

New Massachusetts Vulnerable Road Users Laws



Overview

- Introduction
- Senator Will Brownsberger discusses legislation
- Galen Mook provides overview of the new laws
- How you can help spread the word
- Questions?



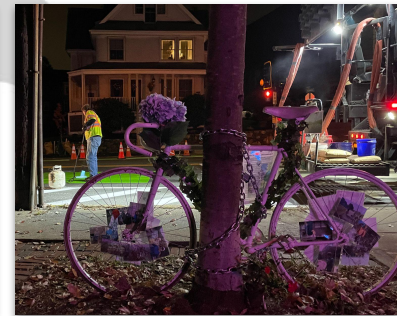
You can always reach us at bikeinfo@massbike.org

What Is a Vulnerable Road User?



Massachusetts now defines “vulnerable user” on our roads to include:

- People walking and biking
- Roadside workers
- People using wheelchairs
- Scooters, skateboards, roller skates, and other micromobility devices
- Horse drawn carriages
- Farm equipment



Credit: Angela Ingram, WKRC

Safe Passing

Drivers will need to provide a “safe passing distance” of at least 4 feet when passing vulnerable road users. Massachusetts is the 36th state to define safe passing as at least 3 feet.

Motorists are explicitly allowed to cross a double-yellow line in order to pass “when it is safe to do so and adhering to the roadway speed limit.”

The MassDOT is required to put up signage to this effect across the commonwealth.



Signage will be implemented by MassDOT to educate drivers about the new safe passing requirement

Rear Red Light Requirement

A new requirement for use of rear red lights at night will go into effect to ensure cyclists are visible on our roadways.

Bicyclists will now be required to use a front white light and rear red light when riding at night.

Police officers cannot use a light violation as a reason to stop a bicyclist. The lack of lights cannot be used as “conclusive evidence of contributory negligence” in a civil action, for instance when making an insurance claim.



MassBike's Lights Brigade program will continue to distribute **free** lights!

www.massbike.org/lightsbrigade

Safer Speed Limits

The process for municipalities to alter speed limits in thickly settled areas from 30 mph to 25 mph both on state-controlled roads and on the roads they control is now clarified.

This is an update on the previously implemented [Chapter 90, Section 18](#).

This change aligns with MassDOT's [new safe speeds philosophy](#).

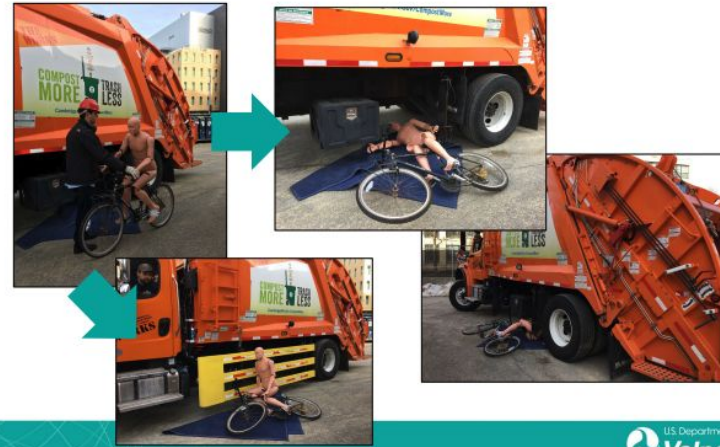


Truck Safety Devices

State-contracted trucks that are class 3 or 10,000+ lb will be required to be equipped with “lateral protection devices” (safety side guards), convex and cross-over mirrors, and backup cameras to reduce fatalities of people walking and biking.

This requirement will reduce some of the tragic right-hook fatalities that we’ve seen in recent years.

The registrar shall also prohibit aftermarket accessories that obstruct visibility or endanger vulnerable users.

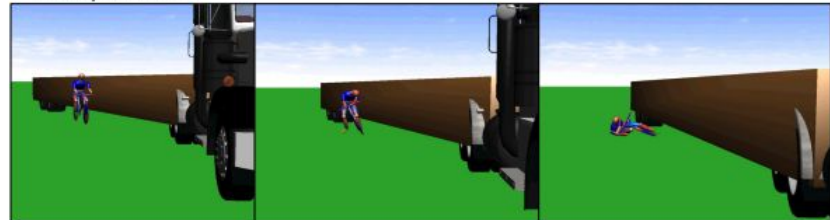


U.S. Department of Transportation
Volpe Center

No LPD



Aerodynamic LPD



Crash Reporting

A standardized analysis tool will now be used to report crashes and incidents involving a motor vehicle and a vulnerable user, as defined in this law, to improve statewide data collection surrounding vulnerable road user crashes.

Standardized crash reporting will allow us to systematically measure, report, and track crashes which allow us to make data-informed changes that increase roadway safety.

As the law is implemented, the State is required to study any racial, gender, and geographic disparities.



Ghost bike memorial for Darryl Willis

How can you help spread the word?

- Host a “Give Us 4 Feet” Ride in your community
- Request that your city/town install 4 foot passing signage
- Request that your city/town utilizes Chapter 90, Section 18 to reduce speed limits in your community
- Request **free** bumper stickers from MassBike



**Motorists must give
4 feet to pass
It's the law!**



Thank you for Joining us!

Questions?

Reach out to us at bikeinfo@massbike.org



Make sure to follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter @MassBike