

E-BIKES AND MICROMOBILITY DEVICE REGULATION



Senate Bill (SB) 3484, which takes effect January 1, 2027 if enacted into law by Governor JB Pritzker, establishes a statewide framework for the regulation of electric bicycles (e-bikes) and electric micromobility (e-micromobility) devices in Illinois. The Illinois Municipal League worked with the Illinois Secretary of State's (ILSOS) Office and stakeholders during development of this legislation to ensure municipal operational concerns and enforcement considerations were incorporated into the legislative framework. ILSOS has released guidance ([available via this link](#)) regarding e-bikes and micromobility regulation.

This legislation creates uniform classifications and operational standards for low-speed e-bikes, electric scooters (e-scooters), skateboards, unicycles and similar devices, while clarifying when high-speed devices are regulated as motor-driven cycles under the Illinois Vehicle Code. SB 3484 directly impacts municipal roadway management, enforcement practices and public safety considerations within local rights-of-way.

WHAT ARE E-BIKES AND MICROMOBILITY DEVICES?

E-bikes and e-micromobility devices are small, electric-powered transportation devices increasingly used on local roadways, bike lanes and shared-use infrastructure. These devices include low-speed e-bikes (Class 1, Class 2 and Class 3), e-scooters, electric skateboards (e-skateboards), electric unicycles (e-unicycles) and other e-micromobility devices.

This legislation classifies these devices based on factors including speed capability, motor wattage and device type. Devices capable of operating in excess of 28 miles per hour (mph) may be regulated as motor-driven cycles under the Illinois Vehicle Code.

TITLE AND REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

Beginning January 1, 2027, certain motor-driven cycles powered by electric motors exceeding 750 watts and certain gas-powered bicycles capable of speeds greater than 28 mph will be subject to certificate of title requirements under the Illinois Vehicle Code.

MUNICIPAL AND LAW ENFORCEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

Prior to implementation, municipalities and law enforcement agencies should:

- Review local ordinances for consistency with this legislation;
- Evaluate roadway, sidewalk and shared-use path regulations;
- Review enforcement protocols and operational practices; and,
- Update local guidance related to micromobility device operation and safety.



AUTHORIZATION AND POTENTIAL LIABILITY

The operation of e-bikes and e-micromobility devices may occur within municipal rights-of-way, including streets, bike lanes and shared-use paths. While municipalities retain authority regarding roadway management and local transportation infrastructure, SB 3484 establishes statewide operational standards and classifications that municipalities must administer consistent with this legislation.

As these devices become more prevalent, municipalities should be aware that:

- Increased use may create heightened safety risks involving pedestrians, vehicles and other users of the public right-of-way;
- Decisions regarding roadway design, signage and permitted uses may impact potential liability exposure; and,
- The absence of clear local operational policies may create enforcement and risk management challenges.

Municipal officials are encouraged to review existing ordinances and operational practices to ensure consistency with this legislation and area transportation conditions.

SIGNAGE REQUIREMENTS

This legislation requires state and local government entities with jurisdiction involving bicycle-specific areas to install permanent signage or pavement markings where motor-driven cycles are prohibited. This requirement applies to bicycle lanes, shared-use paths, bicycle trails and other bicycle-specific areas established under state or local law.

DEVICE CLASSIFICATIONS

Device classification is based on speed capability, motor wattage and operational characteristics, which determine whether a device is regulated under micromobility provisions or motor vehicle laws.

LOW-SPEED E-BIKES (CLASS 1, 2 AND 3)

Low-speed e-bikes are classified as Class 1, Class 2 or Class 3 devices under this legislation. Class 1 and Class 2 e-bikes provide electric assistance up to 20 mph and Class 3 e-bikes provide pedal-assist up to 28 mph. These devices may generally operate on roadways, bike lanes and shared-use paths consistent with state and local requirements. Operation on sidewalks may be restricted under state or local law depending on device classification and location.



E-MICROMOBILITY DEVICES

E-scooters, skateboards and unicycles fall within this category. These devices may generally operate on roadways with posted speed limits of 35 mph or less and on high-speed roadways where bicycle lanes are present, subject to state and local restrictions. E-micromobility devices are prohibited from operating on sidewalks under the legislation and operators must be at least 16 years old.





HIGH-SPEED E-BIKES AND E-MOTOS

Devices exceeding 750 watts or that are capable of operating in excess of 28 mph may be classified as motor-driven cycles under the Illinois Vehicle Code. These devices are subject to driver's license requirements, vehicle registration requirements, insurance requirements and additional motor vehicle regulations. Motor-driven cycles are prohibited from operating on bicycle-specific areas where prohibited by state or local law.



TOY VEHICLES

Low-speed devices designed for children and operating at speeds of 10 mph or less are regulated separately from e-micromobility devices under the Illinois Vehicle Code. These devices are treated as pedestrians and may operate on sidewalks, unless restricted locally.

RESTRICTIONS FOR E-BIKE AND MICROMOBILITY DEVICE USE

Municipal officials and law enforcement should be aware of the following statewide requirements:

- Devices capable of operating in excess of 28 mph may be regulated as motor-driven cycles and subject to additional licensing, registration and insurance requirements;
- Operators of e-micromobility devices must be at least 16 years of age;
- E-micromobility devices are prohibited from operating on sidewalks;
- E-micromobility devices may generally operate on roadways with speed limits up to 35 mph and on high-speed roadways where bicycle lanes are present;
- Devices classified as motor-driven cycles must comply with applicable motor vehicle requirements, including licensure, registration and insurance;
- A person may not tamper with or modify a device to exceed its designed speed capability;
- Motor-driven cycles and certain high-speed devices remain subject to Illinois DUI laws under the Illinois Vehicle Code;
- Retailers and manufacturers are prohibited from misrepresenting high-speed devices as low-speed e-bikes; and,
- All devices must be operated in a safe manner consistent with roadway conditions and applicable traffic laws.

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