

Moped, Scooter & Motorcycle Drivers License in Illinois

It's no surprise that with increasing gas prices, motorists are looking for alternative means of transportation. Naturally, moped, scooter and motorcycle sales are up compared to last year due to these vehicles getting better gas mileage. Much of this increase in sales is a result of people trying to save money at the pump.

If you are one of those who recently purchased a moped, scooter or motorcycle or you have considered purchasing one, you should know the legal requirements for obtaining a license to drive one of these vehicles may be different than for cars and trucks.

Mopeds

Motorized pedalcycles, often called mopeds, are low-speed, two-wheeled vehicles. They can be pedaled like a bicycle or driven like a motorcycle. Mopeds are intended for limited use on public roadways.

The following four criteria must be met in order to be considered a moped; otherwise it is a motor-driven cycle and requires a Class L license:

- A motorized pedalcycle is a motor-driven cycle with speed attainable in one mile of 30 mph or less.
- Equipped with a motor that produces 2-brake horsepower or less.
- If an internal combustion engine is used, displacement shall not exceed 50cc.
- Power drive system shall not require the operator to shift gears.

If all four criteria are met, the operator of a moped may drive it with any valid driver's license of any classification.

Title and Registration

All vehicles in Illinois must be titled and registered if they travel on the roadways. This includes motorcycles, scooters, and mopeds.

The process to register a scooter or moped is the same as for motorcycle registrations. You must complete Form VSD-190, available only at your local Secretary of State office (or call toll-free within Illinois 1-800-252-8980), and submit the appropriate documentation and required fees and taxes. It costs \$38 to register a moped or scooter and \$65 to title it.

License to Operate

Motorcycle Classifications

You'll need to carry a Class L driver's license to operate a moped (unless it meets the above criteria) or scooter, as long as the engine displacement is less than 150 cubic centimeters. If the displacement is 150cc or more, you'll need a Class M license.

If you are 18 or over and want to obtain a motorcycle classification on your driver's license, you must pass a separate motorcycle examination. Drivers ages 16 and 17 must also successfully complete a motorcycle training course approved by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT). Persons age 18 and older who successfully complete an IDOT motorcycle training course are not required to pass a written or driving examination at a Driver Services facility.

Instruction Permits

Motorcycle (over 150 cc)

Persons age 18 or older may apply for a 12 month instruction permit to operate a motorcycle other than a motor-driven cycle. The permit allows driving only during daylight hours, under the direct supervision of a licensed motorcycle operator age 21 or older with at least one year driving experience. A 24 month instruction permit for a Class M License may be issued to an applicant under age 18 only after successful completion of an approved driver education course and successful completion of an IDOT Motorcycle Rider Education Course.

Motor-Driven Cycle (under 150 cc)

Persons ages 16 and 17 who have successfully completed driver education and passed the motorcycle written test may apply for a 24-month instruction permit to operate a motor-driven cycle (under 150 cc). The permit allows driving only during daylight hours, under the direct supervision of a licensed motor-driven cycle operator age 21 or older with at least one year driving experience.

If you have further questions regarding licensing, go to www.cyberdriveillinois.com click on publications, rules of the road – traffic safety and then Illinois Motorcycle Operator Manual.

Other Requirements

A number of laws in Illinois specifically apply to moped, scooter and motorcycle riding. A few of them are listed below:

- Helmets, although highly recommended, are not legally required in Illinois. However, strapping on a helmet may save your life.
- Motorcyclists must wear eye protection unless the vehicle they are riding is equipped with a windscreen. The windscreen must extend above the eyes when an operator is seated in the normal upright riding position.
- Motorcyclists are mandated by law to carry the basic minimum amount of insurance liability, which is; injury or death of one person in an accident: \$20,000, injury or death of more than one person in an accident: \$40,000 and damage to someone else's property: \$15,000.
- Daytime use of headlights is required by law. A modulating headlight is permitted. If operating a vehicle at night, it must have a headlight visible from at least 500 feet.
- mopeds must have a red reflector on the rear visible from at least 100 to 600 feet.
- A passenger seat and foot-rest are required for mopeds, scooters and motorcycles that carry a passenger.
- Motorcyclists must obey all street signs, signals and traffic laws. Mopeds must also obey most bicycle laws.