



# St. Johns County Sheriff's Office

*"Taking Care of People"*

## Sharing the Road

### Motorists and Bicyclists

Driving on the road requires care whether you are in a car or on a bicycle. Motorists should respect the rights of other road users including bicyclists. Bicyclists have the same rights and responsibilities as automobile drivers, including obeying all traffic laws. If both groups work together and follow all the rules, the roads can be safe for both.

#### Tips for Motorists:

Do your part by being a safe and courteous driver. The following are tips to help drivers share the road with bicyclists:

- Give driving your full attention. Many accidents occur because drivers are distracted.
- Pedestrians and bicyclists have the right of way. Remember to yield at unmarked crosswalks, especially when turning right on a red light.
- When passing a bicyclist, take a moment to observe the roadway. Once you have assessed the situation and determine it is safe and necessary to pass, give the cyclist plenty of space. **Florida law requires you to give the cyclist at least 3 feet of space when passing.**
- Do not stop on the cross walk, your vehicle should be BEHIND the stop bar at all intersections.
- Don't blow your horn when approaching a bicyclist. This may startle them and cause an accident.
- Never drive under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Even prescribed medication can cause impairment and result in an arrest.
- Avoid using high beam headlights when you see a bicyclist approaching.
- Before opening the car door, check for bicyclists who may be approaching from behind.

In Florida, the bicycle is legally defined as a vehicle and has all of the privileges, rights and responsibilities on public roads (except for expressways) that a motor vehicle operator does. Bicyclists may ride out of the bike lane in the travel lane for their own safety on narrow roads to avoid obstacles or pavement hazards, or to prepare for a left turn. A bicyclist may use the full lane even while traveling substantially below the speed of traffic if the lane is too narrow for both a car and bicycle to share.

## Tips for Bicyclists:

Bicycles are the most vulnerable of all vehicles on the road, and extra safety precautions should be taken when riding. As road riders, bicyclists must be predictable and highly visible; often drivers of vehicles have a hard time seeing bicyclists in traffic.

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The following are tips to help bicyclists share the road with vehicles:

- Always obey all traffic laws, controls, and signals. Always.
- Bicyclists riding on the roadway must always ride with the flow of traffic.
- Use directional hand signals to show other drivers that you are about to turn.
- Never attach yourself or your bike to any vehicle on the roadway.
- Bicyclists may not ride more than two abreast except on paths or parts of roadways set aside for the exclusive use of bicycles. Cyclists may ride two abreast only within a single lane and when not impeding traffic.
- A bicyclist may ride on the sidewalk unless prohibited by local laws; always give the right of way to pedestrians.
- A bicycle operated between sunset and sunrise must be equipped with proper lighting and reflectors.
- A bicyclist or passenger under 16 years of age must wear a helmet when riding.
- A bicyclist is not allowed to wear headphones, headsets or any other listening device except a hearing aid while riding.
- A bicycle is considered a vehicle so all the laws pertaining to Driving Under the Influence or possessing an open container of alcohol while operating the vehicle also applies to bicyclists.



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