

## **Licensure, Safety and Inspection of Autocycles (Statement)**

This act amends existing laws in Virginia relating to vehicle licensure, fees, license plates, safety, inspection and other requirements to include a new class of vehicle known as an “autocycle.”

An “autocycle” is defined as “a three-wheeled motor vehicle that has a steering wheel and seating that does not require the operator to straddle or sit astride and is manufactured to comply with federal safety requirements for motorcycles.” Except as otherwise provided, an autocycle shall not be deemed to be a motorcycle.

### **License, Title & Registration Requirements and Fees**

The act states that an autocycle shall not be used by a driver’s license applicant for a behind-the-wheel examination.

The act specifies that a licensed motorcycle manufacturer shall not be required to obtain a certificate of title for a new motorcycle of a different line-make purchased by the manufacturer for the purpose of obtaining parts used in the production of another new motorcycle or an autocycle, provided such manufacturer obtains a salvage dealer license.

The act extends to autocycles the 30-day temporary exemption for new residents operating vehicles registered in another state or country from registering or paying fees on the vehicle.

The act establishes an annual registration fee of \$18 for an autocycle (compared to \$33 for most passenger cars and \$18 for motorcycles).

The act adds autocycles to the list of vehicles for which the Department of Motor Vehicles will furnish one license plate to be displayed as required. The license plate assigned to an autocycle is required to be attached to the rear of the vehicle.

The act adds autocycles to the list of vehicles a driver can present evidence of owning or having regular use of in order to obtain a special license plate for an antique motor vehicle or antique trailer.

### **Safety Equipment Requirements**

The act states that every person operating an autocycle (or motorcycle) shall wear an approved face shield, safety glasses or goggles, or have his autocycle (or motorcycle) equipped with safety glass or a windshield at all times while operating the vehicle, and operators and any passengers shall wear protective helmets. Operators and passengers riding on autocycles that have non-removable roofs, windshields, and enclosed bodies shall not be required to wear protective helmets.

### **Headlight Requirements**

The act exempts autocycles from the requirement on other types of motor vehicles to have at least two approved headlights at the front of and on opposite sides of the motor vehicle. It states that autocycles (or motorcycles) shall be equipped with at least one approved headlight and shall be capable of projecting sufficient light to the front of the vehicle to render discernible a person or object at a distance of 200 feet.

However, the lights shall not project a glaring or dazzling light to persons approaching such autocycles (or motorcycles). In addition, each autocycle (or motorcycle) may be equipped with not more than two auxiliary approved headlights. Autocycles (or motorcycles) may be equipped with means of modulating the high beam of their headlights between high and low beam at a rate of 200 to 280 flashes per minute. Such headlights shall not be so modulated during periods when headlights would ordinarily be required to be lighted.

### **Brake and Tail Light Requirements**

The act exempts autocycles from the requirements on other types of vehicles that they be equipped with at least two brake lights. Every autocycle (or motorcycle) shall be equipped with at least one brake light. Autocycles (or motorcycles) may be equipped with one or more auxiliary brake lights.

Every autocycle (or motorcycle) shall carry at the rear at least one or more red lights plainly visible in clear weather from a distance of 500 feet to the rear of such vehicle. Such tail lights shall be constructed and so mounted in their relation to the rear license plate as to illuminate the license plate with a white light so that the same may be read from a distance of 50 feet to the rear of such vehicle. Alternatively, a separate white light shall be so mounted as to illuminate the rear license plate from a distance of 50 feet to the rear of such vehicle.

Autocycles (or motorcycles) may be equipped with a means of varying the brightness of the vehicle's brake light for a duration of not more than five seconds upon application of the vehicle's brakes.

### **Other Safety Requirements**

The act exempts autocycles from the requirement on other vehicles that they be equipped with a windshield.

The act states that the brake system on an autocycle (or motorcycle) should be capable of stopping within a distance of 30 feet on a dry, hard, approximately level stretch of highway free from loose material at all times and under all conditions at a speed of 20 miles per hour.

The act exempts autocycles (or motorcycles) from the requirement on other vehicles that they be equipped with emergency or parking brakes.

The act requires that front seats on autocycles (and passenger cars) be equipped with adult safety lap belts or a combination of lap belts and shoulder harnesses for model years 1963 and later. It states that no autocycle shall be issued a safety inspection sticker if any lap belt, combination of

lap belt and shoulder harness, or passive belt systems required to be installed have been either removed from the autocycle or rendered inoperable.

### **Inspection Requirements**

The act states that for the purposes of inspection of the mechanism and equipment of a vehicle by an official inspection station, autocycles shall be inspected as motorcycles. Safety inspection stations may charge no more than \$12 for each inspection of any autocycle, \$10 of which shall be retained by the inspection station and \$2 of which shall be transmitted to the Department of State Police to be used to support the Department of Motor Vehicles' costs in administering the motor vehicle safety inspection program.

Submitted as:

Virginia

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Status: Signed into law on March 3, 2014.