

BICYCLING LAWS

According to the Revised Code of Washington (RCW), a bicycle is a legal road vehicle, just like a car. This means that bicycle riders have the same rights and responsibilities as motor vehicle drivers.

Here are some current bicycling laws to be aware of whether you are biking or driving a motor vehicle:

Riding on the Road - When riding on a road, a bicyclist has all the rights and responsibilities of a vehicle driver (RCW 46.61.755). Bicyclists who violate traffic laws may be ticketed (RCW 46.61.750).

Roads Closed to Bicycles - Some designated sections of the state's limited access highway system may be closed to bicycles for safety reasons. See <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/bike/closed.htm> for more information. In addition, local governments may adopt ordinances banning cycling on specific roads or on sidewalks within business districts. See <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/bike/Laws.htm> for tools to search for contact information for staff of local jurisdictions.

Riding Side-by-Side - Bicyclists may ride side-by-side, but not more than two abreast (RCW 46.61.770).

Riding at Night - For night bicycle riding, a white front light (not a reflector) visible for 500 feet and a red rear reflector are required. A red rear light may be used in addition to the required reflector (RCW 46.61.780).

Bicycle Helmets - As of June 1, 2011, there is no state law requiring helmet use. However, some cities and counties (including Pierce County) do require helmets. A list of jurisdictions requiring helmet use can be found at the following link: <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/bike/helmets.htm>

Source: Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT)

For information about other state bicycling laws, please refer to the following:

WSDOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Program (360) 705-7596
www.wsdot.wa.gov/bike/Laws.htm

Washington Laws and Agency Rules (360) 786-7573
www.leg.wa.gov/LawsAndAgencyRules

Washington Traffic Safety Commission (360) 753-6197
www.wtsc.wa.gov

Bicyclists should contact local jurisdictions for information about their local bicycling laws. For information about bicycling laws for the unincorporated areas of Pierce County, please refer to the following:

Pierce County Code

(253) 798-7777

www.piercecountywa.org/countycode