment: *Use of such devices can be distracting. A cyclist should not rely on hearing when changing lane position, crossing another roadway, etc. Sounds of an approaching vehicle may be masked by other traffic or, in some cases (bicycle, hybrid-electric car) too soft to be heard.*

Carriage of other riders [§316.2065(3)(a)]

A bicycle may not be used to carry more persons at one time than the number for which it is designed or equipped. However, an adult cyclist may carry a child in a backpack or sling, child seat or trailer designed to carry children.

Operating on the roadway

Obedience to traffic control devices [§316.074]

A driver must obey all applicable traffic control devices (traffic signs, markings, and signals).

Driving on right side of roadway [§316.081]

Upon all roadways of sufficient width, a vehicle must be driven on the right half of the roadway.

Comment: *A cyclist on a roadway must ride on the side for his direction of travel. Riding against traffic increases crash risk and is a factor in about 15 percent of car-bicycle crashes. Motorists turning onto a roadway at intersections and driveways do not expect traffic to approach from the wrong direction.*

Roadway position [§316.2065(5)]

A person operating a bicycle on a roadway at less than the normal speed of traffic under the conditions existing must ride as close as practicable [safe] to the roadway's right-hand curb or edge, except under any of the following situations:

• when passing another vehicle

• when making a left turn

• when reasonably necessary to avoid conditions including (but not limited to), a fixed or moving object, parked or moving vehicle, pedestrian, animal, surface hazard

• when a lane is too narrow for a bicycle and another vehicle to travel safely side by side.

A cyclist operating on a one-way street with two or more marked traffic lanes may ride as close to the left-hand edge of the roadway as practicable.

Comment: *A white edge line is often marked to indicate the right edge of a roadway. On a roadway with curbs, the gutter area is not normally considered part of the roadway. In any case, a cyclist should ride at least 2 feet from a curb.*

On a road with flush shoulders, the right-hand edge of the roadway is the line between the roadway and the shoulder. Since the definition of "roadway" [§316.003(42)] excludes the shoulder, a cyclist is not required to ride on a paved shoulder, although he may prefer to do so. A cyclist riding on a paved shoulder is still expected to travel on the right, since this is the only practical way to obey traffic signs and signals [§316.074].

A cyclist intending to go straight through an intersection should avoid a lane signed or marked exclusively for right turns (see "Obedience to traffic control devices" above). In a lane that may be used for right turns or through travel, a cyclist riding through should stay far enough to the left to avoid conflicts with right-turning traffic.

*A **bicycle lane** is an extra lane on the roadway designated for the use of bicycles. A cyclist may leave a bicycle lane in any of the exceptional situations described above. Most bicycle lanes are designed for through travel; to make left or right turns, a cyclist should use the appropriate lanes. Where a bicycle lane is continued along the right side on an intersection approach, a cyclist who intends to go straight through the intersection may adjust his position to the left to avoid the hazard of being cut off by a right-turning motorist (in about 3 percent of the motor vehicle crashes of roadway cyclists, the cyclist was cut off by a right-turning motorist).*

*Where restricted conditions prevent inclusion of bicycle lanes or paved shoulders on laned roadways, Florida Department of Transportation engineering guidance recommends an outside lane width greater than 12 feet. A lane width of 14 feet [4.3 m] is recommended for shared use as the "minimum width that will allow passenger cars to safely pass bicyclists within a single lane," i.e., without the need to use part of the next lane (*Florida Greenbook, *sect. 9.B.3). See "Overtaking and passing a vehicle" under* "Other laws for drivers" *below.*

A cyclist riding past a car parallel-parked on a street should maintain at least 3 feet [1 m]of clearance to avoid risk of collision if a car door on the driver side is opened.

Riding two abreast [§316.2065(6)]

Cyclists may not ride more than two abreast except on paths or parts of roadways set aside for the exclusive use of bicycles. Cyclists riding two abreast may not impede traffic when traveling at less than the normal speed of traffic and must do so within a single lane.

Method of turning at intersections [§316.151(1)]

—**Right turn:** *see "Method of turning right at intersections" under* "Other laws for drivers" *below.*

—**Left turn:** A cyclist intending to make a left turn is entitled to full use of the lane from which a driver may legally make a left turn.

Option: instead of making a left turn as a motorist does, a cyclist may proceed through the rightmost portion of the intersection and turn as close to the curb or edge as practicable at the far side. Before proceeding in the new direction of travel, the cyclist must comply with any official traffic control device.

Comment: *When using the second method to make a left turn, a cyclist should never swerve left from the far right corner. There are risks of conflict with traffic from several directions. The cyclist should stop at the far corner and walk to a point where traffic can be reentered safely.*

Signaling a turn or stop [§316.155(2)(3); §316.157(1)]

A signal of intention to turn must be given during the last 100 feet traveled by the vehicle before turning. If a cyclist needs both hands for control, the signal need not be given continuously. A cyclist signals intent to

turn left—by extending the left arm horizontally;

turn right—by extending the right arm horizontally, or by extending the left hand and arm upward;

stop or suddenly reduce speed—by extending the left hand and arm downward.

When overtaking on the right is permitted [§316.084]

Overtaking on the right is permitted upon a street or highway with unobstructed pavement not occupied by parked vehicles, of sufficient width for two or more lines of moving traffic in each direction. The driver of a vehicle may overtake and pass another vehicle on the right only under conditions permitting such movement in safety.

Comment: *A cyclist traveling in a bicycle lane, or in a lane wide enough for motor vehicles and bicycles to share (see"Roadway position" above), may pass motor vehicles on the right, because in this case there is sufficient width for two lines of moving traffic (one of which is bicycle traffic). However, the cyclist should proceed with care. Cars or trucks may turn at driveways, or at the next intersection.*

Operation on limited access facilities [§316.091]

No person shall operate a bicycle on a limited access facility, except as otherwise provided. No person shall operate a bicycle on the roadway or shoulder of an interstate highway.

Comment: *At this time, the only exception provided is for the Jacksonville Expressway System* [§349.04(1)].

Other laws for drivers

Yielding on entry to roadway [§316.125(2)]

The driver of a vehicle emerging from an alley, building, private road or driveway shall stop the vehicle immediately prior to driving onto a sidewalk, and shall yield to all vehicles and pedestrians which are so close thereto as to constitute an immediate hazard.

Yielding before moving laterally [§316.085(2)]

No vehicle shall be driven from a direct course in any lane until the driver has determined that the vehicle is not being approached or passed by any other vehicle in the lane or on the side to which the driver desires to move and that the move can be completely made with safety and without interfering with the safe operation of any vehicle approaching from the same direction.

Overtaking and passing a vehicle [§316.083; §316.085]

The driver of a vehicle overtaking another vehicle proceeding in the same direction shall pass to the left thereof at a safe distance and shall not again drive to the right side of the roadway until safely clear of the overtaken vehicle. The driver of a vehicle overtaking a bicycle or other non-motorized vehicle must pass the bicycle or other non-motorized vehicle at a safe distance or not less than 3 feet between the vehicle and the bicycle or other non-motorized vehicle.

Comment: *See exception discussed above, "When overtaking on the right is permitted." About 2 percent of bicycle-motor vehicle crashes involve motorists who misjudge passing space. Close passing causes some cyclists to hug the curb or ride on the sidewalk, where crash risk is, on average, higher. To pass a cyclist with safe clearance, it may be necessary for a motorist to enter (at least partially) the next lane, when and where it is safe to do so.*

Method of turning right at intersection [§316.151(1)(a)]

Both the approach for a right turn and the turn are to be made as closely as practicable to the right-hand curb or edge of the roadway.