

# Understanding E-Bike Rules, Regulations, and Safety

The popularity of electric bicycles (e-bikes) has surged across Connecticut, and Farmington is no exception. As more residents turn to these convenient and eco-friendly alternatives to traditional transportation, the Town is facing new challenges because their rapid rise has outpaced existing state regulations, prompting the need for updated laws and community guidelines.

A new state law taking effect October 1, 2025 will require all newly purchased e-bikes to include a label indicating their specific classification, providing the foundation for future regulation.

Municipalities may adopt local ordinances to regulate e-bikes based on these classifications and can impose further restrictions tailored to community needs, such as speed limits and use on sidewalks. The Town of Farmington is considering implementing local regulations after the state law takes effect to ensure public safety and address local concerns.

## Electric Bicycle Definition

By law, an electric bicycle is a bicycle that (1) has operable foot pedals and an electric motor of less than 750 watts and (2) qualifies as a class 1, class 2, or class 3 bicycle as outlined below:

### Classes of E-Bikes

Source: CGS § 14-1

Class	Description	Top Speed	Minimum Age
<b>Class 1</b>	<b>Pedal-Assist Only:</b> Motor assists only when pedaling, motor stops when pedaling stops	20 MPH	N/A**
<b>Class 2</b>	<b>Throttle-Assisted, No Need to Pedal:</b> Motor can propel bike without pedaling	20 MPH	N/A**
<b>Class 3</b>	<b>Pedal-Assist Only, Faster Speed:</b> Motor only assists while pedaling	28 MPH	16+ Only

**\*\*PARENTS SHOULD CAREFULLY ASSESS WHEN THEIR CHILD CAN SAFELY AND RESPONSIBLY OPERATE AN E-BIKE TO AVOID INJURY**

## Rules of the Road

- When going slower than the normal speed of traffic, a bicycle or e-bike rider must ride as close to the right side of the road as is safe, in the person's judgement, except under specific circumstances (e.g., passing another vehicle, turning left, or avoiding hazards).
- When traveling on a sidewalk or crosswalk, bicycle and e-bike riders must yield the right of way to any pedestrian and give an audible signal within a reasonable distance before passing the pedestrian.
- Bicycles and e-bikes generally may not ride more than two abreast. Those doing so may not impede the normal movement of traffic and must ride within a single lane (if the road has lanes).
- Riders may not carry (1) passengers on bicycles and e-bikes that are not equipped or designed to carry passengers or (2) packages or other articles that prevent the rider from using both hands for operating the bicycle or e-bike (CGS §§ 14-286 & -286b).

**Questions about whether your e-bike or other motorized/electric vehicle is legal? Contact the Farmington Police Traffic Unit at 860-675-2400.**

## Electronically Propelled Bikes (or 'e-dirt bikes')

Electric dirt bikes are now classified as "motor-driven cycles" under Connecticut's updated law (Public Act 25-159, effective October 1, 2025).

Unlike electric bicycles, these bikes lack pedals and have higher power output, requiring a valid driver's license to operate. They are not legal for children or anyone without a license.

## Current E-Bike Rules

**Age Restrictions:** Under Connecticut law, riders under age 16 may not operate a Class 3 e-bike, unless they are a passenger on a model specifically designed to carry one.

**Helmet Requirement:** Unlike traditional bicycles, all e-bike riders and passengers must wear a helmet, regardless of age.

**Required Safety Equipment:** E-bikes are required to be equipped with proper lights and reflectors including:

- A Forward-facing white light, visible from at least 500 feet away
- A Red rear light or reflector, visible from at least 600 feet away
- Reflective material placed on both sides of the bike

## Bicycle Safety Tips

**Be seen:** Wear high-visibility, brightly colored clothing. When out near or after sunset, wearing reflective materials are a must. If you don't own reflective clothing, a lightweight reflective vest is a great option.

**Unplug your ears:** Avoid wearing headphones in order to hear approaching vehicles. If you do use headphones, ride with the volume low, or with one earbud in.

**Check your equipment:** Before riding, inflate tires properly and check that the brakes work. Check and oil your chain regularly.

**Be aware of hazards:** Keep a lookout for obstacles in your path. Watch for anything that could cause a fall, such as: cracks in the road or sidewalk, drainage grates, potholes, wet leaves, sand.

**Pack Loose Items:** Use a backpack or bag to carry items that could otherwise get tangled in your chain or tires.

**More information, resources, and classes on safe cycling can be found at [bikeleague.org/ridesmart/rules-of-the-road/](https://bikeleague.org/ridesmart/rules-of-the-road/)**