



## Cycling Laws in Michigan

In Michigan, pedestrians and bicyclists share the road with motor vehicles and consequently are especially vulnerable in crashes. While state law gives pedestrians the right of way in many situations, bicyclists are generally treated like drivers and must follow the same traffic rules as motorists. When accidents happen, liability is determined by Michigan's No-Fault law if a car is involved, or by negligence and comparative fault principles if the collision is between a pedestrian and a bicyclist.

### Your Rights & Duties as a Cyclist

Under **MCL 257.657**, every person riding a bicycle on a roadway has "all of the rights and is subject to all of the duties applicable to the driver of a vehicle." That means bicyclists must follow the same traffic laws as cars when they are on the roadway. Duties of a cyclist are:

- **Ride on the Right:** Cyclists must ride as far to the right as practicable except when passing another vehicle, preparing for a left turn, avoiding hazards, or on a lane too narrow for side-by-side travel
- **Lighting:** Bikes must have a white front light and a red rear reflector or light visible from 500 feet at night
- **Helmet:** Not required for adults, but may be required for minors in some cases; lack of helmet may be considered under comparative fault principles

### Motorist Duties Toward Cyclists

- **Safe Passing:** Drivers must leave at least three feet of space when passing a cyclist
- **Dooring Violations:** Opening a car door into traffic without checking for cyclists is prohibited
- **General Duty of Care:** Motorists must exercise reasonable care to avoid injuring cyclists

### Bicycles & Sidewalk Rules

Michigan law allows local governments to decide whether bicycles are permitted on sidewalks (**MCL 257.660c(5)**). If riding a bicycle on a sidewalk is permitted, cyclists must:

- Yield the right of way to pedestrians
- Give an audible signal (such as a bell or saying "on your left") before overtaking and passing a pedestrian (**MCL 257.660c(6)**)

### Bicycle Accidents & Michigan's No-Fault Law

Bicyclists who are injured in a crash with a motor vehicle can access Personal Injury Protection (PIP) benefits through their own auto insurance policy. If they do not have an auto policy, coverage may be available through the insurer of a spouse or another resident relative living in the same household, following Michigan's priority rules.

If the bicyclist suffers significant injury, they can also file a third-party lawsuit against the at-fault driver for pain and suffering and excess economic damages.

**Disclaimer:** The outcome of a particular matter can depend on a variety of factors—including the specific factual and legal circumstance that may come to light during initial investigation.

